

Thornton Corridor Edgemoor Drive Summary and Recommendations (Vol 1) June 2018

Locality Services Commissioned

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1. Background and Introduction

Background

The opening of Broom's Cross Road in August 2015, brought changes to traffic and travel patterns in the Thornton area. Since the road opened residents have been getting in contact and telling us about the issues they are experiencing. Some of the issues we are hearing about are long standing issues and some appear to be due to recent changes in travel patterns.

In response to this the Council has undertaken an extensive assessment of the traffic conditions within the A565 area in order to address the issues raised. The outcome of this work is the Thornton Corridor Study. From this corridor study a short term action plan has been developed. This short term action plan included the options to alleviate the problems which residents from Edgemoor Drive, Thornfield Road and Ronaldsway have been telling The Council about.

In the summer of 2017 the Council asked the residents of Edgemoor Drive, Thornfield Road and Ronaldsway their views on a range of options one of which was the closure of Edgemoor Drive. Of the options presented, the closure of Edgemoor Drive was favoured the most by the residents. Based on the results of this initial consultation a trial closure went into place in February 2018.

The closure was implemented on a trial basis so that the impact to both the Thornton estate as a whole and the wider network could be assessed.

The assessment of the impacts of the trial closure was based on results from the following

- A traffic monitoring plan to ensure that sufficient data was collected to allow the impact on the wider road network to be adequately assessed. Monitoring was undertaken using a variety of different methods.
- A wider public consultation, which expanded on the initial consultation area of Edgemoor Drive, Thornfield Road and Ronaldsway and included all the roads between Edgemoor Drive and Edge Lane, as well as a section of Moor Lane.

The results of the monitoring and public consultation exercises have been separated into two documents; Volume 2 reports the recorded and observed monitoring results of the trial closure of Edgemoor Drive, whilst Volume 3 reports the results of the public consultation exercise. A combined summary and recommendations are contained in Volume 1.

Scheme Objectives

The objectives of the traffic management scheme in Thornton were;

- Improve journey time reliability along the A565
- Decrease journey times along the A565
- Reduce rat-running through the Thornton Estate link roads (primarily Thornfield Road and Ronaldsway)
- Decrease peak time queueing on Edgemoor Drive
- Decrease speeds through the Thornton Estate
- Decrease overall traffic numbers within the Thornton Estate

The monitoring plan was developed to be able to assess the extent to which the trial closure met the scheme objectives

Introduction

This report will separate the positive and negative impacts that the monitoring exercise recorded. The report will also highlight the results of the public consultation exercise and present the options to take forward.

2. Monitoring

Monitoring Methods

The methods that the Council used to monitor the impact on the wider network comprised the following.

- Automatic Traffic Counters (ATC)
- Manual Turning Counts (MTC)
- Traffic Camera Monitoring
- Queue length monitoring
- Journey Time data
- Traffic signal operation data
- Google Map Traffic data

In addition, comments received from both residents and stakeholders were collated and formed part of the assessment.

The monitoring plan included areas of specific interest which the Council anticipated that the closure would affect most during the peak times. These include Edge Lane, The Crescent, Quarry Road / Moor Lane southbound and the Moor Lane northbound right turn lane (into Edge Lane).

3. Monitoring Results: Positive Impacts

A brief summary of the positive impacts measured from the monitoring survey is as follows.

3.1 A565 SOUTHBOUND TRAFFIC

The trial closure has seen a significant reduction in the peak time 'rippling effect' of southbound A565 traffic slowing down after the Edge Lane junction. The benefit of this is a decrease in congestion in and around the Edge Lane signal junction with the following effects

- An improvement in the overall consistency of the flow rate (i.e. traffic not at a standstill), through the Edge Lane signal junction and towards the Chesterfield Road junction.
- A 7.5% and 12.5% increase in the AM and PM flow rate respectively and hence southbound traffic through the signal junction from Quarry Road.
- A decrease of 2 minutes in the average southbound peak journey time between the Edge Lane junction and the Moor Lane roundabout at Crosby Village; from an average of 3 min 30 secs recorded in January to an average of 1 min 30 secs in April.

3.2 THE ESTATE

The monitoring results indicate a marked reduction of nearly 20% in the amount of traffic entering and exiting the Estate as a whole, with the greater benefits seen in the roads further west.

The results also show a definitive East / West split in terms of gains with the roads closest to the A565 showing decreases whilst the two roads furthest east, Larchfield Road and St William Road showed increases.

4. Monitoring Results: Negative Impacts

A brief summary of the negative impacts measured from the monitoring survey is as follows.

4.1 EDGE LANE

The trial closure has resulted in longer westbound, peak time queues on Edge Lane, with observed peak time queues frequently stretching back up to and beyond the Water Street junction and towards Drummond Road. This increase in queue lengths translates to a recorded average peak hour journey time along the length of Edge Lane of approximately 6 min 40 secs, which is an **increase of 1 min 20** secs from the 'pre-closure' figures.

Increased queue lengths and an increase in the westbound journey time along Edge Lane have resulted in a number of associated issues that have been observed or reported during the trial period.

- Rat-running through The Crescent Monitoring Data / camera observations
- An increase in secondary rat-running through the Thornton Estate via St William Road and Thornfield Road also on the Edge Lane service road – suggested by the Monitoring Data / public feedback
- Difficulty in exiting the Estate onto Edge Lane especially for roads without a 'Keep Clear' marking with the Edge Lane junction suggested by camera observations
- Increase in noise and air pollution non-recorded.
- Difficulty in accessing properties public feedback
- Increase in taxi costs public feedback

4.2 A565 (MOOR LANE) NORTHBOUND

The trial closure has seen a marked increase in the usage of the right turn lane at the A565 / Edge Lane signals which has led to a number of detrimental impacts to both the junction and northbound traffic

- Congestion has become worse both on the northbound approach lanes and as a junction overall, especially during the AM peak. During the AM peak the efficiency of both northbound lanes has decreased over the duration of the closure, leading to increased congestion, whilst the PM peak has retained an amount of spare capacity
- Queue length surveys indicate an AM and PM increase in the northbound straight ahead / left lane and the right turn lane.
- A recorded average northbound journey time of 7 min 57 secs which represents an **increase of** 1 min 40 secs compared to the pre-closure figures.
- A marked decrease in the consistency of the northbound flow increasing the likelihood of congestion.
- The AM / PM peak periods lasting longer.

4.3 THE CRESCENT

The Crescent has seen a **30% increase** in traffic flows, predominantly westbound, following the trial closre. The increase is assumed to be largely rat-running traffic, some of which would previously have used Thornfield Road.

The main issues observed from CCTV images are as follows

- Increased usage of the Thornfield Rd / Edge Lane / Crescent junction.
- An increase in traffic in an area frequented by pedestrians / school children.
- Traffic on the A565 southbound slowing down to let traffic exit The Crescent.

4.4 THE ESTATE

The results also showed that there wasn't an overall reduction of the 85th percentile speed throughout the Estate, with post –closure speeds staying similar to the pre-closure figures, with a couple of notable exceptions, including Thornfield Road which saw a marked increase.

Whilst this isn't necessarily a negative impact a reduction in speed was one of the scheme objectives and although public reported a reduction in the consultation feedback, this was not shown in the measured traffic counts.

5. **Public Consultation**

Public Consultation

The public consultation strategy is set out below:

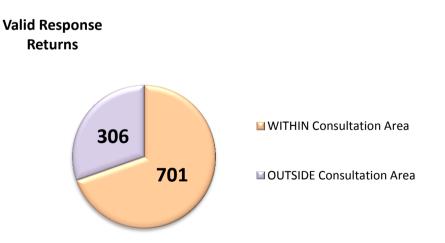
- Distribution of consultation packs with a free post returns envelope to the defined Consultation Area
- An online e-form available on the Councils website <u>www.sefton.gov.uk/thorntoncorridor</u> to allow residents to respond to the consultation; either within the Consultation Area or outside.
- The availability of a service to post out forms to households who wanted to respond to the consultation but were outside the defined Consultation Area and were unable to do so online.
- Every adult within each household was eligible to respond to the consultation.

The defined Consultation Area was bounded by Moor Lane, Edge Lane, Drummond Road, Edgemoor Drive and included all the Estate roads between. In total a consultation pack was delivered to **978** properties within the defined Consultation Area with the following options

Option	Proposal
А	Keep the closure and make it permanent
B Re-open the road and investigate alternative traffic management measures	

A summary of the responses is as follows

- 1007 valid responses in total
- 701 valid responses were received from the defined Consultation Area from 417 properties, representing an overall turn-out of 43%.
- 306 valid responses were received from outside the Consultation Area



6. **Public Consultation Results**

The option which received the most votes is

Option A – Keep the closure and make it permanent.

This response is consistent for both the replies solely within the Consultation Area and when combined with the responses from outside the Consultation area. Table 6.1 and the subsequent pie-charts summarise the voting results.

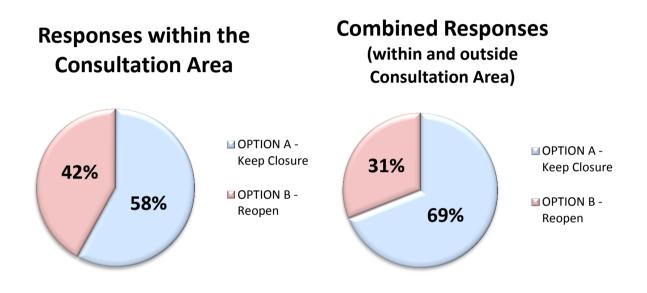


Table 6.1 Results summary	Number of Valid responses	Percentage
Within the consultation area		
A – Keep the closure and make it permanent	408	58%
B – Re-open the road and investigate alternative traffic management measures	293	42%
Total	701	
Outside the consultation area		
A – Keep the closure and make it permanent	288	94%
B – Re-open the road and investigate alternative traffic management measures	18	6%
Total	306	
All responses (combined)		
A – Keep the closure and make it permanent	696	69%
B - Re-open the road and investigate alternative traffic management measures	311	31%
Total	1007	

For responses within the consultation area only, OPTION A received 16% more votes than option B, whereas if all responses are combined OPTION A received **38% more** of the votes, representing a significant vote for OPTION A from outside the consultation area. Within the Consultation Area the pattern of voting is highlighted in the table 6.2 below with the following summary;

- There is an East / West pattern in both the voting and the turn-out. With roads in the east of the estate more likely to vote for OPTION B reopen but with a lower turn-out than the west side who were more likely to vote for OPTION A and have a higher turn-out.
- The results show that 8 out of the 22 roads (not including Link Av) voted in favour of OPTION A Keep the closure with an average turn-out of 59% for these roads.
- The results show that 13 out of the 22 roads (not including Link Av) voted in favour of OPTION B Re-open with an average turn-out of 29% for these roads
- Thornfield Rd, Ronaldsway, Larchfield Road, west side of Edgemoor Drive and St William Road, would have been considered the roads most affected by the pre-closure traffic. All these roads voted in favour of OPTION A.
- The two roads which the monitoring results suggested the trial closure had least benefits, 'The Crescent' and 'Part of Edge Lane' both voted in favour of OPTION B. Turn-out for these two roads was 13% and 32% respectively.

Table 6.2 Voting by Road	Turn -out	A or B?	Option A %	Option B %
Part of Moor Lane	52%	А	52%	48%
Part of Edge Lane	32%	В	16%	84%
The Crescent	13%	В	0%	100%
Edgemoor Drive West	72%	А	96%	4%
Edgemoor Drive East	43%	В	41%	59%
Thornfield Road	77%	А	97%	3%
Ronaldsway	65%	А	71%	29%
Link Avenue				
Gorsefield Ave	54%	А	58%	42%
White Meadow Drive	27%	В	26%	74%
Whinfield Road	41%		50%	50%
Sorany Close	50%	В	0%	100%
Larchfield Road	50%	А	69%	31%
Amaury Road & Close	46%	В	40%	60%
Fern Hey	60%	А	59%	41%
Lower Hey	24%	В	37%	63%
Radburn Close & Road	33%	В	30%	70%
Stile Hey	28%	В	40%	60%
St William Road & Way	45%	А	81%	19%
Seven Acre Road	27%	В	12%	88%
Edgemoor Close	21%	В	13%	88%
Coney Crescent	20%	В	19%	81%
Drummond Road	18%	В	20%	80%

Analysis of the responses from outside the Consultation Area shows an overwhelming vote in favour of OPTION A; 288 votes for, compared to 18 votes for OPTION B. Voting from the L23 postcode and the borough of Sefton accounted for a large proportion of the responses from outside the Consultation Area.

Table 6.3 Location of Responses outside the consultation area				
Postcode District / Area	District / Post Town	No of Eligible Votes	A – Keep the Closure	B – Re- open
L23	Blundellsands, Brighton-le-Sands, Crosby, Little Crosby, Thornton	133	117	16
Sefton	Borough of Sefton (excluding the L23 postcode above)	86	85	1
L & PR	Liverpool and Preston	48	48	0
	Other Postal Town Districts	39	38	1
	Total	306	288	18

7. **Respondents Comments**

Over half the respondents, 553 out of the 1007 received, took the time to provide detailed comments regarding the trial closure.

The three key positive and negative issues regarding the trial, which received the most mentions within the comments, have been listed separately below.

Table 7.1a Positive Feedback issue	Number of Mentions
Safer for residents & Children / Improved Road Safety / reduced speeding	159
Improved / Smoother traffic flow	89
Reduced air / noise pollution	52

Table 7.1b	Number of
Negative Feedback issue	Mentions
increased congestion \ general traffic \ journey times	88
increase in travel costs - taxi fares & fuel costs	25
More difficult exit /access to the estate / parking	14

Alternative Traffic Management Measures

A number of respondents included comments on alternative traffic management measures. These have been reviewed, but the Council does not consider the following to be viable options

- Move the Aldi entrance onto Virgins Lane
- 'Access Only' signs onto the Estate roads
- 'Access Only' signs with automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) cameras
- Close roads; Thornfield Road / Ronaldsway / St William Road
- Restrict Access into Estate by means of mechanical barriers / rising bollards

It is also worth mentioning that the following option was mentioned a number of times in the public responses but is not considered viable either

• Open Cranfield Road and /or Rosemoor Drive

The potential Port Access road through Rimrose Valley received a number of mentions with the overall public perception that it will benefit traffic flows on Moor Lane; however Highways England have not yet published their assessment of what the impact would be along the A565 corridor and therefore cannot be assessed.

The following two alternatives are considered viable options

- Allow traffic to turn into Edgemoor Drive from Moor Lane.
- Increase the length of the A565 Northbound 'right turn lane' (This would require the widening of the A565 slightly and may have potential scheme costs in the region of £500K).

8. Friends of Edgemoor Drive Petition

A report including a survey and petition to keep Edgemoor Drive closed was submitted to Sefton Council on 12th April 2018 by the Friends of Edgemoor Drive action group.

- The petition was undertaken by a group of residents and collected **634** signatures in favour of the closure, comprising of 565 signatures from roads within the Estate and 69 from outside.
- Signatures were collected from 11 roads within the Estate. Moor Lane, Edge Lane and The Crescent were not included in the petition area.
- As part of the exercise to collect the petition a door-to-door survey of households within the estate was also undertaken, with a total of 513 households included as part of the survey.
- The results of the survey suggest 66% in favour of the closure
- Positive feedback from households surveyed centred on safety, quality of life, and the community, which was consistent with the comments received in the Council exercise (refer to Section 7).
- Negative feedback from households surveyed centred on longer journey times and increased taxi costs, which was consistent with the comments received in the Council exercise (refer to Section 7).
- The report also contains feedback from a focus group meeting held on the 3 March 2018 and attended by over 90 people.

9. **Review of Scheme Objectives**

The extent to which the trial closure achieved the original objectives has been assessed.

Scheme Objective	Achieved / Partially Achieved / Not Met
Improve journey time reliability along the A565	Partially Achieved
Decrease journey times along the A565	Partially Achieved
Reduce rat-running through the Thornton Estate link roads (primarily Thornfield Road and Ronaldsway)	Achieved
Decrease peak time queueing on Edgemoor Drive	Achieved
Decrease speeds through the Thornton Estate	Not Met
Decrease overall traffic numbers within the Thornton Estate	Achieved

The trial closure has largely been successful in meeting the scheme objectives, with only a decrease in speeds through the Estate not being realised. The scheme objectives along the A565 have only been partially met with journey time and journey time reliability improving in the southbound direction on Moor Lane but worse northbound.

The trial closure has also however seen a number of positive and negative impacts on the wider network; refer to sections 3, 4 and 7.

10. Assessment Timetable

17 th March to 13 th April	Public Consultation Period on trial closure
13 th April to 20 th June **	Monitoring records and public responses collated, reviewed and documented
Wednesday 20 th June	Cabinet Member and Ward Councillor briefing by Council Officers
Wednesday 20 th June	Option A and Option B Presentations made by invited members of the public to Cabinet Member, Ward Councillors and Council Officers at Bootle Town Hall
Week commencing Monday 2 nd July	Confirmation of Cabinet Member decision and publication of Cabinet Member report

** The number of responses received from the public consultation was higher than anticipated which caused the collation and review period to exceed the initial estimate.

11. **Options for Consideration**

OPTION A: KEEP THE CLOSURE:

This was the overall popular vote from the public consultation (receiving 58% support), especially in the west of the estate (which also had a higher voting turn-out than the east side). A petition (with 634 signatures) to keep the road closed has also been submitted – see last paragraph.

PROS

The trial showed marked benefits to the southbound A565 flow rate with a reduction in congestion from the Edge Lane signals and an improved southbound journey time. It is worth noting there could be a potential traffic calming scheme along Ince Road which may relocate some rat-runners onto the A565, The improvements to the southbound flow would therefore benefit this potential increase.

The trial shows significant benefits to the general amenity of the Estate with traffic numbers (and ratrunners) also reduced. Public feedback highlighted the benefits including improved quality of life, road safety and reduced noise etc.

CONS.

This option does however have some negatives, most notably the increase in the queues on Edge Lane (stretching back as far as Drummond Rd), the increase in congestion and journey time to the Moor Lane northbound traffic, leading up to the Edge Lane signals and a significant increase in traffic on The Crescent.

In terms of the negatives to the north bound lanes it is worth bearing in mind potential future housing developments close to the Broom's Cross roundabout and the potential for future traffic growth along the A565 corridor.

Within the estate there are some negatives for the Estate including increased taxi costs, difficulty in exiting / entering the estate and a feeling of isolation.

Interestingly a large proportion of the public feedback suggests a reduction in speeding cars however the traffic surveys suggests the trial has made little difference to the 85th percentile speed.

Mitigating Measures

There are limited mitigating measures available to address some of the negatives. The proposed Buckley Hill junction improvements should divert traffic numbers away from Edge Lane, especially in the AM peak and may present the opportunity to introduce a new green left turn arrow on the signals at the exit on Edge Lane – it is hoped that these measures would have a positive impact on westbound queue lengths.

The removal of the existing Quarry Road signals left turn green arrow may assist in reducing the number of southbound A565 rat-runners by removing the advantage that the inside lane (Quarry Road) currently offers. This option can only be considered however if the Buckley Hill scheme reduces the current numbers of Quarry Road left turners.

'Keep Clear' markings on the junctions of the Estate roads with Edge Lane may help in keeping these junctions free from blocking cars.

The northbound right turn lane on Moor Lane could be extended however this would be expensive and require land acquisition.

Public feedback suggested a number of alternative traffic management measures such as 'access only' signs, road closures and Open Cranfield Road and /or Rosemoor Drive – The Council do not consider these as viable.

The potential Port Access road through Rimrose Valley received a number of mentions with the overall public perception that it will benefit traffic flows on Moor Lane; however the potential impact is currently unknown as Highways England has not published their assessment yet and therefore cannot be assessed by the Council.

Keep the Closure - was the option favoured by the *Friends of Edgemoor Drive* (FoED) survey and the door-to-door petition (signed by 634 people). FoED mentioned the introduction of a Cumfy Bus within the estate however the Council have not had any dialogue with Merseytravel about this proposal. Also FoED queried the increase taxi fares being charged by some companies and have spoken to the Council's taxi licensing dept.

OPTION B: RE-OPEN EDGEMOOR DRIVE:

This option received 42% of the vote in the Consultation exercise and was a popular vote on the east side of the Estate (although with a voting turn-out of less than 30%). The two roads which the monitoring suggested came out worst during the trial; Edge Lane and The Crescent both voted to re-open. Re-opening the road would provide an additional outlet to / from the Estate than Edge Lane.

PROS

Re-opening Edgemoor Drive would see significant benefits to the current issues on both the queues on Edge Lane and the capacity issues to the northbound A565 lanes, which saw detrimental impacts as part of the trial closure. Traffic numbers on The Crescent would also be expected to lower.

Improving the northbound A565 would have benefits when bearing in mind potential future housing developments at the Brooms Cross roundabout and the potential for future traffic growth along the corridor.

CONS

Re-opening Edgemoor Drive would remove the benefits seen on the A565 southbound flows with an expected increase in congestion from the Edge Lane signals. This would have a detrimental impact when considering future traffic growth along the corridor from housing and potential displacement of some southbound rat-running traffic from Ince Road.

Re-opening Edgemoor Drive would see rat-running traffic return to the estate, especially on Thornfield Road, Edgemoor Drive and Ronaldsway – similar to the pre-trial closure levels. The benefits to the general amenity of the Estate experienced under the trial would be removed.

Mitigating Measures

If the road was re-opened there are a limited number of measures that could be adopted to mitigate the negatives that would return. The Buckley Hill junction improvements should divert traffic numbers away from Edge Lane, especially in the AM peak and may also reduce the numbers of left turning traffic from Quarry Road southbound (into Edge Lane). This reduction in left turning traffic may present the opportunity to remove the existing Quarry Road left turn green arrow on the signals, which would remove the advantage that the inside lane (Quarry Road) currently offers rat-runners and may reduce the numbers of rat-runners. Traffic calming measures would also be expected to be proposed within the Estate to reduce speeds and deter rat-runners.

Public feedback suggested a number of alternative traffic management measures such as 'access only' signs, road closures and Open Cranfield Road and /or Rosemoor Drive – After review the Council do not consider these as viable.

The potential Port Access road through Rimrose Valley received a number of mentions with the overall public perception that it will benefit traffic flows on Moor Lane; however the potential impact is currently unknown as Highways England has not published their assessment yet and therefore cannot be assessed by the Council.

12. Recommendation

The following recommendation has been made by Councillor John Fairclough. Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Locality Services.

"After careful consideration of the results from both the traffic monitoring exercise, the public consultation exercise and the representations made by the local community at Bootle Town Hall, *I*, in full agreement with the Manor Ward Councillors have instructed the Council to proceed in making the trial closure permanent.

In making this decision I acknowledge the marked improvements the closure has had on the southbound flows and journey times along the A565 (towards Crosby) and the significant improvements the closing of Edgemoor Drive has made to the overall amenity of the Estate. From which, I and the Ward Councillors are keen to work with the local community to further enhance the social and health benefits that the closure has brought to the Estate.

I recognise that the closure has had some negative impacts on the wider Thornton network and as such I have instructed the Council to investigate options to mitigate these impacts. These will include the following;

- The Buckley Hill Lane junction improvement scheme to reduce traffic numbers along Edge Lane.
- The investigation into the feasibility of the reconfiguration of the A565 / Edge Lane signals and timings to introduce a new left turn green arrow on the exit from Edge Lane.
- The investigation into the feasibility of the reconfiguration of the A565 / Edge Lane signals to remove the existing left turn green arrow on Quarry Road to reduce the benefits to rat-running traffic.
- Keep clear markings to be provided at the junctions of Edge Lane and Ronaldsway / Larchfield Road / St William Road to avoid the blocking of these junctions from queuing traffic
- The assessment of the impact that the proposed Port of Liverpool access scheme would have on the A565 corridor.
- Improved public transport links within the Estate.
- Further traffic monitoring of the future impacts to the northbound A565 flow with a view to investigate the practicalities to extend the right turn lane and the feasibility of obtaining funding for any such scheme.

I would to thank everyone who took the time and effort to respond to the public consultation, which saw over a thousand votes received with more than half having comments attached. This public feedback has proved extremely useful in assisting in the decision making process. Finally on behalf on the Council I would like to thank those who attended Bootle Town Hall to make representations on behalf of the local community. I appreciate the trial closure has seen many people from within the Thornton Estate having strong and differing views, however I firmly believe the closure will prove to be to the benefit of the estate as a whole and to the wider Thornton area".

> Councillor John Fairclough. Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Locality Services

13. Implementation Timetable

A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) will be required to make the closure permanent.

The existing temporary barriers will remain in place until the TRO has been confirmed. This process is likely take up to 3 months to complete after which time the permanent closure will be constructed. This is anticipated to be in September / October.

The permanent closure will be at the junction of Edgemoor Drive and Moor Lane and will be expected to be similar in arrangement to the existing closure at the Rosemoor Drive / Edgemoor Drive junction.