

AGENDA FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

MONDAY 23RD MAY 2022 IN THE GUILDHALL

You are hereby **SUMMONED** to attend the **Planning Committee** on **Monday 23rd May 2022** at **6.30pm** for a maximum of 90 minutes in the Guildhall for the purpose of transacting the following business:

Committee Members: Councillors G Allen (Chair), T Bennett, S Collinson, J Cummings, J Hodgson and P Paine.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair will read out the following statement:

Welcome to everyone attending and observing the meeting.

A reminder that open proceedings of this meeting will be video recorded. If members of the public make presentations, they will be deemed to have consented to being recorded. By entering the Council Chamber attendees are also consenting to being recorded.

This meeting is limited to 90 minutes and therefore members are asked to raise their points succinctly and not repeat the same view expressed by colleagues if it does not add to the debate.

To receive apologies and to confirm that any absence has the approval of the Council.

The Committee will adjourn for the following items:

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A period of 15 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions or make comment regarding the work of the Committee or other items that affect Totnes.

The Committee will convene to consider the following items:

2. ELECTION OF CHAIR AND DEPUTY

To elect a Chair and deputy for the committee. No document.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 25th April 2022 and update on any matters arising. Document attached.

4. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

To make recommendations on the following planning applications:

4a. 1522/22/FUL - Construction of 6No. two-storey residential dwellings with associated landscaping. East Dartington Lane, Dartington, TQ9 5LB. See <http://apps.southhams.gov.uk/PlanningSearchMVC/Home/Details/221522>

4b. 0532/22/HHO - Householder application for single storey ground floor extension. 54 Follaton, Plymouth Road, Totnes, TQ9 5ND. See <http://apps.southhams.gov.uk/PlanningSearchMVC/Home/Details/220532>

4c. 0916/22/HHO – Householder application for extensions to detached dwelling house, with demolition of dilapidated garage and enlarged off-road parking area. Waylands, Bourton Lane, Totnes, TQ9 5JF. See <http://apps.southhams.gov.uk/PlanningSearchMVC/Home/Details/220916>

4d. 1354/22/LBC - Listed Building consent for conservation and restoration of main facade to High Street. Loggia columns at ground floor, first floor and second floor façade. 43 High Street, Totnes, TQ9 5NP. See <http://apps.southhams.gov.uk/PlanningSearchMVC/Home/Details/221354>

4e. 1343/22/FUL - Conversion of upper retail floors to 2 bedroom Maisonette including new ground floor corridor, store & WC. 29 High Street, Totnes, TQ9 5NP. See <http://apps.southhams.gov.uk/PlanningSearchMVC/Home/Details/221343>

4f. 0724/22/HHO & 0722/22/LBC - Householder application and Listed Building Consent for various internal works including velux roof lights, extract vent, VP, relocated flue, new shower room, relocated combi and gas fire inserts to two fireplaces and various external works including render and subcills and Air source heat pump. Castle House, Totnes, TQ9 5PQ. See <http://apps.southhams.gov.uk/PlanningSearchMVC/Home/Details/220724>

4g. 1394/22/LBC - Listed building consent for re-slating roof of back range of building. 12 Fore Street, Totnes, TQ9 5DX. See <http://apps.southhams.gov.uk/PlanningSearchMVC/Home/Details/221394>

4h. 1356/22/CLE - Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing building works including demolition of fire damaged Sport Pavilion changing room and installation of temporary facility (portakabin). King Edward VI College, Ashburton Road, Totnes, TQ9 5JX. See <http://apps.southhams.gov.uk/PlanningSearchMVC/Home/Details/221356>

4i. 0833/22/HHO - Householder application for replacement of four windows on north elevation, like for like, PVC, to improve energy efficiency. Brookes Barn, Rowsells Lane, Totnes. See <http://apps.southhams.gov.uk/PlanningSearchMVC/Home/Details/220833>

4j. 1309/22/ARC - Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 1, 2 and 3 of planning consent 56/1134/07/LB. 4 Lamb Corner, Leechwell Street, Totnes, TQ9 5SX. See <http://apps.southhams.gov.uk/PlanningSearchMVC/Home/Details/221309>

5. PREMISES LICENCE APPLICATION

To consider a premises licence application from The Edgy Veggie Kitchen, The Mansion, 36 Fore Street for the supply and consumption of alcohol on the premises Monday to Wednesday 1100-1630 and Thursday to Sunday 1100-2100. No document.

6. TRAFFIC CALMING CONSULTATION

To consider Dart Harbour Community Group response to the Dart Harbour Navigation Authority Strategic Plan review and make a recommendation to Full Council in May with a draft Council response. Documents attached.

7. KINGSBRIDGE HILL AREA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION PROPOSAL

To consider a proposal from the Kingsbridge Hill Area Residents' Association to restrict vehicle access on Kingsbridge Hill. Document attached.

8. TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT FORUM

To consider any recommendations from the Traffic and Transport Forum held on 27th April 2022. Document attached.

9. EVENTS ON SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL LAND

To note the following events taking place on South Hams District Council land (no document):

9a. Playgoers Society of Dartington, Thursday 14th July 1300hrs until Saturday 16th July 2200hrs, Follaton House Gardens.

9b. Totnes Pride 2022, Saturday 3rd September 0800hrs 1700hrs, The Rotherfold.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Planning Committee – Monday 20th June 2022 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall.

The Committee will be asked to RESOLVE to exclude the press and public "by reason of the confidential nature of the business" to be discussed and in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. (CONFIDENTIAL by virtue of relating to legal and/or commercial matters, staffing and/or the financial or business affairs of a person or persons other than the Council)

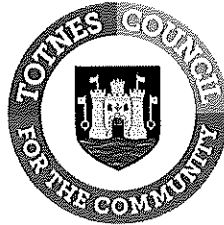
11. TOTNES NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

To consider legal advice on the Totnes Neighbourhood Plan and make a recommendation to Full Council about the examination process (legal). Document attached.

USE OF SOUND RECORDINGS AT COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The open proceedings of this Meeting will be video recorded. If members of the public make a presentation, they will be deemed to have consented to being recorded. By entering the Council Chamber or Zoom meeting, attendees are also consenting to being recorded.

Televised, vision and sound recordings or live broadcastings by members of the press or public at Councillor Committee debates are permitted and anyone wishing to do so is asked to inform the Chair of the respective Committee of their intention to record proceedings.



DRAFT MINUTES FOR THE PLANNING COMMITTEE

MONDAY 25TH APRIL 2022 IN THE GUILDHALL

Present: Councillors G Allen (Chair), S Collinson, J Cummings and J Hodgson.

Apologies: Councillor R Hendriksen.

Not Present: Cllrs P Paine and V Trow.

In Attendance: Two members of the public and S Halliday (Governance and Projects Manager).

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive apologies and to confirm that any absence has the approval of the Council.

Cllr Allen read out a statement about how the meeting would be conducted and recorded.

The apology was accepted.

The Committee will adjourn Standing Orders for the following items:

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

A member of the public asked why the community grant applications went straight to Full Council in April and not through the Council Matters Committee, and raised concerns about where assets like laptops would go if an organisation collapsed. The Chair said that the Planning Committee had no involvement in this issue. The Officer explained that due to pre-election period constraints before the planned election on 17th May and as some grant applications were for funding for events being held over the Platinum Jubilee weekend, it was decided that the April Full Council needed to make funding decisions or else there was no opportunity to do so before 2nd June.

A member of the public updated the Committee that Tally Ho buses are looking at alterations to the Saturday bus route to cover the usual Bob the Bus route in Bridgetown, which the Town Council may be consulted on. The member of the public also raised the issue of a planned telegraph pole being installed as part of the Airband project along the pavement between Maudlin Road and St Katherine's Way which will restrict access for wheelchairs and buggy users.

Cllr Collinson made the Committee aware of the newly formed Kingsbridge Hill residents association who are looking at solutions to the traffic problems on the road, particularly speeding and rat running. The Group will attend the Traffic and Transport Forum this week to set out their aims and suggestions for low-cost solutions to the problems being experienced.

The Committee reconvened Standing Orders.

2. AIRBAND

To receive an update on the Airband project role out from Airband Community Liaison. Verbal update [no more than 30 minutes].

Unfortunately, the Airband representative was unwell and unable to attend the meeting. It was **AGREED** to request a virtual update/presentation from Airband for a Thursday at 5pm which can be live streamed to the public on FaceBook.

3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To approve the minutes of 21st March 2022 and update on any matters arising.

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of proceedings.

4. TREE WORKS APPLICATIONS

To make recommendations on the following tree works applications:

4a. 0838/22/TCA –T1: Thuja plicata (Western Red Cedar) - lateral reduction by 0.3m on the W side. T2: Juglans nigra (Black Walnut) - crown raise to give 5.2m statutory road clearance. T3: Fagus sylvatica (Copper Beech) - crown raise to give 5.2m statutory road clearance, and reduce lowest lateral branch by 2m. T4: Lawson cypress - trim all N/E/S/W profiles to maintain structure. T5: Magnolia - reduce branches by 1m away from BT Line. T6: Cotoneaster frigidus - crown height reduction by 1.5m, and, lateral reduction by 0.5m on the W side. G1: Pittosporum, Bay and Portuguese Laurel - crown height reduction by 2m creating a rounded top, trim annual growth from all side profiles. Chy Vean, Priory Avenue, Totnes, TQ9 5HR.

No further action - a decision notice was issued on 25th April for this application.

4b. 0826/22/TCA - T1: Sorbus (Rowan Tree) – crown height reduction by 4 metres. 1 Castle Court, Totnes, TQ9 5PD.

Support.

5. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

To make recommendations on the following planning applications:

5a. 1008/22/HHO – Householder application for rear extension, front and rear dormer extension and raised terrace. 55 Denys Road, Totnes, TQ9 5TL.

Support.

5b. 0719/22/HHO – Householder application to build oak timber frame extension onto the front of the property, to replace and enlarge the existing bay window. Ayesha, Weirfields, Totnes, TQ9 5JS.

Support.

5c. 0756/22/FUL – Replacement patio doors and windows. 3 Elizabethan House, Steamer Quay Road, Totnes, TQ9 5BY.

Support.

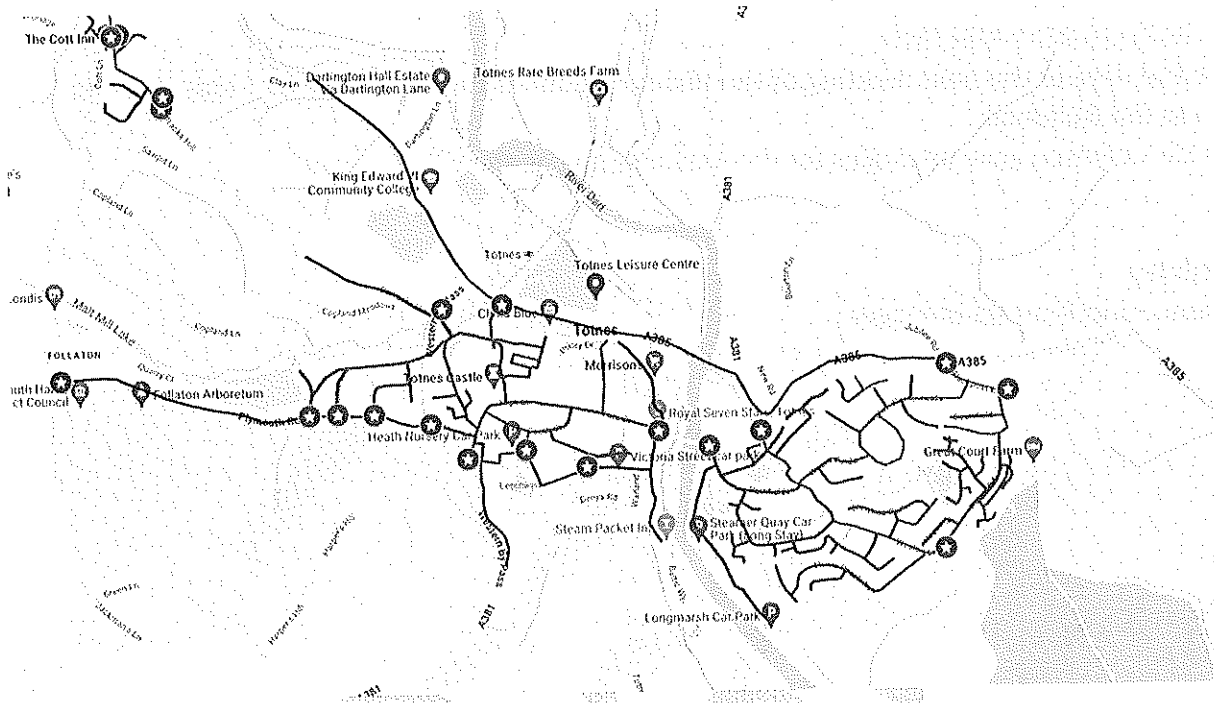
5d. 1233/22/ARC – Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 3, 4 and 5 of planning consent 56/0733/15/LB. 5 Garden Flat, Plymouth Road, Totnes, TQ9 5PH.

Support.

6. 20MPH SPEED LIMIT PILOT

To consider the proposed expression of interest for the 20mph speed limit pilot scheme being run by Devon County Council.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council that it supports the application that Totnes be included in the 20mph pilot trial for the roads identified in purple in the map below (those shown in red are already 20mph):



7. DART HARBOUR STRATEGIC PLAN CONSULTATION

To consider Dart Harbour Community Group response to the Dart Harbour Navigation Authority Strategic Plan review and make a recommendation to Full Council in May with a draft Council response.

It was **AGREED** to have a future agenda item on the proposed extension of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to link the Dart with Dartmoor.

To **RECOMMEND** to Full Council the following response to the Dart Harbour Community Group comments on the Dart Harbour Navigation Authority Strategic Plan:

Totnes Town Council supports the Dart Harbour Community Group's comments in response to the Dart Harbour Navigation Authority's Strategic Plan consultation. The Council is particularly supportive of the approach to engaging with town and parish councils and we welcome such engagement, and the regular monitoring of water quality. Totnes Town Council's concerns include sewage discharges into the river, and how river use affects wildlife in and around the river. The Council is keen to explore proposals for extending the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to link the Dart through to Dartmoor.

8. ROADMAP NEWSLETTER

To note the latest Devon Highways 'Roadmap' Spring newsletter.

Noted.

9. EVENTS ON SOUTH HAMS DISTRICT COUNCIL LAND

To note the following events taking place on South Hams District Council land:

9a. Totnes Elizabethan Craft and Charity Market, Tuesdays 3rd May – 27th September 0800-1500hrs, Market Square. Noted.

9b. Sea Change Festival, Friday 27th May 1000hrs until Sunday 29th May 2200hrs, The Rotherfold. Noted.

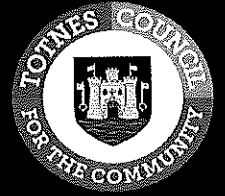
10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date of the next meeting of the Planning Committee – Monday 23rd May 2022 at 6.30pm in the Guildhall.

Noted. Cllr Collinson gave apologies for the May meeting as she will be away.

Sara Halliday
Governance and Projects Manager

DRAFT

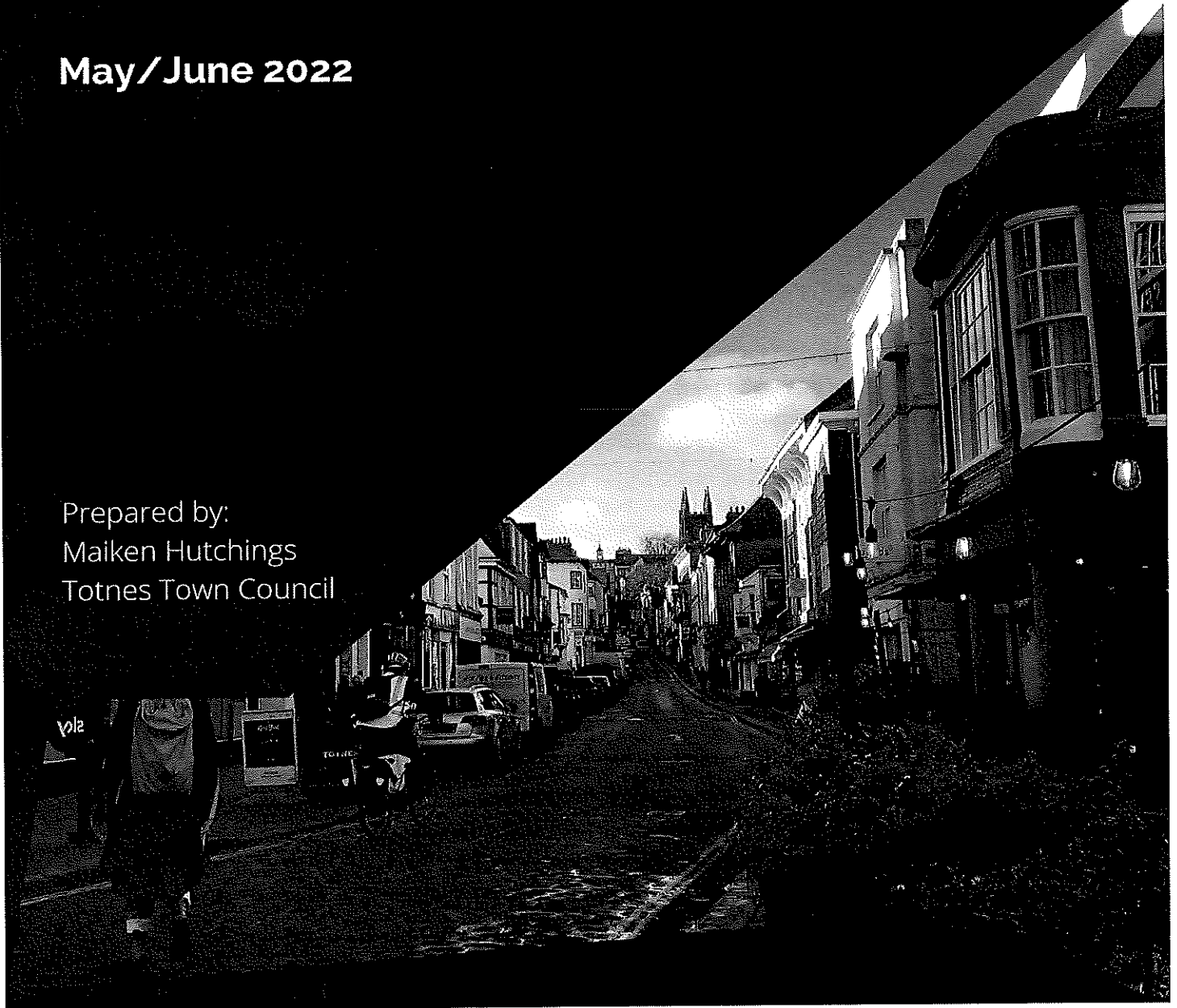


Public Consultation Report

Proposed traffic calming
measures for Fore Street, Totnes

May/June 2022

Prepared by:
Maiken Hutchings
Totnes Town Council



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Report summary

- Totnes Town Council ran a public consultation into three traffic calming measures proposed by Devon County Council in response to calls to make the high street safer and reduce the volume and speed of traffic. The consultation consisted of a survey and an in-person event and ran between 18 January and 31 March 2022.
- A total of 767 responses were received to the survey and approximately 40 people attended the in-person event. The results showed that 48.6% opposed the measures, 36.2% supported, 13% supported but with amendments, and 2.6% answered 'don't know'.
- Of those who support but with amendments, many actually expressed a preference for entirely different traffic measures. Of those who oppose the measures, 74.4% do not feel that any traffic calming measures are needed in Fore Street at all.
- The business community largely oppose the measures. Residents were more evenly split between supporting and opposing.
- The most common comments received were:
 1. Requests for some degree of pedestrianisation
 2. Opposition to any loss of car parking spaces
 3. Requests for the focus to be on the High Street and the Narrows rather than Fore Street
 4. Requests that signage should be improved first
 5. Requests that the 'access only' restrictions should be better enforced
- There is a question around whether the measures would reduce accessibility on Fore Street as it would effectively remove two existing level crossing points. This requires further clarification.
- The consultation shows that this is a very complex issue with no clear solution that everyone will be satisfied with. There is a widespread feeling of frustration amongst all parties and significant survey fatigue. There is also a lack of a cohesive strategy for the town which needs addressing.
- It is the **officer recommendation** that no action is taken until after an independently facilitated stakeholder meeting has taken place (as requested by Devon County Council); that there are other more cost-effective and less disruptive measures that should be explored first; and that the accessibility issues need addressing.
- **Next steps:** To organise an independently facilitated stakeholder meeting to create a prioritised list of acceptable options for the high street and centre of town. This has been requested by DCC.

1.0 Introduction

Totnes Town Council have produced this report based on the public consultation it ran on proposed traffic calming measures designed by Devon County Council. Devon County Council designed these measures in response to calls to make the road safer and to reduce the amount of traffic using the road. The challenge of balancing the needs of the whole community, including residents and businesses in the high street, within a historic town setting were carefully considered in designs. The Devon County Council proposal to narrow the road in three places aims to deter vehicles from entering Fore Street by slowing down traffic while still maintaining access for shopping, deliveries and servicing. The idea is that this would then also reduce the number of people using the High Street as a cut-through.

Totnes Town Council ran the public consultation as requested by Devon County Council as part of the public engagement process. It ran between 18 January 2022 and 31 March 2022.

2.0 Method

2.1 Consultation process

The consultation initially ran from 18 January to 24 February 2022 but was extended for another four weeks at the request of the Steering Group for the Totnes and District Traffic & Transport Forum to ensure a wider response. The consultation closed fully on 31 March 2022. The proposed designs can be found in Appendix A.

The consultation consisted of a survey, which was available online and in hard copy. It consisted of 8 questions. These can be found in Appendix B. The online survey was run using Google Forms. This platform was used due to its perceived ease of use and cost-effectiveness. 4000 paper versions were circulated to Totnes residents via the Totnes Directory. Copies were also available at Totnes Library and at the Totnes Town Council offices.

As well as the survey, Totnes Town Council held an in-person drop-in event at the Civic Hall in Totnes on the 18 February 2022. This was to allow people to find out more about the plans and to discuss their ideas directly with officers facilitating the consultation. This provided another opportunity to fill in comment cards and to share ideas with others via sticky notes on a whiteboard.

Responses were also received via email and in the post. All responses were collated and coded into categories using the program Nvivo. Overarching themes were then identified.

The consultation was publicised through various methods:

- Totnes Town Council website
- Totnes Town Council and Green Travel Totnes Facebook and Instagram pages
- On various town Facebook pages
- A Facebook and Instagram ad aimed at all residents and businesses in the Totnes area
- Via email to the Totnes Town Council Business community directory
- Via email to schools
- TTC Officer went around to all shops on Fore St

2.2 Limitations

A number of limitations have been identified with the consultation method. First of all, it was highlighted that combining business-owners and workers might produce a skewed view of opinions as the two might have quite different views. However, as can be seen in section 3.2.2, this does not seem to be the case as the vast majority of responses opposed the measures.

Another issue that was raised was the use of Google Forms for the online survey. It was highlighted that it was possible to submit multiple responses and thereby attempt to skew the results. This is a valid point but unfortunately one that other platforms also suffer from. In addition, Totnes Town Council did not wish to create a barrier to people responding, which requiring a sign-in or email address might do. The Council did not wish to collect respondents' email addresses unnecessarily. Other platforms, such as SurveyMonkey, have restrictions on the number of responses that can be collected.

The Council will of course endeavour to learn from this and welcome any other feedback on the process.

3.0 Results

A total of 767 survey responses were received. 632 responses were submitted via the online survey and 135 responses were completed using the paper copy.

Approximately 40 people attended the in-person event with 27 people leaving feedback on comment cards. A few other responses were received via email or in the post.

3.1 In-person event: 18 February 2022

A drop-in event was held at the Civic Hall in Totnes on Saturday 18 February between 10am and 1pm. Approximately 40 people attended this event over the course of the 3 hours with 27 people leaving feedback on comment cards and sticky notes.

Common themes amongst these were:

- Fore Street is not the problem, but rather the High Street and the Narrows
- Pedestrianisation (either fully or partially) as a solution
- Enforce 'access only'
- Improve signage to redirect traffic to alternative routes

3.2 Survey

A total of 767 survey responses were received with 632 responses submitted via the online survey and 135 responses completed using the paper copy. A summary overview of responses to each question can be found in the following section. For the questions with open-ended answers, only the key responses are shown. More detailed feedback can be found in Appendix C.

3.2.1 Question 1: I am a... (please tick all that apply)

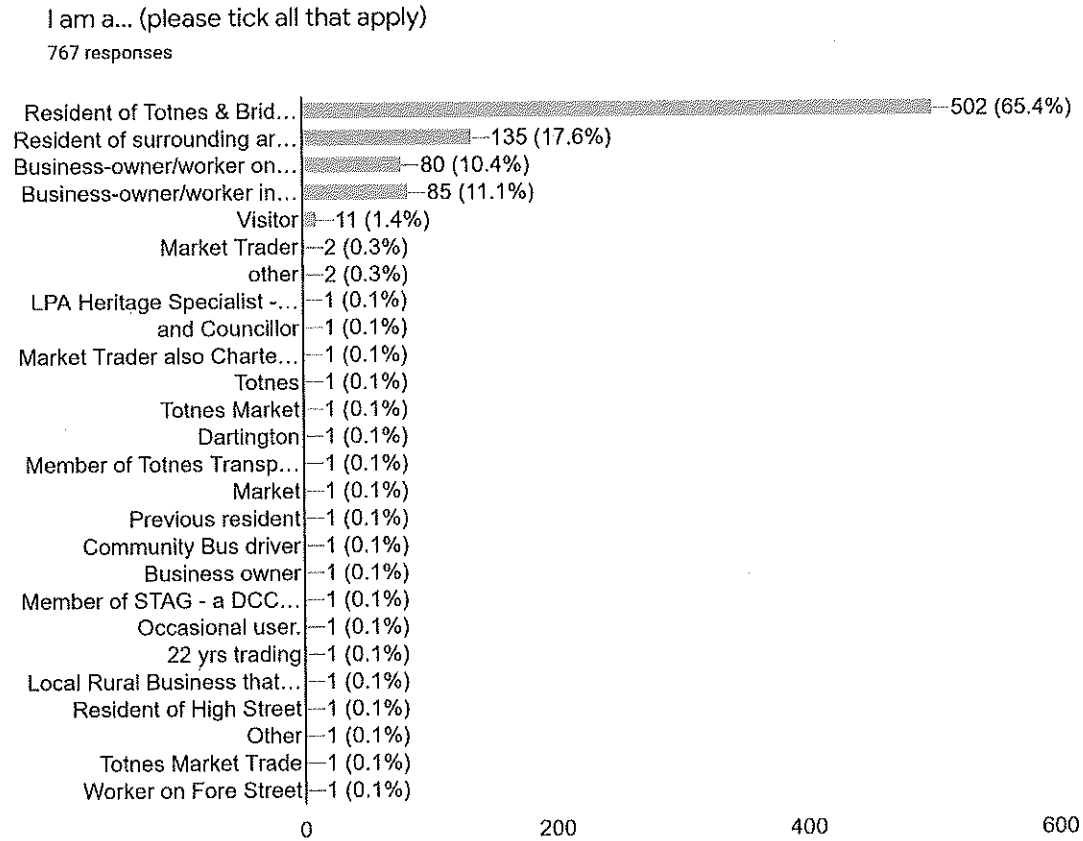


Figure 1: Overview of respondents

As can be seen, 65.4% of respondents were residents of Totnes and Bridgetown. 17.6% were residents of surrounding areas, 10.4% were business-owners/workers on Fore Street, and 11.1% were business-owners/workers in town but not on Fore Street.

3.2.2 Question 2: Do you support the three proposed traffic calming measures on Fore Street?

Do you support the three proposed traffic calming measures on Fore Street?
767 responses

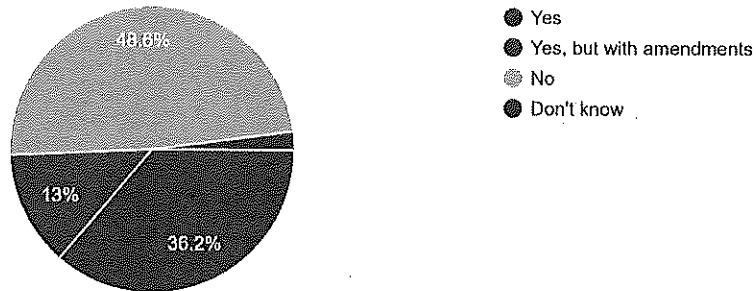


Figure 2: Distribution of answers to question 2: "Do you support the three proposed traffic calming measures on Fore Street?"

As figure 2 shows, there is quite an even split between those who are against the proposed measures (48.6%) and those who fully (36.2%) or partially support the measures (13%) (combined 49.2%). 2.6% answered 'don't know'.

A further breakdown between responses from the business community and residents can be found below.

Do you support the three proposed traffic calming measures on Fore St? All business-owners/workers

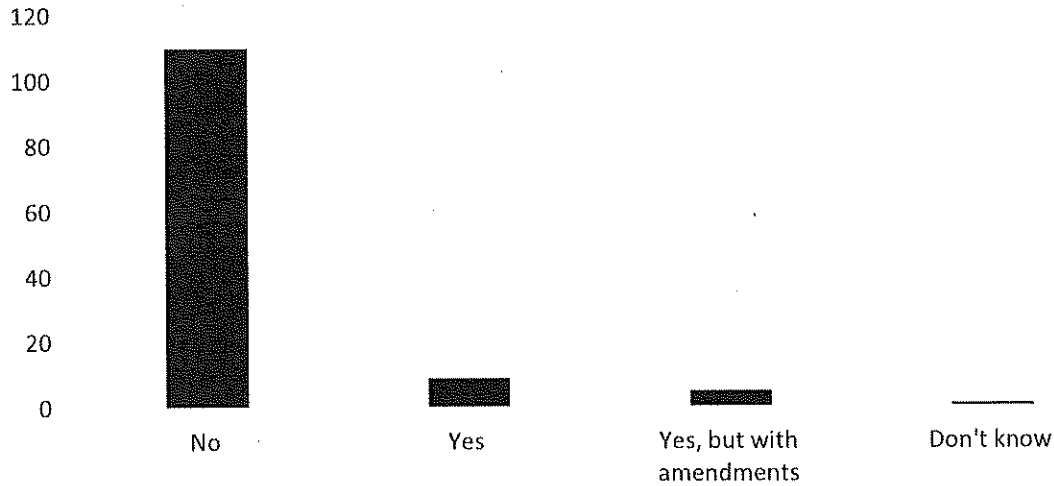


Figure 4: Opinion distribution of all respondents who identified as business-owners/workers

Do you support the three proposed traffic calming measures on Fore St? All residents

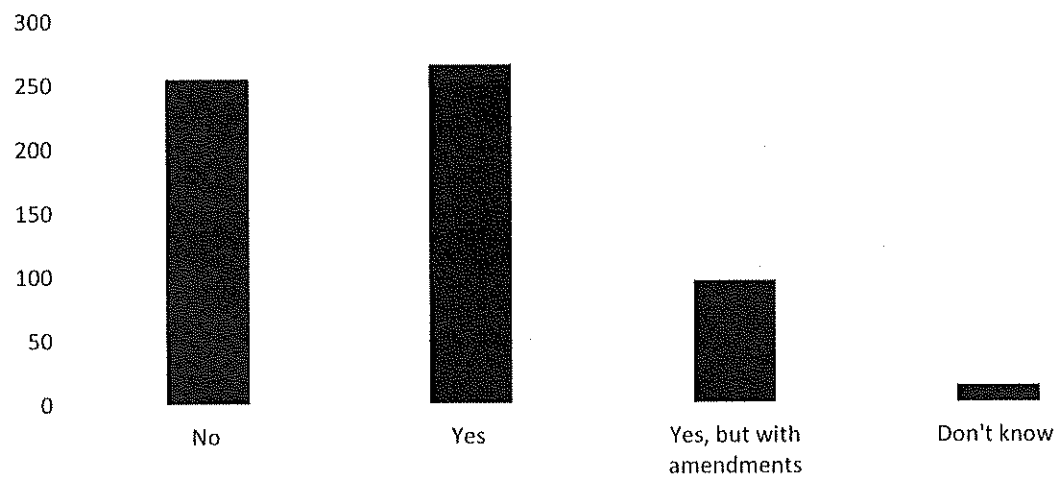
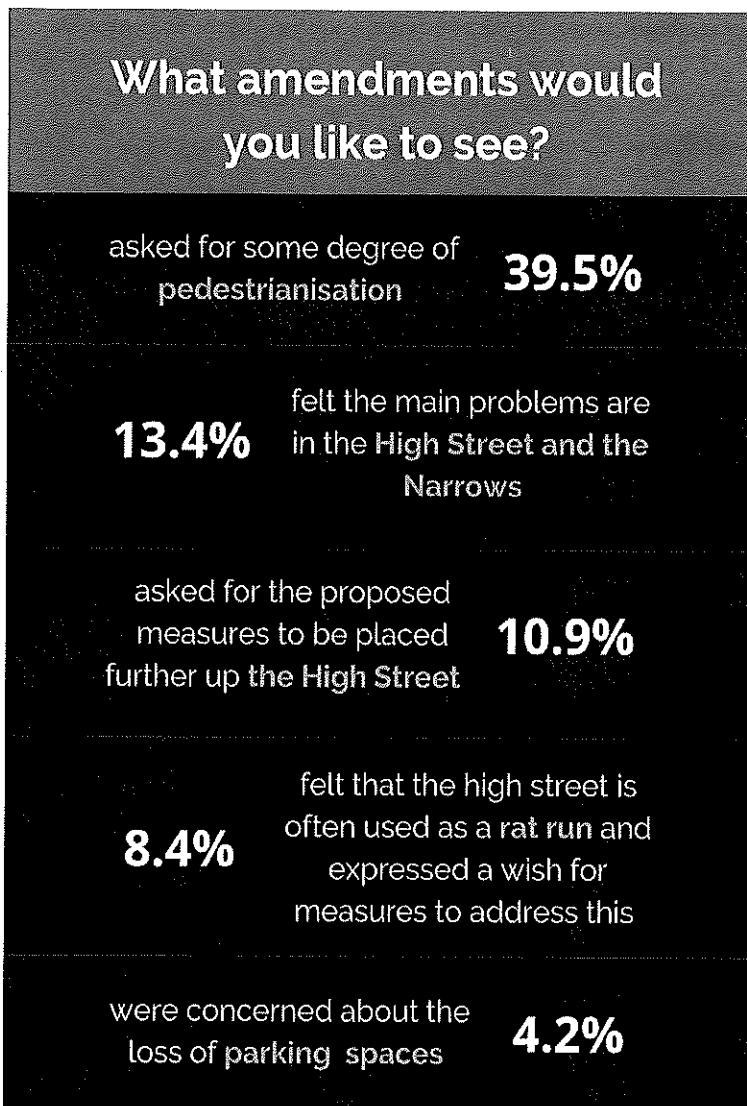


Figure 3: Opinion distribution of all respondents who identified as residents

3.2.3 Question 3: If you answered 'yes, with amendments', what amendments would you like to see?

13% of respondents answered in Question 1 that they supported the proposal but with amendments. A total of 119 people (15%) responded to Question 3 which asked them to explain what amendments they would like to see.

The responses have been collated and grouped into themes. The five most popular response themes can be seen in figure 5 below. *Please note that the percentages are of the people who responded to this specific question, not of all survey respondents.* Further detail on responses can be found in Appendix C.



Results indicate that while respondents initially said they supported the measures, the amendments they would like to see were often completely different solutions. Of those who did suggest amendments to the measures, the most common response was for the measures to be placed further up the High Street and the Narrows.

Figure 5: Most common responses to Question 3, 'If you answered 'yes, with amendments', what amendments would you like to see?'

3.2.4 Question 4: If you answered 'no' to Question 2, do you believe that traffic calming measures are needed on Fore Street in general?

If you answered 'no' to Question 2, do you believe that traffic calming measures are needed on Fore Street in general?

425 responses

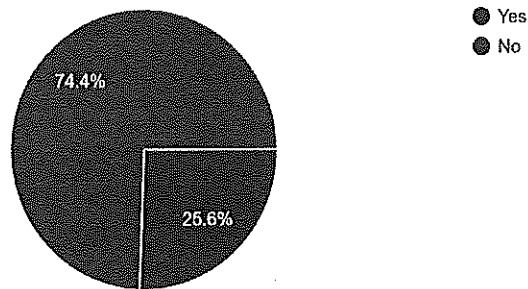


Figure 6: Responses to question 4, 'do you believe traffic calming measures are needed on Fore St in general?'

A total of 425 responses were received for this question. Of those who answered that they did not support the three proposed traffic calming measures, the vast majority also do not believe that traffic calming measures are needed on Fore Street in general.

3.2.5 Question 5: If you agree traffic calming measures are needed, why do you not support the current proposal?

A total of 139 responses were received for this question. The responses were very varied with different reasons given for not supporting the measures. The top responses are shown in figure 7 below. Further detail on these and additional responses can be found in Appendix C. *Please note that the percentages are of the people who responded to this specific question, not of all survey respondents.*

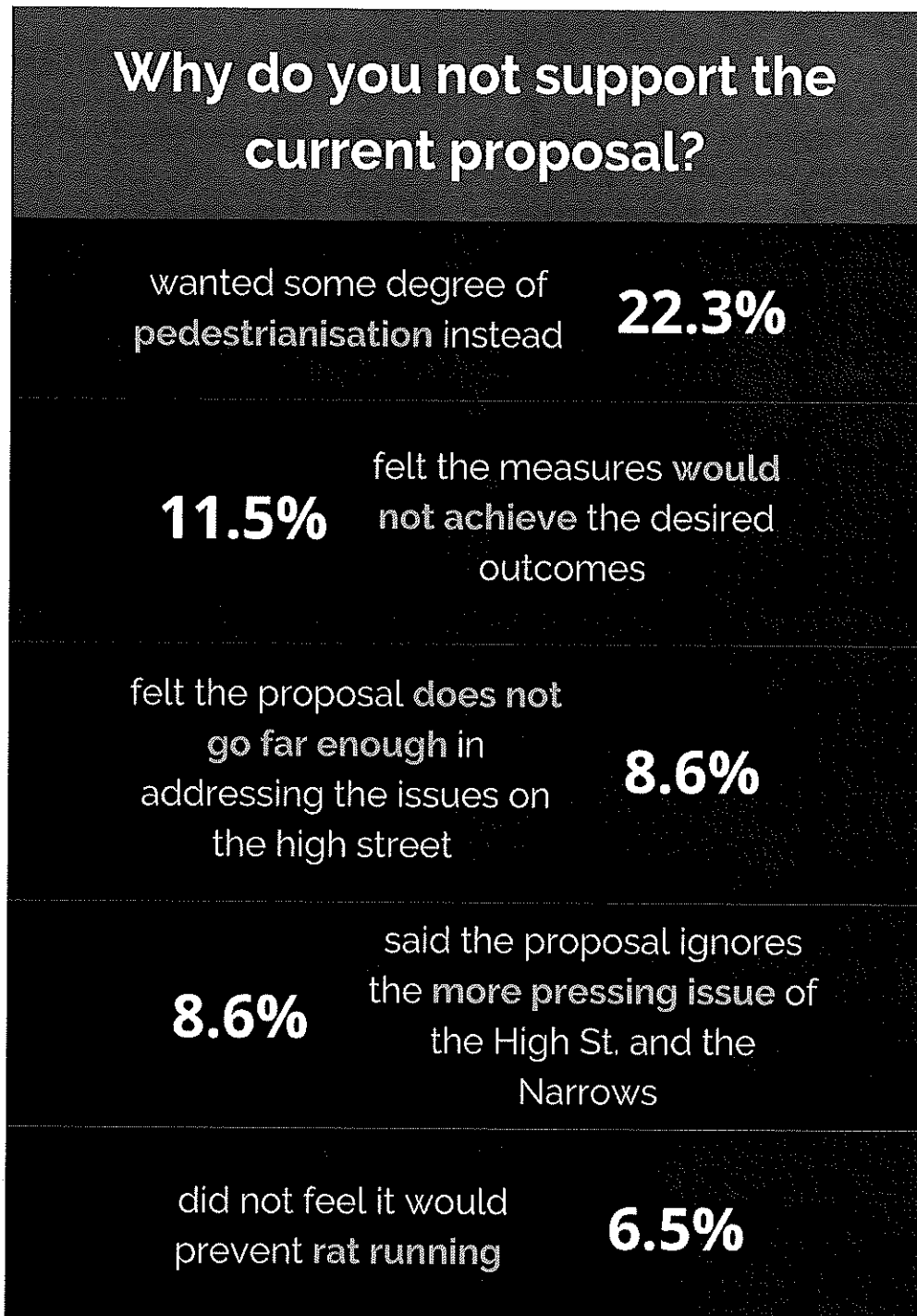


Figure 7: Most common responses to Question 5, 'If you agree traffic calming measures are needed, why do you not support the current proposal?'

3.2.6 Question 6: Do you agree with the proposed placement of the three narrowings?

Do you agree with the proposed placement of the three narrowings?

728 responses

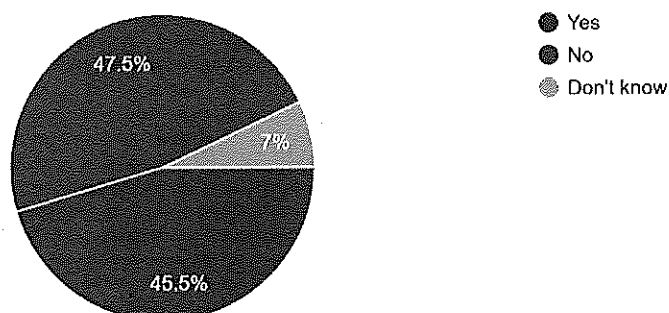


Figure 8: Responses to question 6, 'Do you agree with the proposed placement of the three narrowings?'

A total of 728 responses were received for this question. It is evident from the responses to question 7 that this question was phrased too ambiguously. Many people understood it to be asking whether they agreed with the measures in general. However, the question was in fact asking whether they agreed with the three proposed locations by the Seven Stars Hotel and at the two existing raised crossings.

3.2.7 Question 7: If you disagree with the placement of the measures, could you explain why?

A total of 313 responses were received for this question. As mentioned above, it became clear that a significant number of respondents had understood this question to be asking why they do not support the proposed measures. However, the question referred to where the measures were located rather than whether the measures should be placed at all. The comments therefore could be unreliable and are predominantly not to do with the specific locations. The main responses can be found in figure 9 below. *Please note that the percentages are of the people who responded to this specific question, not of all survey respondents.* Additional details can be found in Appendix C.

Of the 5 people who did express an opinion on the location, different suggestions were made: one person expressed a preference for design #1; one person suggested removing the middle location and placing it outside St Mary's Church; one person suggested not having the middle one; and one person wanted them moved to different locations where they would not cause the loss of any parking.



Figure 9: Most common responses to Question 7, 'If you disagree with the placement of the measures, could you explain why?'. Percentages are of the people who responded to this specific question, not of all survey respondents.

3.2.8 Question 8: If you have any other comments or suggestions regarding priorities or wider measures to address traffic, pedestrian safety and accessibility in town, then please share them below.

A total of 317 responses were received for this question.

These have been grouped into themes with the most common ones shown in figure 10. Please see Appendix C for further details.

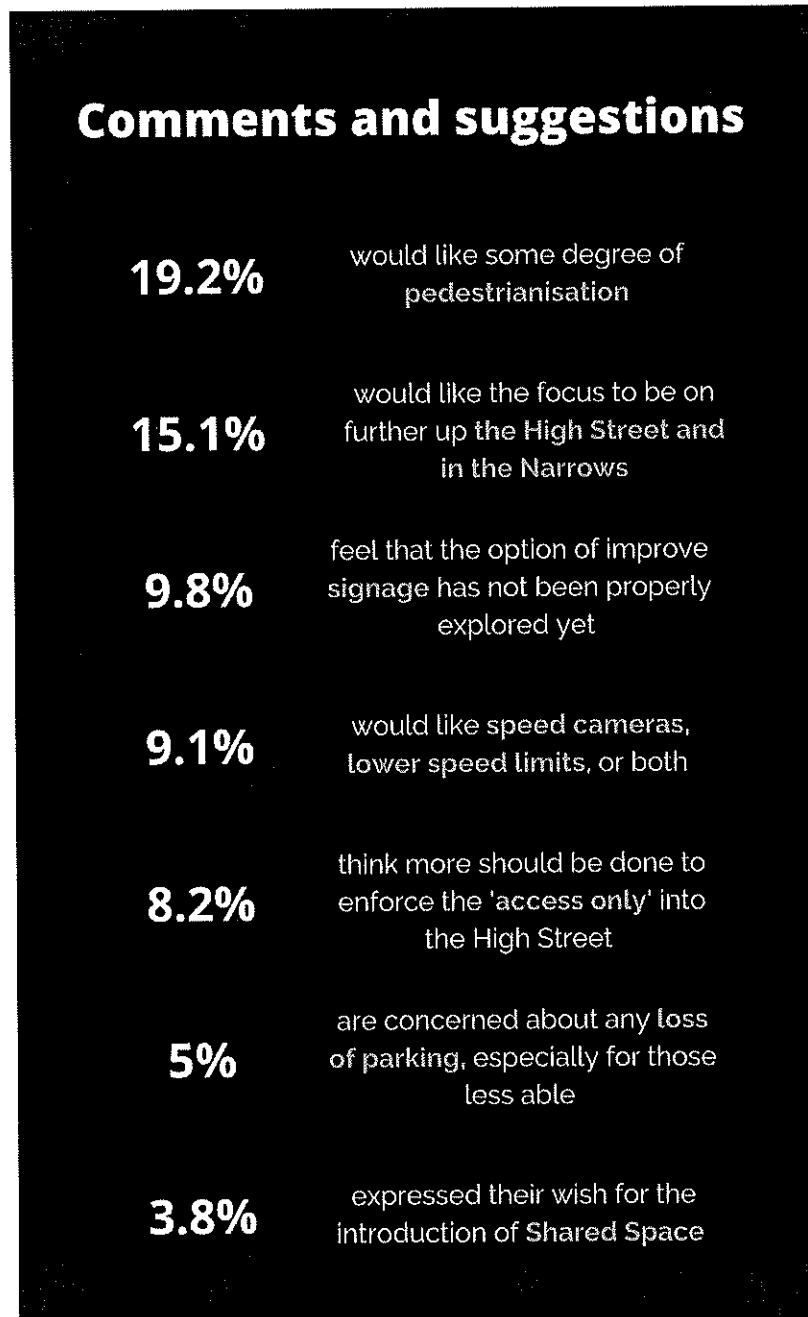


Figure 10: Most common responses to Question 8, any other comments or suggestions

3.3 Accessibility

A few key accessibility issues have been raised. The main points are outlined below:

- How will the proposed measures impact on accessibility? Two of the proposed measures are located at existing raised crossing points. Will this proposal retain crossing access for those less able, particularly wheelchair users and those with buggies? A number of respondents highlighted that there are already accessibility issues in the whole high street with few dropped kerbs and often narrow, sloped or uneven pavements.
- One respondent stated that ramps can be a real problem for people with certain neurological conditions due to the noise, vibration and judder when inside the vehicle. This would possibly be an issue for those using Bob the Bus and wider personal vehicles.
- Loss of parking was raised as posing issues to accessibility as less able-bodied people rely on vehicular access to the town. This is especially the case for those accessing the post office, pharmacy and bank, as well as further up where the road is very steep. The recent loss of the Budgens car park exacerbates this issue.

“As a local Taxi driver I'd also like to point out how important it is to keep fore street and the High street open for vehicular access. So visiting and resident disabled people can enjoy everything our wonderful town has to offer also.

The town is situated on a very steep hill and we are often called upon to take elderly and disabled from the bottom to the top.

“My health issues are spinal, therefore to shop whilst walking, the goods I can carry have to be light and manageable whilst using a walking stick. I may have to return to my car a few times to complete my shopping. Therefore I need to park close to where I am shopping.

My current car width including mirrors is 2034mm, not too far from the proposed 2200mm width restriction. It would be a problem for me to fold the car mirrors in to manoeuvre through the bollards, as climbing in/out of my car is very time consuming.

Disabled resident

3.4 Inclusive Totnes

The key points raised by Inclusive Totnes are outlined below. The full response can be found in Appendix D.

- Inclusive Totnes do not support the current proposal as they do not have any confidence that it will have any discernible impact on the serious pedestrian access and safety problems that Totnes has in the High Street and the Narrows.
 - They state that the dangerous combination of heavy traffic flow and lack of pavements in the town's main shopping areas presents particular dangers, barriers and disadvantage for people with disabilities (including sensory disabilities), older people and children, and that a much more comprehensive set of measures are needed.

- One reason that they do not support these measures is that they believe their focus is misplaced. The problems that Totnes has with pedestrian safety / access is not in Fore Street but higher up in the High Street and the Narrows.
 - Their own traffic surveys have shown that the majority of vehicles passing up through the High Street (over 75%) are not stopping or attempting to stop for any reason, but instead use it as a rat-run. They argue that these proposed narrowings and their placement will not help address this problem.

- They highlight that there is broad support for making the shared space that we already have in practice (particularly in the Narrows where there are sections with no pavements) into a safer shared space.
- They also suggest improving the signage coming into town from Bridgetown Hill and the Old Bridge to clearly direct traffic away from the High street and towards the main car parks (e.g. 'all routes'), changing the signage at the King William / entrance into the High Street, as the 'access only' sign is not recognised by drivers and is completely ignored by most
- They also suggest changing the arrangement of parking spaces in Fore Street to create a slalom between parked cars on either side (which has been confirmed by a local fireman as acceptable to the fire service, and would also not reduce the number of parking spaces but simply add a further deterrent to drivers approaching Fore Street)

3.5 Chamber of Commerce

The key points raised by the Chamber of Commerce (CoC) are outlined below. Their full response can be found in Appendix E.

The CoC conducted two surveys separately from the one run by Totnes Town Council. The first was with all businesses in Fore Street that would be directly impacted by the works and long-term loss of parking. The second survey was conducted to directly extrapolate evidence from business owners, as they felt the Totnes Town Council survey did not adequately distinguish between employees and owners. This second survey was circulated amongst all businesses in and around Fore Street and High Street. A total of 57 responses were received, out of approximately 225 total business along the entire high street.

Their report states the following:

- 85% of businesses did not think there are any issues with traffic where they trade. The 5% that did identify issues are based in the Narrows. The 10% that were undecided commented that if there were issues, they were higher up the street rather than in Fore Street.
- 87.5% of businesses stated that any works would impact their ability to trade in the short and medium term. 7.5% were not sure of the impact on trade – all these businesses are new to town. 5% of businesses did not think this would impact them at all – either because they are based much higher up the street or they service their customers remotely.
- 87.5% did not think the works would improve the pedestrian experience. 5% believed it would and 7.5% were unsure.
- 92.5% of businesses did not think the costs to the TTC would be worth the results. 5% thought it would be worth it – the rest undecided.
- 92.5% of businesses were extremely concerned about any loss of parking. 5% were not concerned as they service customers remotely and 2.5% were unsure.

The Chamber state that they will continue to object to these proposals based on the irreparable damage they feel it will do to businesses in the area. Their reasons for their objection are as follows:

- It disrupts access for Bob the Bus
- It reduces parking bays
- It creates access issues for Blue Badge holders and those with any access issues
- It will cause lengthy disruption during works
- It will cause numerous/ lengthy periods of road closures
- It will act as a barrier to access/ trade for customers/deliveries
- The measures are costly with negative impacts and with no justification (no data at all to support Fore Street unsafe)
- Impactful on Conservation area
- Prejudices business's ability to operate

3.6 Bob the Bus response

The key points raised by the community transport provider, Bob the Bus, are outlined below.

Awaiting.

4.0 Key themes

Fundamentally there is a division between those who feel that the high street as a whole needs traffic calming measures, and those who do not feel that there are any problems. This is evidenced by the almost 50/50 split between those who oppose the measures and those who support them (to some degree or another).

As evidenced in section 3.2.2, the business community is generally opposed to these measures. Residents are generally more in favour although the distribution here is not quite as clear as amongst businesses.

The key themes from the comments received are outlined in figure 11. Comments generally fell into one of the following themes:

- Statement of support for traffic calming measures
- Statement of opposition to traffic calming measures
- Comments highlighting current issues that have not been addressed
- Comments highlighting specific problems with the current proposal
- Comments suggesting alternative solutions

The most common responses in terms of number of mentions have also been tallied and added up. The five categories that received the highest number of comments can be seen in figure 12. More detail can be found in Appendix C.

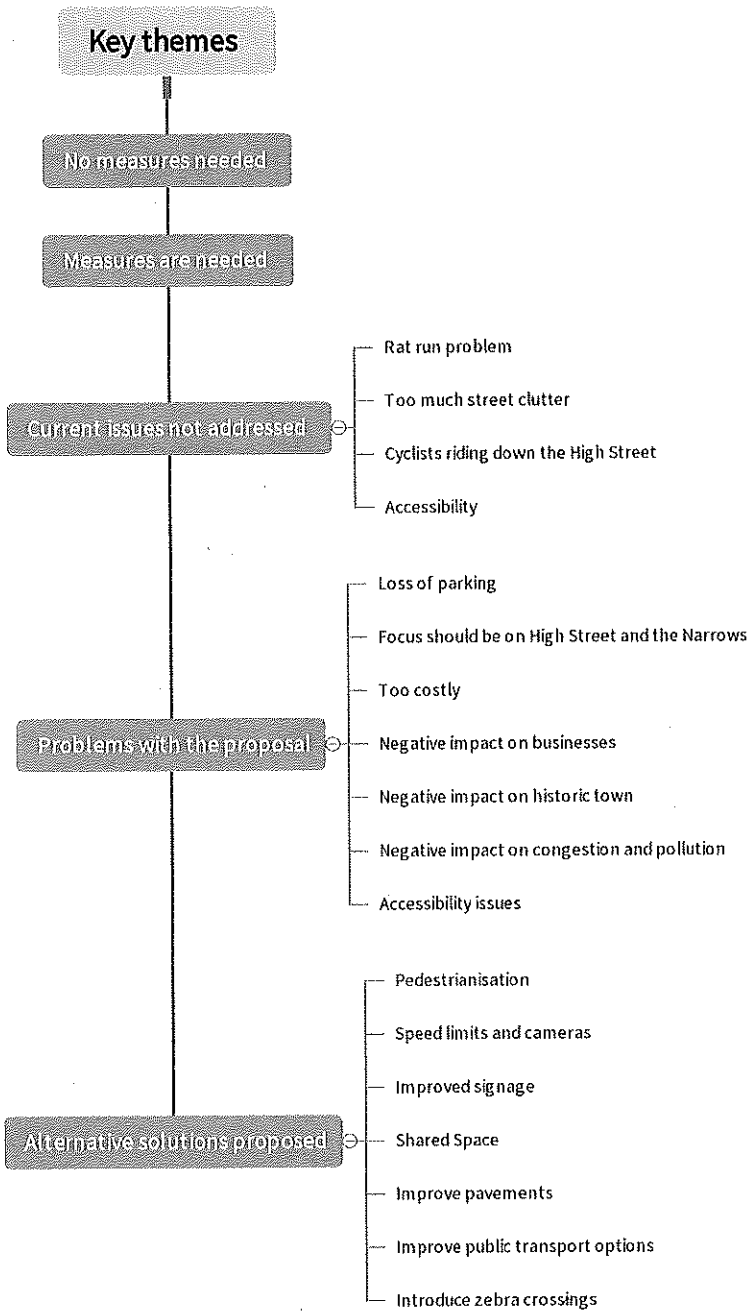


Figure 11: Key themes



Figure 12: The most common responses to the survey

5.0 Discussion and conclusions

The response results show an almost exactly 50/50 split between those in favour of the proposed measures and those against. 48.6% are against the measures, with 74.4% (41% of all respondents) stating that they do not experience the need for traffic calming on Fore Street at all. 49.2% support or support but with amendments. However, when you dig into these numbers it becomes clear that there is less support for the measures than it appears. Only 36.2% fully support the measures with no amendments. The 13% who answered "yes, but with amendments" were in the following question overwhelmingly asking for either completely different solutions or asking for the focus to be on the High Street and Narrows. It can therefore be said that there is no majority support for the proposed measures as they stand.

This is clearly an intensely complex issue which must be handled sensitively. Many people have very strong feelings about the high street and town traffic in general. There is a rich history of discussion and previous work carried out by different community groups. Some of this work has led to changes and some has not. It has also become clear, through conversations and through survey responses, that there is a strong feeling of frustration which appears to be felt by all parties. Those who are in favour of radical changes feel frustrated by the lack of action. Those who oppose changes to the high street feel frustrated that the subject is constantly revisited.

There is no single solution that will please everyone and no matter what decision is taken, some people will be dissatisfied.

6.0 Officer recommendations

Any changes to the high street should form part of a cohesive plan for the town. It is not entirely clear at this stage how the proposed measures would fit into such a plan. Given that there is not overwhelming support for the proposed measures, it is the officer's recommendation that:

- No action is taken until an independently facilitated stakeholder meeting has been held to create a prioritised list of options. This has been requested by DCC. This can feed into a more strategic and cohesive plan for the town that key stakeholders are on board with.
- That other more affordable and less drastic options are considered first. There are various options, such as improved signage, clearer road markings, better enforcement of 'access only', and improving active travel infrastructure. In addition, it seems to be generally accepted that the key problem areas are the High Street, particularly around the arch and the Narrows.
- The impacts on accessibility need to be fully considered before taking any action. The current proposal would appear to reduce accessibility by altering two existing raised crossing points. There are also concerns that reducing parking will reduce accessibility for less able-bodied people.

Kingsbridge Hill Area Residents' Association (KHARA)

SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

to

Totnes Town Council

TO CHANGE KINGSBRIDGE HILL TO **NO THROUGH ROAD** FROM MAUDLIN ROAD JUNCTION, WITH **NO ENTRY** SIGN INSTALLED ABOVE **WINDRUSH** AT TOP OF HILL

▪ Proposal

- For Totnes Town Council to support KHARA's request to Devon County Council and South Hams District Council that Kingsbridge Hill be made into a No Through Road by the inclusion of a No Entry sign southbound above 'Windrush' (the final dwelling at the top of the hill)
- Aim: To end the use of Leechwell Street (south of The Lamb) and Kingsbridge Hill as a dangerous 'rat-run' for Dartmouth/Kingsbridge-bound traffic leaving Totnes.

▪ Background

- For many years, an increasing amount of southbound 'through traffic' in Totnes has been directed via The Plains, St Katherine's Way, Heath Way, The Lamb and Cistern Street to reach the Western Bypass
- A significant proportion of this traffic uses the local residential lane of south Leechwell Street/Kingsbridge Hill as a short-cut/rat-run to reach the Bypass, rather than the fit-for-purpose Cistern Street junction moments away.

▪ Rationale for need for urgent change of road use

1. *Danger to pedestrians, cyclists and other non-vehicle road users on this rat-run route*
2. *Danger to children and the elderly*
3. *Additional danger to those with disabilities*
4. *Risk of head-on collisions with pedestrians, cyclists and car-users travelling downhill*
5. *Aggressive behaviour*
6. *Health, wellbeing, quality of life and environmental impact*
7. *Legitimate 'through traffic' route available nearby*
8. *Detriment to history and heritage of Totnes / amenity for locals / tourism*
9. *Loss of potential for extended amenities*

▪ Rationale for proposed road use change to No Through Road/No Entry

1. *Rat-runners represent 51.4% of all vehicles / 72.9% of vehicles travelling up the hill*
2. *Cost & other considerations*
3. *Solution: No Entry sign southbound at top of Kingsbridge Hill, above 'Windrush'*

▪ **Community support for change**

KHARA Residents' Survey (Appendix 1)

- 86.7% response rate from all properties
- 96.2% confirmed traffic affects their lives
- 96.2% would like measures to improve situation

South Leechwell Street/Kingsbridge Hill Traffic Survey (Appendix 2)

Survey shows the following reduction in traffic would occur if KHARA's 'No Entry southbound from Windrush' proposal were accepted:

- 35.5 fewer vehicles/hour rat-running up hill (51.4% of all vehicles on road / 72.9% of vehicles travelling up hill)
- 3 more vehicles/hour turning from Maudlin Road into south Leechwell Street (as Kingsbridge Hill now a No Through Road)
- significant reduction in speed/acceleration/aggression of driving styles currently experienced by other users of the road, as traffic would be local

KHARA vote for change to 'No Entry' at top of Kingsbridge Hill (see KHARA South Leechwell Street/Kingsbridge Hill Traffic Proposal Map - Appendix 3)

100% support of members for proposed 'No Entry southbound from Windrush' solution for Kingsbridge Hill, together with:

- No Through Road and 'change of road layout' signage at junction of Maudlin Road and Kingsbridge Hill
- 'change of road layout' signage at junction of The Lamb and south Leechwell Street
- urgent updates requested to Google Maps/other Satnav services in order to swiftly eliminate journey errors, gridlock due to paused cars, etc.

▪ **Legal obligations**

- *The Highway Code*, as amended 29th January 2022, requires all road users to give priority to the more vulnerable according to a new 'hierarchy of road users'; to be "considerate"; and to take "responsibility ... to reduce the danger they pose to others"
- *Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty*: local authorities have a duty to promote and include disability equality in their work, and to have "due regard" to equality outcomes at all time, particularly in respect of those with protected characteristics. The current situation causes disproportionate danger to vulnerable people, disadvantage, and a barrier to equality of opportunity for these groups.

Kingsbridge Hill Area Residents' Association (KHARA)

PROPOSAL

to

Totnes Town Council

TO CHANGE KINGSBRIDGE HILL TO **NO THROUGH ROAD** FROM MAUDLIN ROAD JUNCTION, WITH **NO ENTRY** SIGN INSTALLED ABOVE **WINDRUSH** AT TOP OF HILL

- **Proposal**

For Totnes Town Council to endorse and support a request from KHARA to Devon County Council and South Hams District Council that Kingsbridge Hill be made into a No Through Road by the inclusion of a No Entry sign southbound above 'Windrush' (the final dwelling at the top of the hill). This would bring to an end the use of Leechwell Street (south of The Lamb) and Kingsbridge Hill as a dangerous 'rat-run' for Dartmouth/Kingsbridge-bound traffic leaving Totnes.

- **Background**

For many years, as has been well documented, there has been an increasing amount of southbound through traffic in Totnes – ie. vehicles seeking to travel from the Torbay area east of the town towards Dartmouth, Kingsbridge and other areas to the south – that has been directed through the town via The Plains, St Katherine's Way, Heath Way, The Lamb and Cistern Street in order to reach the Western Bypass.

A significant proportion of this through traffic makes use of the local residential lane of Leechwell Street (south of The Lamb) and Kingsbridge Hill as a short-cut/rat-run to reach the Bypass, rather than the fit-for-purpose Cistern Street junction moments away.

The volume of traffic using the lane has recently further increased due to 1) the greater number of delivery vehicles now on the roads post-Covid, whose Satnav systems/Google Maps/etc direct them to use the lane rather than the official Cistern Street route; and 2) the diversion of vehicles onto the lane during the Bypass roadworks of Summer 2022, which publicised the route as a convenient shortcut to all travelling in either direction.

The overuse by through traffic of this route detrimentally affects the residents of the area as well as legitimate road users, in ways outlined below. Such is the impact that the residents of south Leechwell Street and Kingsbridge Hill have formed the Kingsbridge Hill Area Residents' Association (KHARA) and undertaken research on all residents' views, together with a series of surveys of traffic use of the hill.

KHARA now presents this proposal for change based on our findings and with the unanimous support of our members.

▪ **Rationale for need for urgent change of road use**

1. *Danger to pedestrians, cyclists and other non-vehicle road users*

The quantity and type of traffic is inappropriate for a narrow residential lane with high walls, poor visibility, several bends – including a blind bend – in the road, and no pavements. There have been cases of pedestrians and cyclists being struck by cars as they pass, and significantly more near-misses where legitimate non-vehicle users such as this have needed to quickly pull into the bushes/brambles or against a wall to avoid being hit. It is only a matter of time before serious harm comes to a walker or cyclist on this route.

The difficulty and danger for pedestrians, cyclists and other non-vehicle users is made worse by confusing acoustics on Kingsbridge Hill, caused by the reverberation of heavy traffic noise coming from the Western Bypass overhead. This can cause pedestrians and cyclists using the hill to mistake a vehicle approaching them – often at speed – up the hill from behind, or towards them as they descend, as simply a car or van passing above them on the Bypass. As a result, there are frequent examples of walkers and cyclists being surprised and frightened by the sudden appearance of a vehicle rounding a bend in the middle of the road that they had not anticipated. While this acoustic effect cannot be eliminated, the excess rat-run traffic on Kingsbridge Hill increases the risk of a major incident, and potentially of a fatality, occurring on the road as a result of its juxtaposition with the Bypass.

2. *Danger to children and the elderly*

We are fortunate to have residents in south Leechwell Street and Kingsbridge Hill who span all ages. In walking up or down the road to/from their homes to town, or up the hill out of town for exercise and enjoyment, they are forced to walk along a road made dangerous by its over-use, and often by vehicles that are not being driven with due care and attention, and at speed. With walking and cycling being universally encouraged for physical and mental health, and general wellbeing – and particularly for those of the younger, and older, generations who might otherwise be more sedentary – the excess rat-run traffic on the lane, combined with the acoustic effects from the Bypass, and the inability of some users to move quickly out of harm's way, poses significant additional risks and dangers, and discourages people who would greatly benefit from being active from getting out in the fresh air.

3. *Additional danger to those with disabilities*

People with disabilities (for example, those who are hearing or visually impaired, have cognitive difficulties, limited mobility, or use a wheelchair) are at particular risk in using the road as pedestrians due to the dangerous traffic, poor visibility due to several bends – including a blind bend – in the road, lack of pavements and disorientating acoustics. As one example, a profoundly deaf resident is unable to walk up and down the road on his own due to the challenging physical layout of the road, offering no pavement shelter, and the confusing acoustics. Reducing the over-use of the road by rat-run traffic is the only way to improve accessibility for disabled pedestrians.

4. *Risk of head-on collisions poses additional danger to pedestrians, cyclists and local car-users travelling down the hill*

Drivers travelling southwards up Kingsbridge Hill typically accelerate hard up the hill and around the bends – including a blind bend – as though it were a one-way street, the assumption appearing to be that this single-track road is a legitimate shortcut to the Bypass, serving southbound traffic only. As part of this, these drivers show little or no consideration for other cars, or cyclists, travelling down the hill in the opposite direction, nor for pedestrians.

With no statutory passing places for cars or cyclists at any point on this narrow road, there is therefore a serious risk of a head-on collision between two cars, and/or a car and a cyclist, which could prove fatal.

Equally, with few safe places for pedestrians to shelter in the face of oncoming traffic – and none where the lane is at its narrowest, between high stone walls, and most dangerous, due to the bends (including a blind bend) – walkers are at additional risk from these drivers, who appear to assume they are the sole users of this road.

5. *Aggressive behaviour*

Due to the negative impact of the rat-run traffic on walkers and cyclists on the hill, some residents and others will attempt to ask drivers to slow down, be mindful of the narrowness of the road, and consider the risk to other road users of vehicles travelling up the hill at speed. Unfortunately, this has led to a number of aggressive responses, such as shouting and verbal abuse (including to a mother, in front of her young children), and in one case the threatening of a resident with a knife.

Not only is this behaviour unpleasant and unacceptable, there is concern amongst residents that if this situation is not swiftly addressed a serious incident could ensue, potentially involving physical harm and/or permanent injury to a pedestrian, cyclist or other local non-car user of the road who is simply requesting asking a through traffic driver to use the road safely.

6. *Health, wellbeing, quality of life and environmental impact*

The over-use of the road as a rat-run/shortcut increases the amount of noise and air pollution in south Leechwell Street and Kingsbridge Hill, and the surrounding area, and in so doing detrimentally impacts the quality of life, health and wellbeing of residents living in the road, and all non-vehicle users such as walkers and cyclists.

The levels of noise and air pollution are particularly acute in this location due to the high percentage of rat-running vehicles using this road*. These vehicles typically either:

- 1) turn the corner from The Lamb at speed, before accelerating past the Kingsbridge Inn and on up the hill, thus generating significant excess noise and emissions; or
- 2) if they meet pedestrians, cyclists and other vehicles coming in the opposite direction at any point on this narrow, single lane road, 'stop-start' – sometimes several times – before then revving their engines from a standing start to continue their progress up the steep incline of the hill.

Both of these alternatives result in increased emissions compared to the more constant journey speed offered via the Western Bypass route.

* KHARA's traffic surveys show that 72.9% of vehicles (213 of 292) turning into Leechwell Street from The Lamb went on to exit onto the Bypass at the top of the hill within two minutes or less (rather than ending their journey locally before that point in Leechwell Street, Maudlin Road or Kingsbridge Hill) – these were therefore assumed to be rat-runners. Eliminating this excess, high-emission traffic from the hill and diverting it appropriately back onto the Bypass would therefore significantly 1) improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life of the residents and other local users of the road, and 2) reduce the negative environmental impact overall of through traffic in this area, in support of Totnes's Green agenda.

7. *Legitimate traffic route available*

The use of this minor, residential road as a shortcut/rat run has no justification, as there is a legitimate, designated route to access the Western Bypass within yards of the entrance to south Leechwell Street, via Cistern Street. The drivers who use this shortcut do so at any time of day or night, when there is no queue/roadworks/other obstruction of any kind on Cistern Street or The Lamb, so its use has no validity.

8. *Detriment to history and heritage of Totnes / amenity for locals / tourism*

Leechwell Street is home to the ancient Leech Wells, the Kingsbridge Inn and Steps Cottage – three of the town's most important and valued heritage sites/assets. It is itself (together with Kingsbridge Hill) a historic road, forming part of the old coaching route through Totnes from London/Exeter to Dartmouth/Kingsbridge.

As current custodians of Totnes, this unique history and heritage must be preserved, out of respect for the past and consideration for the enjoyment and education of current and future generations. Tourists, local and international, frequently walk here to explore and enjoy the history – but then find themselves having to hurriedly step aside to avoid being hit by cars; while local hosts and tour group leaders have to raise their voices to be heard above the traffic. This impacts the appeal of Totnes, and the additional income to the town that could be generated from otherwise returning visitors – and suggests that, despite its billing, Totnes is not after all the "caring town" and green/eco-hub that it professes to be.

9. *Loss of potential for extended amenities*

Totnes has long supported various creative and far-sighted initiatives that have offered significant wellbeing, health and cultural benefits to residents and visitors to the town, such as the Franklin Totnes Trail Walk, and the Totnes Garden Trail.

Were south Leechwell Street/Kingsbridge Hill to be restored to a peaceable and safe residential road, there lies the potential for:

- the Franklin Walk to divert walkers down this historic and attractive lane as they return to the town, rather than needing to direct them, as currently, alongside the high traffic Western Bypass, with its secure pavements

- extend the Garden Trail to include the grassy, tree-filled area at the top of the hill, which offers unique views over Totnes, and now restored bench seating (and in so doing, return the current unofficial car park area to the 'Viewing Area only' short-term car stop that it used to be).

▪ **Rationale for proposed road use change to 'No Through Road'/'No Entry'**

1. *Rat-runners represent 51.4% of all vehicles / 72.9% of vehicles travelling up the hill*

- According to our traffic surveys, a consistent 51.4% of all vehicles (213 of 414) using the road (up or down) are through traffic en route to the Western Bypass access point at the top of the hill, ie. rat-runners
- Of all vehicles travelling up the hill, 72.9% (213 of 292) are rat-runners
- Many of these drivers do not drive in a way that is appropriate for the nature of the road as a narrow residential lane with no pavements and poor visibility, frequently leading to dangerous interactions with pedestrians and other vulnerable road users
- Voluntary measures to request drivers to drive slowly – such as 'Access only' or equivalent – will not succeed, as a change of use of this kind will be ignored by such drivers due to the perceived value of the rat-run/shortcut (as is proven by the behaviour of non-local/through traffic drivers in the High Street and The Narrows).
- We therefore need to bring the use of this road by this excess rat-run traffic to an end, through the deployment of a legally enforceable (and at the same time, easily and cheaply implementable) change to the road layout.

2. *Cost & other considerations*

In considering the options, we concluded that the installation of bollards at the top of the hill, in order to close off the road to traffic in both directions, would likely 1) necessitate significant expense for Devon County Council/South Hams Council, in terms of installation, maintenance, etc; and 2) potentially raise their legitimate concerns in respect of ease of access to the road for emergency vehicles, refuse lorries, etc.

We therefore sought an alternative solution that would achieve the residents' aims for safety, amenity, equality of access, health, environment, etc – with minimal cost and practical impact for the Council bodies.

3. *Solution: No Entry sign southbound at top of Kingsbridge Hill, above 'Windrush'*

A No Entry sign to southbound traffic, placed just above 'Windrush' (the final dwelling at the top of the hill) would bring to an end the use of south Leechwell Street and Kingsbridge Hill as a dangerous 'rat-run' for Dartmouth/Kingsbridge-bound traffic leaving Totnes.

To ensure that the new No Entry sign installed above 'Windrush' was supported appropriately, we presume that the following additional changes (or similar) would be needed:

- No Through Road/'Access only' sign installed at the bottom of Kingsbridge Hill, at its junction with Maudlin Road

- 'Change of road layout'/'Left turn - Access only' signs installed on Maudlin Road, prior to its junction with Kingsbridge Hill
- 'Change of road layout'/'Access only' signs installed at each corner of south Leechwell Street, at its junction with The Lamb (thus also providing protections for Maudlin Road)
- urgent updates requested to Google Maps/other Satnav services to ensure that virtual/satellite/GPS-based traffic/travel guidance was swiftly amended to eliminate journey errors, gridlock due to paused cars, etc.

Importantly, by placing the No Entry sign at the *precise location of "just above 'Windrush' "*:

3.1 Southbound drivers reaching this point would be unable to see over the final brow of the hill and round the bend in the road to its junction with the Bypass a couple of hundred yards away, thus preventing:

- those drivers unfamiliar with the road from being aware that any access to the Bypass was otherwise close by (unless via their Satnav system)
- all previous rat-run drivers from being able to see whether a vehicle was on the point of turning down the road from the Bypass, in their direction.

In either case, any driver – if tempted to pass through the No Entry sign due to the known proximity of the junction – would be fully aware that in doing so they would now be breaking the law.

3.2 All residents of Kingsbridge Hill would still be able to access their homes from the bottom of the hill, and from the top of the hill, as they do now – the only change being that they would no longer be able to leave their homes in the direction of Dartmouth/Kingsbridge by turning up the hill towards the Bypass, but would instead need to drive down the hill and use the official Cistern Street junction to access the Bypass. The residents are happy with this compromise, in order to gain the benefit of the safety of their road.

3.3 Users of the Allotments and/or Viewing Area would be able to access these locations by taking a right turn, travelling southbound, from the Bypass, and on their departure exit onto the Bypass in either direction via that same junction, or otherwise drive down Kingsbridge Hill, as they do now. The one concession would be that they could no longer access this area from Kingsbridge Hill, travelling south.

▪ **Community support for change**

In February 2022, residents of south Leechwell Street and Kingsbridge Hill came together to seek change. During March and April, all residents of the 30 properties in the combined area were canvassed for their views on the current traffic issue, and their opinions sought on possible solutions. In the first half of May, resident volunteers undertook regular surveys of the traffic usage on the road at different times of day.

Inspired by the interest and support of the vast majority of those living on the road (86.7%), the Kingsbridge Hill Area Residents' Association (KHARA) was formed and its Inaugural AGM held on 11th May 2022. On the basis of all information gathered, and

views expressed, the proposed solution of a No Entry change to Kingsbridge Hill, southbound from just above 'Windrush', was unanimously endorsed by all members.

A summary of the results of the residents' survey and traffic usage surveys are attached. Key points from these are as follows:

KHARA Residents' Survey (Appendix 1)

- 86.7% response rate from all properties
- 96.2% confirmed traffic affects their lives
- 96.2% would like measures to improve situation

South Leechwell Street/Kingsbridge Hill Traffic Survey (Appendix 2)

Based on the survey results (please see attached for full details), the following reduction in traffic would occur if KHARA's 'No Entry southbound from Windrush' proposal were to be accepted:

- 213/72.9% fewer vehicles per 6 hours would travel up south Leechwell Street/ Kingsbridge Hill ~ ie. 35.5 fewer vehicles/hour @ 7am-6pm Mon-Fri (51.4% of all vehicles on road)
- 18 more vehicles per 6 hours would turn from Maudlin Road into south Leechwell Street ~ ie. 3 more vehicles/hour @ 7am-6pm Mon-Fri (as Kingsbridge Hill now a No Through Road)
- there would be a significant reduction in speed/acceleration/aggression of driving styles experienced by other, local users of the road (as noted by volunteers)

KHARA vote for change to 'No Entry' at top of Kingsbridge Hill (see KHARA South Leechwell Street/Kingsbridge Hill Traffic Proposal Map - Appendix 3)

- 100% support of members for proposed 'No Entry southbound from Windrush' solution for Kingsbridge Hill.

▪ **Legal obligations**

The Highway Code – amended 29th January 2022

The recent amendments to The Highway Code include a new section on the 'hierarchy of road users'. This amendment was based on the premise that *"The road users most likely to be injured in the event of a collision are pedestrians, cyclists, horse riders and motorcyclists, with children, older adults and disabled people being more at risk."*

As part of the amendments, the new Code added several new rules:

- *"a new rule H1 about the importance of knowing The Highway Code, being considerate to other road users, and the responsibility of road users to reduce the danger they pose to others"*
- *"a new rule H2 about giving way to pedestrians"*
- *"a new rule H3 about not cutting across cyclists, and not turning at a junction if to do so would cause a cyclist going straight ahead to stop or swerve."*

These rules have been introduced in order to 1) highlight the vulnerability of certain types of road users to injury or more serious harm from drivers of vehicles, and 2) to better secure their safety.

The behaviour of the majority of drivers on south Leechwell Street and Kingsbridge Hill clearly violates these rules.

As “road users most likely to be injured in the event of a collision” (see above) the KHARA residents are appealing for the support of their local authority representatives to uphold the law on our behalf.

Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty

Local authorities have a duty to promote and include disability equality in their work. The Equality Act 2010 states that it is unlawful for a public authority to discriminate in the exercise of its “public functions” – which include highways functions.

Section 20 (4) requires that where a “physical feature”, such as an increase in traffic, puts a disabled person at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to a person who is not disabled, an authority is required to take such steps as is reasonable to have to take to avoid disadvantage.

The manyfold increase in rat-run traffic using south Leechwell Street/Kingsbridge Hill, combined with the narrow, twisting nature of this single track road – together with no pavements available for use by pedestrians from the Kingsbridge Inn, and only high walls offering no shelter, plus the confusing traffic noise from the Western Bypass – makes this route “unreasonable for use” by pedestrians or cyclists with a disability, such as a hearing or sight impediment, or the need for a walking stick or wheelchair.

As public bodies, all local authorities are also subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act, and as such are required to have “due regard” to equality outcomes in everything they do. In particular, and in respect of people with protected characteristics including children, the elderly and those with disabilities, local authorities are required to ensure that they:

- eliminate discrimination
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between, amongst, others, disabled and non-disabled people.

The current hazards posed by rat-run traffic using south Leechwell Street/Kingsbridge Hill prevents its safe and legitimate use of by all walkers and cyclists, and in particular by children, those with disabilities and the elderly due to the additional dangers they face in using the road. This causes disproportionate danger, disadvantage and represents a barrier to equality of opportunity for these groups.

Appendix 1: KHARA Residents' Survey (Summary) – March/April 2022

Summary of KHARA Traffic Questionnaire

How many households/properties located on the road responded to the questionnaire?

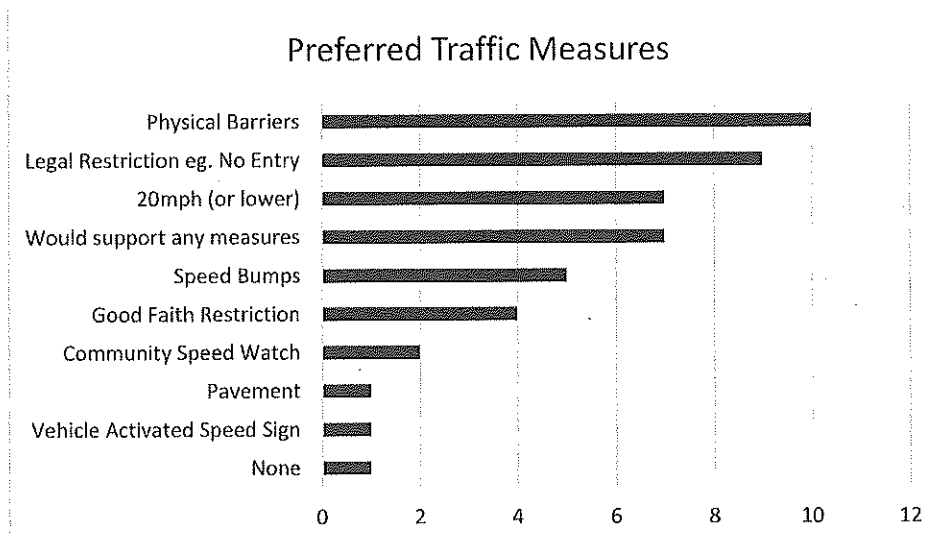
26 of 30 households 86.7%

Of those who responded how many said they were affected by traffic?

25 of 26 households 96.2%

Of those who responded how many said they would support traffic control measures?

25 of 26 households 96.2%



All properties on Kingsbridge Hill and upper Leechwell Street were invited to respond to our questionnaire. The response rate was very high. There is near-complete consensus among responding households regarding the negative impact of traffic on the lives of residents and about the need for traffic control measures. Encouragingly, most households are keen to take part in action to bring about change.

Data gathered March-April 2022

How many premises located on the road responded to the questionnaire?*

	Number of responses received	Percentage response rate
Kingsbridge Hill above Maudlin Road Junction	14 of 15	93%
Upper Leechwell Street/Lower KH (Lamb-Maudlin Road)	12 of 15	80.0%
Overall	26 of 30	86.7%

*includes Coromandel, as a residence (unoccupied)

*includes REconomy, as a business

Of those who responded how many said they were affected by traffic?

Kingsbridge Hill above Maudlin Road Junction	13 of 14	92.9%
Upper Leechwell Street/Lower KH (Lamb-Maudlin Road)	12 of 12	100.0%
Overall	25 of 26	96.2%

Of those who responded how many said they would support traffic control measures?

Kingsbridge Hill above Maudlin Road Junction	13 of 14	92.9%
Upper Leechwell Street/Lower KH (Lamb-Maudlin Road)	12 of 12	100.0%
Overall	25 of 26	96.2%

Appendix 2 – KHARA South Leechwell Street/Kingsbridge Hill Traffic Survey

Method:

For one hour at a time, two volunteers sat outside the Kingsbridge Inn, and two additional volunteers by the allotments. They all separately recorded the last three letters of each passing vehicle's number plate, the time the vehicle passed them to the minute and its direction of travel on the Hill. Volunteers at the allotment site also noted when vehicles stopped at – or left from – the car park or allotments. If time allowed, other features were noted, such as the colour or type of vehicle, to help with identification. The completed survey data were typed into a spreadsheet, allowing the results to be compared, and vehicles to be identified travelling between the two survey sites.

Assumptions:

Two main assumptions were made.

First, that vehicles turning onto the Hill from the Lamb or bypass and exiting again at the other end in **two minutes or less** did not have reason to travel on the hill specifically and are 'rat runners'.

Second, that vehicles recorded turning onto the Hill, but not exiting again (or the reverse) are residents or other needful users, ending (or starting) their journeys on Leechwell Street, Kingsbridge Hill or Maudlin Road.

Observations:

During the six hours that were observed, a **total of 414 vehicle journeys** were recorded. Four main types of journey were noted, together accounting for 378/414 or **91.3%** of recorded journeys:

1. Vehicle turns onto Leechwell Street from the Lamb, then exits onto the bypass in two minutes or less. This type is assumed to be 'rat runners'.
2. Vehicle turns onto Leechwell Street from the Lamb and ends its journey locally.
3. Vehicle begins its journey locally and exits onto the Lamb.
4. Vehicle begins its journey locally and exits onto the bypass.
The last three types are assumed to be **residents** and other needful users.

The first main type of journey – ‘rat runners’ – accounted for 213/414 journeys, or **51.4%**. Of these, *only one* vehicle was timed completing its journey in over two minutes, taking *three* minutes. There was a relatively high volume of traffic on the Hill at that time (including oncoming traffic), so this journey is being included with the others.

→ This shows us that **more than half of all vehicles on the Hill are ‘rat running’**.

The second type of journey – turning from the Lamb, ending locally – accounted for 79/414 journeys, or **19.1%**.

→ This shows us that of all **vehicles that turn onto the Hill from the Lamb**, 213/292, or **72.9% are ‘rat runners’**.

The third type of journey – starting locally, turning onto the Lamb – accounted for 68/414 journeys, or **16.4%**.

The fourth type – starting locally, turning onto the bypass – accounted for 18/414 journeys, or **4.3%**.

→ This shows us that residents and other **local users generally leave the Hill by turning down to the Lamb** in 68/86, or **79.1%** of these journeys.

Other types of journey were noted, including but not limited to:

- vehicle turns onto KH from the bypass and ends its journey locally
- vehicle leaves the allotments and exits onto the bypass.

Additionally, no conclusions can be drawn about the journeys of some vehicles recorded in the opening and closing minutes of surveys due to incomplete data.

These various types combined account for 36/414 or **8.7%** of all recorded journeys.

Survey Data Table:

	Type 1 Journeys	Type 2 Journeys	Type 3 Journeys	Type 4 Journeys	Other Journeys	Incomplete Data	Total Journeys
Friday 4-5pm	56	16	9	3	2	1	87
Monday 8-9am	22	12	15	9	2	2	62
Tuesday 3-4pm	29	10	12	1	5	3	60
Thursday 7-8am	13	1	14	1	4	1	34
Thursday 4-5pm	52	16	8	4	7	6	93
Friday 5-6pm	41	24	10	0	3	0	78
Total	213	79	68	18	23	13	414

Additional Comments:

Volunteers made the following comments:

- some drivers drove too fast for the nature of the road – all of these were going uphill
- others accelerated aggressively, which they felt posed a danger to other road users – again, all were driving uphill
- some volunteers reported seeing illegal right-turns from the bypass onto Kingsbridge Hill

Impact of Proposal:

Taking these six observed hours as a model, some predictions can be made about the impact of the Proposal. *This assumes perfect compliance with the new road layout – no more Lamb-to-bypass rat runners, and all local traffic turns down the hill to exit onto the Lamb.*

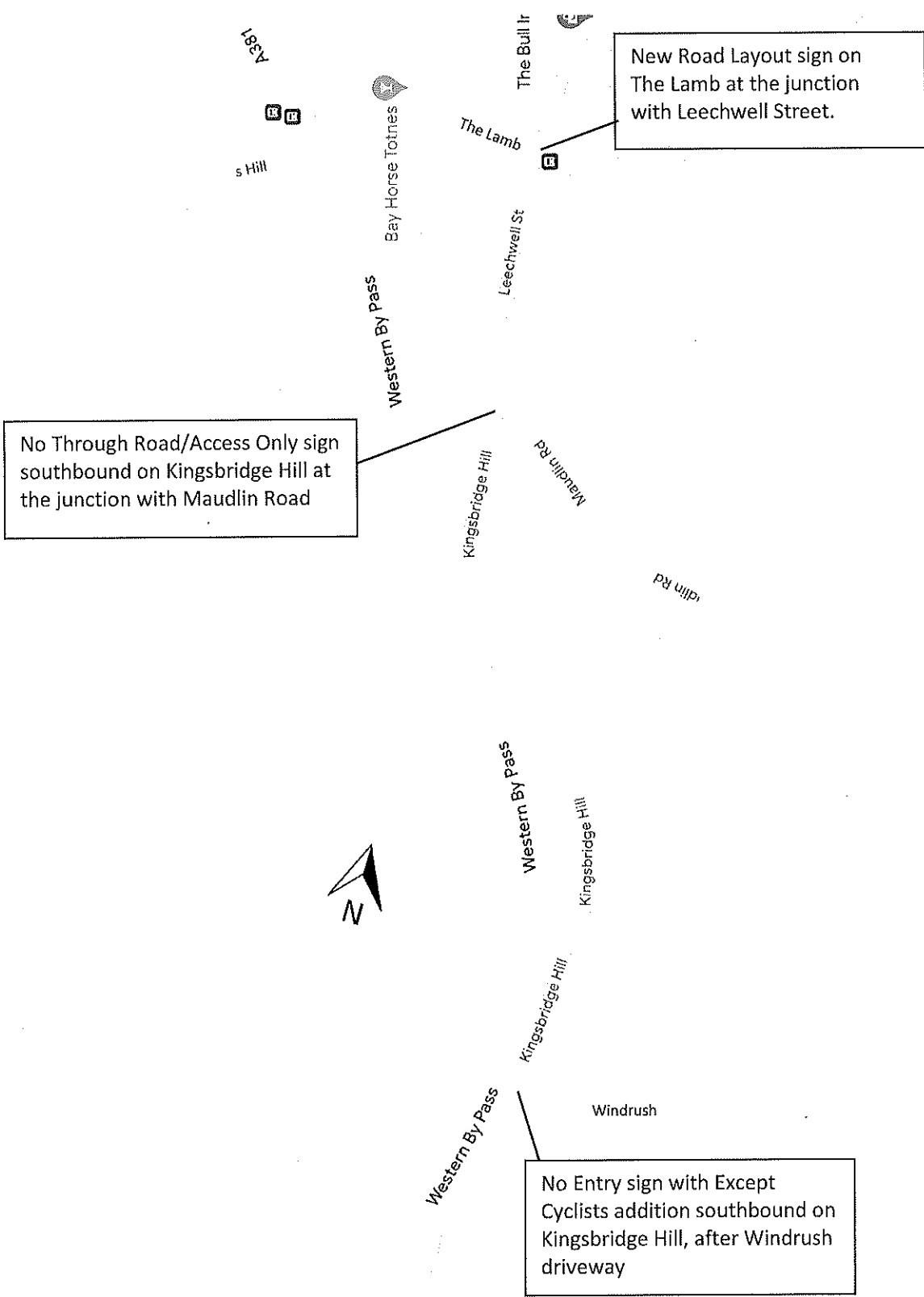
Over the six observed hours, there would have been:

- 213 fewer vehicles on the whole of the Hill – a reduction of more than half
- an increase of 18 vehicles driving down Leechwell Street and turning onto the Lamb, still working out as a significant overall reduction in vehicle numbers
- a reduction in the speed and dangerous acceleration of vehicles, due to the reduction in uphill traffic (from the unmeasured observations of volunteers)

As most local users already turn downhill and exit onto the Lamb, the need to change our driving behaviour should not be too inconvenient.

As 'rat running' vehicles exclusively travel from the Lamb to the bypass there is no reason to expect that enacting this Proposal would lead to additional traffic turning onto Maudlin Road.

Appendix 3: KHARA South Leechwell Street/Kingsbridge Hill Traffic Proposal Map



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Totnes and District Traffic & Transport Forum

27 April 2022

18:30 - 20:00

Present:

Cllr Jacqi Hodgson - Acting chair
Sarah Collinson - Inclusive Totnes
G [REDACTED] B [REDACTED] - Totnes Ramblers
Cllr Jo Sweett - and Vice Chair of Chamber
of Commerce
Cllr John Cummings
S [REDACTED] G [REDACTED] - Chair of Trustees, Bob the
Bus

L [REDACTED] P [REDACTED] - Bob the Bus coordinator
V [REDACTED] C [REDACTED] - Kingsbridge Hill campaign
M [REDACTED] C [REDACTED] - Chamber of Commerce
N [REDACTED] B [REDACTED] - Kingsbridge Hill campaign
P [REDACTED] - Heritage champion
Maiken Hutchings - Green Travel
Coordinator (notes)

Overview of recommendations and actions at end of document.

Notes

1. Welcome & Who is here

- Meeting started late (18:40) as Jacqi was struggling to log in
- Sarah Collinson kindly stepped in to start the meeting
- Jacqi joined a few minutes later

2. Fore St traffic calming proposal update

Update (MH)

- TTC ran a public consultation on behalf of Devon County Council. The suggested traffic calming measures for Fore Street were designed by DCC in response to calls to make the road safer and to reduce the amount of traffic using the road.
- The public consultation ran from 18 January until 31 March, having been extended on the recommendation of the Steering Group to ensure a better response rate.
- The consultation consisted of an online and hard-copy survey, as well as an in-person drop-in event in February.
- Results are currently being analysed and put together in a report.
- A total of 767 responses were given to the online/hard copy survey – approximate 40 people attended the in-person event.
- 50/50 in terms of people supporting or not supporting. Clearly a complex issue.
- Timings:

- a. Preliminary report to Planning Committee 23 May 2022
- b. Steering Group 25 May 2022
- c. Full Council 6 June 2022

Other comments

1. Proposal not designed in collaboration with TTC
2. Need for a proper strategy for the town
3. A stakeholder meeting will be scheduled to have a conversation and figure out priorities
 - o Need to ensure there are DCC officers present as otherwise we will just keep going round and round in circles
4. **ACTION** - suggestion made to get DCC to tell us some dates that their officers can attend such a meeting
5. **ACTION** - suggestion that a press release should be sent out to people in Totnes regarding this meeting to keep people updated on what is going on
 - o **ACTION** - suggestion to send out a notice to the Forum members as well

3. Bob the Bus update (LP/SG)

- BtB in a state of uncertainty as Government grants during Covid are being phased out
- Probably up to ⅔ of passenger numbers before Covid.
- Need for a base / hub
 - o 4 buses in 2 different locations
 - o Current conversation with GWR for the old Alchemy Cars site at Totnes Station - early stages – any help there would be much appreciated
 - o A location within the Atmos area would be ideal.
- Still have strong volunteer base - nearly 40 volunteer drivers
 - o D1 category drivers, 1997 cut off, cause of future issue looming
 - o In 5-6 years BtB will start running out of volunteers able to drive minibuses
- Discussion in the group regarding how to overcome this issue in the future
 - o Applying for grants that will cover training costs
 - o Potential for funding that aims to support employment initiatives, e.g., providing skills and experience for people out of work who would like to work for Stagecoach
 - o Could Stagecoach be approached to offer support? Charitable giving.

- Historically relations between commercial and charitable transport organisations hasn't been good
 - Could MP Mangnall tap into some source of funding? Levelling Up agenda perfect for this.
- Lack of a hub is a major limiting factor to everything, including sourcing funding.

4. Discussion of 'proposed transport schemes' in the Transport Policy and Strategy: require updating (JH / MH)

- Plymouth Rd
 - Largely been forgotten
 - Speed camera disabled - due to number of cars parked in front of it
- E-bikes: GTC pursuing e-bike trial with Co Bikes
- Totnes Forecourt to Borough Park: skate park will be moving away at some point, this will be an opportunity to make a nicer entrance
- Electric charge points: SHDC leading on this as TTC has very limited land. TTC can support residents and businesses to apply for funding
- Chicken run: now wheelchair accessible - this scheme can listed as completed
- Underpass still to pursue
 - Was put on hold as they were going to put up new signal boxes
 - **ACTION:** Follow up with rail company (██████████)
- Western Bypass - Cistern Street
 - Need for a refuge point at bottom of Harpers Hill – this is one of the walking routes out of town
- Western Bypass - Plymouth Rd
 - Refused by DCC in summer 2021
- Painted cycle lane line by Coronation Rd at Seven Stars Hotel
 - Still there but likely won't be taken out until road needs resurfacing

General discussion re pedestrian safety at the Plains roundabout

- A lot of clutter and street furniture
- Could be made a lot safer for pedestrians, issues with people tripping over curb as they cross at the "wrong" point
- Needs rethinking - a main crossing point into town for those coming from Bridgetown
- Need expert in pedestrian safety to come and have a look

Discussion re lift at Totnes Station

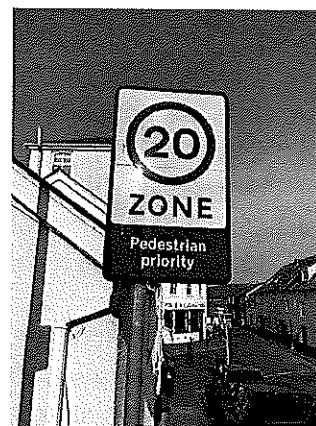
- Locked in the evening and no one there to open. Significant accessibility issue.
- **ACTION:** find out what is going on (SC may have email address for relevant person)

Other items to add to proposed schemes:

- Zebra crossing at the Lamb (already has Town Council support)
- Bob the Bus hub

5. 'Pedestrian priority' signs in the High Street and the Narrows (SC)

- Type of signs that they have in Salcombe would be ideal for Totnes (see image)
- At the start of the High St and in other strategic locations going up
- **Motion** to endorse this as a proposal to Planning Committee
 - Motion passed unopposed
 - Needs to go hand in hand with the wayfinding project and a general audit/consideration of signage in town



6. Kingsbridge Hill residents' proposal (SC, VC, NB)

Update on progress

- Long standing issue with Kingsbridge Hill – popular and dangerous place to walk
- Also dangerous for drivers – people think it's a one-way road but it's not, accelerate up the hill and around the corner
- T [redacted] and V [redacted] - in process of forming a Kingsbridge Hill Residents Association (11th May)
 - Extensive survey undertaken with residents
 - Various suggestions considered
 1. Bollards going up and down: too costly and would take too long
 2. Make it a one-way road down the hill: creates access problems

3. Alternative option → having a no-entry sign near the top: allows access for residents but turn the top section into one-way coming down
 - Is this a workable idea?
 - How would it impact other areas?

General discussion of proposal #3

- A proper public consultation would be needed
- Suggestion to email to the Allotment Association to ask how they would feel about it
- Would the Forum endorse the proposal provisionally, if also supported by the Residents' Association (once formed)?
- **Motion** to take this forward to the next stage of the process
 - Motion passed unopposed

20:10 End of meeting

Date of next Steering Group meeting: 25 May 2022

Date of next Forum meeting: 27 July 2022

Recommendations

1. Install 'pedestrian priority' signs up the High St and Narrows
 - a. Similar to signs in Salcombe (see point 5)
 - b. To be considered in conjunction with the wayfinding project and Fore St public consultation results to ensure a cohesive signage strategy is implemented
2. Organise independently facilitated town stakeholder meeting to discuss traffic priorities
 - a. To be organised for after Fore St consultation report finalised
3. Support that Kingsbridge Hill Residents Association (when formed) pursue turning part of the hill into a one-way system (see point 6)
 - a. This might solve a long-standing issue of danger to both drivers and pedestrians

Actions

1. GTC: Ask DCC to give us some dates that their officers can attend a stakeholder meeting (once this meeting has been properly considered/planned)

- a. GTC/TTC: Press release to be sent out to people in Totnes regarding this meeting to keep people updated on what is going on
 - b. GTC: Send out a notice to the Forum members as well
2. GTC: Follow up with rail company re underpass / status of signal boxes
3. GTC: Find out what is going on with the lift at Totnes Station
4. GTC: Add to transport schemes: Bob the Bus hub; Kingsbridge Hill proposal; zebra crossing at the Lamb