

Central and South Mid Sussex County Local Committee	Ref No: CSM04 (18/19)
26 June 2018	Key Decision: NO
Blackthorns Close, Blackthorns Primary School - School Keep Clear Traffic Regulation Order.	Part I
Director of Highways and Transport and Service Manager of Transport and Countryside	Electoral Division(s): Lindfield and High Weald

Summary

Yellow zigzag 'School Keep Clear' markings are used to prevent vehicles parking too close to school entrances, where they cause obstruction and restrict visibility. Many School Keep Clear markings are advisory without the requisite Traffic Signs and are not being well observed. The members of North Mid Sussex County Local Committee requested a TRO be prioritised to ensure entrances to the schools in their area are protected by School Keep Clear markings and Traffic Signs allowing them to be enforced.

School Keep Clears for Blackthorns Primary School were proposed in Blackthorns Close.

Following the initial consultation in May 2017 we received objections from residents of Blackthorns Close so the plan was redesigned to address their concerns and following a second public consultation in December 2017 we have now received comments from Blackthorns Residents Association.

Following public advertisement nine objections to the proposals was received which has been summarised in Paragraph 4.4 of this report.

Recommendation

That the Central and South Mid Sussex CLC having considered that the resulting benefits to the community outweigh the objections raised authorise the Director of Law and Assurance to make the Order as advertised.

Proposal

1. Background and Context

- 1.1** Yellow zigzag 'School Keep Clear' markings are used to prevent vehicles parking too close to school entrances, where they cause obstruction and restrict visibility. Many School Keep Clear markings are advisory and are not well observed. The members of Central Sussex County Local Committee requested a TRO be prioritised to ensure entrances to the schools in their area are protected by legally enforceable School Keep Clear markings.
- 1.2** WSCC identified locations for the required School Keep Clear markings and traffic signs ensuring that they were compliant with the Traffic Signs Regulations and

General Directions. Additional waiting restrictions were also proposed where considered necessary in specific sites

- 1.3 The purpose of the restrictions is to improve visibility and safety for young people travelling to and fro school.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal will introduce/formalise school keep clear markings in Blackthorns Close to prohibit any vehicle from stopping on the markings Monday to Friday between 8am and 5pm excluding bank holidays, additional Single yellow line with a timed restriction of Monday to Friday 8am to 5pm excluding bank holidays and introduce double yellow lines at the junction of Blackthorns Close and Blackthorns.
- 2.2 The length of road which is/are subject of the proposed Order is shown in Plan No. TQ3424NWN and TQ3425SWS.

The plans are included in Appendix A.

- 2.3 The Order has been proposed to prevent danger to persons or traffic using the roads, improve the amenities of the area through which the affected lengths of roads run and to facilitate the passage of traffic.

3. Resources

- 3.1 The entire cost for the lining/signing to implement the TRO is in the region of £1.5k and is part of a wider batch of works to offer improved Value For Money. This is funded as part of an approved IWP with allocated capital funding. This work forms part of a countywide CLC priority. Once the scheme is delivered maintenance is kept up by Highways.

Factors taken into account

4. Consultation

- 4.1 At the design stage, Blackthorns Primary School was consulted on the proposed extent and location of the school keep clear restriction. The Local Member and Sussex Police were also consulted. No objections were raised.
- 4.2 A three week statutory consultation period ran between 30/11/2017 - 21/12/2017. During this consultation period, notices were erected at the school, a copy of plans and a statement of reasons were made available at the local library and on the County Council website, and a copy of the Public Notice advertised in the Mid Sussex County Times
- 4.3 During the consultation period there were no negative comments from any of the statutory consultees

4.4 Nine Objections were received and are summarised below, together with the response on behalf of the Interim Director Highways & Transport.

<u>Objection</u>	<u>Response</u>
<p>The parking restriction proposal CMS8013-MM concerns my road. In general terms I am happy with the proposals. However, I have a concern with the junction between Blackthorns and Appledore Gardens. This junction is right next to my house and has at present no parking restriction markings. As a consequence people park right on the junction at school times. This causes major chaos due to no room for turning left or right with constant heavy traffic along Appledore Gardens</p> <p>I suggest that parking restriction signage and lining is provided at this junction while the fuller parking proposal is being provided. Naturally I am happy to meet your representative at any time to discuss my proposal.</p> <p>You should also note that I have submitted a separate request to the WSSC Highways department. This has been given an enquiry number of 2449690.</p>	<p>Following a meetings with the three local schools and the Blackthorns Residents Association with Cllr Andrew Lea and Richard Speller, the residents group will be working with highways to look all the junctions within the community to develop a separate community led TRO. It is recognised that the restrictions will potentially displace 5 vehicles from Blackthorns Close into the wider community at peak school run times, this will be monitored by the school and community and highways and this will then support a community led TRO.</p>
<p>We are resident in Blackthorns, Lindfield. We have been passed details of proposed yellow lines in Blackthorns Close only. We live on the next close in the road and I believe that these lines will not solve the growing problem of parking in our road but will merely push the traffic further along and into our close! I do agree the lines are needed but more than what is proposed. People park on the corner of our close and I often can't see around the corner to pull out or indeed get in or out of my driveway- we are on the corner. Please consider at the very least putting yellow lines on the corners too</p>	<p>Parking on the corner of Blackthorns Close and Blackthorns will be addressed with Double Yellow Lines as part of this proposal, the school will be working with WSSC to promote highway code rule 243 to parents and the wider community. Additional junctions will be reviewed by highways as part of a request for a community led TRO following a review of the impact the SKC TRO has on the community.</p>
<p>Blackthorns is a narrow road and needs to be considered as a whole. Vehicle access for residents is extremely difficult at school run times and at other school events. Long term parking is an issue. Emergency Vehicle access is vital at all times. The whole road is not suitable for large coaches at any time. The restrictions proposed will merely move the problems further along the road and exacerbate the current</p>	<p>The current lack of restrictions in Blackthorns Close does lead to potential access issues for emergency vehicles, by restricting the parking to the East side of the carriageway flow of traffic, visibility and</p>

<p>problems residents have.</p>	<p>safety is improved.</p>
<p>I am writing to express my deep concerns to the proposal in reference around Blackthorns school. The road outside my property and that of my neighbours sustains a heavy and often dangerous cacophony of school traffic twice a day and any restrictions nearer the school will only add to the volume of traffic and often dangerous parking (on corners of junction opposite 27 Blackthorns) and blocked driveways I have suffered personally. Whilst I welcome safety improvements this scheme needs looking at in the wider context of the effect on properties further in Blackthorns. School parking in residential areas is often dangerous with young children and parked and moving cars a worrying mix in an area not designed for such. I urge the team to strongly reconsider the proposal in the wider context of the effect on properties such as mine further in Blackthorns</p>	<p>Parking on the corner of Blackthorns Close and Blackthorns will be addressed with Double Yellow Lines as part of this proposal, the school will be working with WSCC to promote highway code rule 243 to parents and the wider community.</p>
<p>I am a resident of Blackthorns.</p> <p>Whilst I understand the reasons for the proposal, there is a need for wider consideration of the current major problems in Blackthorns and Blackthorns Close and the effect of the proposal.</p> <p>The effect will be to transfer school parking problems to the rest of Blackthorns which is a cul-de-sac and where there is already an excessive amount of school traffic.</p> <p>Additionally, currently, school traffic parks on the corners (including pavements!) of the second small cul-de-sac between Nos. 28 and 42 which causes the same problems as at the junction of Blackthorns and Blackthorns Close. Children, parents (with buggies etc.) and residents are forced to walk onto Blackthorns road to cross the cul-de-sac. The school coaches and a large proportion of traffic use this second cul-de-sac to turn quickly to exit Blackthorns. This is an unsafe situation and it is only a matter of time before there is a serious accident and injury.</p> <p>The proposed restrictions will result in even more cars trying to park in an overfull Blackthorns which has already resulted in occasions of gridlock, abuse of residents, parking across driveways, damage to vehicles and to verges.</p> <p>The school coaches are an added problem –</p>	<p>Parking on the corner of Blackthorns Close and Blackthorns will be addressed with Double Yellow Lines as part of this proposal, the school will be working with WSCC to promote highway code rule 243 to parents and the wider community.</p> <p>The proposals will enable coaches to access and exit Blackthorns Close easier, however the school acknowledges at peak times this can be difficult and will work with the other two schools to identify a safe coach parking alternative – potentially on Oathall school site.</p> <p>The walking path between Blackthorns and Lindfield Primaries works both ways and parking crossover does occur with Blackthorns parents parking by Lindfield and</p>

<p>presumably their parking is being considered?</p> <p>Also, the problems are exacerbated by parents of Lindfield school pupils parking in Blackthorns / Blackthorns Close and walking through the gate between the two Schools. This has become a real problem since the gate, previously locked, was opened.</p> <p>Whist we accept that something needs to be done to address the traffic issues, due to the school parking and traffic movements we feel the proposals outlined will in fact make matters worse by moving the parking/waiting problem elsewhere along Blackthorns.</p> <p>Current parking in the close up to the school, is in a defined area where there are minimal properties and minimal associated driveways. Part of the close is also wider than Blackthorns itself allowing some space for parking. The restrictions at the 'T' junction will help relieve some of the major congestion. However if there are restrictions in the close cars will just park in the main Blackthorns roadway which is no wider than the close, and has many more properties with driveways. There is also considerably more traffic flow and this would be restricted even further than present along much of the roadway due to one way alternate working only being possible passed parked cars. This situation would remain for most of the day as many of the parked cars belong to staff from the school.</p>	<p>Lindfield Parents parking by Blackthorns, the schools believe this to be an even swap however they are working together to survey this route. At the meeting 05/01/18 closure of this safe route was rejected by the schools as it would add traffic at each school site as parents historically will not walk the longer road via Appledore Gardens.</p>
<p>I am registering my objections to any parking restrictions on "lengths of Blackthorns" in Lindfield as detailed in the current proposal. This is because any restriction will have a knock on effect on parking on the street and we require daily access to on street parking. I am a resident on the street and require access to on street parking. I strongly disagree with the proposal for restrictions on "lengths of Blackthorns".. We do not consider that "The Blackthorns community association's" views on this matter are representative of all residents who actually live on the street and require on street parking.</p>	<p>The only proposed restriction on Blackthorns is at the junction with Blackthorns Close to protect the junction and the crossing point,</p>
<p>I am not against your limited proposals, but do not believe that they are sufficient to address the serious parking & congestion problems which currently prevail in Blackthorns around 9.00 am & 3.00 pm each school day.</p> <p>Blackthorns is a residential cul-de-sac & was not</p>	<p>Parking on the corner of Blackthorns Close and Blackthorns will be addressed with Double Yellow Lines as part of this proposal, the school</p>

<p>designed to cope with a large volume of traffic. However we now have parents with children at two local schools attempting to park in our road in order to drop off and collect their children. Originally only those with children at Blackthorns Academy used Blackthorns to access the school, but a few years ago a decision was made to leave open a pedestrian gate which separates Blackthorns Academy from the adjacent Lindfield Primary Academy, as a result many parents from that school also now try to park in Blackthorns, instead of using the main school entrance located close to Lindfield Common.</p> <p>The current excessive volume of cars driving & parking in Blackthorns presents a serious danger to the parents & children of both primary schools, as well as to the many children from the nearby Oathall Secondary who also use Blackthorns to walk to & from school. This situation could easily be remedied by restricting access through the gate to only the few parents who have children attending both primary schools. This should significantly reduce the volume of traffic using Blackthorns.</p>	<p>will be working with WSCC to promote highway code rule 243 to parents and the wider community.</p> <p>The walking path between Blackthorns and Lindfield Primaries works both ways and parking crossover does occur with Blackthorns parents parking by Lindfield and Lindfield Parents parking by Blackthorns, the schools believe this to be an even swap however they are working together to survey this route. At the meeting 05/01/18 closure of this safe route was rejected by the schools as it would add traffic at each school site as parents historically will not walk the longer road via Appledore Gardens.</p>
<p>I think the proposed permanent Traffic Regulation Order that will introduce/formalise enforceable School Keep Clear Markings prohibiting stopping for Blackthorns School is acceptable in terms of positioning of the markings but I think the timing should be from 8am to 4pm and not 8am to 5pm. After 3.30pm there is little, if any, discernible school traffic in Blackthorns and this order will therefore penalise residents. I believe it is wrong to adopt a "one size fits all" arrangement for all schools in terms of the timing restriction.</p> <p>Blackthorns has been subject to increased traffic of late because parents of children attending Lindfield Academy School also park in the Blackthorns area and walk their children through the field which is accessed from a gate by Blackthorns School. Closing this gate would greatly reduce congestion in the Blackthorns area and make it safer for everyone else. Introduction of the markings will of course stop dangerous parking, but it will not relieve the congestion</p>	<p>The timings are designed to cover the whole school day when access may be required and this includes after school clubs, keeping the road clear and preventing part time staff blocking the road, following the initial consultation excluding bank holidays was added as part of the amendment to the original plan.</p> <p>The walking path between Blackthorns and Lindfield Primaries works both ways and parking crossover does occur with Blackthorns parents parking by Lindfield and Lindfield Parents parking by Blackthorns, the schools believe this to be an even swap however they are working together to survey this route. At</p>

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4.5 Four Comments of support were received

<p>Daily 'school-run' traffic causes grid-lock in Blackthorns and Blackthorns Close which spills over into 'road-rage' incidents with vehicles leaving the carriageway to negotiate jams by driving along the verge and pavement. Congestion, parking and unacceptable driver behaviour presents a risk to pedestrians, especially children. Access to Blackthorns school and nearby homes by the emergency services is clearly compromised at times and represents an unacceptable risk.</p> <p>The proposed restrictions are welcome. They would be further enhanced by extending the "No waiting at any time" restriction to include the junction with the close off Blackthorns at TQ34262511. Vehicles often park on this junction in contravention of the Highway Code.</p> <p>Grid-lock could be prevented by imposing a residents only parking restriction on the section of Blackthorns between Blackthorns Close and Appledore Gardens. Parking by school traffic routinely reduces this section of the road to single carriageway and given Blackthorns is a cul-de-sac, mayhem ensues. I appreciate such restrictions may exceed the scope of the proposed TRO perhaps needs to be a separate initiative along with the development and implementation of a sustainable transport policy.</p>
<p>This proposed action for parking around the school is fair, and I am in favour. We are pleased to see that the proposed restrictions do not affect Blackthorns past Blackthorns close. Restrictions significantly past Blackthorns close would cause problems to residents further along the road</p>
<p>I support the proposal but believe that it does not go far enough. For example there is a second close in Blackthorns between house numbers 28 & 42 where cars regularly park on the corners, often on the pavement, during school arrival & leaving times. This presents a significant danger to the many parents & children walking along the pavement & attempting to cross the road at a time when it is exceptionally busy with school traffic.</p> <p>The measures currently proposed will ease congestion in the close leading up to Blackthorns Primary Academy, but will not ease the congestion in the rest of Blackthorns. In fact it will make it worse, as motorists who are no longer able to park in the close will seek to park elsewhere in Blackthorns.</p> <p>Blackthorns is a cul-de-sac and currently, during school term time it is very difficult to enter or exit the road between 8.30 to 9.30 am & again from from 2.30 to 3.30 pm. This problem has worsened during the last few year's, I believe this dates back to a decision taken some years ago to allow children & their parents to pass freely through a pedestrian gate located between</p>

<p>Blackthorns Academy & the neighbouring Lindfield Primary Academy. Previously this gate had been kept closed & locked at most times.</p> <p>The result of this change is that many parents with children at either school now attempt to park in Blackthorns when dropping off & collecting their children, causing serious congestion. I believe strongly that the parking problem & the resulting congestion could be greatly eased if there was some control over who is permitted to pass through the pedestrian gate between the two schools.</p> <p>The head & deputy head at Blackthorns Academy have argued that there are a few parents with children at both schools who need to use this gate, in which case access should be restricted to only these parents. Thus parents who only have children at Lindfield Primary Academy would return to using the main school entrance located close to Lindfield Common where there is alternative parking available.</p>
<p>My comments relate to the proposals within this TRO for the Blackthorns Primary Academy area (Blackthorns Close and Blackthorns). I welcome and fully support this TRO for the Blackthorns Close area.</p> <p>However I was party to discussions between Blackthorns Community Association, WSCC Highways & WSCC Councillor Andrew Lea in September when 'No Waiting At all times' restrictions were also proposed around the 2nd Junction (unnamed Close) to the North of the junction with Blackthorns Close and Blackthorns. Parent parking throughout Blackthorns creates significant disruption and this junction in particular is frequently used to turn large vehicles, School coaches etc. The turning circle at the far end of Blackthorns being inadequate for the size of these vehicles.</p>

4.6 The Local Member has been made aware of the consultation responses and supports implementation of the TRO

5. Risk Management Implications

5.1 Should the proposed TRO not be made the risk to the County Council is that the concerns raised by schools about inconsiderate parking in the vicinity of the school entrances will not be addressed and the threat to safety will continue.

5.2 Should the proposed TRO be made the risk to the County Council is that the proposed restriction will protect the school entrance but parking will migrate into neighbouring roads. The Travelwise Team are working with the school community to discourage inconsiderate parking behaviour the Council will monitor the situation and propose further restrictions if necessary.

6. Other Options Considered

6.1 WSCC officers believe that the length of the proposed restrictions is justified on the grounds of pupil safety, and this approach is supported by the school'

7. Equality Duty

- 7.1 WSCC has considered it's public sector quality duties in the attached Equality Impact Report, which has not identified any outstanding issues under the Equality act.

8. Social Value

- 8.1 The proposals align with the County Council's policy on Social Value insofar as they are supported by the School community to improve the local road environment.

9. Crime and Disorder Act Implications

- 9.1 The County Council does not consider there to be any foreseeable Crime and Disorder Act implications associated with this proposal. The view of Sussex Police has been sought, who confirm they believe there are no issues in relation to the Crime and Disorder Act.

10. Human Rights Implications

- 10.1 It is unlawful for a public authority to act in a way that is incompatible with a convention right. The policy objective to avoid danger to all road users and reduce congestion should then be set against these rights. Taking these points into consideration it is believed that the introduction of this TRO is justified.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Plan

Background Papers

None

Appendix A – Plan

