



**Meeting: Transport Working Party**

**Date: 6<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

**Wards Affected: Tormohun**

**Report Title: Torbay Road, Torquay – Consultation Review**

**Executive Lead Contact Details: Sue Cheriton, Executive Head – Resident & Visitor Services**

**Supporting Officer Contact Details: Ian Jones, Principal Engineer (Highways Development & Traffic)**

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**1. Purpose**

1.1 This report is to review the results of a public consultation regarding the layout on Torbay Road, Torquay, adjacent to Rock Walk and consider whether the scheme should remain in place or be reverted back to its original 'dual carriageway' arrangement.

**2. Proposed Decision**

2.1 That in view of the preference identified from the consultation that Torbay Road is reverted to a 'dual carriageway, arrangement and that revised traffic regulation orders are advertised and implemented if no objections are received.

**3. Action Needed**

3.1 A recommendation from this Working Party is required to determine whether the trial traffic arrangement at this location should remain and be funded to provide a permanent layout or whether funding is directed to reinstating the previous dual carriageway arrangement.

**4. Summary**

4.1 The current traffic arrangements on this section of Torbay Road were implemented as a semi-permanent scheme prior to the summer of 2011 following a full consultation with stakeholders and the public, which was the subject of a report to the Transportation Working Party on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2009.

4.2 Following a recent review the Working Party recommended that a further public consultation was carried out prior to considering the layout further.

## Supporting Information

### 5. Position

- 5.1 A report was presented to this Working Party on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2013. The report reviewed the success of the trial scheme adjacent to Rock Walk as approved by the Transportation Working Party on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and gave options on continuation of the current two-way traffic arrangement or consideration of reverting the arrangement to the previous dual carriageway traffic arrangement.
- 5.2 The Working Party recommended that a consultation be progressed to consider ending the current arrangement for the A379 Torbay Road, Torquay, adjacent to Rock Walk with a view to reinstating the previous dual carriageway arrangement and increasing the on-street parking provision.
- 5.3 A consultation exercise has now been carried out with stakeholders and the public using the Torbay Council website during April/May 2013 and a public exhibition at the Princess Theatre for three days in April 2013, both. The response results of the consultation are included in **Appendices 1-3** to this report.
- 5.4 The current scheme was fully implemented in June 2011 using the minimum amount of engineering works to provide a layout, which would effectively work on a semi-permanent basis. The scheme has been deemed to have improved traffic flow through this section of the A379 as there is no delaying effect by vehicles maneuvering in and out of parking spaces, however the layout has reduced the number of available on-street parking spaces and has raised safety concerns in respect of pedestrians not fully understanding the layout when crossing.
- 5.5 Since implementation there have been 4 reported slight injury collisions involving pedestrians and 1 slight injury collision involving a cyclist. Warning signage is in place however there is evidence that visitors to the area have been confused by the layout. It should however be noted that the original layout did also have some reported collisions and as such reverting back to this layout does not necessarily constitute a reduction of risk to the public.
- 5.6 It is however likely that the safety concerns within the current layout would be overcome if additional investment was provided to make the layout into a permanent scheme and to change the appearance of the seaward carriageway, with some widening to provide echelon parking and surfacing the area in a different material to make the parking area substantially different from the two way carriageway. The level of investment required is likely to be between £150 - 200,000, depending on the level of improvements considered.
- 5.7 The investment required to revert the road layout back to its original dual carriageway arrangement is likely to be in the region of £45,000 if no additional engineering improvements or facilities are provided.
- 5.8 The results of the consultation are summarized as follows:

For responses sent directly to Highways a total of 39 letters were received of which 37 gave a yes/no response and 2 were comment only copies are attached in **Appendices 1 & 2**.

Total In favour of Current layout – 16 (43%)

Total in favour of reverting to dual carriageway – 21 (57%)

For responses sent through the corporate on line survey a total of 90 responses were received and the report on the survey is attached in **Appendix 3**.

Total in favour of current layout – 33 (39%)

Total in favour of reverting to dual carriageway – 57 (61%)

The results therefore show a slight preference towards reverting the traffic arrangement back to a dual carriageway, however there were a number of additional comments regarding the area and these are summarised within the Appendices.

- 5.9 Members will be aware that this review also coincides with current negotiations in respect of the proposed highway layout to the frontage of the current redevelopment of the former Palm Court hotel. The physical works to the development are now under way and the developer is proposing commencement of the adjacent highway works in the forthcoming autumn. In order that officers can agree the revised layout to coincide with this timescale a recommendation from this Working Party on the preferred layout is required.
- 5.10 Whilst this report includes an officer recommendation, based on the results of the consultation, members should be mindful that officers would also advise that both the current and original layouts are workable in highways terms. It is also worth noting that at the time of the original approval it was proposed that the seaward carriageway could be further utilised to host events, which to date has not materialised.

## 6. **Possibilities and Options**

- 6.1 Members may recommend that the traffic arrangement of Torbay Road, Torquay should be reinstated as the original dual carriageway arrangement.
- 6.2 Members may consider that the current traffic arrangement should remain in its present form and be progressed to a permanent layout when funding allows.
- 6.3 Members may consider that the trial period for the current arrangement should continue for a further summer season following which the scheme can be reviewed again. This would however mean that the highway works in front of the former Palm Court development would have to reflect the current layout and would incur additional expense to alter if the layout is then reverted to a dual carriageway.

## 7. **Preferred Solution/Option**

- 7.1 Highways officers do not have a technical preference between the options in 6.1 and 6.2 as both layouts are workable, however as the consultation shows a general preference for 6.1, officers are recommending this as the preferred option.

## 8. **Consultation**

- 8.1 The consultation as recommended by the working Party has now been completed.

Any traffic regulation orders that require amendment following this review will need to be formally advertised and any resulting objections will be presented to a future meeting of this Working Party.

## 9. Risks

- 9.1 The additional parking provision from reverting the layout to a dual carriageway has the potential to provide additional parking income from this section of highway. There is a risk however that the additional on street provision will cause some displacement of vehicles from car parks, especially in the evenings when the on street parking is free and this may result in the additional income not fully materializing and not covering the costs of the changes in the short term.
- 9.2 There is a risk that the return of the traffic arrangement to 'dual carriageway' will adversely affect traffic flow in this area and increase traffic congestion in the area.
- 9.3 There is a risk that if a decision on the future of this section of road is delayed then this may result in the developers improvements to the frontage of the former Palm Court Hotel requiring alteration in the future at public expense.

## Appendices:

**Appendix 1** – Copies of correspondence to highways in favour of current arrangement.

**Appendix 2** – Copies of correspondence to highways in favour of previous dual carriageway arrangement and other comments.

**Appendix 3** – Copy of report for the corporate on line consultation.

## Additional Information:

Members may wish to view the on line consultation using the following link:

[www.torbay.gov.uk/torbayroad.htm](http://www.torbay.gov.uk/torbayroad.htm)

## Documents available in Members' Rooms:

None.

## Background Papers:

Report to Transportation Working Party 6<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Report to Transport Working Party 31<sup>st</sup> January 2013