

Beaver Road Bus Gate

Joint Transportation Board – 8th March 2016

The Ashford Joint Transportation Board met on the 3rd June 1997 where they were informed of a survey carried out in the Beaver Road area. This survey was implemented to highlight the amount of vehicles per day that were travelling through Beaver Road. It was established that out of the 9,000 per day 6,000 travelled through the area without stopping.

To alleviate this problem it was decided that all residents and businesses in the area be consulted on all proposals put forward with an additional option to introduce further traffic calming devices.

During January 1998 all residents and businesses within the Beaver Road area were consulted by letter on six scheme options and invited to complete a questionnaire to indicate their preference: one of the options was Option 5:

Option 5: Closure between South Stour Avenue and Godfrey Walk with a bus gate.

NB: All traffic entering the area could only do so via Norman Road or Beaver Lane/Jemmett Road.

From the questionnaire response it was decided that taking Beaver Road responses in isolation 88% of residents supported a closure of some form with 80% supporting Option 5. With regard to Beaver Road businesses, most 88% favoured leaving the road as it is with no changes. In total for the area 56% of all businesses supported no change with only 13% supporting Option 5.

It was noted at this time that inconvenience would be caused for everyone through increased mileage when accessing the town centre.

Since the opening of the bus gate the Designer Outlet, Asda and businesses along Norman Road have opened causing greater traffic jams and unacceptable inconvenience for residents and businesses trying to access Beaver and the adjacent roads.

Installation of the bus gate has been an extremely controversial decision ever since its first induction. There have been several incidents causing damage to vehicles and one known fatality. These incidents were caused by cars and vans tailgating Taxis and Buses to short cut through the bollards exiting Beaver Road. The fatality, a young boy aged six was killed when his father hit the unlit bollard at 30 mph in March 2000.

Residents have moved on and new businesses have opened. Ashford has changed and is still changing dramatically since the initial survey and questionnaire.

The opening of the Victoria Way has alleviated the need for traffic to cut through Beaver Road to access the Matalan roundabout etc.

The bus gate is no longer a viable option for traffic restrictions in the area. It is outdated, constantly out of order for long periods of time, and as controversial as ever!

I would ask therefore ask the Board to recommend that the residents and businesses in the area be given fair opportunity to decide if this bus gate and traffic calming system is the way forward!

Recommendation:

For the Ashford Joint Transportation Board to recommend to Kent County Council that: -

- **The bus gate should be disabled for a six month trial period.**

And

- **That at the end of the trial period a new survey be undertaken with current residents and businesses to determine if the bus gate is still a viable option or it should be disabled on a permanent basis.**

Councillor Mrs Jenny Webb

Ward Member – Norman (Ashford) Ward

Ashford Borough Council

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FAO: Councillor Feacey
Ashford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Tannery Lane
Ashford
Kent
TN23 1PL

19th February 2016

Dear Sir,

As a taxi proprietor we have had constant problems with the Beaver road barrier ever since it was installed. We are now in a position whereby at least 3 of our tags do not work, and have been waiting some months for replacements that I understand have to come from Sweden.

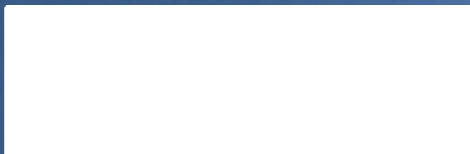
We also have the added problem that fare paying passengers are becoming very rude and at times aggressive when they receive a taxi which is unable to use the barrier. At times if we supply a private hire vehicle, customers will turn the driver away because it is not allowed through the barrier or they believe that we as a company are trying to take the long way round along Romney Marsh Road.

We really do feel as a major company in this town that the buses and taxis only rule down Beaver road is very much out dated, especially with the advent of Victoria way now open which also takes more traffic the very southern part of South Ashford.

We would very much like to see Beaver road become two way again, but obviously keeping in place traffic calming measures. It would also make sense financially to Ashford Borough Council because of the constant drain on finances for repairs to a constant broken barrier.

I look forward to receiving your comments on the points outlined above.

Yours Sincerely



Jenny Lucking
Director



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