

Report for Resolution

Report to Norwich Highways Agency Committee
27 November 2008

Report of Head of Transportation and Landscape

Subject Bowthorpe Road Speed management scheme – Fieldview Junction

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Purpose

This report informs Members of options for resolving a visibility problem at the Bowthorpe Road / Fieldview junction

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended not to introduce the traffic order to extend the double yellow lines at the Fieldview junction at this time.

Financial Consequences

The financial consequences of this report are that the Local Transport Plan has an allocation of £65,000 for the Bowthorpe Road Speed Management Scheme.

Strategic Priority and Outcome/Service Priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate objective to ensure that the City has a clean and healthy environment and the service plan priority of implementing the Local transport plan.

Contact Officers

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Background Documents

Report and Minutes for Bowthorpe Road Speed Management Scheme, dated 25 September 2008

Report

Background

1. At your meeting in September you agreed a speed management scheme for Bowthorpe Road between Farrow Road and Earlham Green Lane.
2. Part of the scheme proposed extending the double yellow lines at the Bowthorpe Road / Fieldview junction. This element of the proposal received 28 objections and members asked for a separate report that considered possible options improving visibility at that junction.

The Bowthorpe Road / Fieldview Junction

3. Fieldview is a cul-de-sac off Bowthorpe Road containing approximately 20 residential properties. On the western corner of the junction is the North Earlham Store at no. 308 Bowthorpe Road, which is also a newsagent, tobacconist and confectioner. It is understood that the store has been on this site for over 80 years and, until recently, also contained a Post Office.
4. Double yellow lines extend along Bowthorpe Road for a distance of 9m from the centreline of Fieldview. Customers regularly park in front of the shop (partly on the footway) and there is space for 1 or 2 vehicles to park between the ends of the double yellow lines and the shop's vehicle access.
5. There are 2 mature lime trees at the back of the footway and in front of the forecourt of no. 308 Bowthorpe Road. One of these trees is leaning forward which reduces visibility to the right for traffic emerging from Fieldview.
6. Bowthorpe Road has a 4m wide footway, and site assessments indicate that the visibility to the right is about 40m. This is the distance that the driver exiting the minor road can see along the major road, from a point 2.4m back from the centre line (the distance between the front of the car and the driver's eye). The slight bend in the road and the wide footway means that drivers can see behind any vehicles parked outside the shop.
7. There has been one recorded accident involving a vehicle emerging from Fieldview in the past 5 years.
8. The existing site layout is shown as appendix 1.

Options for improving visibility at the Fieldview junction

OPTION 1 – Remove trees

9. Removal of the tree which is leaning forward would improve visibility and give drivers more time to see the oncoming traffic before emerging.

10. The City Council's Arboricultural Officer has inspected the tree and has provided the following statement:

'No major defects that warranted remedial action were identified.

The tree is a mature / over mature specimen approximately 18m high, displaying a slight lean towards the road.

The tree holds significant amenity value both as an individual specimen and as part of a formal planting scheme along this section of Bowthorpe Road.

As part of this planting scheme, the tree serves to extend the natural green area of the cemetery into the wider built environment, softening the contrast between the two.

It's remaining contribution (with appropriate management) is considerable. Any gains, in terms of increasing the line of sight for vehicles exiting Fieldview, achieved from removing this tree, would be limited. Other options to increase line of sight / decrease speed of oncoming traffic should be explored'.

11. If the tree was removed, it is estimated that visibility would increase from 40m to about 50m, so whilst the removal of the tree would increase visibility slightly, it would not make a significant difference. In view of the comments of the Arboricultural Officer, the removal of any trees is not recommended.

OPTION 2 – Facilitate parking on shop forecourt

12. Parking already takes place on the forecourt but is limited by the presence of the trees, a post box and a fixed advertising board. Additional parking on the forecourt would be possible if the 2 trees were removed, the post box and advertising board relocated and the footway re-laid to provide dropped kerbs along the Bowthorpe Road frontage.
13. Whilst this would provide an off street parking facility for shop customers, the shop forecourt is approximately 6m deep which is not enough to allow vehicles to turn around and exit onto Bowthorpe Road in forward gear. It would require vehicles to reverse into Bowthorpe Road.
14. Reversing into Bowthorpe Road is a potentially dangerous manoeuvre, so this option is not recommended.

OPTION 3 – Provide bollards at front of footway to prevent vehicles parking on the footway

15. This would keep the footway clear of parked vehicles but without the double yellow lines being extended, it would result in vehicles parking wholly on the carriageway, which may not have the desired result of improving visibility for emerging traffic.
16. This option should only be considered as an addition to the proposed double

yellow line extension.

OPTION 4 – Build out footway at junction

17. Visibility could be improved by building out the footway on the north side of Bowthorpe Road, either side of the Fieldview junction. This would allow the give way lines to be moved forward. It would also help to speeds on Bowthorpe Road.
18. Bowthorpe Road is 6.6m wide at this point, so to maintain lane widths of 3m, footway widening could only be about 0.6m. This would help to improve visibility but it is not enough to enable emerging traffic to see around the parked vehicles. It would also create a pinch point which may cause a problem for cyclists.
19. This option would require an increase in the budget.

OPTION 5 – Reduce the length of the proposed double yellow lines

20. The existing double yellow lines extend 9m from the centre line of Fieldview. This allows about 2 vehicles to park along the shop frontage. The proposal is to extend the double yellow lines by a further 13m so that it covers the full length of the shop frontage.
21. The double yellow lines could be extended by say 7m instead of 13m which would still allow one vehicle to park along of the shop frontage, however this parking would then start to block the vehicle access to the forecourt. Also, because the road bends slightly, moving the parking further away from the junction may actually reduce visibility to the right.
22. In view of the fact that some objectors have stated that it is not the parking, but the tree leaning forward combined with the speed of traffic that creates difficulties for emerging traffic parking, a small extension in the length of the yellow lines is unlikely to result in any appreciable improvement in visibility.

OPTION 6 – Do not extend the double yellow lines (ie do nothing)

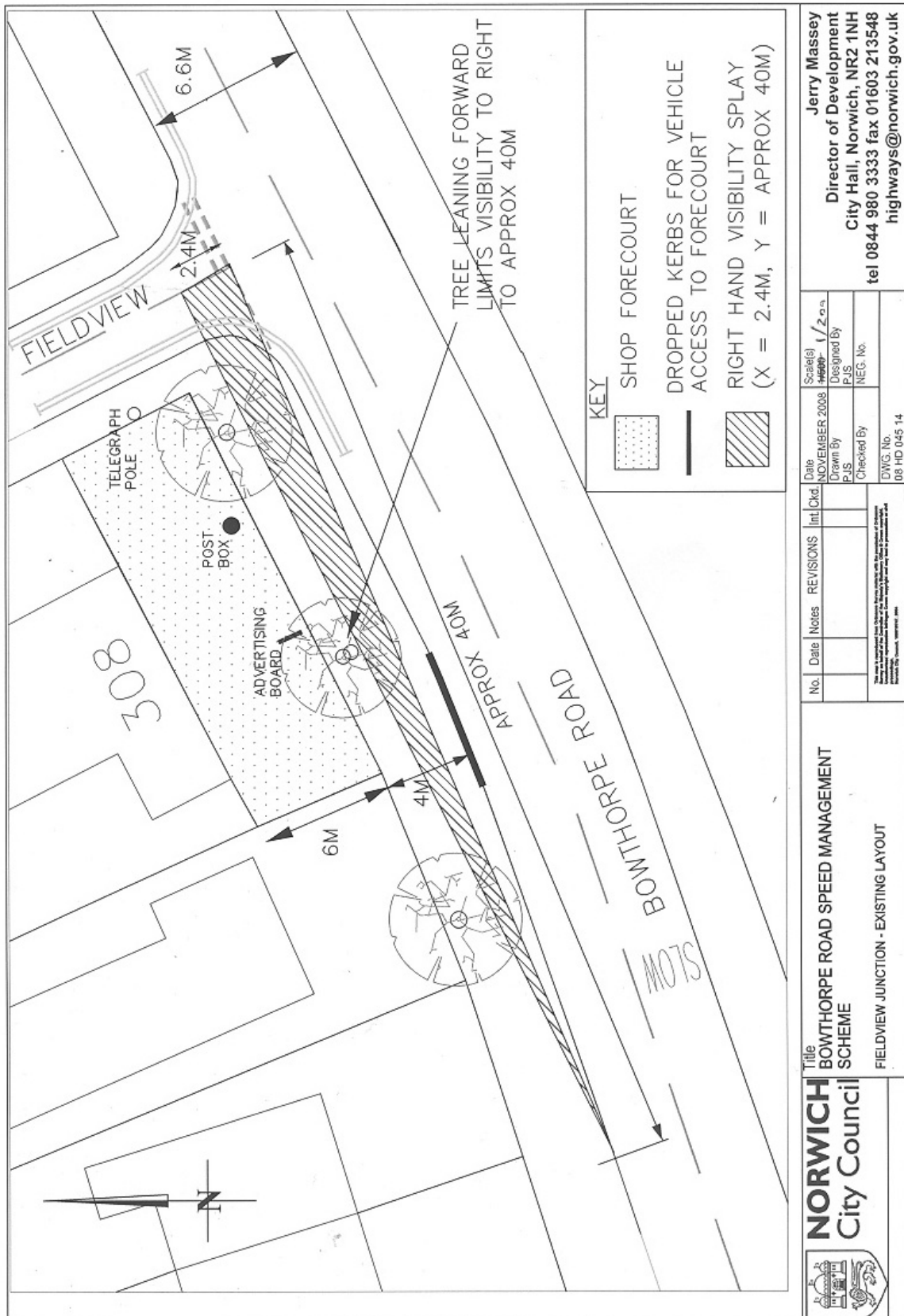
23. The Highway Code recommends that vehicles should not park within 10m of a junction, so the junction almost complies with the requirements of the Highway Code.
24. The visibility to the right at this junction has been estimated to be 40m. This is about what would be expected between these 2 types of roads for a 30mph speed limit. There are many junctions within Norwich which, due to either parking, street trees or marrow footways, have a lot less visibility.
25. The speed management measures already agreed for Bowthorpe Road will

help to slow down the traffic on the approach to the Fieldview junction.

Conclusions

26. Many priority junctions throughout the city have less than ideal visibility and vehicles emerging from the minor road into the major road need to take extra care. Bowthorpe Road has a wide footway and compared to many other junction, and visibility to the right at the Fieldview junction is as restricted as it is at many other junctions in the City.
27. The number of objections to the proposed double yellow lines indicates that the shop is a valued local facility, and there is concern that preventing parking outside the shop could affect its viability.
28. Fieldview is a cul-de-sac of around 20 residential properties and there has been one personal injury accident at this junction in the past 5 years. It is therefore difficult to justify extensive works such as building out the junction or removing a mature tree, particularly since the benefits would be marginal.
29. Many residents believe that traffic speeds along Bowthorpe Road is the biggest problem for vehicles exiting Fieldview. The provision of a Zebra crossing near the Gipsy lane junction and the vehicle activated signs will help to reduce traffic speeds and should make it easier and safer to emerge.
30. It is recommended that no action is taken at this time.

Appendix 1



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Scale(s)	1/200
Date	NOVEMBER 2008
Drawn By	PJS
Designed By	PJS
Checked By	NEG. No.
DWG. No.	08 HD 045 14

No.	Date	Notes	REVISIONS	Int.	Ctd.

NORWICH
 City Council
 Title
 BOWTHORPE ROAD SPEED MANAGEMENT
 SCHEME
 FIELDVIEW JUNCTION - EXISTING LAYOUT

