

Report to Norwich highways agency committee
24 July 2014
Report of Head of city development services
Subject Push the Pedalways - Park Lane to Vauxhall Street

Item
8

Supplementary report

Purpose

To consider (as a supplement to the original published report) alternatives to the proposed mini-roundabout on Unthank Road; options for the routing of the pink and orange pedalways between Park Lane and Vauxhall Street; clarify the exact position of the proposed closures of Park Lane and the parking provision on Avenue Road.

Recommendation

Members are recommended to delete recommendations 2 a-e from the original published report and replace them with the following amended set of recommendations:

- a) The introduction of a road closure on Park Lane to the immediate north of the junction with Avenue Road and a road closure on Avenue Road to the immediate east of Maida Vale. Cyclists and emergency vehicles will be exempt from those closures.
- b) The introduction of a no waiting at any time restriction on the entire length of the northern side of Avenue Road, including the removal of the bus stop cage, the replacement of the bus stop cage and a 9m length of double yellow line on the southern side of Avenue Road with a permit parking restriction and the transfer of Maida Vale from parking zone R to parking zone P.
- c) The realignment of the junction of Park Lane with Unthank Road to provide wider shared-use footpath cycleways in the vicinity of the junction.
- d) The removal of the existing signalled crossing on Unthank Road by Essex Street and the provision of a new type of shared-use pedestrian / cyclist crossing on a raised table on Unthank Road between Park Lane and Essex Street.
- e) The introduction of contra flow cycling on the section of Rupert Street between Trinity Street and Cambridge Street
- f) Introduce a signed only contra flow cycle lane on Essex Street and explore the possibility of designating Essex Street as a Cycle Street.
- g) Extend the existing 20mph restriction on Unthank Road to the north of the Essex Street junction.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority of a safe and clean city and the service plan priority to implement the Local Transport Plan and Norwich Area Transportation Strategy.

Financial implications

£180,000 is available from the Push the Pedalways programme budget to implement this project.

Ward/s: Nelson & Town Close

Cabinet member: Cllr Stonard, cabinet member for environment, development and transport.

Contact officers

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Background documents

Consultation material available online at

<http://www.norwich.gov.uk/TransportAndStreets/Transport/Cycling/Pages/ParkLaneVauxhallStreetConsultation.aspx>

Consultation responses

Report

Background

1. The original published report under item 8 on this agenda considers the responses to the consultation on a number of options for improving the quality of the cycling infrastructure along the pink and orange pedalways between Avenue Road and Chapel Field Road. Recommendation 3 of that report (and accompanying explanation in paragraph 49) indicated that a supplementary report would be produced for consideration at the meeting. This supplementary report has been written following further technical research and feasibility design. It addresses questions about the routing of the pink and orange pedalways, safety concerns about the proposed mini-roundabout on Unthank Road, the extent of the 20mph limit on Unthank Road, minor amendments to the proposed closures near the junction of Park Lane and Avenue Road and the parking restrictions on Avenue Road.

The mini-roundabout on Unthank Road

2. The consultation proposed a mini-roundabout at the junction of Unthank Road and Park Lane. Further research and feasibility design has led to a review of this proposal. The proposed removal of most traffic from Park Lane through its closure near Avenue Road allows the junction of Park Lane with Unthank Road to be re-aligned to provide a wider path on the north side of Park Lane that could be shared by pedestrians and cyclists and used by cyclists to approach a new shared-use pedestrian / cyclist crossing that features a parallel cyclist crossing area next to a zebra, where motorists are obliged to give way to both pedestrians and cyclists. As a Cycle Ambition City Norwich is well placed to get authorisation from the Department for Transport to install this new type of crossing, which are expected to become available for use by all local authorities during 2015.
3. This crossing would especially help less confident cyclists who could access Essex Street and Park Lane without sharing space with vehicles. The mini-roundabout would have required cyclists to share space with vehicles and only help them turn into and out of Park Lane. The layout of the crossing is shown on the plan attached as appendix 1.
4. The lack of vehicles moving between Park Lane and Unthank Road as a result of the proposed road closures in the vicinity of the Park Lane / Avenue Road junction would mean that some motorists driving along Unthank Road may fail to give-way to cyclists at a mini-roundabout. This is another reason why the shared-use pedestrian / cyclist crossing is better than a mini-roundabout at this location. The crossing would be placed on a raised table to reduce vehicle speeds on the approach to the crossing and encourage compliance with the 20mph limit, the start of which would be moved just north of Essex Street.

Routing Options

5. The pink and orange pedalways currently follow a one-way gyratory around Essex Street and Trinity Street to connect Vauxhall Street / Rupert Street with Park Lane. The recent consultation proposed a shorter and simpler routing of both pedalways via Essex Street by permitting cycling in both directions on Essex Street through the introduction of westbound contra flow cycling. Following the consultation officers looked at a third option using Trory Street, Kimberly Street, Oxford Street and

Unthank Road for westbound journeys on the pink pedalway, with the orange pedalway continuing to use Trinity Street. All three options are shown in appendix 2.

Routing option 1 – Retaining the Essex Street / Trinity Street gyratory.

6. If the Essex Street / Trinity Street pedalway gyratory is retained, it would be important to help cyclists to cross from Trinity Street to Park Lane because this manoeuvre is quite awkward. Better ways of enabling cyclists to make this crossing have been explored.
7. The footpath on the south-eastern side of Unthank Road between Trinity Street and Essex Street is not wide enough to be converted to a shared-use footpath cycle way to allow the cyclists to reach use the proposed shared-use pedestrian / cyclist crossing. Officers have concluded that the only realistic option to get cyclists from Trinity Street to Park Lane is to convert the existing zebra crossing outside Tesco to a shared-use pedestrian / cyclist crossing.
8. An indicative layout of how this may look is shown on the plan attached as appendix 3. This is for information only and if this route option was selected further work would be needed to determine the best design treatment. It is likely that for a replacement crossing to be successfully accommodated there would need to be some loss of parking and loading on Unthank Road, which would not be popular with businesses. The two-way section of Trinity Street near Unthank Road may need to become one-way, which would inconvenience people needing to access the properties in lower part of Trinity Street by vehicle. If members were minded to adopt this option further work would be required.

Routing option 2 – Trory Street / Kimberley Street / Oxford Street / Unthank Road.

9. With this option north-east / inbound cyclists would continue to use Essex Street and south-west / outbound cyclists would be directed though the quiet residential area via Trory Street, Kimberley Street and Oxford Street, emerging onto Unthank Road 170m north-east of the Park Lane junction. A south / outbound 1.5m wide advisory cycle lane could be provided between Oxford Street and Essex Street to help cyclists travel along Unthank Road, where traffic volumes and speeds are relatively high compared to Oxford Street, Essex Street and Park Lane. In this option the start of the 20mph limit would need to be moved to a position on Unthank Road between Oxford Street and Grosvenor Road. This layout is shown on the plan attached as appendix 4.
10. This solution offers cyclists a shorter route out of the city compared to Trinity Street. However, there has been no consultation with residents of the residential streets about this option, some cyclists would still feel uncomfortable cycling on Unthank Road with a minimum width advisory cycle lane and the advisory cycle lane will narrow the available carriageway width for vehicles to 5.85m in places, which is tight for two way bus movement. The splitting of the routes for the pink and orange pedalways would also make the routes more confusing and harder to signpost. While the focus of Push the Pedalways is the pink pedalway it is important to acknowledge that improvements are needed to the orange pedalway too. This routing option does not improve the orange pedalway. For these reasons it is not considered to be an appropriate option.

Routing option 3 – Contra flow cycling on Essex Street

11. The original published report concluded that the signed-only cycle contra flow on Essex Street was premature at the current time given that contra flow cycle lanes on narrow streets are uncommon in the UK. However, this conclusion has been revisited in light of some further external design guidance about the application of contraflow cycling and the new proposal to introduce a shared-use pedestrian / cyclist crossing on Unthank Road which connects Park Lane and Essex Street well in both directions.
12. As part of the Push the Pedalways programme, officers have access to the expertise of one of the UK's leading consultants specialising in the design of cycling infrastructure. He has provided officers with more information on contra-flow cycling in narrow streets and research evidence to suggest that they can be safely applied to streets like Essex Street. In addition, he advises that Essex Street could become a "Cycle Street", which is a new concept that is being trialled by the Department for Transport where overtaking by vehicles from behind is banned in streets where there is a high proportion of cyclists. Such streets can also have an advisory 15mph speed restriction. Making Essex Street a "Cycle Street" with signed-only contra-flow cycling would be a further measure that would make contraflow cycling in Essex Street successful.
13. To dissuade non local traffic from entering Essex Street it is proposed to carry the footpath on Unthank Road across the mouth of the junction, giving pedestrians' priority. This will help reduce the number of vehicles in the street. The layout is shown on appendix 1.

Park Lane closures

14. When consulting on the options for reducing traffic in Avenue Road and Park Lane officers' efforts were concentrated on assessing the effects of the fundamental traffic management proposals rather than the physical detail of how the closure points would be designed. As we acknowledged in the original published report, the option of two road closures severing the through routes on Park Lane would offer the most benefit to cyclists and received the most support during the consultation, so that is the option that has been recommended to take forward to statutory consultation.
15. In drawing up plans of what the closures may look like on the ground it has become apparent that the descriptions used for the closure points need to be amended. Attached as appendix 5 are two design options for how these closures could be implemented. The first shows the closures as originally described, while the second provides an opportunity for vehicles that have mistakenly driven up Park Lane from Unthank Road to turn around and return to Unthank Road. Officers recommend that a design approach based on the second option is adopted, which is why the wording of recommendation 2a has been changed.

Avenue Road waiting restrictions

16. No plan of the details of the waiting restrictions proposals was included in the original published report. Since the report was published concerns have been expressed about the loss of the parking on the northern side of Avenue Road. Officers have reviewed the existing restrictions in the area and identified a section of double yellow line that, given reduced traffic flows resulting from the proposed road closures, will no

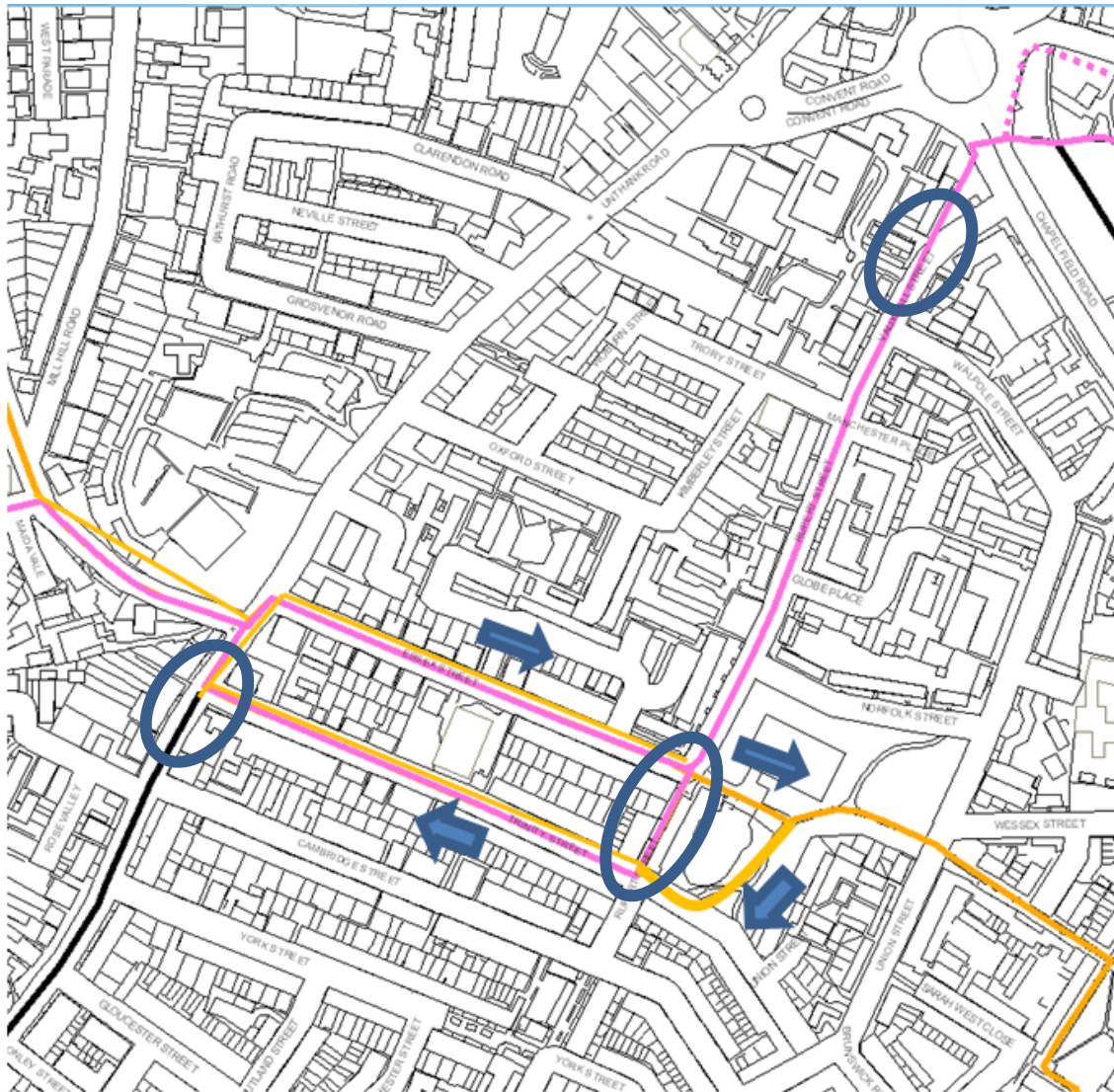
longer be necessary. It is therefore proposed to convert these to permit parking. A plan showing all the parking restrictions is shown as appendix 6.

15. A revised plan summarising all the proposed changes is shown as appendix 7. This replaces the plan in appendix 11 of the original published report.

Option 1 – Essex Street contra-flow



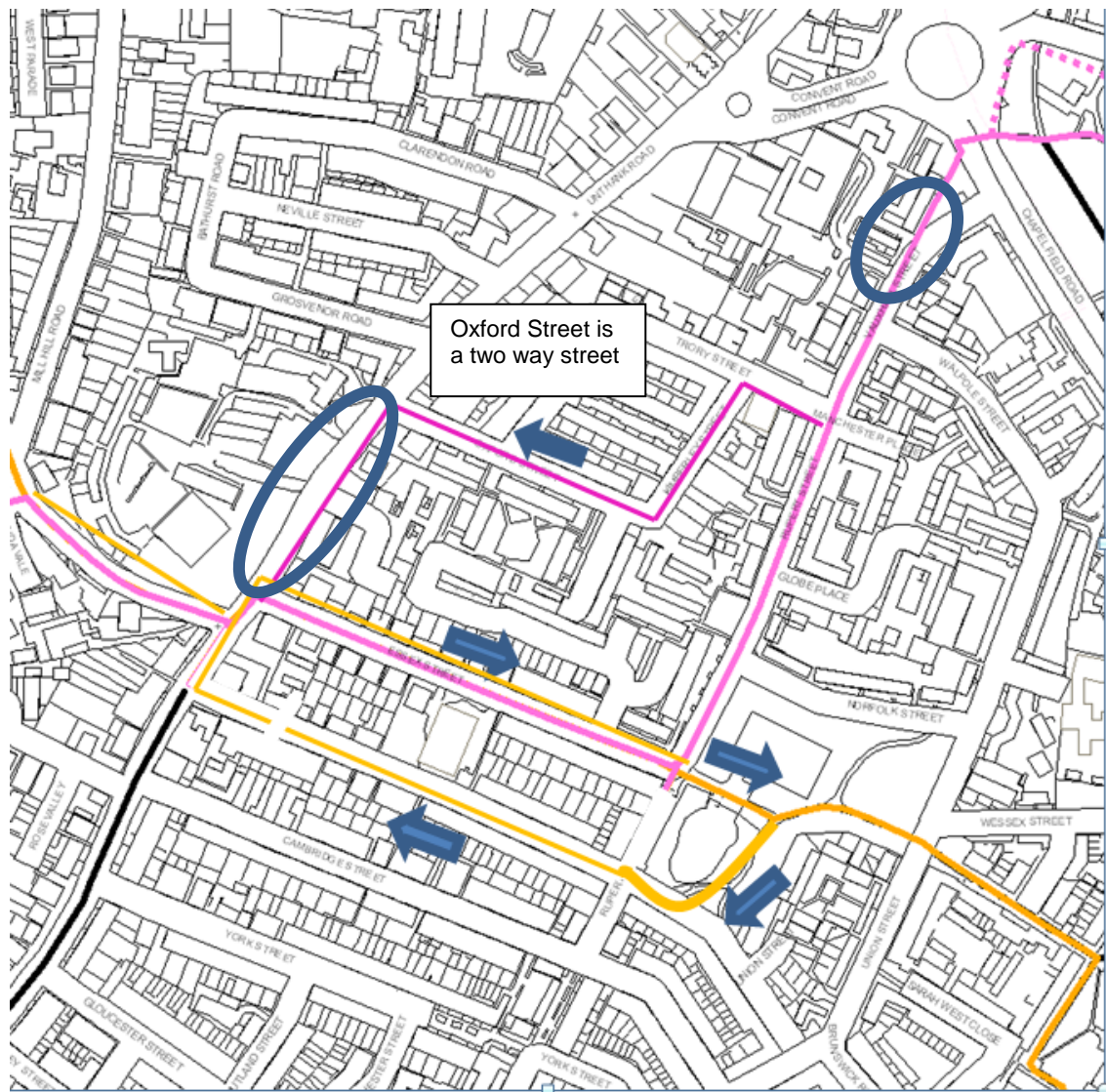
Option 2: Essex Street/Trinity Street gyratory



Possible requirements:

- 1) Safety mitigation at Trinity Street/Unthank Road
- 2) Improvement and widening of Rupert Street cycle path
- 3) Protection of cycle path at Vauxhall Street

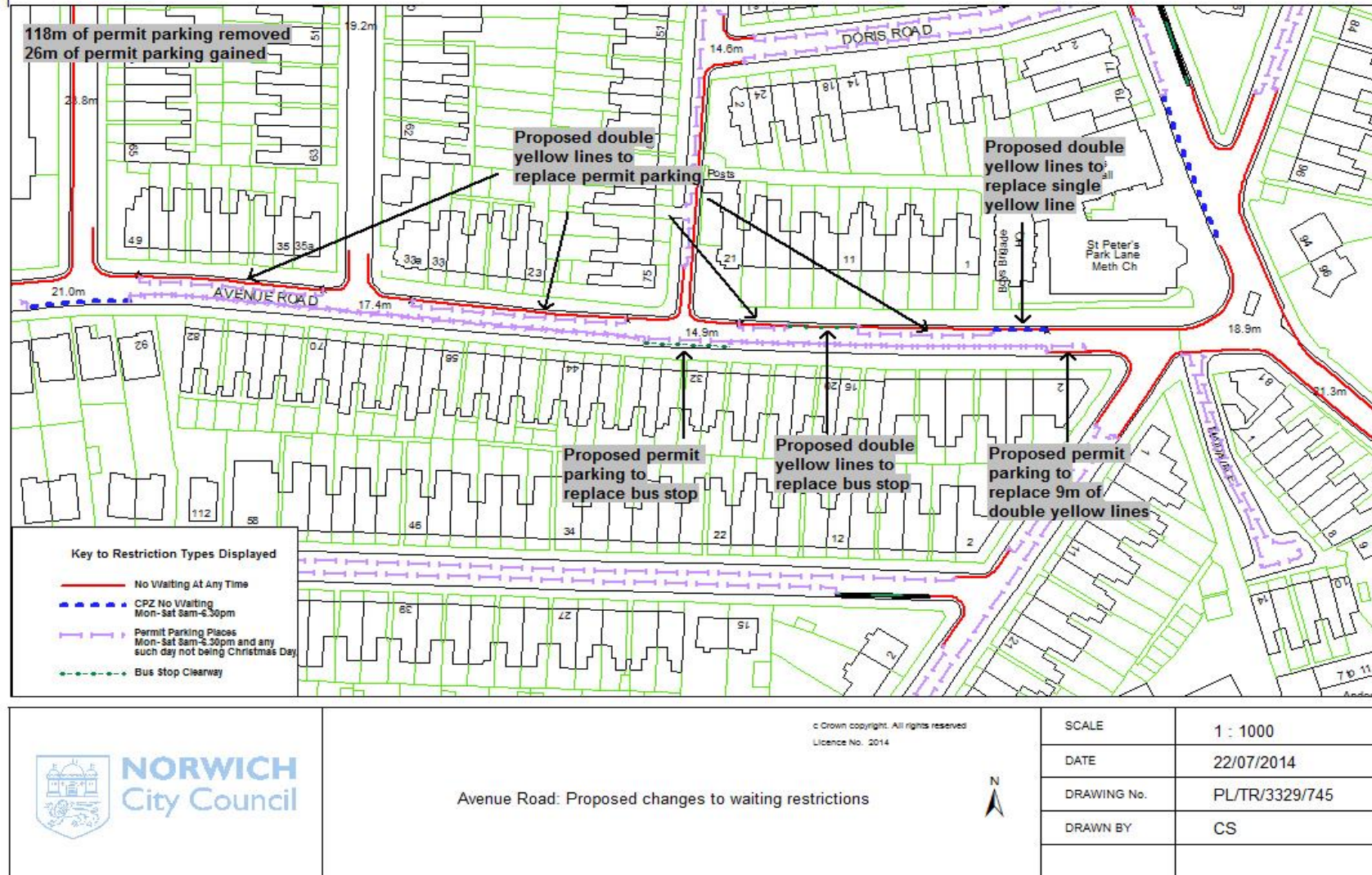
Option 3; new outbound pink route via Trory Street / Kimberley Street, Oxford Street and Unthank Road



- Cycle measures on Unthank Road from Oxford Street to Park Lane e.g. advisory cycle lane and possible entry feature (hump or table). The 20mph limit would need to be extended to/from Oxford St.
- The Orange route has issues at the Trinity St/Unthank Road junction (Tesco's) that are unresolved
- The cycle track at Vauxhall Street near the kiosk could also be improved of either option

Appendix 6 – Avenue Road waiting restrictions

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Appendix 7 – Summary of proposals for statutory consultation

