

**Norwich Highways Agency committee**

**10:00 to 11:15**

**20 December 2018**

Present:     **County Councillors:**           **City Councillors:**  
                  Fisher (chair) (v)\*           Stonard (vice chair) (v)  
                  Vincent (v)                   Stutely (v)  
                  Bills                           Carlo  
                  Jones (C)                   Malik  
                  Thomson

Apologies:   City Councillor Peek

                  \*(v) voting member

(The chair announced that notification had been given that the first item, Public Questions/Petitions was being filmed in accordance with the city council's film policy.)

**1.     Public Questions/Petitions**

**Public questions -**

Question 1   Ms Gail Mayhew, chair, Cathedral, Magdalen and St Augustine's Forum, asked the following question:

"We understand that Norwich City Council is putting forward a bid to the Transforming Cities Fund for further street-scaping in Tombland. Has a post-hoc appraisal been done of the success or otherwise of the first portion of the scheme, given the very high level of public usage of and demands on Tombland? In movement terms would this not be wise in advance of designing an improvement scheme?"

Councillor Fisher, chair, replied on behalf of the committee as follows:

"The northern part of Tombland was improved in 2015 with the expectation that the rest of Tombland would be improved as soon as potential funding had been identified. The report before the committee today makes it clear that although no formal bid for funding for Tombland has yet been submitted, there is the potential to obtain funding through the Transforming Cities Fund, and a substantial amount of work has been undertaken in order to bring proposals to the position that they can be consulted on, which again is the consultation we are discussing at today's committee meeting.

The feasibility study that has been published along with today's report has considered not only the issues surrounding the southern area of Tombland, but has also reviewed the northern section and the movement demands of the area as a whole."

As a supplementary question, Ms Mayhew said that there were a number of safety issues and asked that the safety review was conducted by a third party rather than the officers who had designed the scheme. The transportation and networks manager, Norwich City Council, said that safety audits were conducted for all highways schemes; two before implementation, one after completion, and a follow up safety audit one year after completion. The audits were carried out by council officers but they were not officers who had a direct involvement in the scheme.

Question 2 Mr Simeon Jackson, Mousehold Street, Norwich, asked the following question:

"The changes to the junction at the Magpie Road/Heath Road/Edward Street junction, seems to have changed the phasing so that pedestrians are shown a red light at the crossings, even when it is safe to cross, where previously the green man would show whenever there was a red light for the traffic. What's more, pressing the button during one of the phases when the road traffic is on red does not cause it to change straight away, so pedestrians must wait out the rest of that phase, plus a full phase of traffic, before the lights turn green. If one is walking on the south side of Magpie Road, as I do every day, this means potentially having to wait for over two full phases of vehicle traffic (once at the road, and again on the island) before getting across, all the while exposing one to the air pollution from the passing traffic. The other option, of course, is to cross on a red light, which is unsafe, particularly for children and visually impaired people. Both of these options are unacceptable.

When will the council correct this junction's poor phasing and make it so that a green man always shows when it is safe to cross?"

Councillor Fisher, chair, replied on behalf of the committee as follows:

"The operation of traffic signals at this junction was changed as you know to accommodate the introduction of the cycle facility to and from Heath Road. Consideration was given to operating a similar pedestrian crossing arrangement as previously but the introduction of the cycle crossing facility meant this was not possible.

I am informed by officers that the new phasing of the lights maximises the overall efficiency of the junction. The operation of the junction is not unsafe as any pedestrian input will receive a green signal the only difference is that it is no longer at green for the same length of time as it used to be. This is in order to provide a greater flexibility and an overall improvement in the efficiency of the junction for all the users, not just pedestrians. The performance of the junction will continue to be monitored to ensure this remain the case."

Mr Jackson said that during the consultation on this scheme he had been a ward councillor and had not been aware that the phasing would change as a result of the proposal. He asked that people could be made aware of how traffic signal phasing would be affected by a proposed scheme during the consultation. The transportation and network manager said that phasing was complicated and difficult to explain without using technical terms. However, she would take away Mr Jackson's point about raising awareness of phasing changes for consideration in future public consultations.

**Question from a local member:**

Question 3 Councillor Lubbock, Eaton ward councillor, asked the following question:

"Traffic travelling in and out of the city on the Newmarket Road particularly at the signalled crossing close to where there is a turning into Unthank Road is travelling too fast. It is at this point that drivers going out of the city see the 50 mph sign and have speeded up in anticipation.

Conversely coming into the city drivers are still in the process of slowing down from the previous 50 and 40 mph signs but not actually doing 30mph. This is shown by the Speed Activated Sign which flashes when drivers exceed 30 mph.

Please can the committee support the Eaton councillors and residents who use this crossing with requesting a review of these speed signs especially their position so close to the crossing and 30 limit and also close to the Eaton Hill slip road into Eaton which is signed 20mph."

Councillor Fisher, chair, replied on behalf of the committee as follows:

"When setting speed limits, Norfolk County Council applies its Speed Management Strategy which is closely related to current Department for Transport guidance contained in Circular 1/2013. A key element to both documents is that speed limits must be self-explanatory and help to reinforce to drivers the appropriate speed at which to travel. To artificially set a speed limit too low can actually cause more safety problems as the difference in speed between the fastest and average speed of drivers increases. It can also lead to a lack of respect for speed limits in general. Frontage development with facilities such as shops, a school etc. and pedestrian activity are important factors in setting speed limits as they change the highway environment very clearly and reinforce to drivers of the need to reduce speed.

Following the submission of Councillor Lubbock's question, officers in the network safety and sustainability team at Norfolk County Council have reviewed the speed limit signing in the vicinity of the new Toucan crossing. I am advised that the inbound 30mph speed limit on Newmarket Road conforms to the guidance which I mentioned earlier as it commences around 40m prior to the pedestrian crossing in an area where shared use footways are present at the start of the built up area. There is an argument for extending the speed limit 40m further south to the end of the Norwich bound slip road, but, there are trees and communications cabinets in this area making the signs problematic to install. It is also possible that 30mph signs in this location could be missed by drivers leaving the slip road on to A11 Norwich bound, when they are concentrating

more on joining the flow of traffic. Officers do not recommend starting the 30mph speed limit south of the slip road as this is a very different environment with no footways or frontage development and speed limit compliance would likely be poor. Travelling south, they are satisfied that the 50mph signs are sufficiently far enough south of the Cringleford bound off-slip road and pedestrian crossing.

They also advise that the injury accident records show that there have been no recorded incidents on the slip roads or at the pedestrian crossing since it was installed in May 2016, which we believe indicates that the area is operating safely. They also assure me that the pedestrian crossing has been designed so that should the driver, approach at excess speed, the time gap between a driver red light and a pedestrian, green man is extended so that a pedestrian should not step out in to its path. Technically it is there to protect people.”

Councillor Lubbock expressed her disappointment with the response because she considered that Newmarket Road was getting increasingly busier and said that she would liaise with the police for their support.

## **2. Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Vincent declared an other interest in item 5 (below), Tombland Transforming Cities Project, in that she worked for a business in The Close.

## **3. Minutes**

**RESOLVED** to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2018.

## **4. Transport for Norwich - A11 Newmarket Road – A140 Mile End Road Improvements to relieve congestion at the Daniels Road Roundabout**

The chair introduced the report.

The principal transportation planner, Norwich City Council, explained the plan, attached to the report as appendix 1 and explained that the extent of the proposed yellow lines which had not itemised in the officer recommendations.

During discussion, the principal transportation planner and the transport for Norwich (TfN) manager, Norfolk County Council, referred to the report and answered questions on the proposed scheme. Members were advised that the proposals sought to improve traffic flow on the main roads. Bus journey times were not expected to be affected as losses in journey times on side roads would be made up by gains on the main roads. The changes to the signal phasing at the South Park Avenue junction would improve the right turn access for vehicles turning into the ring road. Officers would advise Councillor Stutely about the impact that the proposals would have the crossing patrol on South Park Avenue. Members were also advised that the proposals would improve access for cyclists crossing from one side of Unthank Road to the other.

Councillor Lubbock, Eaton ward councillor, addressed the committee and expressed concern that the capacity of Newmarket Road and the ring road were not being

considered as a whole. Leopold Road and Christchurch Road had been considered. She referred to the schools in the vicinity and the hospital and expressed concern that a consequence of the parking bays outside the Colman Hospital would be tail backs and traffic congestion on the ring road. In reply the TfN manager and the engineer (network analysis), Norfolk County Council, explained that this scheme had wider implications for the transportation network in Norwich than the previous schemes and would make a sizeable improvement to journey times on the ring road. The TfN manager explained that the parking bays would provide controlled parking areas where parking was currently chaotic and uncontrolled. The bus companies were fully engaged with the consultation. He confirmed that he would meet with Councillor Lubbock on site as requested.

Members spoke in support of the proposed scheme which they considered would improve traffic flow on the ring-road. One voting member expressed reservations about the efficacy of the proposed parking bays.

The chair moved and the vice chair seconded the recommendations as set out in the report.

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, with all 4 voting members voting in favour, to:

- (1) agree to consult on proposals for changes to the section of the outer ring road between South Park Avenue and Newmarket Road as shown on the plans in Appendix 1 to include the following:
  - (a) alterations to the traffic light controlled junction at South Park Avenue to improve the operation of the junction, including pedestrian facilities;
  - (b) new pedestrian refuges near to Highland Road and Unthank Road;
  - (c) replacing the existing pedestrian crossings near Mornington Road and Waldeck Road with a staggered signalised pedestrian crossing;
  - (d) provide double yellow lines on the northern side of Colman Road with a combination of double yellow lines and limited waiting parking bays on the southern side;
  - (e) provide double yellow lines on both sides of Unthank Road with a parking bay on the northern side;
  - (f) provide double yellow lines at the junction of South Park Avenue
- (2) ask the head of city development services to commence the necessary statutory process to implement the above proposals;
- (3) note that the results of the consultation will be reported to the committee at a future date.

## **5. Tombland Transforming Cities Project**

(Councillor Vincent had declared an interest in this item.)

The principal transportation planner pointed out that a revised appendix 2 had been circulated in advance of the meeting as an incorrect version had been attached to the agenda papers.

Councillor Stonard, vice chair, said that he welcomed this proposal to improve the historic centre of the city and remove the eyesore of the disused public toilets and refuse bins. The chair also considered that the proposals would improve this important area for tourists. The chair and vice chair moved the recommendations as set out in the report.

Councillor Jones, Thorpe Hamlet division, also expressed general support for the proposal.

During discussion, the principal transportation planner, answered questions. He explained that the proposed removal of the “triangle” route to the Ethelbert Gate would improve the public realm and also protect the gate as vehicles would not approach it at an oblique angle. He considered that concerns that the proposals would lead to congestion were unfounded. Access to the gateway was important and would be two way. It was not wide enough to segregate pedestrians and cyclists. In reply to a suggestion that insufficient consideration had been given to the number of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers who accessed The Close through the gate, the principal transportation planner said that the purpose of the consultation was to get feedback from the public which would inform the next stage of the project. The landscape architect, Norwich City Council, explained that it was necessary to remove two trees and confirmed that five trees would be planted as part of the landscaping, resulting in a gain of three trees within the space.

The design and conservation manager, Norwich City Council, explained that the consultation approach would be similar to that used in the previous cycling ambition programme that involved a small exhibition at the Hostry, writing to interested parties and issuing a press release. A member referred to the public question from Gail Mayhew earlier in the meeting and asked that the consideration be given to include the outcome of the safety audit as information provided as part of the consultation.

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, with all 4 voting members voting in favour, to approve for consultation the proposals for Tombland that improve facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users by better managing existing traffic movements and creating and improved the environment to boost the local economy as shown on the plan attached as Appendix 1 which have the following effects:

- (1) removing traffic from the northern arm of the ‘Tombland Triangle’, creating a two-way route to the Ethelbert Gate and improved pedestrian space;
- (2) replacing the pedestrian crossing where Upper King Street meets Tombland, narrowing the carriageway to make crossing easier and putting it on a table to reduce speeds and increase pedestrian safety;
- (3) moving the inbound bus stop CP from Tombland to Upper King Street and widening the pavement to provide improved waiting facilities, including a bus shelter;

- (4) moving the outbound bus stop CK from Upper King Street to Tombland and extending the kerb space available for bus stopping on the west side of Tombland to provide more coherent facilities for north bound bus services;
- (5) providing a new bay in Tombland that caters for loading (including coach drop-off and pick up), taxis and disabled parking;
- (6) formalising the motorcycle parking and increase the amount of bicycle parking;
- (7) implementing changes to the on street parking and loading restrictions.

## **6. Essex Street Safety Scheme**

Councillor Corlett, Town Close division, addressed the committee on behalf of residents who were calling for a raised table to prevent speeding in Essex Street. She said that drivers had been reported who were driving in excess of 40 mph and in some cases in the wrong direction on this one way street. She listed the concerns of residents which included the need to prevent cars from driving the wrong way and speeding and that this was important because the pavements were narrow and used as a pedestrian route to three primary schools. She said that the safety audits did not include the number of near misses. Residents were also concerned about parking and congestion from delivery vehicles to Tesco's.

The transportation and network manager referred to the report and replied to the issues raised by the local member. She said that the changes to the junction of Suffolk Square and Essex Street would change the priorities but would not be a physical island. The issue of parking and delivery vehicles on the supermarket site would be raised with development control colleagues. The civil enforcement officers could enforce existing restrictions. Delivery vehicles and builders could have dispensations to park outside properties.

Councillor Stonard, vice chair, said that he was shocked that drivers could drive the wrong way down a narrow street at 50 mph, with a cycle contraflow in place. He said that he considered that the proposals would address the issues raised and that there the proposed pinch-point had been removed from the scheme so there would be no loss of parking. However he had listened to the residents' request for speed table and therefore moved, seconded by Councillor Stutely, that there should be a traffic survey six months after implementation of the safety scheme and if problems had not been addressed then consideration could be made for further measures, including a speed table.

During discussion the transportation and network manager replied to a member's question and said that the cycle contraflow was part of the Pink Pedalway and that it was not proposed to review the right turn from Unthank Road into Essex Street as part of these proposals.

The chair moved the recommendations, seconded by the vice chair, with the additional recommendation to conduct a traffic survey in Essex Street. The chair referred to the

committee's policy on speed tables (as set out in paragraph 22 of the report) and said that he hoped that the proposals would solve the problems, but if not then an exception to the policy could be considered.

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, with all 4 voting members voting in favour, to:

- (1) approve the installation of (as set out in the plan shown as appendix 3 of the report):
  - (a) a changed priority at the junction between Essex Street and Suffolk Square;
  - (b) additional 20mph signage and road markings;
  - (c) road markings to delineate a parking bay.
- (2) agree not to introduce the proposed pinch point / cycle bypass (shown in Appendix 1).
- (3) ask officers to carry out a further weeklong traffic survey in Essex Street approximately 6 months after the change of priority and additional 20mph signs and roundels have been introduced, to see what effect the changes have had on speeds, and to ask officers to report those findings back to a future meeting of this committee.

## **7. Waggon and Horses Lane - Proposed Traffic Management**

The chair introduced the report and moved the recommendations. The vice chair seconded the recommendations.

Councillor Jones, Thorpe Hamlet division, welcomed the proposal, which was supported by residents and businesses alike. However it had been reported to him that the temporary bollard was heavy to remove. The principal transportation planner said that it would be replaced by a "Norwich" bollard which was relatively light and easy to lift when required.

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, with all 4 voting members voting in favour, to:

- (1) note the results of the experimental road closure and that the initial road closure point has achieved the scheme objectives without the need to trial alternative road closure locations on Waggon and Horses Lane.
- (2) ask the head of city development to undertake the necessary statutory procedures to make permanent the provisions of the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) without amendments.
- (3) agree minor highway works in response to consultation feedback in relation to the choice of bollard used and removal of redundant bollards nearby.

## 8. Proposed Limited Waiting Restrictions in the Sewell Ward – Consultation Results

The chair moved the recommendations and said that Councillor Brociek-Coulton, local member for Sewell ward and division, supported the proposal. The vice chair seconded the proposal. (A copy of Councillor Brociek-Coulton's letter was circulated at the meeting.)

**RESOLVED**, unanimously, with all 4 voting members voting in favour, to:

- (1) approve the installation of the proposed limited waiting restrictions in four locations in Sewell Ward (as set out in the report and in 2 (a) to (d) below);
- (2) ask the head of city development services to carry out the statutory legal procedures to finalise the traffic regulation orders to:
  - (a) amend waiting restrictions in Denmark Opening as shown on plan No.PL/TR/3329/788;
  - (b) install waiting restrictions in Garrett Court and Gertrude Road as shown on plan No. PL/TR/3329/790;
  - (c) amend waiting restrictions in John Stephenson court and Violet Road as shown on plan No. PL/TR/3329/791;
  - (d) install waiting restrictions in Mousehold Avenue and Lavengro Road as shown on plan No. PL/TR/3329/792.

CHAIR