

## **The Essex County Council (Elmstead Road, Elmstead) (One Way) Order 202\***

### **Statement of Reasons**

The proposal to introduce a one way northbound restriction on Elmstead Road is directly associated with the delivery of the A1331 scheme. This measure is considered necessary to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the local highway network following the introduction of the new link road.

Elmstead Road is currently a single track rural lane with limited passing opportunities and constrained verges. With the A1331 in place, Elmstead Road is expected to attract additional traffic as it provides an alternative route to the A1331 from the B1027 and Wivenhoe. Without intervention, this increased demand would result in:

- A higher frequency of vehicle conflict on a road not designed for two way flows
- Damage to verges and carriageway edges
- Increased maintenance costs
- Reduced safety and reliability for all users

Widening Elmstead Road to accommodate two way traffic is not feasible within the scope, budget, or environmental constraints of the A1331 project. A one way restriction therefore represents the most proportionate and deliverable solution.

By removing opposing traffic movements, the risk of head on conflict is eliminated. This is particularly important on a narrow lane where sightlines and passing opportunities are limited.

The restriction prevents verge over running, rutting, and erosion, which would otherwise increase significantly with two way flows. This helps preserve the character of the lane and reduces maintenance liabilities.

Traffic that currently turns right across the A133 westbound carriageway from Elmstead Road will instead turn left out of Elmstead Road travelling west before utilising the A1331 Roundabout to the travel eastbound. The gap in the central reservation that facilitated this movement historically will be removed under a separate prohibition order. This removes a turning movement that currently interrupts A133 traffic flow and presents a safety hazard.

Traffic travelling westbound along the A133 which will no longer be permitted to turn left into Elmstead Road are to make use of alternative routes via School Road to the east or via the A133/B1027 junction to the west.

There may be additional travel distance however this is expected to be minimal and is outweighed by the safety benefits of removing two way conflict on a single track road. The alternative routes via the B1027 are designed for two way traffic, have better visibility, and provide safer access to the wider network. The one way restriction

ensures that journeys made via Elmstead Road remain predictable and free from obstruction.

Whilst some might expect displaced congestion on the B1027, the B1027 is the appropriate route for through traffic and is already designed to accommodate higher volumes. The displacement from Elmstead Road is expected to be modest, as the road currently carries relatively low flows. The A133/B1027 junction and the B1027 corridor have greater capacity and better safety features than Elmstead Road, making them more suitable for the redistributed movements.

While historically the road has carried two way traffic, the introduction of the A1331 changes travel patterns and increases demand. The road's physical constraints mean it cannot safely accommodate higher flows without significant widening, which is not feasible. The one way restriction is a proactive measure to prevent deterioration in safety and road condition.

It is not anticipated that speeding will be an issue however, Speed data will be monitored, and traffic calming measures can be considered if required. The geometry of Elmstead Road naturally limits vehicle speeds, and the removal of opposing traffic reduces the likelihood of sudden braking or evasive manoeuvres.

Agricultural and commercial access will remain fully available. The one way system simplifies movements for larger vehicles by removing the need to negotiate oncoming traffic on a narrow lane. Any additional routing required is minimal and occurs on roads better suited to larger vehicles.

In conclusion The one way northbound restriction on Elmstead Road is a necessary and proportionate measure to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the local highway network following the introduction of the A1331. It addresses the physical limitations of the road, prevents future safety and maintenance issues, and ensures that traffic is directed onto routes designed to accommodate it. While some users may experience minor changes to their travel patterns, the wider safety, environmental, and operational benefits justify the proposal.