



## NORWICH HIGHWAYS AGENCY COMMITTEE

10.00 a.m. – 11.30 a.m.

27 November 2008

Present:

**County Councillors:**

Adams (Chair) (V)  
Gunson (V)  
Scutter  
Shaw  
Ward

**City Councillors:**

Morrey (Vice-Chair) (V)  
Read (V)  
Bremner  
George  
Lubbock

\*(V) – Voting Member

### 1. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor George declared a personal interest in item 4, 'Objections to Traffic Regulations Orders for the Mount Pleasant /Albermarle Road/ The Cedars', as he resided in one of the neighbouring streets included in the consultation area.

### 2. MINUTES

#### Newmarket Road – Review of Speed Limit

In response to a question, the Transportation Manager (Norwich City Council) said that the review of the speed limit in Newmarket Road would be considered at the Committee's next meeting in January 2009 together with a proposal to extend the bus lane.

**RESOLVED** to agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 25 September 2008.

### 3. LITTLE BETHEL STREET HIGHWAY AND FOOTPATH IMPROVEMENTS

Councillor Read welcomed the report and said that it offered a 'genuine solution that was satisfactory to all'. He understood from conversations with local residents that there was concern about the proposed design in relation to the position of dropped kerbs for pedestrian crossing. It was essential to the scheme that vehicles were prevented from mounting the pavement with raised kerbs, and there was concern about the damage vehicles had caused to the tarmac surface on the pavements. The Transportation Manager explained that the dropped kerbs were placed on the straight edge of the pavement and not the radii, but could be adjusted to be as close

to the pedestrian desire line as possible and a bollard put in to protect pedestrians. The proposals included the removal of the whole carriageway and its reconstruction.

During discussion members expressed concern that the bus companies were no longer using Bethel Street and that buses might never use this route in the future. Members were advised that it was still accessible by all but the largest vehicles and that the use of the route was up to the operators.

**RESOLVED** to note the report.

#### **4. OBJECTIONS TO THE TRAFFIC ORDERS FOR THE MOUNT PLEASANT /ALBERMARLE ROAD/ THE CEDARS**

(Councillor George had declared a personal interest in this item.)

(As several speakers had indicated to speak, the Chair requested that there should be one speaker for and against the proposals.)

A resident of Mount Pleasant, on behalf of the 'Mount Pleasant Action Group' addressed the Committee, with the aid of photographs which were circulated to members of the Committee, and outlined the objections to the proposal. Option 2 would not bring any significant road safety benefits. Most of the people in Mount Pleasant had favoured option 5 but this had been considered too costly. At the July meeting option 4, which had the support of the majority of residents in Mount Pleasant, had been presented to the Committee, had been approved and it was expected that option 4 would be implemented. He suggested that the results of the subsequent consultation by the Council, offered no new information, was 'lopsided' and should be disregarded. The current proposal would do very little to improve safety. Vehicle speed was not a significant issue as most drivers 'struggled to do more than 5 mph'. Option 4 had offered a compromise and on balance was the best solution. The Committee was called on to support this option.

A resident then spoke in support of the officers' recommendations, with the aid of photographs, on behalf of the local residents who supported the proposals. There was concern that traffic would be displaced into Albermarle Road and Arlington Lane. The latter was an unmade, un-adopted road and less than 3m wide in places. There was also a residential home in The Cedars and two schools and pedestrians were very vulnerable. Residents supported speed management in Mount Pleasant but were against the use of 'no entry' signs. The schools should implement travel plans and parking restrictions should be enforced.

At the Chair's discretion a resident of The Cedars then addressed the Committee in support of the recommendations and said that there were 80 flats where 94 older people lived. She pointed out that the traffic problems were not just at peak times and that residents objected to the 'no entry' signs in Mount Pleasant.

Councillor Stephen Little (Ward Councillor for Town Close Ward) paid tribute to the residents and spoke of the advantages and disadvantages of the proposal. He suggested that the 'no entry' signs should be introduced on an experimental basis and welcomed the proposal for officers to assist the schools with its travel plans.

Discussion ensued in which members of the Committee acknowledged the complex issue before them and the need to find the best solution possible. Councillor Scutter supported Councillor Little's suggestion that the 'no entry sign' be implemented on an experimental basis and monitored. Councillor Read concurred and said that the 'no entry' restrictions in Mount Pleasant might cause some initial displacement until drivers got to know the new road layout but there would be some 'evaporation' of journeys as drivers found other routes or means of transport, such as walking or cycling. Councillor George also agreed and pointed out that there was an environmental impact from non-moving traffic where a car blocked others trying to get through.

Councillor Gunson considered that the use of 'no entry' restrictions was 'too harsh a solution' and that he supported the recommendations presented a balanced solution although causing some inconvenience to some road users and residents. The schools attracted students from outside the city and therefore there was a need for school transport plans. Councillor Morrey agreed with Councillor Gunson and pointed out that the costs involved in implementing temporary 'no entry' restrictions would be a wasteful use of resources.

Councillor Lubbock agreed with the officer's recommendations, welcomed the reduction of the speed limit to 20 mph and said that parking restrictions should be enforced and that the issue of school travel plans needed to be addressed.

Councillor Read moved and Councillor Scutter seconded that the 'no entry' restriction in Mount Pleasant should be introduced on an experimental basis as set out in paragraph 18, point 5, of the report.

**RESOLVED**, with 1 member voting in favour (Councillor Read) and 3 members voting against (Councillors Adams, Gunson and Morrey) the amendment was lost.

The Head of Transportation and Landscape (Norwich City Council) undertook to write to members of the Committee to appraise them of the work on the school travel plans, which included encouraging the use of park and ride schemes.

**RESOLVED** to:-

- (1) approve the proposal for a 20mph speed limit in Mount Pleasant, Albemarle Road and The Cedars;
- (2) acknowledge that the decision on whether to introduce a 'no entry' restriction in Mount Pleasant is a finely balanced one, and if approved, will increase the volume of traffic in Albemarle Road and Christchurch Road;
- (3) not to implement the proposal for a 'no entry' restriction into Mount Pleasant from Newmarket Road;
- (4) to continue to work with the local schools to encourage parents and children to use alternative modes of transport other than the private car.

(Councillor Read left the meeting at this point.)

## **5. BOWTHORPE ROAD SPEED MANAGEMENT SCHEME – FIELDVIEW JUNCTION**

Councillor Scutter referred to the issue of the leaning tree adjacent to the Fieldview junction and pointed out that it was not being advocated that it should be cut down.

**RESOLVED** not to introduce the traffic order to extend the double yellow lines at the Fieldview junction at this time.

(Councillor Read was readmitted to the meeting.)

## **6. AN UPDATED ON LOCAL BUS SERVICE ISSUES AND PERFORMANCE**

The Network Projects Manager (Norfolk County Council) presented the report and answered questions. It was expected that real time information systems would be available on services in the city early in 2009.

During discussion members expressed concern that buses were unpunctual and that punctuality was important to encourage people to use buses when coming into the city. If bus services were more punctual it would make car use less attractive. Councillor Gunson suggested that the decline in punctuality was a seasonal one and attributed it to the start of the new school year and the build up to Christmas. The County's park and ride system was one of the most successful in the country.

**RESOLVED** to note the general improvements to the bus service performance.

## **7. NORWICH PARK AND RIDE FARE CHANGES**

The Head of Passenger Transport (Norfolk County Council) presented the report and explained the rationale behind reducing fares for single car occupants to make park and ride more attractive to them, therefore reducing the number of car journeys into the city. The Head of Passenger Transport and the Head of Transportation and Landscape answered questions. Members were advised that park and ride use was monitored and this would include the impact of the changes included in the proposed fare changes.

Councillor Read said that he could not accept the proposals which encouraged single car occupancy over car sharing.

Councillor Gunson said that as the district councils received government funding for concessionary bus passes, and not the County Council, it was not unreasonable for the district councils to defray the costs of concessionary fares on park and ride buses. The Head of Passenger Transport confirmed that discussions with the Transport Concessionary Authority would continue.

**RESOLVED**, with 3 members voting in favour (Councillors Adams, Gunson and Morrey) and 1 member against (Councillor Read) to:-

- (1) note the amendments to the fares structure, with changes taking place in January 2009;
- (2) agree to amend the existing Traffic Regulation Order at the Airport Park and Ride site to meet the operational requirements of the shift in fares structure.

## **8. HIGHWAYS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMME**

The Transportation Manager presented the report and pointed out that the report on 'Bus Stop Clearways in Norwich' would be considered at the next meeting; and that on page 69 of the agenda the reference to priority 11, Waterloo Road by Magdalen Street, the word 'uncertain' should be deleted and replaced with 'pedestrian refuge'. A signalled crossing at Harvey Lane would be funded by contributions from the new Aldi store. Funding contributions from the Duke's Wharf development would be used to fund the revenue costs for a cycle hire scheme. The weighting system of priorities looked across all priority lists (traffic calming, pedestrian crossings, safety schemes) and therefore ensured that schemes were the best value for money.

Councillor Lubbock welcomed the report and said that the pedestrian crossings on the Ring Road and Unthank Road were long overdue. She requested that officers sent her further details about the scheme to extend the footpath in Leopold Road.

### **RESOLVED to:-**

- (1) endorse the proposed submissions for Local Transport Plan (LTP) funds for 2009/10 and 2010/11 as detailed in Appendix 1;
- (2) ask the County Council's Cabinet to consider this Committee's submission for LTP funding as part of the overall highways and transportation capital programme for the coming years;
- (3) notes the non-LTP schemes for the City that are detailed in appendix 3 of the report.

## **9. PERFORMANCE MONITORING OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY AGREEMENT**

**RESOLVED**, having considered the report of the Head of Transportation and Landscape and the Head of Asset and City Management (Norwich City Council) to receive the performance results and note that generally performance results for the 2008/2009 financial year compare reasonably well against targets.

## **10. MAJOR ROADWORKS – REGULAR MONITORING**

**RESOLVED**, having considered the report of the Head of Transportation and Landscape, to note the report.

CHAIR