



Northumberland County Council

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY CORPORATE DIRECTOR

ACTING DIRECTOR OF LOCAL SERVICES & HOUSING: PAUL JONES

PROPOSED PROHIBITION OF DRIVING, EXCEPT FOR ACCESS TO OFF STREET PREMISES, C362 DOVECOTE LANE

Purpose of Report

To consider the results of the public consultation exercise, regarding the proposed 'Prohibition of driving except for access to off-street premises' restriction on the C362 Dovecote Lane near Stanington.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- 1) The proposed 'Prohibition of driving, except for access to off-street premises' restriction is provided.

Key Issues

- 1) Residents of Dovecote Farm contacted Councillor Eileen Armstrong raising concerns about increasing through traffic on Dovecote Lane.
- 2) The lane is experiencing increased through traffic following the new housing development at St Mary's.
- 3) Dovecote Lane is narrow with blind bends and is not suitable for use by large vehicles.

Report Author

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Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the *Places and Environment Aim* in the Corporate Plan:

Our aim is to maintain and further improve the quality of our towns, villages and countryside and make it easier for residents to access services and high quality, affordable homes and to travel using different modes of transport. To achieve this, we will keep Northumberland clean, green and safe from detrimental impacts of climate change, build more houses to benefit those most in need and provide a convenient, integrated public transport network.

Background

1. Residents of Dovecote Farm contacted Councillor Eileen Armstrong raising concerns about increasing through traffic on Dovecote Lane.
2. Dovecote Farm is a working farm with residential development consisting of 14 properties.
3. The amount of through traffic has increased since new housing development began on the former St Mary's Hospital site.
4. This increased through traffic includes some construction traffic and large delivery vehicles.
5. Dovecote Lane is a narrow single track road with blind bends. It is not suited to large volumes of traffic and is particularly unsuitable for large vehicles.
6. Residents have raised concerns about speeding and the increased risk of accidents, particularly at the blind bends.
7. In response to these concerns, Officers agreed with Councillor Armstrong to consult the residents on a 'Prohibition of driving, except for access to off street premises' restriction. This would prevent through traffic but will allow residents and their visitors to use the road.
8. The proposed restriction will continue to allow agricultural vehicles to access adjoining fields.

Consultation

9. A scheme was prepared and was the subject of a consultation which concluded on 26th October 2015.
10. The consultation exercise involved the delivery of a consultation letter together with a plan showing details of the scheme to residents, statutory consultees; County Councillor Armstrong, Stannington Parish Council; road user organisations; and other interested parties. The proposal was also available to view and comment via the Council's website. The consultation plan is attached as Appendix A.

11. 11 responses were returned. 10 were in favour of the proposal, 0 against, while 1 failed to state a preference. A summary of the responses is attached as Appendix B.
12. These results were discussed with the local Ward Member, Councillor Eileen Armstrong, who agreed that the level of responses received is a sufficient mandate to proceed.
13. The east end of Dovecote Lane joins the A1 trunk road. Discussion will be required with Highways England as the proposed restriction may require advance signage on the A1. Officers have already begun to liaise over this issue.

Conclusion

14. In view of the results of the consultation, it is recommended that the proposed 'Prohibition of driving' restriction is provided on Dovecote Lane.

Background Papers

File Ref: HE16

Implications Arising Out of the Report

Policy	None
Finance and value for money	None
Human Resources	None
Property	None
Equalities	None
Risk Assessment	None
Crime & Disorder	None
Customer Considerations	None
Sustainability	None
Consultation	The relevant people and organisations were consulted
Wards	Ponteland East

DECISION TAKEN

Title of Executive Member or Officer(s):

Paul Jones: Acting Director of Local Services & Housing

Subject:

PROPOSED PROHIBITION OF DRIVING, EXCEPT FOR ACCESS TO OFF STREET PREMISES, C362 DOVECOTE LANE

Consultation

11 Responses
10 For
0 Against
1 Neither

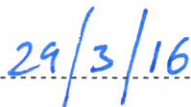
Decision Taken:

- 1) The proposed 'Prohibition of driving, except for access to off-street premises' restriction is provided.

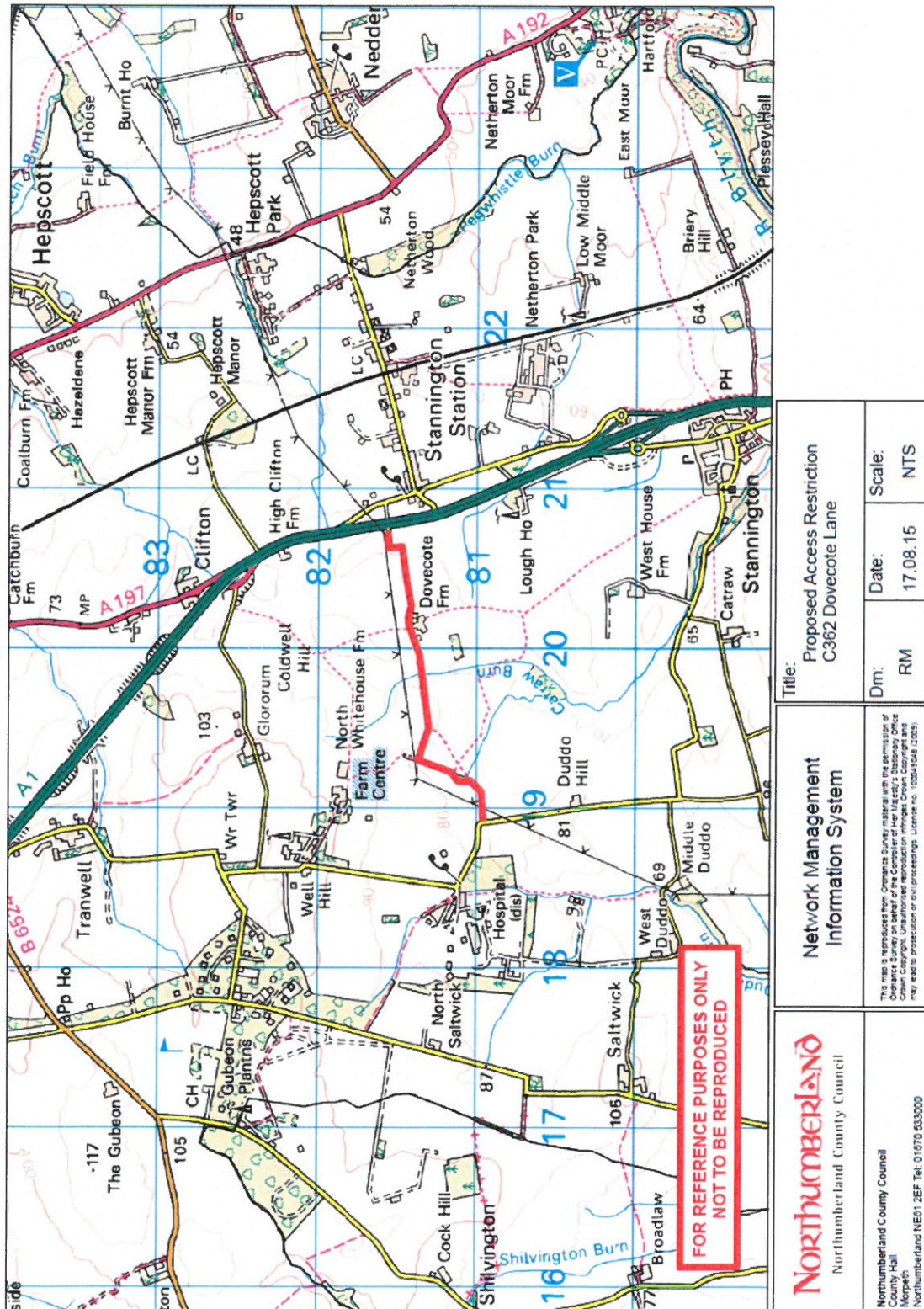
Signature of Director



Date



Appendix A – Consultation Plan



Appendix B – Consultation Responses

FOR	AGAINST	NEITHER	Other Relevant Comments
1			Myself and my partner fully support this proposal and consider it to be long overdue. We have lived here for 8 years, and in that time we have seen a massive increase not only in the volume of traffic using the lane, but also the speed of many of the drivers. There are many blind bends on this road and I know that myself, my partner, and several other residents have had many very near misses whilst driving, with people who are quite obviously inexperienced at driving on this type of single track road. We have also felt unsafe many times whilst walking along the road. There has also been a very noticeable increase in the number of large articulated wagons using the lane which are particularly inappropriate for a single track road with very few passing spaces. There are no footpaths along this lane, and therefore it is regularly used by residents of Dovecote Farm including children and pets, and as it is a working farm, flocks of sheep are regularly moved along here. Last but not least, I'd also like to point out the obvious danger to wildlife of which we are very lucky to have a wide variety of at present. We hope that these comments will be taken very seriously as we feel it is only a matter of time before a serious accident occurs.
1			If this will be signed with the low flying motorbike signs, which allow use by cyclists, we would support this proposal.
1			What a good idea.
1			Since the start of St. Marys Park development there has been a number of vehicles (including commercial) using Dovecote Lane as a "short cut". Over the past 6 months the number has increased considerably, some of which use excessive speed for such a road.
1			The lane is unsuitable for long and heavy vehicles, especially past Dovecote Farm, towards St. Mary's Park, it narrows, has blind bends (with no signage) and is in poor repair. The lane condition is deterioration with the vehicles, using the lane in terms of increased volume and types of vehicle. Road works are required to make good the road surface that have worn away and maintenance of signage completed. Speed of traffic using the lane is higher than it would be for the condition of the lane. Prohibition of driving can only reduce the speed of road surface deterioration and improve / lessen litter thrown from vehicles using the lane. Over the past 12 years the lane condition has worsened and the volume of traffic / speed of traffic increased with "near xxx" accidents on the lane; especially on the blind bends, narrow sections. The conditions for leaving and joining the A1 are awkward and the increased volume of traffic puts individuals more at risk. residents of Dovecote Farm and the private properties are at risk of careless driving and sometimes verbal abuse from drivers of vehicles using the lane.
		1	Thank you for your letter dated 14th september 2015 in which you invite us to offer our comments on the above proposal. I would inform you that as an Emergency Service we may be required to use the above road(s) for access and egress in the event of being activated to attend an emergency call, or to convey patients to hospital for out-patient appointments. I would thank you for your consultation on this matter and offer our support for the on-going road safety programme.
1			As a resident (No7 The Old Barn) I would certainly wish that Dovecote Lane is only used for residents and those visiting residents at Dovecote Steadings. It would be a huge relief to residents as the increased traffic is creating danger and damage to Dovecote Lane which is already in serious need of repair. Thanking you kindly.
1			Traffic has increased significantly. The suggestion is the only solution.
1			I should be grateful if you would also put speed restriction signs on Dovecote Lane, especially near the residences. We have children and dog walkers regularly around the area. Perhaps a triangle saying SLOW for pedestrians / residents. Excellent proposal.
1			Fully support the proposal. A large stretch of the road does not have passing places and is not suitable or safe for regular 2 way traffic.
1			This road has become dangerous since the St. Marys' building. There are no passing places west of Dovecote and the traffic has increased alarmingly. Sundays sees an increase in traffic with people going to St. Marys pub for lunch. Commercial traffic - very large vehicles are using this road as a rat-run to access the by-pass and they speed up and down - dangerous for animals and children. Access to this road is dangerous from the A1 due to poor signage on the approach to Dovecote lane.
10	0	1	