

SUMMARY OF OBJECTIONS AND OFFICER RESPONSES

No	Objector Comment	DBC Response
1	<p>The crossovers should remain open. The speed limit on the A68 should be reduced to 30mph and speed cameras should be installed instead.</p>	<p>The current 70mph speed limit on the A68 complies with national guidance when setting speed limits. Durham Constabulary will not support a 30mph speed limit on a rural dual carriageway. Safety Camera signage on the A68 to maintain the 70mph speed limit is an option but this proposal must have the full support of Durham Constabulary.</p>
2	<p>The underlying problem of safety is the bottleneck approaching Swan House roundabout from Heighington and the blatant disregard for the speed limit on the dual carriageway down to the A1(M). Closure of crossings directly related to a homestead would mean a lengthy diversion and is counterproductive to the Council's 'Go Green' policy. The only workable solution is traffic lights at Burtree Lane crossover and a 10mph reduction in the 70mph speed limit.</p>	<p>It is unfortunate that the proposed crossover closures will result in additional travel, however when balancing potential accident reduction against extra journey time, officers consider this to be acceptable.</p> <p>The provision of traffic signals at the Burtree Lane junction would require considerable alterations to the road layout and the cost of this work is not financially viable. There is also a real potential that this type of junction at this location could actually increase accidents. Shunt type accidents occur at traffic light installations and at Burtree Lane the current speed limit and horizontal alignment increase the concern.</p> <p>The current 70mph speed limit on the A68 complies with national guidance and Durham Constabulary will not support any speed limit reduction.</p>
3	<p>The current temporary closure is causing a lot of disruption along the A68. The speed limit is now far too fast to accommodate this diversion and the subsequent increase in volume of slower moving traffic. There is also an increase in volume of traffic into Cockerton.</p> <p>There can be a better response to road safety, increased mileage and causing a detrimental increase in traffic flow back towards the already over congested Cockerton Village.</p> <p>Can you please re-consider your decision to close this important link road to local people?</p>	<p>The temporary diversion on the A68 was installed by A-One in order to carry out essential bridge repairs on the A1(M) and there was a temporary 30mph speed limit on part of the southbound approach to the A1(M). Although the crossover closures and diversion route had nothing to do with Darlington Borough, the arrangement has been a useful exercise in assessing the effects of permanent crossover closures. The scheme appears to work well and there have been very few reported incidents compared to when the crossovers were open. At the Burtree Lane junction there has not been a single reported accident since the crossover was closed temporarily.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Ctd/..</p>

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3 Ctd/.		We are confident that the increased traffic through Cockerton is a temporary problem until the temporary works end and motorists start using the A1(M) as an alternative route across town.
4	<p>The Burtree Inn has never been made aware of a serious road traffic accident.</p> <p>The temporary closure of the crossover has caused great hardship to the Pub and business has lost a minimum of 30% of its turnover.</p>	<p>Darlington Borough Council has a duty to investigate accident cluster sites. Accidents have been reported in the local press so the Pub should be aware of the problem.</p> <p>The ever present accident problem at the Burtree Lane junction must be addressed urgently and it is unfortunate that the proposed remedial measures may have an effect on a local business. However, Burtree Lane itself is not closed and can be accessed from Whessoe Road/Burtree Lane. An alternative route to access Burtree Lane from Darlington via Swan House Roundabout is to be clearly signed.</p>
5	<p>The current road works have made the A68 a race track and this will continue if Burtree Lane crossover is closed permanently. The increase in speeds will result in a serious accident. The closure will mean a journey of 7.5 miles to the nearest shop.</p>	<p>There is a concern that speeds may increase slightly after the permanent closure of the crossovers. Surveys will be undertaken to monitor speeds and if necessary Durham Constabulary have agreed to undertake enforcement campaigns.</p>
6	<p>Considerable concerns over the safety implications of closing the farm crossover outside Bottom House Farm. It is currently safer to use the crossover to access the farm rather than turning left, as vehicles would have to occupy the outside lane in order to access the farm. This unorthodox method of access is not safe.</p>	<p>We appreciate that the left turn into Bottom House Farm is far from ideal but the right turn through the central reserve is also unsafe. Long vehicles are currently stopping in the outside lane of the northbound carriageway before turning right through the crossover to access the farm. Large agricultural vehicles have also been witnessed straddling the outside lanes of both carriageways to use the crossover outside Bottom House Farm.</p> <p>The detour is minimal due to the proximity of the roundabouts and the left turn in is deemed safer than the current practice.</p> <p>Additional farm warning signs will be installed to increase the awareness of the farm access.</p>

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7	<p>There has been a considerable decline in our weekly income since the temporary closure of the crossover. Customers have been deterred by the addition of approximately four miles on the journey length. Traffic lights and a 50mph speed limit should be considered instead of closure.</p>	<p>See point 2 above regarding the provision of traffic lights and a reduced speed limit.</p>
8	<p>Excess speed is the cause of accidents; the speed limit should be reduced to 30mph on the A68 and enforced with a speed camera.</p>	<p>See point 1 above regarding the reduction of the speed limit.</p>
9	<p>The accidents occur away from the farm crossover on the faster section of the A68. The crossover is vital for safe access to the farm by heavy goods vehicles.</p> <p>Access to the Bottom House Farm is hidden by the bend in the road making it difficult to judge. By using the crossover you have a clearer view of traffic coming on the opposite carriageway.</p>	<p>See point 6 above regarding Bottom House Farm.</p>
10	<p>The route is not only quicker but means that we do not have to travel through Cockerton. The alternative route is approximately three miles extra and is now a very busy fast road. Can a roundabout or traffic lights be considered for Burtree Lane crossover?</p>	<p>See point 3 above regarding additional traffic through Cockerton.</p> <p>The provision of a roundabout would be suitable if sufficient funds were available. A roundabout would require additional land and the diversion of public utility apparatus. These costs would run into hundreds of thousands of pounds and is not affordable.</p>
11	<p>Has anyone suggested a roundabout? Drivers would slow down and it would cut down on CO₂ emissions</p>	<p>See point 10 above regarding the provision of a roundabout.</p>
12	<p>The crossover at Bottom House Farm is vital for safe access by heavy goods vehicles.</p> <p>Access to the farm entrance is hidden by the bend in the road making it difficult to judge. By using the crossover you have a clearer view of traffic coming on the opposite carriageway.</p>	<p>See point 6 above regarding Bottom House Farm.</p>
13	<p>The situation you will create at Bottom House Farm will be far more dangerous for heavy goods vehicles. Why can't traffic lights be installed at Burtree Lane to slow the traffic down?</p> <p>I also object to the scheme on environmental grounds as a car going to Teesside would travel an extra four miles a day, which is 20 miles per week, pumping out unnecessary pollution.</p>	<p>See point 6 above regarding Bottom House Farm and point 2 regarding the installation of traffic lights.</p>

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14	<p>The crossovers opposite Holly House and Bottom House Farm should remain open as there have been no reported accidents at these sites.</p> <p>The crossovers at Coldsides, Humbleton and Swan House Farms should remain open if traffic lights are installed at Burtree Lane.</p> <p>The closure of the crossovers will result in excessive speeds and will adversely affect the daily journeys of residents.</p> <p>The estimated cost of traffic lights at Burtree Lane should not be the crucial factor.</p> <p>Excess journeys are in contradiction to the Council's declared policy of encouraging a reduction in car usage.</p>	<p>There have been no recorded personal injury accidents at Holly House and Bottom House Farm but there is a real concern that if the crossovers were to remain open an accident will occur because of large agricultural vehicles straddling both carriageways. The problem has been raised on many occasions by the Police and members of the public and on this occasion we are taking a proactive decision to close the farm crossovers due to the proximity of the A1(M) Interchange and Rotary Way Roundabout.</p> <p>See point 2 above regarding excessive speeds and traffic light installation.</p>
15	<p>Instead of negotiating Swan House Roundabout it is now quicker to go into Cockerton, across Brinkburn Road and onto North Road.</p> <p>Burtree is our bypass to the A66; surely we should be encouraging vehicles out of the town not forcing them to go through it.</p> <p>A roundabout at Burtree Lane will solve the accidents at the junction, and also have the added benefit of slowing vehicles down.</p>	<p>See point 3 above regarding Cockerton and point 10 regarding the provision of a roundabout.</p>
16	<p>The closure of the Burtree Lane crossover will cause unnecessary pollution and road wear, and also discourage people from using that end of town.</p> <p>Install a similar junction to the Gretna Green Pub at Aycliffe.</p>	<p>The road layout outside the Gretna Green Pub on the A167, near Newton Aycliffe, has recently been installed by Durham County Council to address road traffic accidents.</p> <p>The A167 at this location has been physically reduced to one lane on both carriageways to accommodate the right turn manoeuvre in and the right turn out of the side road.</p> <p>This layout would be difficult to accommodate at Burtree Lane due to faster approach speeds, the additional capacity required and the existing prohibition of right turn out of Burtree Lane.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Contd/..</p>

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16 Ctd/..	<p>The closure of the Burtree Lane crossover will cause unnecessary pollution and road wear, and also discourage people from using that end of town.</p> <p>Install a similar junction to the Gretna Green Pub at Aycliffe.</p>	<p>If such a layout were to be adapted for the Burtree Lane junction, the number of accidents relating to right turners would probably decrease but they would still occur, whereas full closure will remove the current accident problem altogether. The scheme would also be very expensive to install because of the extensive kerb realignment.</p> <p>Personal injury accidents are still occurring at the Gretna Green Pub, four personal injury accidents have occurred at this junction since the introduction of the accident remedial scheme.</p>