
Beaver Road Bus Gate

To: Ashford Joint Transportation Board 14th June 2016

By: Tim Read – Head of Transportation, KCC

Classification: For Information

This report sets out the need to retain the Beaver Road Bus Gate.

It is recommended that the Traffic restriction remains in force and a trial removal is rejected.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The scheme to restrict access along Beaver Road was installed in April 1999 consisting of the installation of a rising bollard with a traffic regulation order (TRO) that only allows buses, taxis and emergency services through the restriction.
- 1.2 The scheme was developed to discourage use of Beaver road as an access route into Ashford town centre. The strategic A2042 had been constructed and was encouraged as the designated route into the town. Beaver Road if open would be a shorter route for residents near to the B2229 accessing the town. This would encourage an increase in traffic through what is mainly a residential area, which has parking for local residents.

2. Bollard issues

- 2.1 The rising bollard lowers when an equipped vehicle approaches, but remains upright at other times. If a vehicle approaches without the equipment or tries to follow an equipped vehicle through the area then damage may occur to the equipment.
- 2.2 In the last 12 months the bollard has been faulty 3 times. In each case this has been due to damage caused by a vehicle hitting the bollard. The equipment itself has not failed in this time.
- 2.3 It is recognised that the only other viable alternative to a rising bollard to maintain a restriction would be to use Camera technology to fine drivers that drive past the TRO signing. This would require the installation of Automatic Number plate Recognition (ANPR) Cameras and new back office equipment.

The back office equipment and operation of such a system would have to be operated within the existing parking service run by Ashford Borough Council.

3. Current Situation

- 3.1 Assessment of the road prior and after the installation of the bollard demonstrates that the restriction has achieved an improvement in road safety along Beaver Road. In the 19 years before the implementation of the bollard there was an average of 8 crashes a year and in the 16 years following the installation the crash record has dropped to an average of 4 crashes a year. For the last 3 years the crash record for Beaver Road is good with only one slight injury accident recorded and this was not attributed to the bollard.
- 3.2 Ashford has continued to grow in the years that the restriction was introduced and car use has increased. Increased use of Beaver Road as a result of the removal of the bollard will place increased demand onto the junction of Beaver road and Victoria way as vehicles seek alternative ways into Ashford town centre. This is at a time where development in the vicinity of the junction will only increase this demand. Increasing demand along Beaver Road will mean that delays at the traffic signals will increase.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The safety record of Beaver Road is good and the operation of the bollard is reliable. There is an alternative method of enforcing the restriction, but this would need significant investment to deliver and possibly place an extra burden on the borough council.
- 4.2 There has been a request to trial the removal of the bollard to see what difference this would make. Any temporary suspension of the traffic restriction would still require some investment to change signing and markings. There is no justification for implementing a trial from a safety or congestion benefit in light of the data available.
- 4.3 On balance KCC does not support either a trial or permanent removal of the traffic restriction.

Future Meeting if applicable:	None
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