

**Norwich Highways Agency committee  
19 January 2017**

**Public questions/petitions**

**Anne Farthing, Mount Pleasant, to present the following petition on behalf of residents:**

“Mount Pleasant Road Safety: We support a formal complaint to Norwich City Council about the lack of action on road safety improvements in Mount Pleasant NR2.

**Introduction**

Nearly 60 residents have signed a complaint to the council regarding the dangerous road conditions in Mount Pleasant. Mount Pleasant has been designated a city cycle route and is a 20mph road. However, the following problems have been identified:

- Injuries: five RTC (Personal Injury) in 5 years. 2 involved pushbikes;
- Damage: one car has been written off, a garden wall was demolished by a car, damage to narrow pavements and drains. Over 12 matters reported to Police;
- Speed limit: is extensively flouted. Average speed is 24mph in a 20mph zone with 85th percentile measuring reaching 28mph (source: Council data).

Clearly the 20mph limits without self-enforcing traffic calming measures are not working.

**Department of Transport Guidance**

DoT Advisory Notices and Leaflets clearly require councils to prioritise safety measures for residential roads within school areas and areas used by disabled residents. Mount Pleasant meets these criteria by having four schools and The Cedars in the vicinity and by being a designated cycle route.

**Proposal**

It appears that a timely solution might be available to all parties that will solve the problem. Mount Pleasant requests to apply for funding under the Push the Pedalways scheme which allows for adjacent roads to be upgraded with self-enforcing safety measures. In this case, we wish apply as an ancillary project to the Push the Pedalways scheme for Newmarket Road:

- In a survey over 90% of the residents support traffic calming measures.
- A constructive meeting between Mount Pleasant and other local roads suggested that chicanes would be the most universally acceptable solution.

- A large number of Mount Pleasant residents would also be very content if speed bumps were proposed.

**Councillor Adams, chair of Norwich Highways Agency committee to reply on behalf of the committee.**

“It has been a while since the committee has considered the concerns of the Mount Pleasant residents about traffic issues in their street and I welcome this latest submission.

For those of you who are not aware a signed only 20mph speed limit was introduced in Mount Pleasant in 2009 and formed part of a trial of signed only 20mph speed limits across the city. Since then a number of new 20mph restrictions have been introduced across the city, predominantly by making use of the cycle ambition grant funding.

I am very conscious that as a committee we do not have an agreed up-to-date framework to work to when implementing 20mph restrictions. Officers rely very much on their professional judgement when recommending if traffic calming measures are needed, obviously taking heed of the Department for Transport guidance and level of available funding. I would find it very useful if this committee were to receive a report setting out recommendations on how to approach the introduction of 20mph speed restrictions and under what circumstances physical traffic calming measures should be considered.

I am asking officers to bring this report to our next meeting in March as it will be very helpful in informing exactly how we implement the 20mph areas that are part of the implementation of the cycle ambition funded blue and yellow pedalways. These are due for implementation in 2017/18. It will also enable us to make an informed decision on whether further measures are needed in Mount Pleasant.”

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**Question 1**

**Les Rowlands, Ipswich Road, to ask the following question:**

“Regarding the recent NICE guidelines - Local authorities should consider lower speed limits, clean air zones and even redesign speed bumps in a bid to reduce air pollution, health experts say. What is the committee’s view on this?”

**Councillor Adams, chair of Norwich Highways Agency committee to reply on behalf of the committee.**

“Unfortunately Norwich, in common with most reasonably sized urban areas has some locations with poor air quality. The city council is responsible for assessing air quality in the city and has identified several locations where levels of nitrogen dioxide exceed European Union limit values. These include Castle Meadow, Riverside Road by Foundry Bridge and King Street/Carrow Bridge.

The city and county councils have worked collaboratively over a number of years to address air quality problems. For example levels of nitrogen dioxide have been successfully reduced to below EU limit values on Grapes Hill. However further work is required and this committee endorsed a new air quality action plan for the city in September 2015. This includes a number of actions including retro-fitting more of the bus fleet with exhaust clean-up technology; which I am pleased to say is now being rolled out extensively making use of government grant funding. This particular initiative tackles 24 of the worst polluting buses in Norwich, which will lead to reductions of 100 tonnes of nitrogen emissions and 200 tonnes of carbon emissions over the next 5 years.

In addition, Norwich has a voluntary quality partnership (VQP) in place between bus operators, Norfolk County Council and Norwich City Council and this has recently been reviewed with the outcome being that it will now include commitments to reduce vehicle emissions through driver training, engine switch off, fleet investment and securing of appropriate funding, both private and public.

The NICE guidelines are draft. However it is likely that much of the guidance will appear in the finalised version later in the year, when they can be considered both in reviewing the present air quality action plan and in the forthcoming proposed review of the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy. It should be remembered, however, that the guidance is quite general in nature; and therefore any interventions taken forward, such as those mentioned by Mr Rowlands, will depend on the specific air quality problems that remain.

Please note that the supplementary question will be:

“What technology is available, if any, to help support a reduction in air pollution in the city.”

**Councillor Adams, chair of Norwich Highways Agency committee to reply on behalf of the committee – proposed response to the supplementary question:**

“There is a wide variety of technology available to support a reduction in air pollution. By and large vehicle fleets are becoming cleaner due to EU legislation which requires newer vehicles to produce reduced emissions. However this can be accelerated through by retro-fitting devices into vehicles to reduce emissions as is being carried out in much of the bus fleet and referred to earlier.

Technology also has a role to play by allowing cleaner fuels to be used; such as gas or electrically powered vehicles; and technology can also come into play in both assessing and monitoring air quality as well as in providing live information. Recent discussions with bus operator, First, highlighted that they would be keen to explore any proposals for partnership working that might assist in bringing low emissions technology to the streets of Norwich, whether that be electric, gas, modern low emissions diesel or other solutions.

Technology is not a panacea, however, and a wide variety of interventions are likely to be required as well; including education, enforcement, traffic management and encouragement of less polluting modes of travel for example.”

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**Public questions/petitions**

**Question 2**

**Paul Scruton, Gertrude Road, to ask the following question:**

“At the end of last year Norwich City Council was lucky enough to receive a large windfall from national government, for various highway improvements.

We would like to lobby for some of this money to be spent, installing better street lighting under the flyover in Magdalen Street, which would remove the feeling of intimidation that many members of the general public have said they feel.

As you can see from the picture of the eastern side of the flyover has one small streetlight to cover the entire area, and the western side has no street lights at all.”

**Councillor Adams, chair of Norwich Highways Agency committee to reply on behalf of the committee.**

“The funding referred to by Mr Scruton is City Cycle Ambition Grant funding and as its title suggests it is aimed at improving conditions for cyclists; to increase the number of people cycling to work or for shopping, etc. Unfortunately it would not be possible, therefore, to use the funds to improve street lighting under the flyover.

There is regrettably no budget to allow the improvement of street lighting at this location from either the city or county councils at present. However Mr Scruton will be aware of emerging proposals for the redevelopment of Anglia Square. As part this, the city council is in discussion with the developers about the possible improvement of the area under the flyover. Whilst it remains to be seen whether such improvements will be feasible and if so what their nature may be, officers will ensure that consideration of street lighting is incorporated into this work.”

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**Note**

The equipment shown in the second picture is cathodic protection equipment for the structure (it prevents the reinforcing bars in the concrete structure from rusting).

Gertrude Road  
Norwich  
Norfolk  
NR3 4SF

Appended - for photographs

DATE : 9/1/2017

A question to the Highways Committee meeting on the 19th of January 2017.

**Subject:- Street lighting under the Magdalen Street Norwich.**

At the end of last year Norwich City Council was lucky enough to receive a large windfall from national government, for various highway improvements.

We would like to lobby for some of this money to be spent, installing better street lighting under the flyover in Magdalen Street, which would remove the feeling of intimidation that many members of the general public have said they feel.

As you can see from the picture of the eastern side of the flyover ( see picture right ) has one small streetlight to cover the entire area, and the western side has no street lights at all.

As you can see from the picture below, electrical connections for street lights are available.



Yours faithfully

Paul Scruton

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**Public questions/petitions**

**Questions, 3, 4, 5 and 6 relate to agenda item 5, Transport for Norwich – Dereham Road/Guardian Road/Sweet Briar Road junction improvement**

**Question 3**

**Richard Holmes, chair of Wensum Residents Association, to ask the following question:**

“Currently, while walking towards to city along Dereham Road from the Sweetbriar roundabout that you discuss today, you must walk 1.2 km or over 1300 yards before you reach a safe point to cross the road at a designated crossing. Over the same distance on Earlham Road you would have passed two zebra crossings and two light controlled crossings; Unthank Road three light controlled and two Zebra crossings; Newmarket Road three light controlled; Ipswich Rd three light controlled; Hall Road four zebra and one light controlled; and Aylsham Road four light controlled crossings. If you approve the proposals before you today without amendment the situation for vulnerable pedestrians will not improve but the flow of motorised traffic will.

Will the committee consider amending these plans to include a pedestrian crossing inside the ring road towards the Dereham Road/Waterworks Road junction, I believe this was considered in the early stages of the original plan, or give a commitment to build a crossing in the very near future?”

**Councillor Adams, chair of Norwich Highways Agency committee to reply on behalf of the committee.**

“The report that we are due to consider today makes it clear that there is insufficient justification for a crossing associated with the roundabout improvement, but that a facility further into the city could be justified, but would require a separate assessment to ensure that the facility provided the greatest benefit. That is outside the scope of this project.

All schemes are subject to the council being able to obtain appropriate levels of funding to allow them to progress, and so I cannot give any commitment at the current time. However, a potential solution could be the upgrading of the lights at Dereham Road/ Bowthorpe Road to include a pedestrian phase. This is not due for replacement until 2024, but we will look to bring this forward if we can.”

#### **Question 4**

**County Councillor Elizabeth Morgan, Wensum Division, to ask the following question:**

“Will the committee please fully endorse the report's recommendation to carry out a traffic assessment on Hotblack Road and Waterworks Road before works begin, shortly after works commence and after works have been completed (see paragraph 63). This will ensure the possibility to react quickly if any adverse effects on residential roads are detected. It will also allow an assessment of whether the works on the roundabout result in an overall improvement of the situation for these roads.”

**Councillor Adams, chair of Norwich Highways Agency committee to reply on behalf of the committee.**

“This issue is also covered in the report that we are due to consider today, and during construction, the amount of disruption can be minimised by building much of the scheme without any changes to the existing roundabout. The report is clear that unexpected impacts will be monitored and if necessary, measures taken to address any adverse effects but I note that officers are not expecting there to be any adverse impacts on these streets as a result of the improvement to the roundabout. “

#### **Question 5**

**City Councillor Sandra Bogelein, Wensum ward, to ask the following question:**

“I would like to question the recommendation not to include an additional pedestrian and cyclist controlled crossing on Dereham Road, east side of the roundabout. Paragraph 28 of the report summarises the results from a pedestrian and cyclist survey. It states:

“A pedestrian and cycle survey was carried out at the same time on Dereham Road (East), by its junction with Winchcomb Road. On the roundabout side of the junction, 4 pedestrians and 4 cyclists were recorded over a 12-hour period, with 27 pedestrians and 2 cyclists crossing Dereham Road on the city side of the junction. There were 138 pedestrians and 33 cyclists crossing Winchcomb Road, this shows that the main desire line is on the south side of Dereham Road.

However, this survey does not include the number of pedestrians and cyclists crossing at the small pedestrian island further up the street. This island is situated right next to the crossing with Waterworks Road and crossing the street at this island can be difficult. However, I believe that the pedestrian survey is skewed, as people are still more likely to cross at the island compared to where the survey was conducted. Paragraph 24 of the report further states that: „the main desire lines were on Dereham Road, near Hellesdon Road junction and the bus stops, and on Guardian Road.”

While I am very pleased that there will be a pedestrian crossing on these two arms, I find it difficult to understand why a Dereham Road east pedestrian crossing is less



desirable than the one planned on Dereham Road west. From the figures presented by officers in meetings where we discussed the improvements the number of pedestrians and cyclists crossing is higher on the Dereham Road east arm than on the Dereham Road west arm. Equally both arms have bus stops on both sides where a crossing could be situated.

Based on these issues, will the committee revisit the recommendation not to include a controlled pedestrian crossing or at least a zebra crossing on the Dereham Road east side to ensure that this scheme will increase pedestrian safety?"

**Councillor Adams, chair of Norwich Highways Agency committee to reply on behalf of the committee.**

"I am pleased that Councillor Bogelein welcomes the much improved pedestrian facilities in the area, and I am aware that these have been needed for some time.

As I have already said, any further crossings east of the junction need to be assessed outside of the project to ensure maximum benefit."

## **Question 6**

**Councillor Kevin Maguire, Wensum ward councillor, to ask the following question:**

"As a Labour councillor for the ward in which the roundabout is located, I am strongly in support of the scheme and would exhort the committee to approve it. This is based on:

- my own experiences in navigating various routes in the vicinity of the existing roundabout;
- the feedback from public meetings that the Labour city councillors helped to organise where we had engineers from county explain the proposals in detail; and,
- the results of a survey of residents in the area of the proposed scheme carried out by the Labour city councillors for Wensum Ward.

In that survey, of the 25 people who responded: 17 were either in favour or had no view on the enlarged roundabout (eight were not in favour). Of that same 25: 18 were either in favour or had no view in having a pedestrian crossing on Guardian Road (7 were not in favour).

Those in favour who stated their reason for supporting the scheme were all on the grounds of safety, for example: "I walk up Dereham Road to get to Aldi. There desperately needs to be a west/east pedestrian crossing close to the roundabout.."

One respondent who described themselves as a "non-driver" objected to the roundabout widening but was keen for the pedestrian crossings saying that "trying to cross the road is an absolute joke. It is just plain dangerous. You really are taking your life in your hands as there seems to be no break in traffic at all."

Two objectors sought an alternative solution to the problem, suggesting they agreed that there was a problem to solve;

- “They should put a flyover”.
- “I think there should be traffic lights not roundabouts. Think of the pedestrians, people with pushchairs/toddlers/disabilities, trying to cross these very busy roads.”

There was no common reason for objecting to the scheme overall. Each objector had a particular view and some did not give a reason. Objections given were:

- “I do not think the Road needs to be altered. Waste of money. Do the pot holes in the road that need to be done” ;
- “I am an allotment holder and would not support anything where I have to lose any part of my allotment or be located elsewhere”;
- “Sick of bikes: should be insured”;
- “Just the latest step in NCC’s anti-car policy”;
- “Make the roundabout smaller and do away with the bus lanes on Dereham Road”;

I trust these comments and views will be considered by the committee in the development of the scheme.”

**Councillor Adams, chair of Norwich Highways Agency committee to reply on behalf of the committee.**

“I am pleased that you support these proposals, and I have no doubt that members of the committee will carefully consider all aspects of the scheme when considering the report.”