Central Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Local Access Forum
Meeting No: 9
Paper for agenda item: 5.1

LUTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
POLICY ON
ACCESS BARRIERS AND BOLLARDS
ON CYCLE TRACKS
FOOTPATHS AND FOOTWAYS

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Luton Borough Council Sustainable Travel Plan 2011 - 2015 promotes the use of walking and cycling as an excellent mode of sustainable travel and also as part of a healthy lifestyle to reduce obesity.

1.2 Cyclists and pedestrians prefer unobstructed routes. They may not be inclined to use a route which adds to their journey time or repeatedly requires them to slow down or dismount. Access barriers and bollards on cycle tracks/footpaths are at best an inconvenience and at worst make using the route impossible.

1.3 It is acknowledged that some forms of access barriers are needed in some areas to control the speed of cyclists to improve their safety and that of other road users. They may also be needed to protect the environment from harm by inappropriate or unsocial behaviour of users especially motorised vehicles (cars and motorbikes).

1.4 The Councils Rights of Way Improvement Plan published in 2008 recognises that some Public Rights of Way or other paths include structures to prevent access by unauthorised users. However, to minimise disadvantage to legitimate users, the Council's policy would be to ensure that any structures should accord with the principles of 'Least Restrictive Access' complaint with BS5709:2006.

1.5 Add section on Council's gating policy

1.6 The use of an excessive amount of barriers along a route will result in fewer people using the path and could result in an increased maintenance burden for the local authority. Therefore, the aim should be to erect no barriers, as this will maximise the usage of the paths. It is often the case that high numbers of legitimate users are self regulating and lower levels of unlawful or inconsiderate activities take place because of the greater numbers of disapproving genuine users.

1.7 However, there may be a need to control access on some sites. For example County Wildlife Sites (CWS) where the biodiversity has to be

protected. Site barriers and gates may be required to control and slow access, prevent tipping from wheel barrows etc and for stock control.

1.8 The Sustainable Travel Plan aims to increase the role of walking as a mode of transport and as a leisure activity so as to reduce dependence upon private cars, and to improve environmental stewardship, economic development, social inclusion and health in Luton.

1.9 The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 makes the provision of easy access compulsory. It is an offence to prevent a disabled person from accessing an amenity. For example, if the disabled person was in a wheelchair or riding a tricycle and couldn't get through a set of barriers because the barriers were set too close together.

1.10 This policy sets out when, where and what barriers and bollards will be used on cycle tracks, bridleways, footpaths and footways within Luton. It has been agreed by LBC's Highway Services, Luton Cultural Services, Regeneration, Community Safety and Bedfordshire Police.

2.0 When should barriers be used?

2.1 Barriers and gates cause a restriction on the use of the cycle track/bridleways. Other than at field boundaries they should only be a last resort after all other solutions have been considered. If bollards and barriers are erected these should always be the minimum amount to solve the problem effectively.

2.2 Installing barriers should not prevent the use by tricycles, cycles towing child or cargo trailers, tandems or cycles with 'tag-along' child attachments.

2.3 Barriers should not be used for preventing access by motorcyclists unless this can be shown to be effective. On many occasions barriers are erected at the end of a footpath but access is still available further along or motorcyclists can go around the barrier.

2.4 Cyclists have no legal right to ride on public footpaths/footways and therefore gates and barriers may be used. However, these must be of a style that does not prevent access for people with disabilities or pedestrians pushing pushchairs access.

3.0 Consultation on installing barriers on cycle tracks and footpaths used by cyclists

3.1 As the Sustainable Travel team in Environment and Regeneration are often the first point of contact for cyclist they should be notified/consulted on all proposals to install new barriers/bollards on cycle tracks, bridleways and shared footways/paths. They will also be able to give advice on the suitability.

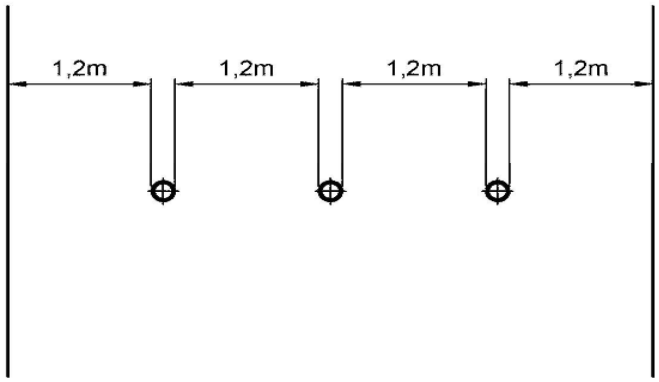
Comment [d1]:

Comment [d2]: See GT's e-mail

4.0 Design of bollards/barriers

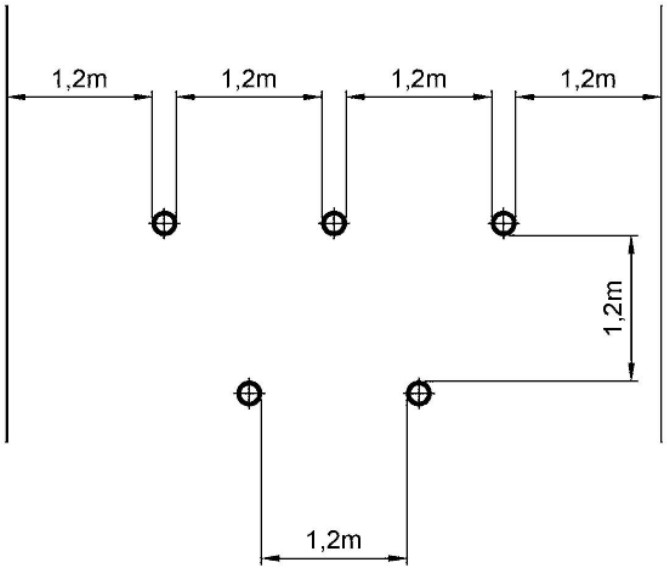
4.1 The first consideration should always be finding an alternative to bollards or barriers, but if this is not possible then bollards should be considered next. They will prevent access by motor vehicles and set at 1.2 metres apart, as shown in Figure 1(a), can reduce the speed of cyclists.

Figure 1a. - Bollards



To make it more difficult for motorbikes but still allow for convenient access for cyclists, wheelchairs and pushchairs a staggered arrangement could be used as shown in Figure 1(b).

Figure 1b. - Staggered Bollards



4.2 All bollards used on the highway shall be to the LBC Highways Standard 02/09 – bollards. Where a highway passes through a park, bollards may match the existing park infrastructure but in these cases they must always be visible to the users of the track/footpath. Wooden posts can be used on unmade cycle tracks/footpaths, bridleways and on countryside sites.

4.3 Bollards and barriers must contrast in tone and luminance with the area in which they are to be used to ensure visibility. This will require consideration of what is the most appropriate colour and/or finish of the bollards and barriers for each environment in which they will be used.

4.4 If bollards are not likely to be effective then barriers can be used. A chicane arrangement will slow cyclists. These should be appropriate to the environ but will usually be metal or wooden when located in or adjacent to environmentally sensitive sites. Figures 2(a) and 2(b) show examples. The distance between the barriers in figure 2(a) can be reduced to a minimum of 1.2m but the closer the barriers are together the more difficult cyclists, especially those with panniers and trailers, will find it to negotiate.

Figure 2a. - Chicane Barriers

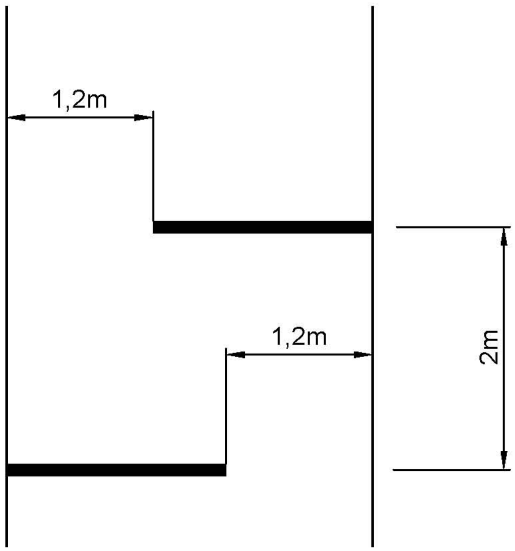
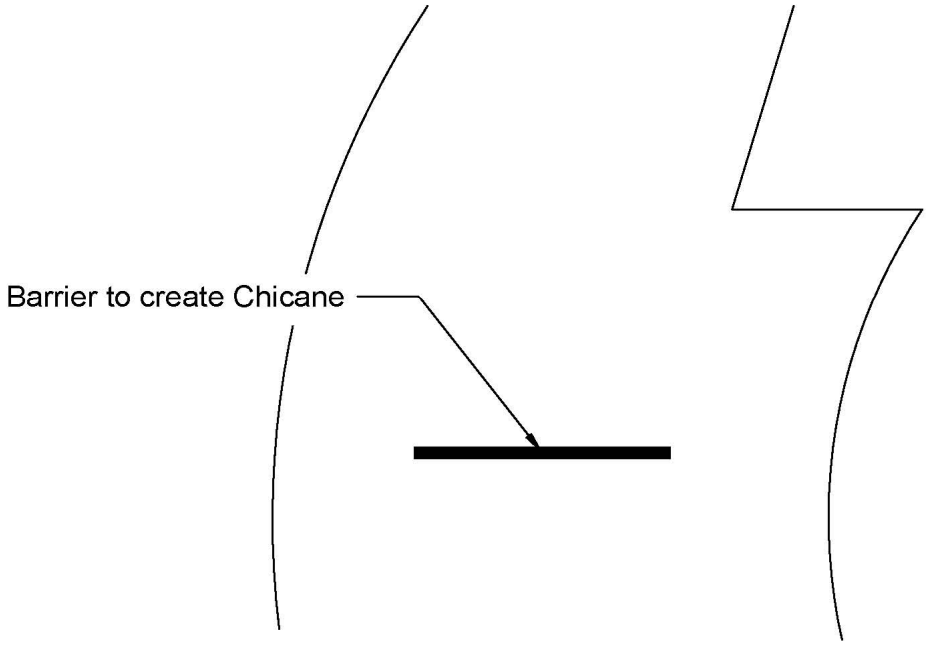


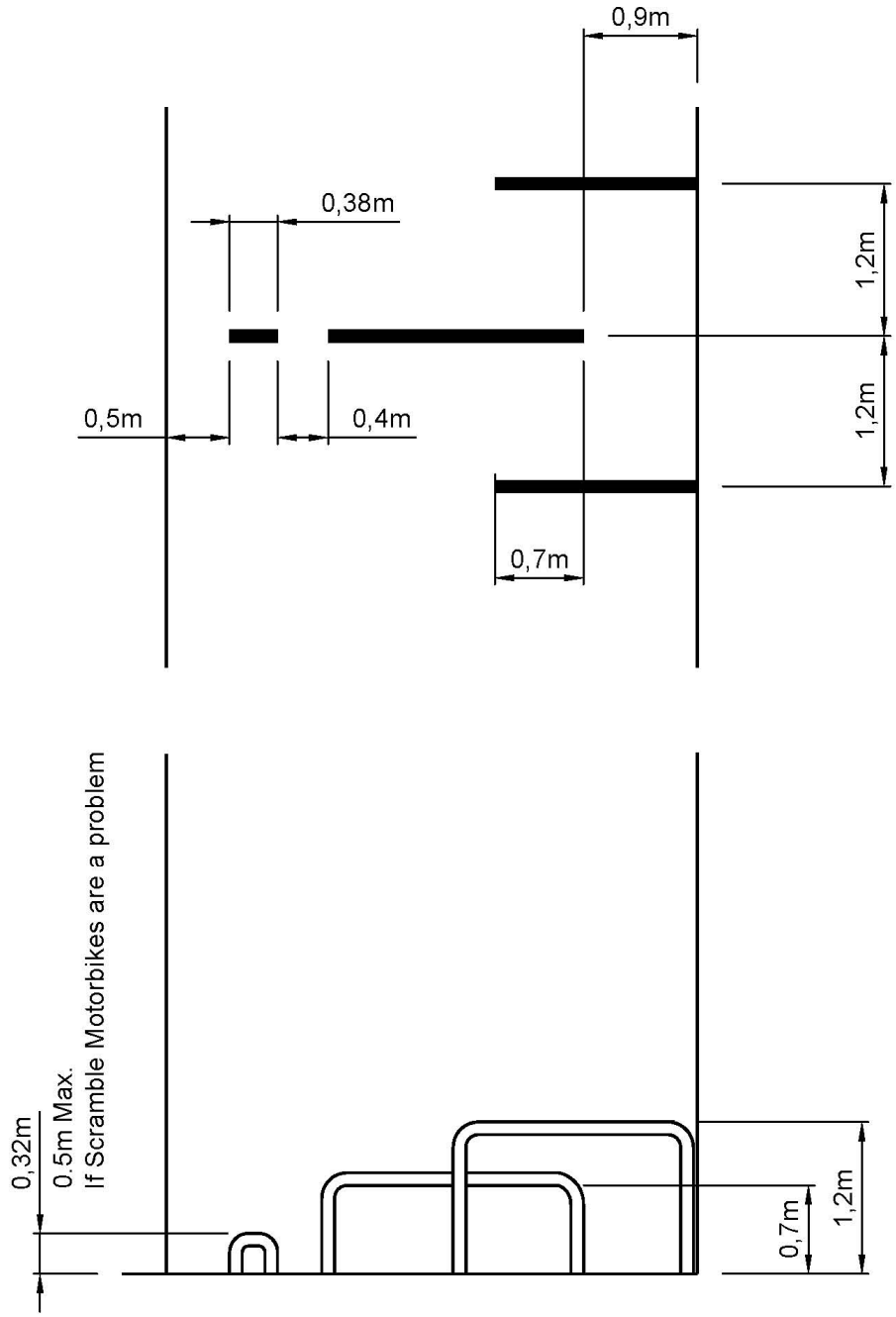
Figure 2b. - Chicane Barrier Alternative



4.5 Figure 3 shows a barrier that can be used on rights of way. These can be either metal or wooden as appropriate. This allows for wheelchairs to bypass the barriers, pushchairs to go under the barriers and also deters motorcycles.

Comment [d3]: See GT's e-mail

Figure 3. - Barrier with Wheelchair bypass



5.0 References

1. Sustrans – Information sheet FF22 – Access Controls
2. Sustrans – Information sheet FF43 – The Interface between Highways and Greenways
3. Cycling England – Cycle Design checklist