

A.05 Exemptions to Traffic Regulation Orders

Key Principle

Cyclists should be exempt from restrictions within Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs), including banned turns and road closures, unless there are **proven** safety reasons for not doing so.

Design Guidance

Background

Cyclists benefit greatly when given exemption from the requirements of traffic regulation orders (TROs) that create road closures, one-way streets, turning bans and vehicle restricted areas. Exemption will invariably provide advantage and permeability by shortening journey time and distance cycled as well as improving accessibility. Where such orders result in a reduction in the volume and speed of motor traffic this can encourage more cycling through the creation of safer and more pleasant cycling conditions on the roads affected.

If cyclists are not given exemption from these types of TRO, it will usually involve them in a frustrating detour which will invariably be more heavily trafficked and hazardous than the route the TRO has denied them. This can be a serious deterrent to cycling. In addition, it may also result in some cyclists ignoring the TRO and following their desired route without the protection of formal provision. Cyclists should therefore be exempted from all such orders as a matter of course unless there are overriding safety considerations which preclude it. Providing an exemption for cyclists when a TRO is first introduced is far easier and less costly than adding the exemption at a later date.

Within the 'core, low speed urban area' at the heart of towns and cities the exemption should generally be the norm. On higher speed/volume roads such as inner ring roads, main radials etc there will need to be a more considered approach where the desired movement might be offered via an alternative such as a toucan crossing for example. A cycle audit of all proposed TROs will help identify the best approach see [A15 Audits and Risk Assessment](#).

Road closures

Road closures, and similar measures such as bus gates, act as very effective traffic-calming devices because they remove through motor traffic and thus prevent rat-running. Where a road is to be physically closed to motor vehicles, an exemption and a cycle gap in the closure should be provided. These should be a minimum of 1.5m wide to allow tandems, trailers and electric wheelchairs to pass through with good visibility of adjacent roads and pedestrians on the footway. Gaps positioned in the centre of closure are less likely to be blocked by motor vehicles and any kerbs leading into them should be placed at a radius of curvature suitable for cycle use (see [A14 Corner Radii](#) and [B07 Cycle Track Junctions](#)). Existing road closures where no such features have been provided should be reviewed, and wherever possible re-opened for cycle use.

Manual for Streets:

6.4.2 Cycle access should always be considered on links between street networks which are not available to motor traffic. If an existing street is closed off, it should generally remain open to pedestrians and cyclists.

Care needs to be taken to ensure that parked vehicles do not obstruct openings created for cyclists at road closures. In some instances, such as town centres, this may be addressed by the introduction of parking restrictions but these may prove difficult to enforce. In these circumstances physical measures such as build outs, cycle logos or hatching may be more effective.

If bollards are used to prevent motor vehicles from travelling through the closure, the gaps between them should be at least 1.5m wide (see [B09 Obstruction of cycle track accesses](#)). Bollards directly next to cycle gaps should be made conspicuous to all users, including pedestrians who might also choose to use the gap. Another way of effecting the closure is to place bollards across the full road width. With more than one gap to choose from, cyclists are less likely to be obstructed by parked vehicles.



Road closure and redistribution of carriageway achieved by bollards – London

Picture © Alex Sully
Transport Initiatives

Banned turns

Cyclists should generally be exempt from banned turning movements unless specific safety concerns dictate otherwise. The order giving effect to the ban will need to exempt cyclists. An 'Except cycles' plate to diagram 954.4 should be placed underneath the appropriate regulatory sign (usually diagram 612 *No right turn* or 613 *No left turn*). It may be necessary to provide traffic islands with bollards accompanied by appropriate road markings and signs to protect cyclists waiting to make the turning manoeuvre.

One-way streets and vehicle restricted areas

Guidance on permitting cyclists contraflow access to one-way streets may be found in [A06 Contra-flow Cycling](#) and [A07 Vehicle Restricted \(Pedestrianised\) Areas \(Town Centre Access\)](#) respectively. The layout of junctions and signs to facilitate cycle access in these circumstances are set out in Traffic Advisory Leaflet TAL 6/98 "Contraflow Cycling" (DETR 1998).

Publications

[Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions](#) DfT 2002

[Policy, Planning and Design for Walking and Cycling](#) (3.6.1) – Local Transport Note 1/04, Public consultation Draft, DfT 2004

[Cycling England Gallery](#) pictorial examples

[London Cycling Design Standards – A guide to the design of a better cycling environment](#) (Sections 3.4, 3.5, and 3.6) TfL 2005

[Lancashire - The Cyclists' County](#) (pdf - 5.45Mb) (Section 3) – creating pleasant road conditions Lancashire County Council, 2005

[CTC Benchmarking – Best practice case studies](#)

[National Cycle Network – Guidelines and Practical details, Issue 2](#) Sustrans 1997

Other references

Traffic Regulation Acts

(Note: Offences against traffic signs and police signals are dealt with in Sections 35, 36, 37 and 163 of the Road Traffic Act 1988. The use of traffic signs is regulated by Part V of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

[Cycle Friendly Infrastructure - Guidelines for Planning and Design](#) Bicycle Association et al 1996

TAL 1/87, *Measures to control traffic for the benefit of residents, pedestrians and cyclists*; DoT