ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984

SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL
(HIGH STREET AND THE CLOSE, THORNBURY) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING)
EXPERIMENTAL ORDER 2020

S T A T E M E N T O F R E A S O N S

Background

As a result of the COVID-19 crisis, restrictions on motor vehicles in Thornbury High Street are to be trialled as part of the council's network management duty and guidance announced by the Secretary of State for Transport, Grant Shapps on 9th May 2020.

With the reopening of some non-essential shops on 15 June, and public houses in early July, the proposed measures will help keep essential workers and goods moving, provide safe access to shops and other high street businesses, and provide people space for social distancing. The proposed layout changes reduce danger to the public in connection with Covid-19, by encouraging active travel and by helping people to stay 2 metres apart for social distancing purposes when outdoors.

By managing our road space where there are lots of shops, restaurants and pubs that attract groups, we can help to reduce further spread of the virus and save lives in our communities.

Purpose of Scheme

Preventing through motor traffic between The Close and Castle Court in the High Street, will assist people to shop safely and provide more attractive access for cyclists and those on foot. The measures will be implemented under an Experimental Traffic Order that prohibits motor vehicle through traffic and a Temporary Traffic Order that will reduce the speed limit to 20mph.

Further guidance is available about the duration and nature of Experimental Traffic Orders and Temporary Traffic Orders which could potentially be in place for up to 18 months before a decision is made whether to make changes permanent or not. This course of action provides a consultation period whilst temporary measures are in place which allows for observation, amendments, and for people to comment having seen the result of a layout change in place before permanent alterations are made.

A diversion route for traffic will be provided via The Plain, Rock Street, Quaker Lane and Midland Way for all through traffic including the bus route.

Proposed Scheme

The proposals in the High Street include:-

- 'No Through Route' for Motor Vehicles between The Plain and Chapel Street.

- Physical road closure points near ‘The Swan’ public house and at The Close to form a central pedestrian and cycle zone. 3m gaps will be provided for motor vehicles to pass through one way from north to south for loading and unloading purposes or for access to off street parking where it is not possible by an alternative route.
- Cyclists will be permitted to travel in any direction.
- The one way system for motor vehicles will not apply in the southern extension of the pedestrian and cycle zone between Chapel Street and The Close.
- There will be an exemption for vehicles to access property where it is only possible to do so from within the zone;
- Cycle parking racks and other street features, such as raised planters will be installed to help form a meandering road alignment for those vehicles that are eligible to access the High Street.
- A reduction of speed limit from 30 to 20mph.
- Entry to the High Street north of The Close from the south will be allowed for cycles and pedestrians only.
- Suspension of the current limited waiting restrictions that will be replaced with ‘No Waiting at Any Time’ restrictions within the pedestrian and cycle zone;
- The current bus layby in High Street will be replaced with disabled parking bays;
- The bus stop will be relocated to Rock Street for all southbound bus services.

It is considered appropriate that this proposal should be introduced using the approved procedure for experimental Traffic Regulation Orders in order to facilitate the modification of the scheme in the light of experience of its operation, should the need arise.

The Council will consider in due course whether a permanent Order in like terms to this Experimental Traffic Regulation Order should be made.