

**DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
ROAD TRAFFIC RESTRICTIONS
(AMENDMENT NO.8) ORDER 2021**

STATEMENT OF REASONS

The Order is made pursuant to section 1(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as it is considered expedient to make the Order for the following reasons:

- (a) for avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising;
- (c) for facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians); and
- (f) for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs.

In July 2020 the Department for Transport (DfT) launched '*Gear Change: A bold vision for cycling and walking*' and '*Cycle Infrastructure Design Local Transport Note 1/20*'. Both of these documents clearly set out the Government's commitment to a radical change in the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure - the value of cycling and walking in terms of physical health and mental wellbeing; the positive benefits to the environment in terms of better air to breathe and reduced noise pollution; and the positive impact on the economy for businesses in local streets is well documented.

The Tees Valley Combined Authority and five local authorities have developed a *Local Cycling and Walking Investment Plan*, following government guidance and utilising tools to identify the best routes to create in order to increase levels of walking and cycling.

In Darlington the first priority is to complete the route from West Park on the north west urban fringe to Darlington town centre. Segregated infrastructure exists from West Park as far as Brinkburn Road north of Cockerton local centre. The proposed extension to the route will provide a continuous route through Cockerton and along Woodland Road. This project is the design and construction of the first phase which provides the route nearest to the town centre connecting the Woodland Road/Hollyhurst Road junction to the town centre via Woodland Road, Outram Street and Duke Street.

Information and Analysis.

This Order relates to the proposed scheme on Duke Street, which includes:

- (i) 20mph speed limit including four raised tables to physically reduce traffic speed;
- (ii) One way operation eastwards (towards town) for all traffic;
- (iii) Stepped contraflow cycle lane (westwards from town);

- (iv) Widening of northern footway;
- (v) Pedestrian priority at side roads;
- (vi) Closure of Outram Street to vehicular traffic, whilst retaining access for two way cycle movement;
- (vii) Relocation of bus stop to Larchfield Street;
- (viii) Reduction in on street parking of 7 spaces;
- (ix) Provision of 4 loading bays, including one on Barnard Street - two to operate 08:00 – 18:00 and two to operate midnight to 10:00.

A temporary 20mph speed limit, one-way operation and a widened northern footway were put in place as part of Covid-19 social distancing measures in 2020. This has provided local residents and businesses with experience of key elements of this scheme and has received wide support. Compliance with the speed limit will be enforced through 4 raised tables at key junctions.

Whilst this has provided a safe environment for cyclists travelling eastwards, a segregated contraflow cycle lane is required to provide a route from the town centre westwards towards Cockerton and West Park.

As part of the temporary measures two loading bays were provided on the south side of Duke Street to facilitate loading/unloading for businesses, as well as a third one on Barnard Street. Previously delivery vehicles had either used parking bays on the south side or double yellow lines on the north side. This scheme therefore proposes to retain two loading bays at the western end to meet the needs of the convenience stores and will operate between midnight and 10:00; the loading bay at the eastern end of Duke Street and on Barnard Street will operate between 08:00 and 18:00 to meet the needs of the businesses at the western end of the street. Outside of these times the bays will revert to parking, limited to 2 hours. Five disabled bays will be retained at the western end of Duke Street, limited to 3 hours. Overall there is a loss of 7 on street parking spaces but this is mitigated by the opening of Winston Street West car park accessed off Barnard Street, which provides 25 spaces.

As part of the temporary measures the bus stop was relocated from Duke Street to Larchfield Street and no issues have been raised.

The scheme also proposes to close the southern end of Outram Street, mirroring a similar closure at the northern end of Outram Street at its junction with Woodland Road. The design will include a raised table to slow vehicular traffic on Duke Street and will provide a two way cycle lane to enable cyclists to continue their journey along Outram Street in both directions. Traffic levels on Outram Street are low – an average of 363 vehicles per 24 hours on weekdays or 340 vehicles per 24 hours over a 7 day week. This traffic will instead utilise the Larchfield Street junction if it is accessing the local residential streets. The closure of Outram Street enables a safer cycling and walking environment to be provided but also enables the creation of a loading bay and additional on street parking spaces, which cannot be provided if vehicle turning movements need to be catered for.

Safety concerns at the junction of Duke Street and Larchfield Street have been reviewed utilising traffic data, asset management information and previous road safety audits. The design has incorporated the recommendations including the speed limit reduction to 20mph, one way traffic operation, speed reduction measures and increasing the conspicuity of the junction through materials, signs and lines.

The Police, Darlington Association on Disability and other stakeholders have been consulted on the above proposals. There has been consultation with local residents and businesses between December 2020 and September 2021.