



Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council

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TravelTelford



Horton Lane Prohibition of Driving

Decision Report

December 2023



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Executive Summary

Significant investigations were undertaken in 2011, 2015 and again in 2017 in relation to concerns raised regarding unsuitable HGV usage, 'rat running'¹, collisions and vehicular speeds along Horton Lane. Consultations on this complex situation have occurred during each of the aforementioned years. Unfortunately, on each occasion a consensus with residents of Horton Lane and the wider community was not reached, subsequently a scheme was not taken forward. However, concerns continued to be raised by Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council and the Borough Councillors for Hadley and Leegomery on behalf of the residents of Horton Lane.

In December 2020, Telford and Wrekin Council brought forward an experimental scheme to close Horton Lane at its junction with Hortonwood 60. This scheme involved a full signing review to ensure vehicles are given appropriate advanced warning of the restriction, and also installing a lockable gate which prohibits motor vehicles. Emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists have been provided special access to Horton Lane through the gate where required.

This report outlines the results of the consultation and recommends a decision on whether the current restrictions should remain permanent or whether the Horton Lane (Prohibition of Motor Vehicle) Traffic Regulation Order 2022 be revoked.

This report demonstrates that the experimental scheme has achieved its original aims, which were to remove rat running along Horton Lane and improve the amenity for local residents.

Objections were received that related to the increased travel distance and congestion on other routes rather than objections against the underlying principles of the lane closure itself.

Traffic data shows there has been a slight increase in traffic between Horton and Leegomery Roundabout (5.6%). However, it should be noted that traffic volumes across all roads are increasing so an increased in traffic volume is to be expected over this period. According to the Department for Transport Road Traffic Statistics, total vehicle miles have increased by 5.9% on average across Great Britain over the same period. Therefore, the increase in vehicle movements that may be associated with the closure of Horton Lane is negligible on the Humber Lane to Leegomery Roundabout route.

A review of the revised journey distances for some of the key routes identified in the consultation demonstrates that there has been a marginal change in travel distance that is not considered to add substantially to journey times or distances.

The findings of this report recommend that the Permanent Traffic Regulation Order remains in place and with no further changes made to Horton Lane. To support this recommendation, as outlined in this report, improvements will be made to route between Humber Lane and Leegomery Roundabout by Autumn 2024.

1. Background

Following concerns raised by Hadley and Leegomery Parish Council and the Borough Councillors for Hadley and Leegomery on behalf of the residents of Horton Lane, in December 2020, Telford and Wrekin Council brought forward an experimental scheme to close Horton Lane at its junction with Hortonwood 60. This scheme involved a full signing review to ensure vehicles are given appropriate advanced warning of the restriction, and also installing a lockable gate which prohibits motor vehicles. Emergency vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists have been provided special access to Horton Lane through the gate where required.

A Prohibition on Motor Vehicle on Horton Lane was installed as an Experimental Traffic Scheme in 2020, which ran for an initial 18-month period. This Order was made permanent in 2022 on the expiration of the Experimental Order. The council agreed to undertake further consultation to review the impact of the restrictions now that traffic flows have returned to near normal levels following the Covid-19 pandemic.

This consultation received a positive response from the residents of Horton Lane. However, objections were received from residents in the surrounding areas, some 12 miles away from the closure but particularly from Preston and Kynnersley residents.

This report outlines the results of the consultation and recommends a decision on whether the current restrictions should remain permanent or whether the Horton Lane (Prohibition of Motor Vehicle) Traffic Regulation Order 2022 be revoked.

The review area of the study shown is shown in Figure 1.1 below.–

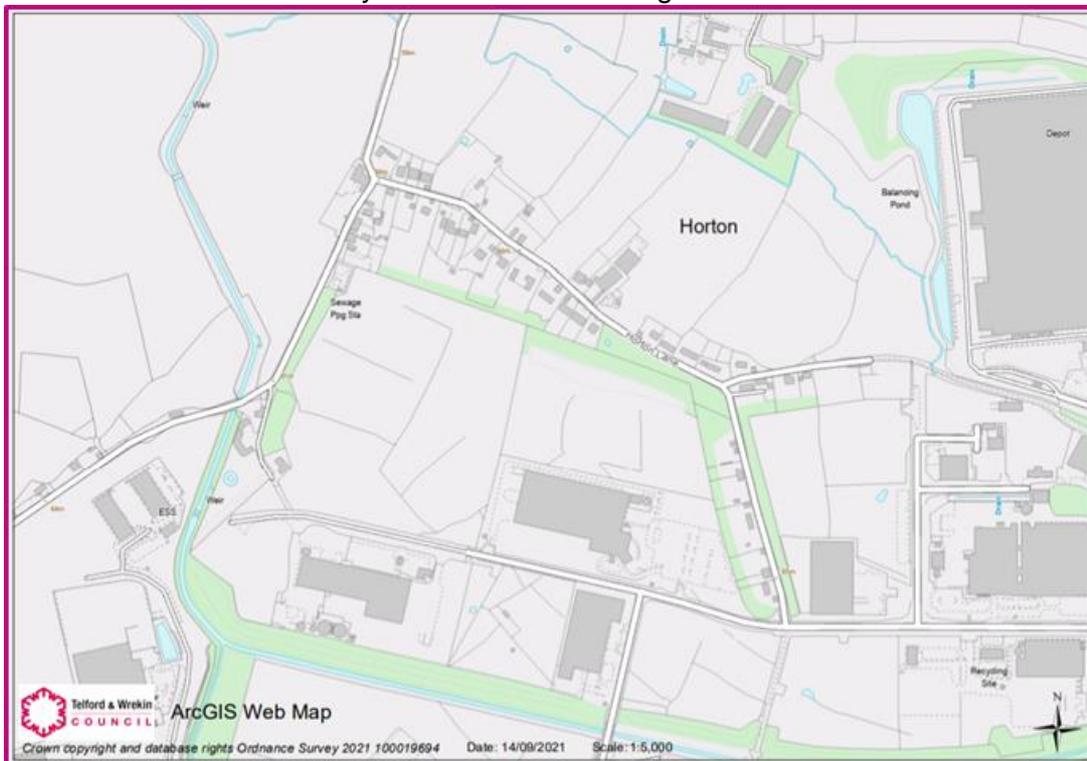


Figure 1.1 Study Area

2. Consultation Response Summary

Overall, there were 206 responses to the consultation. Of these, 95 were in support of the closure with 77 responses from residents of Horton Village. 109 responses disagreed with the proposals with 12 of these responses from residents of Horton Village. 2 of the responses received neither agreed or disagreed with the proposed changes.

50 of the objections raised concerns relating to increased travel distance and 25 responses raised concerns relating to congestion on other routes. It should be noted that concerns relating to increased travel distance was an anticipated side effect of the closure, with one of the key aims to bring through-traffic on to more appropriate distributor roads.

30 of the responses also raised concerns with increased difficulty in accessing nearby locations. However, all locations that were accessible prior to the closure remain open and accessible but alternative routes may need to be used.

The detail relating to travel distance and congestions are considered further in this report.

3. Traffic Counts

Traffic counts were undertaken in 2023 in order to investigate reports that traffic volumes had increased significantly due to the closure.

The count locations for 2023 were chosen to reflect locations of historic traffic counts.

KYNMERSLEY RD		HUMBER LANE		WHEAT LEASOWES	
2013	653	2016	2,733	2013	2,399
2023	610	2023	2,384	2023	2,535

Table 3-1; 5 day average vehicle counts

The above data shows that there has been a small drop in traffic flows between Kynnersley and Preston (-6.6%), and between The Humbers and Preston (-12.8%).

It also shows there has been a slight increase in traffic between Horton and Leegomery Roundabout (5.6%). However, it should be noted that traffic volumes across all roads are increasing so an increased in traffic volume is to be expected over this period. According to the Department for Transport Road Traffic Statistics, total vehicle miles have increased by 5.9% on average across Great Britain over the same period. Therefore, the increase in vehicle movements that may be associated with the closure of Horton Lane is negligible on the Humber Lane to Leegomery Roundabout route.

Furthermore, any minor increase on the strategic roads that form the alternative routes would not be significant and would not have an impact on the capacity at the junctions along these routes.

As a result of the above, whilst there were objections relating to this issue, there are no concerns related to increased traffic volume on the surrounding highway network.

4. Comparison of Distances

Following concerns raised through the consultation in relation to additional travel distance, it has been possible to establish the five main areas of concern and a comparison of journey distances are provided below.

1. Preston upon the Weald Moors to Hadley Park East Roundabout:	
Via Horton Lane	2.58km
Via Leegomery Roundabout	3.93km
<i>Additional distance:</i>	<i>1.35km</i>
2. Preston upon the Weald Moors to Clock Tower Roundabout:	
Via Horton Lane	4.59km
Via The Humbers	3.02km
<i>Additional distance:</i>	<i>-1.57km</i>
3. Preston upon the Weald Moors to Aldi Donnington:	
Via Horton Lane	3.93km
Via The Humbers	4.16km
<i>Additional distance:</i>	<i>230 metres</i>
4. Preston upon the Weald Moors to Donnington Health Centre / Shops:	
Via Horton Lane and Wrekin Drive	4.40km
Via Clock Tower Roundabout	4.68km
<i>Additional distance:</i>	<i>280 metres</i>
5. Preston upon the Weald Moors to Donnington ASDA:	
Via Horton Lane	5.31km
Via Clock Tower Roundabout and Donnington Wood Way	5.92km
<i>Additional distance:</i>	<i>610 metres</i>

The above demonstrates that there has been marginal change in travel distance which is not considered to add substantially to journey times.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

The experiment has achieved its original aims, which were to remove rat running along Horton Lane and improve the amenity for local residents.

The consultation has shown positive support from residents of Horton Village with the majority of objections being submitted by residents of other localities.

Objections relating to the increased travel distance and concerns regarding congestion on other routes have been considered. When comparing the travel distances from Preston and Kynnersley to the main destinations identified from the consultation, the additional distance travelled is not excessive – in most cases only a few hundred metres. However, it is recognised that journeys to destinations within Hortonwood will have an increase in journey length.

In terms of journey times, in the vast majority of cases the impact in time will be negligible due to the higher category of the alternative routes available as opposed to the narrow width of Horton Lane and negotiating the various junctions within Hortonwood Industrial Estate.

In conclusion, when considering the improvements in amenity and safety for the residents and non-motorised users of Horton Lane and against the marginally longer travel distances for residents north of Horton Lane, it is considered the benefits outweigh the disadvantages.

5.2 Decision

In view of the findings in this report and the concluding statement, it is recommended that the Permanent Traffic Regulation Order remains in place and with no further changes made to Horton Lane.

To support this recommendation, and to mitigate concerns relating to increase traffic on the Humber Lane to Leegomery Roundabout route, improvements will be made to this route which will include traffic calming measures, reduced speed limits and a full review of all signing and lining throughout the route. The aim will be to deliver these improvements by Autumn 2024.

Details of this scheme will be made available online at www.telford.gov.uk/traffic once finalised.