

Agenda item: 

**Title of meeting:** Traffic and Transportation Committee

**Date of meeting:** 18 December 2014

**Subject:** Villiers Road closure point (TRO 43/2014)

**Report by:** Head of Transport and Environment

**Wards affected:** St Jude

**Key decision:** Yes/No

**Full Council decision:** Yes/No

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### 1. Purpose of report

To consider the public consultation responses to making the closure point in Villiers Road a permanent feature, following its installation under an Experimental Order. When objections are received to Traffic Regulation Orders, it is a statutory requirement to consider them and for a report to be taken to a formal decision meeting.

See [Page 5](#) for a summary of the public consultation response (TRO 43/2014)  
See [Page 8](#) for a summary of the public consultation response (ETRO 24/2013)

### 2. Recommendation

**That instead of continuing with the road closure on a permanent basis, Villiers Road is opened to one-way traffic in a westbound direction between The Vale and the current closure point.**

### 3. Background

In April 2013, the closure point was introduced just east of the entrance to Palm Court's car park; at the same time the southern end of Lennox Road South was closed to traffic. Lennox Road South was subsequently re-opened, and the Villiers Road closure continued under Experimental Order 24/2013 from 24 July 2013 as Palmerston Road became closed to traffic (except buses) north of Villiers Road.

Experimental Orders can be in operation for up to 18 months, meaning ETRO 24/2013 expires on 24 December 2014. Therefore, consultation has taken place to help determine whether or not to continue with the closure point under a permanent Order (TRO 43/2014), to re-open the road to through traffic (allowing the Experimental Order to lapse) or to identify an alternative.

#### 4. Reasons for recommendation

- 4.1 The recommendation represents a compromise that aims to accommodate the needs of residents of Villiers Road and of the adjacent area, along with the road network as a whole.
- 4.2 The comments received from residents of Southsea during the formal public consultation of both ETRO 24/2013 and TRO 43/2014 have been considered and are reflected in the recommendation.

The total responses showed 16 in favour of Villiers Road remaining closed, and 31 in opposition to that proposal. These are broken down as follows:

In favour - Villiers Road (15), Lennox Road South (1)

In opposition - Auckland Road West (4), Auckland Road East (5), Lennox Road South (1), Clarence Parade (1), Netley Road (1), Villiers Road (1), Palmerston Road (3 + 11 signatures on a letter), South Parade (1), Festing Grove (1), Farlington (1), Portsmouth (1)

- 4.3 Enabling traffic to travel westbound between The Vale and Palmerston Road will;

- allow Villiers Road to become part of the road network again, re-instating more of its capacity;
- reduce the potential for conflict between oncoming vehicles at the 2 bends at the western end;
- remove the necessity for larger vehicles to mount the pavement when vehicles try to pass each other;
- remove the need for occasional vehicles to turn round using private driveways and the pavements near to the current closure point;
- allow the current reduced level of traffic to continue by preventing the two-way through traffic (the situation prior to the closure in 2013);
- allow an improved environment for residents in conjunction with Palmerston Road being opened up to one-way traffic northbound.

#### 5. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

This report has undergone a preliminary equality impact assessment and there are no equality issues arising from this report.

## **6. Legal Implications**

- 6.1** A TRO may include provisions prohibiting or restricting the waiting of vehicles or the loading and unloading of vehicles. A TRO may also make provisions prohibiting, restricting or regulating the use of a road or any part of the width of a road by vehicular traffic of a particular class specified in the order subject to such exceptions as may be so specified or determined, either at all times or at times, on days or during periods so specified.
- 6.2** A proposed TRO must be advertised, the appropriate bodies notified and the public given a 3 week consultation period where members of the public can register their support or objections. If objections are received to the proposed order the matter must go before the appropriate executive member for a decision whether or not to make the order, taking into account the comments received from the public during the consultation period.
- 6.3** An experimental order is similar to a permanent traffic regulation order in that it is a legal document which imposes traffic and parking restrictions such as road closures, one-way streets, banned turns, bus/cycle lanes, controlled parking and on-street parking places. Such Orders are made under Sections 9 and 10 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and all other enabling powers after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with Schedule 9 to the 1984 Act.
- 6.4** Unlike a permanent order an experimental order can stay in force for a maximum of 18 months while its effects are monitored and the Council decides whether or not to make the provisions permanent. There is no public consultation before the experimental traffic order is brought into effect, but from its commencement date there is a 6-month public consultation that allows representations to be submitted based on experience of the traffic scheme in operation.

## **7. Finance Comments**

- 7.1** The scheme currently has features, such as signage, that would remain in place should the recommendation be approved. Additional costs required to implement the proposal are expected to be £5,000 and a proportion of this would also be necessary should the 18 month period lapse on the Experimental Order 24/2013 and the road be reverted to a two-way road.

The cost of carrying out the required works would be met from the Local Transport Plan fund.

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Signed by:  
Head of Transport & Environment Service

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
31 emails, 6 letters	Transport Planning, 4 <sup>th</sup> floor, Civic Offices

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by ..... on .....

.....  
Signed by:  
Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation

**Summary of public consultation responses to TRO 43/2014**

Support for the closure to remain	Objections to the closure remaining
<p><u>Resident, Villiers Road</u>            I vehemently support the closure being made permanent. Villiers Road is very narrow, has a sharp 'S' bend at the west end and is totally unsuitable for "through traffic". There are the many vehicular entrances to properties all along the south side, resulting in vehicular manoeuvres in and out. Residents are happy and relieved that the road is returned to a peaceful residential area in which to live, as it was intended. Being fully opened up to traffic with its narrow road and narrower pavements could result in an accident.</p>	<p><u>Resident, Auckland Road West</u>            Villiers Road was closed as a late addition to the Palmerson Road partial closure. It has increased 'rat run' traffic in the other roads. 2-way traffic has always passed each other slowly and the road has been safe. There is no historical basis on safety for this Order; larger vehicles could be prevented or 1-way traffic could be considered instead.</p>
<p><u>Residents, Villiers Road</u>            The order that has been in place for the past few months has been a big success and making the order permanent to continue this situation is a logical conclusion.</p>	<p><u>Resident, Auckland Road East</u>            You suggest the road is unsuitable for 2-way traffic, but it is suitable for 1-way traffic which you have not proposed. Blocking Villiers Road causes problem in other roads such as Auckland Road East, particularly when events take place on the seafront.</p>
<p><u>Residents, Lennox Road South</u>            We suffered years of distress with the onslaught of cars and taxis speeding in from Palmerston Road and screeching round into Maple Road (our back entrance and garage). We thoroughly recommend the permanent closure of Villiers Road at its west end.</p>	<p><u>Resident, Lennox Road South</u>            The proposal leaves 2-way traffic in Villiers Road and does not intend 1-way traffic. The reasons for the order given on the notice were misleading and invalid, referring to ETRO 23/2013 and that the Order has lapsed.</p> <p>This part of Villiers Road has double yellow lines on both sides, so it is all available for traffic, unlike other roads nearby that have parking on 1 or both sides. There is no justification to close the road to all traffic, which puts even more traffic on adjacent roads.</p> <p>Villiers Road was closed "<i>due to increased levels of traffic experienced since the introduction of Palmerston Road pedestrian zone</i>" Now that palmerston Road is to be re-opened to traffic, Villiers Road should likewise be restored to its original condition. There is no justifiable reason to continue with the closure.</p>
<p><u>Residents, Villiers Road</u>            The closure removes the short cut for taxis and non-residents down this narrow road which it was plagued with before the temporary order was put in place. The signage could be improved as some vehicles still drive along, reach the closure point and have to try and turn around in front of the houses.</p>	
<p><u>Resident, Villiers Road</u>            The 'no entry' has made a significant difference to this conservation area which I believe should be upheld.</p>	
<p><u>Resident, Villiers Road</u> - I support the "No Entry" becoming permanent.</p>	



Support for the closure to remain	Objections to the closure remaining
<p><u>Resident, Villiers Road</u> I confirm my support for the closure to be made permanent. Villiers Rd is not suitable for 2-way traffic; pedestrians frequently walk in the road under the canopy of the trees, which they could not do if the road were busier.</p>	<p><u>Resident, Clarence Parade</u> There is no reason for Villiers Road to be closed as it is no different from any other road in Portsmouth. How can it be classed as unsuitable for 2-way traffic: if it is unsuitable then make it 1-way. Once Palmerston Road is open the reason for Villiers Road being closed no longer exists.</p>
<p><u>Resident, Villiers Road</u> Prior to the 'no entry', Villiers Rd was used as a 'rat-run' by traffic, taxis in particular after picking up passengers from Palmerston Rd. The speed and volume of traffic was entirely inappropriate for a residential road with multiple driveways onto it - it appeared to be a clear run, despite the 20mph limit in place. The pedestrianisation of Palmerston Rd greatly enhanced the area and permitting northbound traffic again is a retrograde step. It is important that Villiers Road remains closed to traffic. If it remains closed and reduced traffic continues I would like to suggest the pedestrian areas on the corners of Maple Rd / Villiers Rd are widened, with wider paths, improved street furniture, planting and a further trend towards a pedestrianised Southsea.</p>	<p><u>Residents, Auckland Road East</u> Rather than restrict use of Villiers Road there is every reason to open it at least one way (west to east) to help traffic flow, especially as Palmerston Road is being re-opened for 1-way traffic. Villiers Road is no more unsuitable for traffic than Auckland Road East.</p>
<p><u>Residents, Villiers Road</u> The existing temporary closure as made an immense improvement to the quality of life for the residents of Villiers Rd and Maple Rd by reducing noise and dangerous amounts of traffic in such a narrow road. Children in the area can now feel safer due to the huge reduction in traffic. Prior to the closure the volume of traffic in Villiers Rd had become unbearable and dangerous.</p>	<p><u>Resident, Netley Road</u> Villiers Rd was closed along with Lennox Road South due to an increase in traffic as a result of Palmerston Rd being pedestrianised. As those 2 roads are now being opened up to traffic there is no reason why Villiers Road should remain closed to traffic. None of the roads in the vicinity of Palmerston Rd are suitable for large volumes of traffic. Roads should not be closed in isolation with no apparent review of the impact of traffic flow elsewhere. The closure does not address Southsea's needs as a whole, just a fortunate few that now live in a peaceful cul-de-sac.</p>
<p><u>Resident, Villiers Road</u> I support the decision for making the 'no entry' in Villiers Road a permanent no entry.</p>	<p><u>Resident, Auckland Road East</u> This proposal is not in the best interests of the majority of locals, but just to benefit the very few living in Villiers Rd by giving them a quiet cul-de-sac and causing a hindrance to others.</p> <p>Villiers Rd was blocked due to the sudden heavy usage of the road by taxi drivers taking a shortcut following the closure of Palmerston Rd. As that road is now being opened up it makes sense to also re-open Villiers Rd.</p> <p>Traffic should be dispersed fairly among the roads in the area instead of over-burdening some.</p>
<p><u>Resident, Villiers Road</u> The proposal has my full support. Villiers Rd is a narrow road which is unsuitable to be used for through traffic. Keeping the no entry is definitely the right decision.</p>	



Support for the closure to remain	Objections to the closure remaining
<p><u>Resident, Villiers Road</u> The experiment has been successful, in my opinion, and has addressed the issues of Villiers Road being unsuitable for 2-way traffic and as an alternative route to using Palmerston Road.</p>	<p><u>Resident, Auckland Road West</u> Villiers Road was closed as an unsuitable alternative route when Palmerston Road south was closed. Now it is to be re-opened, why can't traffic be allowed along Villiers Rd to exit into Palmerston Rd? Villiers Rd has double yellow lines on both sides, allowing sufficient room for 2-way traffic, whereas other roads in the city have less usable road width, even with parked cars. At present there is a significant volume of southbound traffic using adjacent roads, also narrow, which is likely to increase when Palmerston Rd is opened to northbound traffic. Villiers Rd should not be closed to through traffic; 1-way traffic to access Palmerston Road South should be allowed.</p>
<p><u>Resident, Villiers Road</u> I am strongly in favour of keeping this road closed for these reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The road is not suitable for 2-way traffic as it is too narrow and vehicles mount the pavement to get past each other, which is unsafe for pedestrians;</li> <li>- The road is used as a 'rat run' by taxis taking customers to pubs and restaurants on Palmerston Rd. This causes an inordinate amount of traffic on Friday and Saturday nights;</li> <li>- This is a residential road when children often play on the street. Their safety and well-being is of paramount importance;</li> <li>- There is no reason to open this road again until the council decides what is happening with Palmerston Rd. At present there is sufficient access to the Palmerston Rd areas via the seafront and Clarendon Rd.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Resident, Villiers Road</u> We suffer from vehicles frequently driving down Villiers Rd and turning round in the driveways after finding they cannot access Palmerston Rd. Taxis also drop off passengers for Palmerston Rd then turn around to get out. This produces noise pollution and wear &amp; tear on a small section of road / pavement. It sometimes causes access to gates to be obstructed. Will the rubbish and recycling collectors be able to drive through? If the road is closed off permanently, better signage is needed further up Villiers Rd indicating access for residents only, to discourage vehicles driving down and turning around.</p>
<p><u>Resident, Villiers Road</u> I am in favour of Villiers Road remaining closed.</p>	<p><u>Resident, Auckland Road East</u> Since the closure of Villiers Road the traffic in Auckland Road and Lennox Road has increased dramatically. There will be a nasty accident if the Villiers Road closure continues.</p>
<p><u>Resident, Villiers Road</u> The street is entirely unsuitable for the volumes of traffic experienced prior to the current layout. In particular the through-traffic from the taxi rank once located in Palmerston Rd was a serious late night issue. During the day, particularly when events took place on the seafront, the road was jammed with cars looking for non-existent parking spaces. Many drivers were disorientated and attempted 3-point turns in the narrow road, causing chaos.</p>	<p><u>Resident, Palmerston Road</u> The installation of the bollards has made life both difficult and sometimes dangerous for residents of the Palmerston Road area. The chaos in front of Palm Court indicates very bad traffic management by the council.</p>



Objections to the closure remaining

Residents, Palm Court, Palmerston Road

A petition signed by 11 residents indicates the bollards only benefit those living east of them. There is some merit in Villiers Rd being too narrow for 2-way traffic, but a greater degree of merit is to remove the bollards and have a west-east one-way. This would improve traffic flow and benefit more residents. The now-dead end off Palmerston Road is accommodating two-way traffic - the case for one-way traffic is clear.

**Summary of public consultation responses to ETRO 24/2013**

Support

Resident, Villiers Road

The closure was requested by residents due to the very high volume of traffic through Villiers Road caused by the pedestrianisation of Palmerston Road South. This closure has addressed the problem and we would request the closure remains.

Objections

Resident & Business owner, Palmerston Rd

The blockage of Villiers Rd has further increased traffic on Lennox Road South, and further aggravated the safety issues, causing larger vehicles to drive over the pavement. The lack of traffic access to Palmerston Rd as a result of the blocking affects business.

Resident, Auckland Road East

Residents and businesses alike are having to use the seafront and Lennox Road South, which again has to bear the excess traffic load for their day-to-day activities.

The only people benefitting from the closure are solely the residents on that road. They are now living in a quiet cul-de-sac and don't have to put up with traffic noise.

The council is urged to look at the whole picture rather than try and please a handful of people.

Resident, South Parade

It is ridiculous that Villiers Road was ever closed and blatantly obvious it needs reopening, even if it is to supply a one way road west to east as every road off Palmerston Rd is no entry. The turning area on Villiers Road is downright dangerous and does need to be reopened, allowing traffic to access Clarence Rd from Palmerston Rd.

Resident, Festing Grove and  
Business owner, Palmerston Road

The closure of Villiers Rd is a health & safety violation for fire engines, car jams and the narrow road just can't handle it. It limits people driving down to Southsea which is not good for businesses.





Objections

Resident, Portsmouth

I wish to join the petition against the close of Villiers Road. Please add my name to the list.

Resident, Auckland Road West

Auckland Road West and Netley Road are also unsuitable for high volumes of traffic due to their layout and status as minor roads; they are narrower than Villiers Road and have several right angle bends to navigate. The impact on this and other roads has not been considered.

Resident, Auckland Road West (a business owner of Clarendon Road expressed his agreement with the sentiments below).

This order will seem to be manna from heaven for the people living in Villiers Road; at a stroke you have created peace and tranquillity for them. However it has created a nightmare overnight and problems caused by traffic displacement for the rest of us.

Resident, Farlington

I have a special interest in these roads as an elderly relative lives in Palm Court and I frequently travel through Southsea to visit. Since the Villiers Road closure the residents of Palm Court have been plagued by the noise from cars trying to turn round in front of their homes. To reach the car park I now have to make an inconvenient detour down Lennox Rd South, into Auckland Road East, into Palmerston Rd and back into Villiers Road. I simply used to drive down Lennox Road South and along Villiers Rd.

## Public notice of the proposal

Dated: 16<sup>th</sup> October 2014

### **THE PORTSMOUTH CITY COUNCIL (VILLIERS ROAD) (NO ENTRY EXCEPT CYCLES) (NO.43) ORDER 2014**

Notice is hereby given that Portsmouth City Council is consulting the public on proposals within the above Order under Sections 1 – 4 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The effect would be to make the following measure operate on a permanent basis:

#### **A) NO ENTRY EXCEPT FOR CYCLES**

##### **Villiers Road**

- (a) Westbound past No.3 Villiers Road (no access through to Palmerston Road)
- (b) Eastbound past No.1 Villiers Road / Palm Court access (no access through to Lennox Road South)

#### **REASON FOR THE ORDER**

The "no entry" to eastbound traffic through Villiers Road from Palmerston Road is to be made permanent. Villiers Road is unsuitable for two-way traffic and as an alternative route to Palmerston Road. Therefore this Order proposes to make the effects of the experimental order permanent (ETRO 23/2013), which has now lapsed.

A copy of the draft Order and a plan may be examined at the Information Desk, Ground Floor, Civic Offices, Portsmouth during normal office hours. A copy of this Public Notice can be found on the City Council's website - visit [Portsmouth.gov.uk](http://Portsmouth.gov.uk) and search "traffic regulation orders 2014"

Persons wishing either to object to or support these proposals may do so by sending their representations in writing to Chris Christophi, Transport and Environment, Portsmouth City Council, Civic Offices, Portsmouth PO1 2NE, or via email to [engineers@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:engineers@portsmouthcc.gov.uk) quoting ref: **TRO 43/2014** by the **6<sup>th</sup> November 2014** stating the grounds of objection/support.

Under the provisions of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, any letters of representation that are received may be open to inspection by members of the public.

SIMON MOON, Head of Transport and Environment  
Portsmouth City Council, Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth PO1 2NE

*(End of Report)*