
Sandwich - Closing Austins Lane to Traffic

To: Dover Joint Transportation Board - 30 November 2017

By: Tim Read – Head of Transportation, KCC

Classification: Unrestricted

Recommendation Required

1. Introduction

Sandwich Town Council has made a request to Kent County Council to close Austins Lane to traffic following an incident involving a vehicle striking a gas supply pipe.

The funding for the works would be provided from the Sandwich S106 budget.

The proposal is to install removable bollards at each end of the road. The key to the bollards would be held in the KCC Sandwich depot in case of emergency. There would be no day to day access to residents.



2. Consultation

From the 8th – 29th September 2017 KCC carried out a consultation with local residents. The consultation document is shown in Appendix A. There were a total of 12 responses.

In favour of closure	Against closure
9	3

The reasons cited against the closure and KCC officer responses are outlined below:

Respondent	Support/ object	Comments	KCC response
Local resident	Object	The overwhelming majority of vehicles using Austin’s Lane access it from New Street. They do so for two reasons: traffic is frequently stationary from the entrance to the junction with No Name Street and Austin’s Lane acts as a relief turning; closing it would only add to congestion. And those from the south side of the town who need to drive to King Street would otherwise have to take a longer route - indeed, if the similarly unwise attempt to close No Name Street proceeds, they would only add to the snake of traffic that would be forced around the Delf Street hairpin.	Many roads in Sandwich would not be deemed suitable as a ‘cut through’. However, considering the exceptionally narrow carriageway in Austins Lane, KCC would consider this to be particularly unsuitable. The joint work that the Sandwich Project Board partners are aiming to achieve promotes walking and cycling and would not be looking to keep this route open simply to help vehicles make a short cut when a wider and more suitable route is available via New Street. On balance the needs of pedestrians and safety considerations would be deemed more important than traffic flow.
Local resident	Object	If there was an emergency requiring fire crews, ambulance	During an emergency the bollards could be removed

		<p>or police lives could be lost whilst trying to locate the bollard keys (I understand keys would be kept at the Guildhall) What happens out of hours.</p> <p>The gas pipe problem was a very unfortunate one off and there are several other sites in Sandwich with gas pipes that could easily be hit are we going to close more roads just in case?</p>	<p>using a bolt cutter on the padlock, this is standard practice for emergency services.</p> <p>The gas pipe that was struck has subsequently been boxed in. However, closing Austins Lane is also about promoting walking and cycling throughout the town.</p>
Local Business	Object	<p>I have a business in King Street which we have had in the town for an amazing 28 years. We have deliveries to the shop and also we deliver many orders from our shop. We find it very difficult as it is when events are on in the town and roads are closed to get anywhere near our shop to collect our large and heavy PRODUCTS (text removed to maintain anonymity). At the moment we are able to use Austin's lane to get in and out when such events are on to collect from. If the road is shut we have nowhere to collect from. There are no designated loading bays for the businesses in town</p>	<p>During events it could be decided that Austins Lane remains open for business access. This could be pre-arranged via the Town Council and KCC Highways.</p>

Sandwich Town Council have seen the results of the consultation and would like to progress with the closure.

3. Recommendation required:

To approve the proposal so that KCC can progress the formal consultation required in order to make the required Traffic Regulation Order.

Contact Officers:	Tim Middleton, Principal Transport Planner (03000 412457)
Reporting to:	Tim Read, Head of Transportation (03000 411662)

Appendix A

Proposed Highway Works in your Area



Austins Lane, Sandwich

Consultation on proposals to stop vehicular access to Austins Lane in Sandwich

What are we planning to do?

Install removable bollards at each end of Austins Lane and create a Traffic Regulation Order to stop vehicular access to Austins Lane.

There would be no access to through traffic or day to day access for the residents unless required in an emergency such as a gas leak or to have scaffolding erected for property maintenance.

Why do we want to do this work?

This work is linked to the '*Which way for Sandwich, Final Report and Masterplan*' adopted by Sandwich Town Council in August 2016 to improve the pedestrian experience in the town.

Additionally a household gas pipe was struck by a vehicle in Austins Lane which has brought the issue to the attention of local councillors.

Have your say

The closing date for receipt of comments is **on Friday 29 September 2017**.

To have your say on this proposal please email sandwichconsultations@kent.gov.uk

Or write to:

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County Hall
Kent County Council
Maidstone
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or call:

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