

Agenda Item	<b>6</b>
Report No	<b>SCC/20/23</b>

# The Highland Council

**Committee:** Sutherland County

**Date:** 31 October 2023

**Report Title:** Old Caithness Road, Helmsdale - One-Way Traffic Regulation Order

**Report By:** Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

## 1 Purpose/Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report invites Members to approve the introduction of a One-Way System Traffic Regulation Order “The Highland Council (C1019 Old Caithness Road), Helmsdale (One-Way), Traffic Regulation Order 2022”.
- 1.2 There are 2 unresolved objections.

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to:-
  - i. **Note** the background to the proposed One-Way System Traffic Regulation Order and the representations received;
  - ii. **Consider** the objections made to “The Highland Council (C1019 Old Caithness Road), Helmsdale (One Way), Traffic Regulation Order 2022”;
  - iii. Subject to i) and ii) above **approve** the making of the One-Way System Traffic Regulation Order; and
  - iv. **Note** the intention to monitor the area after the introduction of the One-Way System including commissioning a traffic survey to determine effectiveness of the new road layout.

## 3 Implications

- 3.1 **Resource** – The introduction of the one-way Traffic Regulation Order will be delivered via the Scottish Government grant funding Cycling Walking and Safer Routes programme.
- 3.2 **Legal** – The introduction of the Traffic Regulation Orders required is subject to formal consultation as per the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984. This report sets out the representations received and is seeking approval for the Traffic Regulation Order.
- 3.3 **Community (Equality, Poverty, Rural and Island)** – None arising from this report.

- 3.4 **Climate Change / Carbon Clever** – the increased pavement provision at the junction of the C1019/A9 makes this crossing safer for all pedestrians and thus has the aim of increasing active travel choices and reducing the number of vehicles on the road.
- 3.5 **Risk** – No identifiable risk from this Traffic Regulation Order.
- 3.6 **Health and Safety (risks arising from changes to plant, equipment, process, or people)** – None arising from this report.
- 3.7 **Gaelic** – None arising from this report.

## 4 Background

- 4.1 Safety concerns with regards to the existing School Crossing Patroller (SCP) location on the A9 Trunk Road were raised by the local community, school community and elected Members to Transport Scotland/BEAR Scotland and The Highland Council's Road Safety and Area Roads Teams. These concerns focussed on:-
- the lack of visibility at the existing School Crossing Patroller crossing location, particularly for pupils travelling north on their way to school;
  - speed of vehicles on the A9 Trunk Road at this location; and
  - lack of pavement width/protection on the North side of the A9 at existing School Crossing Patroller location.

- 4.2 Recommended visibility for pedestrians crossing a road which has an 85th percentile\* speed of 30 mph is 40 metres in each direction. The current SCP site falls well below this threshold. See 5.3.

*\*The 85th percentile speed is the speed at or below which 85 percent of the drivers travel on a road segment.*

- 4.3 To allow a road safety improvement scheme to be delivered in the area, as outlined in section 5 below, the introduction of a short section of one-way traffic flow on Old Caithness Road, Helmsdale is required. The plan detailing the proposed one-way section is contained within **Appendix 1**.
- 4.4 Following the statutory consultation process for "The Highland Council (C1019 Old Caithness Road), Helmsdale (One Way), Traffic Regulation Order 2022" 2 outstanding objections remain unresolved and full correspondence is provided in **Appendix 2**.

## 5 Road Safety Improvement Scheme Proposal

- 5.1 The proposed Road Safety Improvement plan for the area of the C1019/A9 crossing location can be seen in **Appendix 3**. This scheme is being delivered by Transport Scotland/BEAR Scotland as it sits on the Trunk Road. As the Roads Authority responsible for Old Caithness Road, the Council are required to promote the one-way Traffic Order for this road.

5.2 The Road Safety Improvement Scheme proposal for the C1019/A9 will result in:-

- the relocation of the SCP nearer to the apex of the bend provides unrestricted visibility in both directions for pedestrians crossing the A9 at the new location. See 5.3;
- creation of a wider footpath on Old Caithness Road at its junction with the A9 to allow for a safer landing area at the new crossing point;
- pedestrians only having one direction of vehicle flow to deal with on Old Caithness Road, which is a lightly trafficked road with good site lines and this scheme will provide safer wider waiting areas; and
- the SCP will manage both the A9 crossing and the crossing over Old Caithness Road.

5.3 Recommended visibility at 30mph (85<sup>th</sup> percentile) = 40 m

Location	South/East side of A9	North/West side of A9
Existing drop kerb crossing point (south side)	30.9m	33.8m
Where SCP operates	22.58m	31.2m
Proposed crossing point	Unrestricted	Unrestricted

## 6 Consultation

6.1 Prior to the wider public consultation taking place residents and businesses on Old Caithness Road were written to with regards to the proposed improvement plans. Dialogue with the objectors was entered into between the Local Authority and Transport Scotland to discuss the proposals being brought forward with them. The Statutory and Public Consultation process concluded on 30 January and following this a site meeting was held between Transport Scotland and the 2 objectors with the aim of discussing and alleviating the concerns they raised regarding the scheme.

## 7 Representations

7.1 The Highland Council has received 2 objections to the proposal for the One-Way System Traffic Regulation Order. The Authority has been unable to resolve these objections.

7.2 A summary of the grounds for objection are as follows:-

- create a threat to the future viability of a successful local business as access will be severely affected;
- feel existing crossing point is fine and provides clear sight lines;
- confusion for patrons accessing a local business a different way;
- one-way system would create confusion and increase pressure on other roads within Helmsdale;
- one-way system would cause pedestrian and vehicle congestion at the Old Caithness Road/A9 junction;
- new proposal will result in school children and pedestrians having to cross two roads, Old Caithness Road and the A9, instead of the current one (A9); and
- would like to see the proposed one-way direction reversed of the one way

7.3 A summary of the officer replies to this are as follows:-

- As part of the scheme additional signage routing vehicles to use the one way correctly and advising of local businesses will be provided.
- See 5.3 above which clearly states the current situation is substandard in terms of visibility requirements and the new location provides unrestricted visibility.
- As a result of the low traffic volumes on Old Caithness Road the change to one way is not expected to create any significant pressure on the surrounding roads.
- The additional crossing will be managed by the SCP, the crossing over Old Caithness Road is a short crossing with good visibility, only one way traffic to contend with and minimal vehicles flows. The practice of an SCP managing two crossings occurs elsewhere in Highland on busier roads e.g. the SCP for Central Primary School in Inverness crosses both the A82 Trunk Road and the end of Planefield Road which is also a one-way street without issue. The Roads Authority therefore have no concerns about the SCP undertaking both crossing movements at this location.
- If the proposed one-way direction were reversed, i.e., it ran East to West, this would pose problems for vehicles turning West from the A9 into Old Caithness Road as larger vehicles would need to swing into the southbound lane of the A9 with little forward visibility to carry out this manoeuvre. For this reason, it would not be safe for the Roads Authorities to promote a one-way order on Old Caithness Road going East to West.

7.4 In view of the desire to make progress with the Traffic Regulation Order for the one-way system on Old Caithness Road, Helmsdale this report is being brought to Committee to seek approval for the making of the Traffic Regulation Order.

## 8 Reasoning

### 8.1 Evidence of Need

In the interests of road safety, The Highland Council proposes to make the aforementioned One-Way Traffic Regulation Order. This Order has been designed to create a safer road environment for all road users and is being brought forward to vastly improve the visibility for pedestrians crossing the A9 trunk road.

Designation: Executive Chief Officer Infrastructure, Environment & Economy

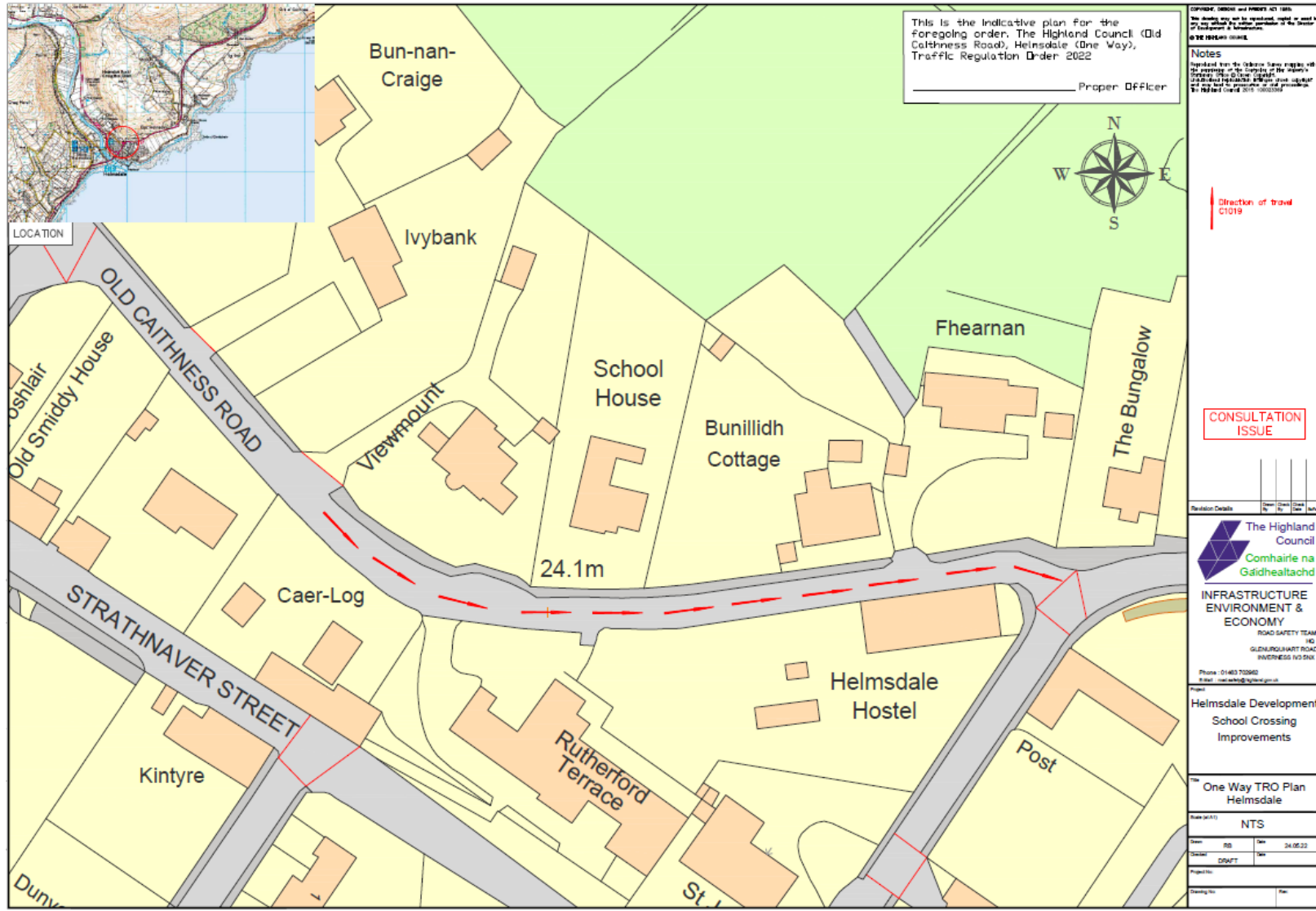
Date: 19 September 2023

Author: Lisa MacKellaich, Road Safety Officer

Background Papers: None

Appendices: Appendix 1 - TRO Plan  
Appendix 2 – Outstanding Objections  
Appendix 3 - Road Safety Improvement Plan

## Appendix 1 – TRO Plan



**CONFIDENTIAL, DESIGN AND RIGHTS ACT 1988**  
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**Notes**  
 This plan is the indicative plan for the proposed order. It is not a guarantee of the order. The Highland Council reserves the right to amend or withdraw the order at any time without notice. The order will be subject to the provisions of the Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Proper Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

**CONSULTATION ISSUE**

Revision Details	Drawn	Checked	Date	By

The Highland Council  
 Comhairle na Gàidhealtachd

INFRASTRUCTURE  
 ENVIRONMENT &  
 ECONOMY

ROAD SAFETY TEAM  
 HQ  
 GLENROTHAR ROAD  
 INVERNESS IV3 5XK

Phone: 01463 703692  
 Email: roadworks@highland.gov.uk

Helmsdale Development  
 School Crossing  
 Improvements

One Way TRO Plan  
 Helmsdale

Scale: 1:1000

NTS

Drawn	RD	Date
		24.06.22

Draft: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Project: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Drawing No: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Rev: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 2 – Outstanding Objections

### Objector 1

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To whom it may concern:

**Re: Objection – The Highland Council (C1019 Old Caithness Road), Helmsdale (One Way), Traffic Regulation Order 2022**

**Statement of Reasons – A9 Helmsdale – A9/Old Caithness Road Pedestrian Crossing Improvements**

██ situated on the corner of the A9 junction of Stafford Street/Old Caithness Road. ██████████ 'long established' tourist accommodation and continues to attract visitors to the village of Helmsdale on an international scale.

Whilst I fully appreciate the safety priorities underlying the proposal, I believe the form in which the road modifications are presented [with Old Caithness Rd becoming a no entry junction and creation of a pedestrian crossing in direct line to the entry/exit of the hostel], would serve to increase risk, and create significant access and safety issues for not only arriving guests, but pedestrians/school children, and create an actual threat to the future viability of this successful local business.

Since May 2022, I have made efforts to encourage a site visit with the planners/engineers involved from BEAR Scotland and Highland Council, to see first-hand my reasons for objecting, and to explore what possible alternative solution may exist to achieve the safety objectives/outcome, while maintaining ██████████ current accessibility.

Since planners/engineers have been unable to conduct a site visit to discuss, I am now writing to detail my objection as follows:

Facts:

The tourist hostel in Helmsdale has existed in the village since the early 1960s

The tourist hostel ██████████ for the past seventeen years

To my knowledge, there has never been an accident at the existing pedestrian/school crossing site

Existing entry from the A9 Stafford Street onto Old Caithness Road, serves to slow down traffic at the bend/junction when turning into Old Caithness Road

Existing pedestrian/school crossing site allows a clear sight line of traffic from the A9 south, A9 north, and from the oncoming traffic onto the A9 from Old Caithness Road

Old Caithness Road is used by heavy goods vehicles, including buses, coaches, commercial delivery trucks and logging lorries – this traffic passes the primary school, along Old Caithness Road, then onto the A9

Heavy goods vehicles, buses and coaches often turn south from Old Caithness Road onto A9/Stafford Street – in direct line of the existing school crossing and the proposed new crossing

Whilst I appreciate the studies cited from BEAR Scotland found traffic is adhering to current 30mph restrictions, this is frequently flouted by motorists travelling at speed on the A9

The need to ensure safety of guests finding and accessing the hostel

██ been directed to turn at the junction of Stafford Street onto Old Caithness Road, and directed to park along the hostel boundary wall on Old Caithness Road

A one-way system from west to east direction, would mean guests would have to navigate through other roads in the village to access the hostel

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A one-way system would create confusion and increase pressure on other roads in the village

Development of a pedestrian/school crossing at the entry/exit of the hostel would create congestion and present risk to guests and pedestrians/school children

Issues identified:

Should another pavement be created on Old Caithness Road, school children and pedestrians would then have to cross two roads instead of one - i.e., from the A9 at Stafford Street, then across Old Caithness Road

The proposed crossing does not allow a clear sightline of traffic from the three directions of north/south A9 and Old Caithness Road

Traffic control warden would still have to negotiate three directional lines of traffic i.e., north from A9, south from A9 and oncoming traffic from Old Caithness Road onto A9

Having no access to Old Caithness Road from the A9, would create confusion and blockage of traffic, since motorists will have to stop to negotiate another route/access to Old Caithness Road – putting pressure on other streets in the village

Suggested potential solution/s:

By making the one-way restriction east to west, would 'decrease' current potential risk, since there would be no traffic coming out from Old Caithness Road onto the busy A9

A reversal of the proposed direction of the one-way system, would continue to slow down traffic at the junction, and importantly, stop heavy good vehicles coming along Old Caithness Road onto the A9

A reversal of the proposed direction of the one-way system, would reduce potential risk by maintaining the existing 'one road crossing' for school children and pedestrians, as opposed to creating another road to cross from Old Caithness Road

Improve safety measures to existing layout by reversal of the one-way proposal to enable continued access from the A9 onto Old Caithness Road

Should the one-way system from the A9 Stafford Street onto Old Caithness Road proposal be reversed, pedestrians/children would only have two directions of traffic to negotiate as opposed to the existing three

Consider making access to Old Caithness Road for local access only, from the A9 Stafford Street junction

To summarise, from a personal perspective, I feel the safety of the children and pedestrians should be paramount to any outcome sought. I believe the proposal as it currently stands, would not enhance safety. In contrast, as detailed in my points above, I feel it would in fact serve to increase potential risk as opposed to achieving the desired outcome of reducing potential risk.

Thank you for considering my objection.

Yours sincerely,



26 January 2023

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Response to Objector 1:



[Redacted]  
[Redacted]  
Helmsdale House  
Stafford Street  
Helmsdale  
Sutherland  
KW8 6JR

Please ask for: [Redacted]  
Email: road.safety@highland.gov.uk  
Our Ref: Helmsdale One Way  
Tel: [Redacted]  
Date: 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Dear [Redacted]

**Formal Response to your Objection to The Highland Council (C1019 Old Caithness Road), Helmsdale (One Way), Traffic Regulation Order 2022**

Following the receipt of your formal objection letter of 26.01.23 to the above proposed Traffic Regulation Order and the subsequent onsite meeting with Marco Bardelli of Transport Scotland on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023 to discuss your concerns with regards to the proposed road safety improvement scheme and associated one way order, I confirm that the Council's Road Safety Team have now been appraised of the discussions you had with Mr Bardelli and are thus now in a position to formally respond to the objection you lodged back in January.

The scheme is being promoted jointly by Transport Scotland/Bear Scotland and Highland Council to improve the safety of the School Crossing Patrol /pupil/pedestrian crossing point over the A9 in the vicinity of your business. Safety concerns with regards to the existing School Crossing Patroller location on the A9 have been raised by the local school community, members of Helmsdale community and local Elected Members as, at present, visibility is poor for the School Crossing Patroller and pupils/pedestrians. Concerns were also raised with regards to the speed of vehicles on the A9 Trunk Road at this location and the lack of pavement width/protection on the North side of the A9 at the existing School Crossing Patroller location.

The proposed scheme is very much in line with the National Transport Strategy which priorities pedestrians and active travel in the drive to get more people travelling more actively more of the time <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/national-transport-strategy-2/>.

**Addressing the issues raised in your objection**

- The proposed scheme has been designed by qualified roads engineers who have designed it to ensure that it provides crossing points for the pupils that are located for optimal visibility. It therefore vastly improves the safety at the A9 crossing points. As you can see from the table below, the current crossing location does not provide pupils with the recommended minimum visibility required for crossing and the new crossing location provides unrestricted visibility when crossing the A9:



Recommended visibility at 30mph (85<sup>th</sup> %ile) = 40m

Location	South/East side of A9	North/West side of A9
Existing drop kerb crossing point (south side)	30.9m	33.8m
Where SCP operates	22.58m	31.2m
Proposed crossing point	Unrestricted	Unrestricted

- To achieve this optimal visibility the scheme will see the School Crossing Patroller (SCP) controlling both the A9 and Old Caithness Road which is proposed to be reduced to one way and is lightly trafficked in terms of vehicle numbers. Each road crossing will be controlled independently by the SCP, so they will either be stopping traffic on the A9 or Old Caithness Road as required.
  - This practice happens elsewhere in Highland on busier roads e.g. the SCP for Central Primary School in Inverness crosses both the A82 Trunk Road and the end of Planefield Road which is also a one way street without issue. The Roads Authority therefore have no concerns about the SCP undertaking both crossing movements at this location.
- Vehicle egress from Old Caithness Road onto the A9 will be safer as there will be no traffic coming into Old Caithness Road from the A9. Thus reducing any potential areas of conflict that may restrict visibility when at the junction.
- To provide context in terms of traffic flows, Road Safety GB's guidance provides the following flow level categories:
  - Low Traffic Flow - up to 400 vehicles per hour
  - Medium Traffic Flow - 400 to 840 vehicles per hour
  - Heavy Traffic Flow - over 840 vehicles per hour
- The Council's Speed Compliance\* tool shows the 'Annual Average Daily Traffic' flow figures for all current traffic on the Local Authority road network within Helmsdale itself to fall within the low traffic flow category (*as shown above*). With the very low traffic volumes and minimal properties involved it is anticipated that making this short section of Old Caithness Road one way will have limited impact on traffic flow within Helmsdale and

therefore traffic congestion is not something that is a concern to either Roads Authority in relation to the proposed one way traffic order.

- As part of the scheme additional signage routing vehicles to [REDACTED] would be provided allowing you to use these road signs in your typical direction instructions. This in addition to the navigation tools available would provide the information required to motorists for the minimal detour required. The changes in pavement provision on Old Caithness Road will provide some pavement provision for your customers who have parked, as you instruct, to access the [REDACTED] business. The additional width at [REDACTED] will also allow more space for those carrying multiple bags and afford more distance from vehicles on the A9 making the experience feel safer.

#### **Comments on your suggested solutions**

##### **Your suggestion:**

Reverse the proposed one way to East to West.

##### **Roads Authority Response:**

The proposed West to East direction for the potential new one way has been carefully considered. The proposed narrowing of the Old Caithness Road/A9 junction to allow for the increased pavement width would, if the proposed one way ran East to West, pose problems for vehicles turning West from the A9 into Old Caithness Road as larger vehicles would need to swing into the southbound lane of the A9 with little forward visibility to carry out this manoeuvre. For this reason, it would not be safe for the Roads Authorities to promote a one way order on Old Caithness Road going East to West.

##### **Your suggestion:**

Should the one-way system from the A9 Stafford Street onto Old Caithness Road proposal be reversed, pedestrians/children would only have two directions of traffic to negotiate as opposed to the existing three.

##### **Roads Authority Response:**

The new proposal will see pupils crossing at 2 locations **1)** A9 at a safer location with increased visibility and wider pavement landing areas so a much improved crossing location **2)** Old Caithness Road which will be a short crossing due to the proposed pavement widening scheme, good visibility at the designated crossing point, pedestrians will only have to negotiate traffic moving in one direction due to the one way and this road is also very lightly trafficked so the safety improvements gained on the A9 outweigh the addition of this extra low risk crossing point. As per earlier comments the Roads Authority will instruct the School Crossing Patroller to manage both crossings.

##### **Your suggestion:**

Consider making access to Old Caithness Road Local Access Only.

**Roads Authority Response:**

We will investigate potential signing solutions for routing HGV's away from the area of the school/Old Caithness Road.

**20mph Limit**

In addition to the above, I confirm that the speed limit in Helmsdale has recently changed to 20mph on the Local Authority Roads. This is part of the current roll out of 20mph speed limits across the Highland Council Area. We confirm that Transport Scotland are responsible for the installation of 20mph limits on the Trunk Roads and this is programmed for implementation in Helmsdale shortly.

We hope the information provided in this response, along with the onsite meeting that took place with Transport Scotland back in March this year, has addressed and alleviated the concerns you have made within your objection and on reflection you may now wish to remove your formal objection to this proposed one way traffic regulation order. We would be grateful for confirmation of whether you wish to remove your objection or wish it to remain within 2 weeks of receipt of this letter.

To ensure you are fully aware of the formal process for objections, if we have not alleviated your concerns and your objection is not withdrawn the next stage of this prescribed process is for your objection to be heard by the Elected Members at the Sutherland Area Committee Meeting, being held on 31st October 2023. If this date changes you will be notified of the change in advance. Copies of all correspondence pertaining to your objection will be anonymised and contained within the papers that go to this Committee.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Road Safety Officer

\*Annual Average Daily Traffic flow data provided has been taken from the Agilysis Speed Compliance Tool, the data is collected using vehicle telemetry data from connected vehicles. The results produced are aggregated data for the period April 2021 to March 2022.

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Response to Objector 2:



Please ask for: [REDACTED]  
Email: road.safety@highland.gov.uk  
Our Ref: Helmsdale One Way  
Tel: [REDACTED]  
Date: 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Dear [REDACTED]

**Formal Response to your Objection to The Highland Council (C1019 Old Caithness Road), Helmsdale (One Way), Traffic Regulation Order 2022**

Following the receipt of your formal objection letter of 26.01.23 to the above proposed Traffic Regulation Order and the subsequent onsite meeting with Marco Bardelli of Transport Scotland on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023 to discuss your concerns with regards to the proposed road safety improvement scheme and associated one way order, I confirm that the Council's Road Safety Team have now been appraised of the discussions you had with Mr Bardelli and are thus now in a position to formally respond to the objection you lodged back in January.

The scheme is being promoted jointly by Transport Scotland/Bear Scotland and Highland Council to improve the safety of the School Crossing Patrol /pupil/pedestrian crossing point over the A9 in the vicinity of your business. Safety concerns with regards to the existing School Crossing Patroller location on the A9 have been raised by the local school community, members of Helmsdale community and local Elected Members as, at present, visibility is poor for the School Crossing Patroller and pupils/pedestrians. Concerns were also raised with regards to the speed of vehicles on the A9 Trunk Road at this location and the lack of pavement width/protection on the North side of the A9 at the existing School Crossing Patroller location.

The proposed scheme is very much in line with the National Transport Strategy which priorities pedestrians and active travel in the drive to get more people travelling more actively more of the time <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/national-transport-strategy-2/>.

**Addressing the issues raised in your objection**

- Thank for your comments re HGV's in this area, I confirm that as part of this scheme we will investigate potential signing solutions for routing HGV's away from the area of the school/Old Caithness Road.



Please ask for: [REDACTED]  
Email: road.safety@highland.gov.uk  
Our Ref: Helmsdale One Way  
Tel: [REDACTED]  
Date: 24<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Dear [REDACTED],

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The scheme is being promoted jointly by Transport Scotland/Bear Scotland and Highland Council to improve the safety of the School Crossing Patrol /pupil/pedestrian crossing point over the A9 in the vicinity of your business. Safety concerns with regards to the existing School Crossing Patroller location on the A9 have been raised by the local school community, members of Helmsdale community and local Elected Members as, at present, visibility is poor for the School Crossing Patroller and pupils/pedestrians. Concerns were also raised with regards to the speed of vehicles on the A9 Trunk Road at this location and the lack of pavement width/protection on the North side of the A9 at the existing School Crossing Patroller location.

The proposed scheme is very much in line with the National Transport Strategy which priorities pedestrians and active travel in the drive to get more people travelling more actively more of the time <https://www.transport.gov.scot/publication/national-transport-strategy-2/>.

**Addressing the issues raised in your objection**

- Thank for your comments re HGV's in this area, I confirm that as part of this scheme we will investigate potential signing solutions for routing HGV's away from the area of the school/Old Caithness Road.

- To achieve this optimal visibility the scheme will see the School Crossing Patroller (SCP) controlling both the A9 and Old Caithness Road which is proposed to be reduced to one way and is lightly trafficked in terms of vehicle numbers. Each road crossing will be controlled independently by the SCP, so they will either be stopping traffic on the A9 or Old Caithness Road as required.
  - This practice happens elsewhere in Highland on busier roads e.g. the SCP for Central Primary School in Inverness crosses both the A82 Trunk Road and the end of Planefield Road which is also a one way street without issue. The Roads Authority therefore have no concerns about the SCP undertaking both crossing movements at this location.
  
- As per number 2 above, the new proposal will see pupils crossing at 2 locations **1)** A9 at a safer location with increased visibility and wider pavement landing areas so a much improved crossing location **2)** Old Caithness Road which will be a short crossing due to the proposed pavement widening scheme, good visibility at the designated crossing point, pedestrians will only have to negotiate traffic moving in one direction due to the one way and this road is also very lightly trafficked so the safety improvements gained on the A9 outweigh the addition of this extra low risk crossing point. As per earlier comments the Roads Authority will instruct the School Crossing Patroller to manage both crossings. Due to the low number of pedestrians that will use this space at the same time we do not envisage any form of pedestrian congestion outside the Hostel Area. The changes in pavement provision on Old Caithness Road will provide a greatly enhanced pavement provision for [REDACTED] who have parked, as instructed, to access the front of [REDACTED]. The additional width at [REDACTED] will also allow more space for those carrying multiple bags and afford more distance from vehicles on the A9 making the experience feel safer.
  
- Vehicle egress from Old Caithness Road onto the A9 will be safer as there will be no traffic coming into Old Caithness Road from the A9. Thus reducing any potential areas of conflict that may restrict visibility when at the junction. The proposed scheme has been designed by qualified roads engineers who have designed it to ensure that the required swept path distances are met to ensure larger vehicles will have no issues when travelling from Old Caithness Road onto the A9. For your information the proposed new crossing location provides a crossing points for the pupils that are located for optimal visibility. It therefore vastly improves the safety at the A9 crossing points for pedestrians, including [REDACTED]. As you can see from the table below, the current crossing location does not provide pedestrians with the recommended minimum visibility required for crossing and the new crossing location provides unrestricted visibility when crossing the A9:

Recommended visibility at 30mph (85<sup>th</sup> %ile) = 40m

Location	South/East side of A9	North/West side of A9
Existing drop kerb crossing point (south side)	30.9m	33.8m
Where SCP operates	22.58m	31.2m
Proposed crossing point	Unrestricted	Unrestricted

- As part of the scheme additional signage routing vehicles to [REDACTED] would be provided allowing [REDACTED]. This in addition to the navigation tools available would provide the information required to motorists for the minimal detour required.
- To provide context in terms of traffic flows, Road Safety GB's guidance provides the following flow level categories:
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### **Comments on your suggested solutions**

#### **Your suggestion:**

Reverse the proposed one way to East to West.

#### **Roads Authority Response:**

The proposed West to East direction for the potential new one way has been carefully considered. The proposed narrowing of the Old Caithness Road/A9 junction to allow for the increased pavement width would, if the proposed one way ran East to West, pose problems for vehicles turning West from the A9 into Old Caithness Road as larger vehicles would need to swing into the southbound lane of the A9 with little forward visibility to carry out this



## **20mph Limit**

In addition to the above, I confirm that the speed limit in Helmsdale has recently changed to 20mph on the Local Authority Roads. This is part of the current roll out of 20mph speed limits across the Highland Council Area. We confirm that Transport Scotland are responsible for the installation of 20mph limits on the Trunk Roads and this is programmed for implementation in Helmsdale shortly.

We hope the information provided in this response, along with the onsite meeting that took place with Transport Scotland back in March this year, has addressed and alleviated the concerns you have made within your objection and on reflection you may now wish to remove your formal objection to this proposed one way traffic regulation order. We would be grateful for confirmation of whether you wish to remove your objection or wish it to remain within 2 weeks of receipt of this letter.

To ensure you are fully aware of the formal process for objections, if we have not alleviated your concerns and your objection is not withdrawn the next stage of this prescribed process is for your objection to be heard by the Elected Members at the Sutherland Area Committee Meeting, being held on 31st October 2023. If this date changes you will be notified of the change in advance. Copies of all correspondence pertaining to your objection will be anonymised and contained within the papers that go to this Committee.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



Road Safety Officer

\*Annual Average Daily Traffic flow data provided has been taken from the Agilysis Speed Compliance Tool, the data is collected using vehicle telemetry data from connected vehicles. The results produced are aggregated data for the period April 2021 to March 2022.

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Objector 2 confirmation of objection standing:

Good morning, [REDACTED]

Further to the information that was sent on 24<sup>th</sup> Aug 23, I am continuing to object to the proposed one-way system along Old Caithness Road, Helmsdale and do not retract my concerns as forwarded to you on 26<sup>th</sup> Jan 23.

Outlined in the response most of the points I had raised were referred to and although I appreciate the response's I do not fully agree with them and still feel there will be the potential to increase risk, along with the negative impact [REDACTED] but the village as a whole.

Contained within the response there was reference to Low Traffic Flow on Old Caithness Road, which I agree, however in my observations a large percentage of the vehicles are of the heavy goods variety including the local bus enroute out of the village and although reference was made to attempting to address some aspects of this, as it is seen as one of the main routes out of the village by drivers, I feel this is unlikely to change.

In response to "minimal detour" I feel traversing around 3 small streets is not a minimal detour particularly for foreign drivers and potentially increasing risk.

As mentioned about the low numbers of traffic I feel the proposed plan involves a lot of upheaval and cost for little gain, with the only negative impact being [REDACTED] and possibly the village shops as the [REDACTED] will be directed away from the village.

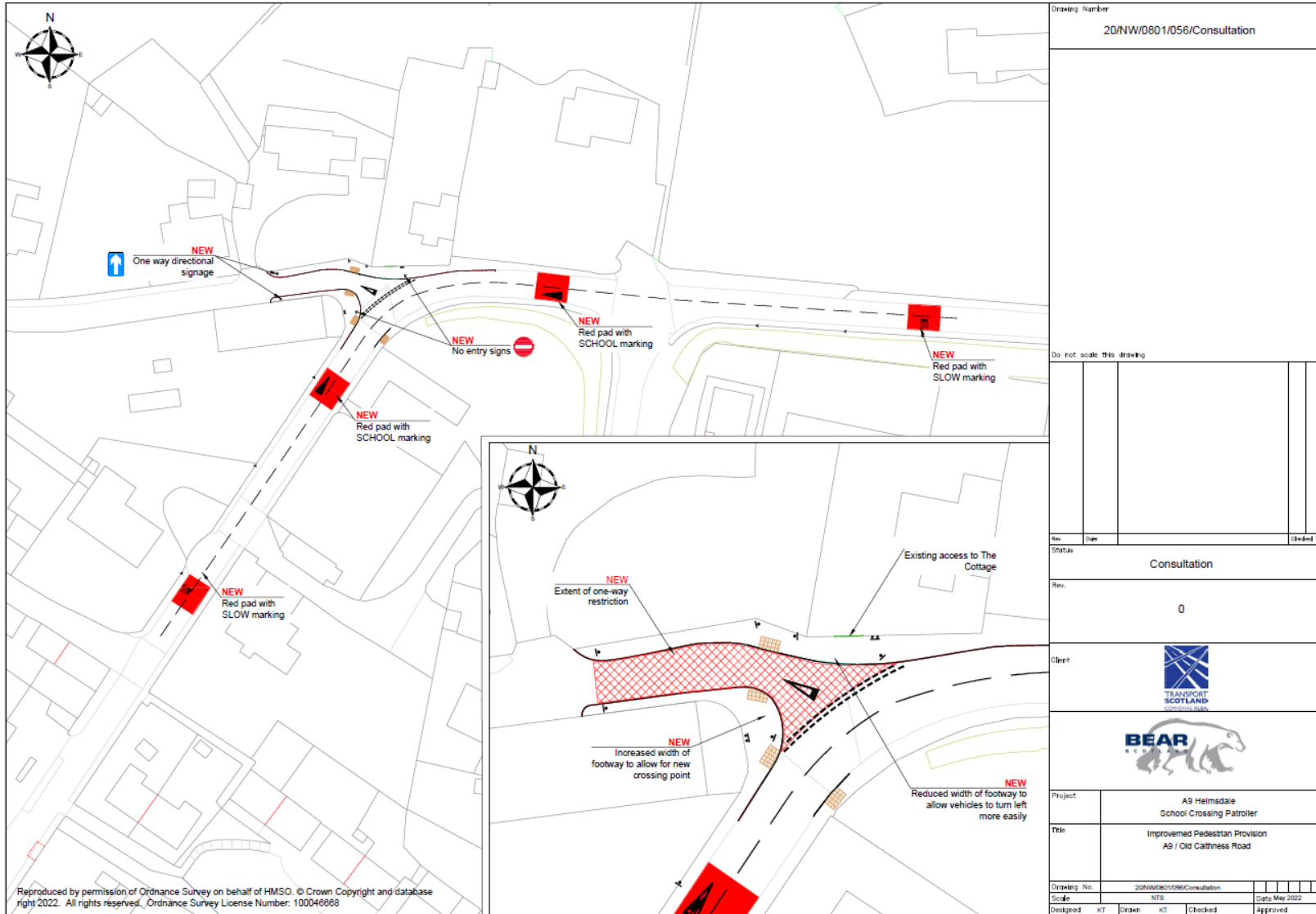
I am disappointed that the negative impact on the [REDACTED] and village does not appear to be a consideration in the response/decision. By directing [REDACTED] away from the village they are less likely to visit the local shops on leaving [REDACTED], which I feel will have an economic impact on this small rural village.



You made reference to the meeting I was present at in March with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] my understanding was he was taking the points raised to a "meeting" and he would feedback the outcome of the meeting. I have not received any correspondence from [REDACTED] or any follow up. I would appreciate if there were minutes of the discussion/meeting, if they would be forward them to me.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

## Appendix 3 - Road Safety Improvement plan for the area of the C1019/A9



Drawing Number			
20/NW/0801/056/Consultation			
Do not scale this drawing			
Rev.	Date	By	Checked
Status:			
Consultation			
Rev.			
0			
Client:			
 <small>TRANSPORT SCOTLAND</small> <small>scotland.gov.uk</small>			
 <small>BEAR</small> <small>NEIGHBOURHOODS</small>			
Project		A9 Helmsdale School Crossing Patrolter	
Title		Improved Pedestrian Provision A9 / Old Cathness Road	
Drawing No. 20/NW/0801/056/Consultation			
Scale: NTS		Date: Mar 2022	
Designed: KT	Drawn: KT	Checked:	Approved: