

**To:** Gravesham Joint Transportation Board  
**By:** KCC Highways & Transportation  
**Date:** 31/08/2022  
**Subject:** Gravesend Bus Hub – Clive Road Bus Gate  
**Classification:** Information Only

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**Summary:** This report provides a response to the letter dated 22 June 2022 from Cllr Broadley – Chair Gravesham JTB regarding the Clive Road Bus Gate.

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This report provides a response to the letter dated 22 June 2022 from Cllr Broadley – Chair Gravesham JTB regarding the Clive Road Bus Gate. General Fastrack items and other projects will continue to be reported separately.
- 1.2. The Gravesend Bus Hub (GBH) was completed on 18 May 2022 and a low-key opening event was held on 21 June 2022 with KCC Members and GBC Councillors in attendance. A short video of the bus hub opening has been produced and is available to view at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kyw6--e9Dnc>.
- 1.3. An integral part of GBH is the Clive Road Bus Gate, which was introduced in October 2017 as part of the Rathmore Road Improvement Scheme to reduce through traffic on Clive Road and Barrack Row.

## 2. Clive Road Bus Gate History

- 2.1. The Clive Road Bus Gate was introduced in October 2017 as part of the Rathmore Road Improvement Scheme which was granted planning in November 2014. This formed a major part of the Gravesend Transport Quarter (GTQ) masterplan, the final part being the construction of GBH.
- 2.2. One of the objectives of the GTQ masterplan was to reduce traffic in Clive Road to local access only, removing through traffic by creating a cul-de-sac, thus creating a safer environment for pedestrians and pedal cyclists. This was also to help remove the road as a barrier between the Thamesgate Shopping Centre and the railway station.
- 2.3. A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was signed on 24 August 2017 (this will also be consolidated in the Fastrack 2022 TRO). The TRO cites that 'No person shall, except under the direction or with the permission of a police constable in uniform, cause or permit any vehicle (except buses and pedal cycles) to enter or proceed into Barrack Row from Clive Road (westbound), Gravesend'. A Public Notice was published in October 2016 and documents were on deposit for review and comment until 21 November 2016.
- 2.4. All appropriate information and Regulatory signage was installed in 2017 as part of the Rathmore Road Improvement scheme including a 'Bus Gate' legend on the road surface. With the completion of GBH the Clive Road Bus Gate has been refreshed with re-positioned Regulatory signs and a new coloured surface incorporating the 'Bus Gate' legend.
- 2.5. Over the period since October 2017 there has been an increase in all vehicle types that are mis-using the Clive Road Bus Gate partly due to a distinct lack of enforcement by the Police, as this was seen as low-level crime and not a good use of limited Police resources. In March 2020 the misuse was recorded with, over a five-day average, a figure of 614 vehicles per day. In May 2022 this has risen to 1535 vehicles per day on the worst day recorded.

2.6. Since the completion of the bus hub and the commissioning of the new traffic signals in Darnley Road at the junction of Barrack Row, an increase of queuing traffic has been noticed at the Darnley Road / Rathmore Road traffic signal junction. This is generally attributed to there being too many vehicles creating a demand at Barrack Row caused by the misuse of the Clive Road Bus Gate.

### **3. Traffic Management Act Part 6**

3.1. As the Local Transport & Highway Authority, Kent County Council has a statutory duty to ensure the effective discharge of the 2004 Traffic Management Act (TMA), which entails a duty of care to help ensure safe passage for all road users and secure the provision of public passenger transport services within the county which would not be met without financial input from KCC.

3.2. Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act allows the highway network to be more effectively managed by the Highway Authority, allowing the civil enforcement of a variety of moving traffic contraventions in line with national standards. Enforcing these regulations aims to improve road safety, pollution levels, journey time reliability and public realms in locations with low compliance.

3.3. Despite the 2004 Act now being 18 years old, the legislation has never been introduced to Parliament and until recently these moving traffic contraventions could only be enforced by the police under criminal law. In September 2020, the Department for Transport (DfT) announced that they would be fully enacting the remaining elements of the Traffic Management Act, which grants enforcement powers to Local Highway Authorities under civil law.

3.4. On 20<sup>th</sup> May 2022 KCC formally applied to the Secretary of State for these powers. The Designation Order was granted by parliament on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022. KCC are now legally able to enforce moving traffic contraventions such as:

- Driving through a 'No Entry' sign
- Turning left or right when instructed not to do so
- Entering yellow box junctions when your exit is not clear
- Driving where motor vehicles are prohibited
- Driving on routes for buses only

3.5. This will be achieved using the latest Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) camera technology, approved by the Vehicle Certification Agency. When the contract is in place, KCC will be able to manage and improve the road network to deliver the key objectives of:

- Improving road safety
- Reducing network congestion
- Increasing public transport reliability
- Improving Air Quality
- Increasing the lifespan of highway assets

3.6 A new service provision is needed to deliver the statutory requirements of the Traffic Management Act 2004. KCC is now beginning the procurement process. The chosen supplier will be in place by late 2022 and should be ready to begin enforcement at suitable sites in early 2023.

### **4. Taxi Use and Clive Road Bus Gate**

4.1. Whilst Kent County Council recognise the crucial role that taxis play in our communities, we are also committed to improving bus usage, journey times and service reliability in order to reduce traffic pollution and congestion. Buses remain the optimum road vehicle for mass aggregation of individual journeys and have the greatest ability to reduce congestion.

- 4.2. There are no existing or planned taxi facilities in Clive Road. The Rathmore Road rank adjacent to Gravesend Railway Station is available and is accessible from all platforms as the station has a lift. Taxis still have the use of the rank in nearby New Road and taxis are also permitted to traverse Garrick Street and Barrack Row to exit the New Road rank. Therefore, no plausible reason exists for taxis to use Clive Road other than as a perceived shortcut or for an occasional drop-off.
- 4.3. The misuse of bus gates can severely impact on bus journey times and cause frustration to motorists who adhere to the regulations, often creating local conflict. The Clive Road bus gate is currently being assessed for future enforcement by KCC in line with the Traffic Management Act Part 6 powers outlined in section 3. A CCTV unit will record vehicles illegally making use of the gate, resulting in a penalty charge notice being issued to the vehicle owner. A first tranche of sites requiring enforcement has already been assessed and public engagement has taken place for these in preparation to begin enforcement in early 2023. The Clive Road bus gate is being assessed for inclusion in the second tranche of sites. Assessment will include 6 weeks of public engagement through the Let's Talk Kent consultation portal.

## **5. Potential Trial**

- 5.1. If the Clive Road Bus Gate is enforced in the future, and traffic misuse has generally ceased it may be possible to consider a trial for Licensed Taxis to use the Clive Road Bus Gate. This would have to consider if the trial was for occupied taxi use or also included empty taxis returning to rank.
- 5.2. However, there are practicalities in the creation of a temporary exemption / whitelist as this would be registration based and will not be easily amended. Whitelisting is causing a bit of an industry headache already and will be challenging even for the management of bus usage.

## **6. Conclusion**

- 6.1. Subject to the implementation of moving traffic enforcement at the Clive Road bus gate, a subsequent trial for taxis to use this route could be arranged providing agreement can be reached on taxi usage and the management of a temporary exemption / whitelist.

## **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1. For information only. Review with updates to Gravesham JTB as the implementation of Clive Road Bus Gate enforcement progresses.

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