

14-Feb-2026

To: Buckinghamshire Highways Consultations
CC: Chesham TC Planning Committee

CHESHAM EXPERIMENTAL TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER -
RESPONSE TO CONSULTATION

The Chesham Society have a number of concerns and objections to the proposals currently out for consultation.

1. The context is important. The condition of the town centre with a rising number of vacant shop units and little sign of the trend being reduced in the short term is a primary local concern. Many resident and traders view the rundown of the centre as one of the fundamental issues to be tackled going forward. It follows that any proposal which fails to deliver a positive message and positive impacts on local businesses and town centre users should be avoided at all costs.
2. The majority of the centre is pedestrian focussed and is a pleasant mainly traffic free environment. This is a one of the attractions of the centre for shoppers - anyone with prams, buggies, wheelchairs and walking aids really appreciate the environment. Anything which consciously permits increased vehicles in the pedestrian zones is not acceptable in principle, so there is a need to have a safety audit prepared alongside the package of proposed changes. In addition to the generality of pedestrian safety, it needs to be remembered that at the beginning and end of the school day, there are considerable numbers of cross town movements by schoolchildren. This is something which must be looked at in the safety audit.
3. The advertised proposals seem to be a technical and procedural exercise by Highway Engineers. This is understandable as a purely administrative operation, but it fails to take a comprehensive approach. It is regrettable that there seems to be no report on the impacts of the changes. The Society would request that no decision is taken without an inter departmental assessment of the effects of the changes involving highways, planning and regeneration teams in the Council.
4. The proposals are poorly presented and difficult to follow. It would be better if there was a graphic summary based on a street map, with 'before' and 'after' situations clearly identified.
5. The intention of charging event's organisers for dispensations or suspensions is really most deplorable. Again, the Council must appreciate the context. Events in the town centre are an important part of the attraction and what makes the centre a draw for visitors and residents alike. They are an essential offset to the loss of shops which we

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have seen over the last four or so years, so any extra costs that might be imposed are a deterrent to those organisations wanting to put on an event in the centre. It is worth remembering that some of these organisations are local charities e.g. The Air Ambulance, or small scale local artisan type businesses who are struggling with cost burdens in any case. The last thing they need are any extra operating charges.

6. Should additional charges be levied despite our objections, we strongly suggest that these be invested in maintaining and improving the High Street. We would remind the council that the revenue from Star Yard and other nearby parking is dependent on the continued prosperity of the High Street, which cannot be guaranteed.

Regards,

Dr James Conboy,
Chairman

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