



# **Northumberland**

## **County Council**

### **RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN BY SERVICE DIRECTOR - LOCAL SERVICES**

**Paul Jones - Service Director - Local Services**

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#### **PROPOSED TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS, FURNACE BANK, BEDLINGTON**

**Cabinet Member: Councillor Glen Sanderson**

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To consider the results of the consultation exercise regarding a proposal to implement a 'No Left Turn', a 'One-way' and a 'No Right Turn' restriction at Furnace Bank in Bedlington.

#### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that the proposed traffic restrictions are implemented.

#### **Link to Corporate Plan**

Living - "We want you to feel safe, healthy and cared for"

Enjoying - "We want you to love where you live"

#### **Key Issues**

The County Council has received concerns from residents in the Bank Top area of Bedlington about vehicle movements at Furnace Bank.

The road layout means that large vehicles that turn left from Furnace Bank onto Stead Lane are forced into the opposite carriageway into the path of oncoming traffic.

There are also concerns about traffic meeting head-on in a narrow section of road.



## Delegated decisions

### Background

1. The County Council has received concerns from residents in the Bank Top area of Bedlington about vehicle movements at Furnace Bank.
2. Furnace Bank is part of the unclassified road that links Bedlington to Bebside. At its north end it has a junction with Stead Lane, highlighted in Figure 1.



**Fig.1. Location Plan.**

3. The junction layout means that vehicles that turn left from Furnace Bank onto Stead Lane are forced into the opposite carriageway into the path of oncoming traffic. A view looking north from Furnace Bank onto Stead Lane is shown in Figure 2. The picture shows how the road layout makes left turns difficult.
4. The junction of Stead Lane with Furnace bank was the site of 3 injury accidents between 2014 and 2016. A local safety scheme to upgrade traffic signs and road markings was implemented in order to address this in 2017. One further injury accident has since occurred in 2018.



## Delegated decisions



**Fig.2. Looking north from Furnace Bank at the junction with Stead Lane.**

5. In addition to the issue at the main road junction, there is a short link road between Furnace Bank and Stead Lane to the west. Its location is shown in Figure 3.



**Fig. 3. Furnace Bank-Stead Lane western link road.**



## Delegated decisions

6. The link road is not wide enough for two-way traffic. Forward visibility at each end is also poor leading to the potential for vehicles to meet head-on. Figure 4 shows a view looking from Furnace Bank into the link road.



**Fig.4. Link Road from Furnace Bank.**

7. At the top of the link road where it joins Stead Lane, the road layout means that visibility to the right is poor and right turning vehicles encroach on the opposite carriageway.
8. In order to address these issues, the following measures are proposed:
  - No Left Turn from Furnace Bank onto Stead Lane (opposite the Bank Top public house)
  - One-way system on the link road between Furnace Bank and Stead Lane.
  - No Right Turn from the link road onto Stead Lane.
9. These proposals are shown on the plan in Appendix A. Statutory consultees were consulted on the proposals.



## Delegated decisions

10. Only 3 responses were received. 2 in favour and one against. One of the responses in favour was from East Bedlington Parish Council.
11. Given the outcome of the consultation and the support of the local Parish Council, it is recommended that the proposed restrictions are implemented.
12. The route to Bebside includes a single track bridge, hairpin bends and is a signed cycle route. It is also well used by pedestrians for recreation and to access Dene Park. It is therefore recommended that advisory signs warning that the route is unsuitable for large vehicles are also provided.

## Implications Arising out of the Report

<b>Policy</b>	None
<b>Finance and value for money</b>	The scheme will be funded through the Local Transport Plan Programme.
<b>Legal</b>	Motorists will be required to comply with Traffic Regulation Orders.
<b>Procurement</b>	None
<b>Human Resources</b>	None
<b>Property</b>	None
<b>Equalities</b> (Impact Assessment attached) Yes No N/A	None
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	None
<b>Crime &amp; Disorder</b>	None
<b>Customer Consideration</b>	Statutory consultees have been consulted.
<b>Carbon reduction</b>	None
<b>Wards</b>	Sleekburn

## **Delegated decisions**

### **Background papers:**

**File ref:** HED19323

### **Report sign off.**

***Authors must ensure that relevant officers and members have agreed the content of the report:***

	initials
Finance Officer	n/a
Monitoring Officer/Legal	n/a
Human Resources	n/a
Procurement	n/a
I.T.	n/a
Director	
Portfolio Holder(s)	

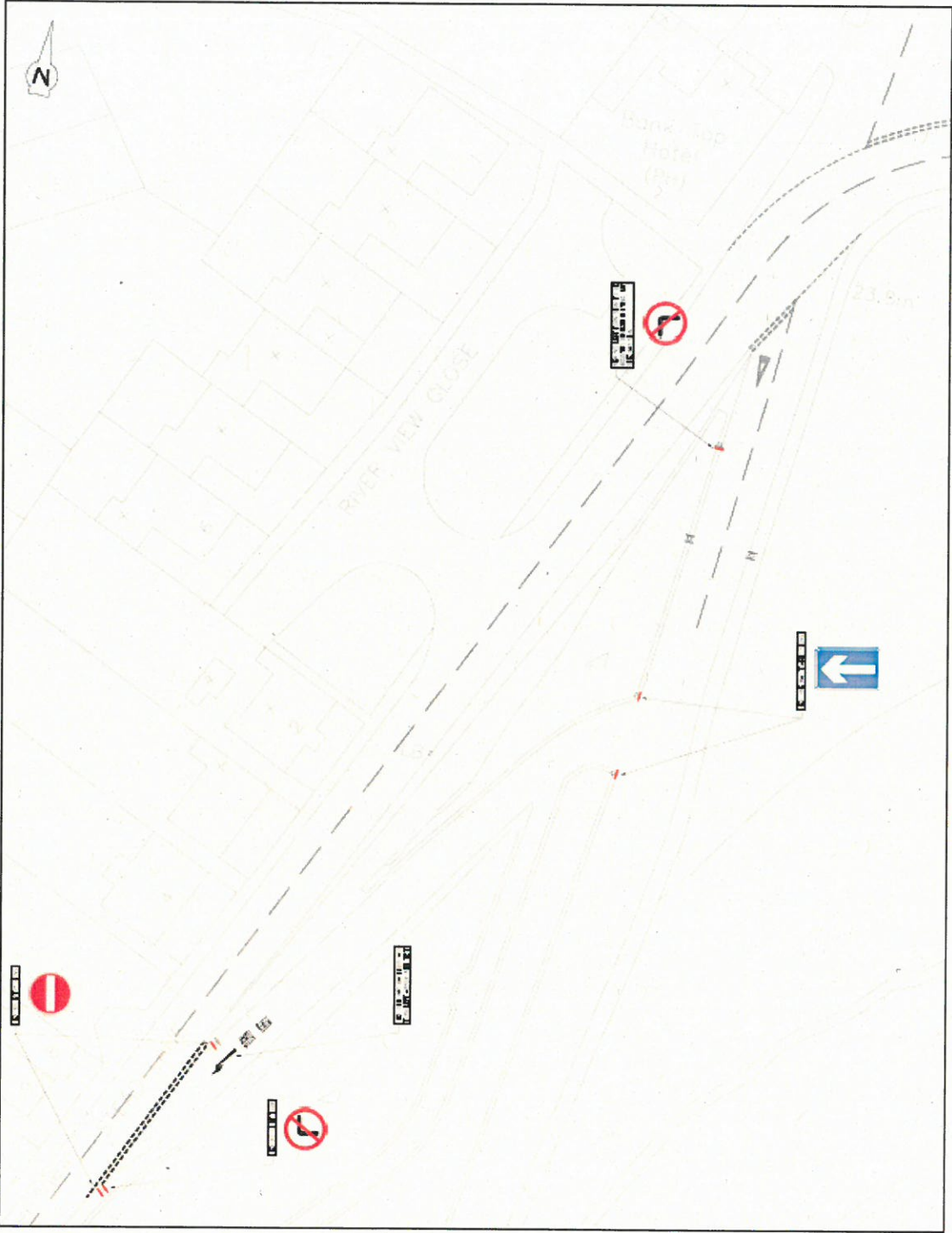
### **Author and Contact Details**

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Report Author     ***Richard McKenzie – Senior Programmes Officer***

Delegated decisions

Appendix A - Consultation Plan





## Delegated decisions

### Appendix B - Consultation Responses

F O R	A G A I N S T R	N E I T H E R	Other Relevant Comments
1			<p>In principle, the council has no objections to the proposals. The preferred solution would be to block off the slip road and create a roundabout at the top of Furnace Bank. Members felt that this would be more effective in slowing down the traffic from all approaches. It was also recognised that such a scheme may be prohibited by cost. Members express concern regarding winter weather road safety and felt that the slip would not be able to accommodate a grit waggon and would NCC be arranging and servicing gritting facilities to allow vehicles to safely negotiate the slip road. Members also considered the installation of a mirror may assist exiting the slip road onto Stead Lane.</p>
1			<p>A Facebook Page which provides news to local people have shared your plans for a new one-way system at Furnace Road. Reference the image below: As a long-term resident of the road on which the works are to be carried out I would like to make some comments which I hope you will consider.</p> <p>My first comment would be in reference to the one reason you have provided in your letter to Councillor Gobin, included below: You have stated that, 'Due to the alignment of the junction with Stead Lane, opposite the Bank Top pub, left turn movements result in vehicles crossing both traffic lanes.'</p> <p>This reason is nonsensical as the new one-way system would force traffic to take an earlier left on Furnace Bank, causing exactly the same issue!</p> <p>You have noted that this problem occurs at (4), (image above). The suggested road 'improvement' will cause it to happen at (3), (image above). In my opinion, this is a much more dangerous place to have vehicles crossing both lanes.</p> <p>The reason being that road visibility ahead is non-existent at junction (3) and therefore it may take more than one attempt to turn. Also because oncoming traffic, from the top of Furnace Bank heading downhill, will be coming over a blind hill with zero visibility until already on the descent – leaving a much shorter area to brake. This means that not only will the drivers who have to take the new proposed option, (3), have poor visibility of the road ahead, but so will the drivers coming from direction (4).</p> <p>In addition to these reasons, I would also like to bring up the issue of larger vehicles trying to turn at junction (3). It is a much narrower road for both turning and accessing. How would a gritter get up for instance?</p> <p>The existing junction has clear views in all directions to allow a relatively safe turn left at (4). This reason also applies to oncoming traffic who also have a clear view of a vehicle possibly crossing into their lane. My second comment is that driver visibility from (1), (on image below) is much poorer, looking right and left to exit junction (1), than it is at (2), looking both ways to exit junction. This is due to several reasons. As you will note, the angle of the turn is acuter at (1) than at (2). At junction (1) you really have to look back over your shoulder, to the right, to see oncoming traffic. As mentioned, junction (2) offers clear views in all directions. This problem would most certainly be worsened by the closeness of the blind corner to the left of (2) and marked with a star in the image below:</p> <p>The blind corner on Stead Lane is near to the marked star on the above image.</p> <p>Traffic exiting junction (1) will already be looking over their right shoulder to drive left into oncoming traffic that could possibly be coming around the corner on the outside of their lanes or even crossing into the other lane. This happens regularly as the corner is tight and also because of resident parking at the front of the houses shown in the image above.</p> <p>This will cause a potential problem as, currently, traffic heading left towards the corner from the Bank Top will stop if they see a vehicle coming around the corner and there are stationary vehicles parked in front of the houses. This allows the oncoming traffic, from further up Stead Lane, to move immediately into the other lane to pass the parked cars safely. If the proposed changes go ahead, the traffic exiting junction (1) will already be inline with stationary vehicles and could not stop to allow oncoming vehicles right of way. This would mean that oncoming vehicles would have to brake suddenly coming around the blind corner, making them a stationary vehicle in the road directly around a blind corner. This is obviously dangerous.</p> <p>There is no resident parking at the top of Furnace Road outside the Bank Top and therefore parked traffic does not cause any visibility issues whatsoever.</p> <p>To sum up, it seems nonsensical to me, that an attempt to make this junction safer would, seemingly,</p>



## Delegated decisions

			<p>making it more dangerous. The reason stated is completely negated by the fact that the changes will be causing the exact same problem, (vehicles crossing both traffic lanes) at a different point.</p> <p>The reason the steep cut is not currently used by a great deal of traffic is for the very reasons that I have listed. It is simply more dangerous.</p>
1			<p>I've marked green an area that is a problem to the plans for the one way system up the hill of Furnace Bank turning onto the slip road at the top there is constantly cars that are parked over the entrance for going onto stead lane. Can we get double yellow lines to stop this.</p>
2	1	0	



## DECISION TAKEN

**Title of Officer(s) and Portfolio  
Holder (where appropriate):**

Paul Jones - Service Director - Local Services

**Subject:**

**PROPOSED TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS, FURNACE  
BANK, BEDLINGTON**

**Consultation**

- For: 2
- Against: 1
- Neutral: 0

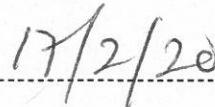
**Decision Taken:**

It is recommended that the proposed traffic  
restrictions are implemented.

Signature of Director/  
officer/Portfolio Holder (where  
appropriate)\*



**Date**



\* delete as appropriate