



NORWICH HIGHWAYS AGENCY COMMITTEE

10am–11.20am

24 July 2008

Present:	County Councillors:	City Councillors:
	Adams (Chair) (V)	Morrey (Vice-Chair)
	Shaw	Lubbock
	Ward	

Apologies: County Councillor Gunson (V) (on other Council business) and City Councillors Read (V), Bremner and George

*(V) – Voting Member

1. PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Cycling Provision

Councillor Lubbock said that the City Council was intent on increasing the number of cyclists using the City and that it would be useful to have information on the current situation of cycling provision to provide a 'benchmark' to measure cycling improvements and to gauge whether the Council had achieved its aims.

The Head of Programme Management, Norfolk County Council, said that this data could be made available and he would be happy to share it with the Committee and the City Council.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Lubbock and Scutter declared a personal interest in item 6, 'Objections to TRO Amendments in Peel Mews and Theatre Street' as friends of the operator of the Road Train.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 26 June 2008.

4. MOUNT PLEASANT/ALBERMARLE ROAD TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS

(A letter from Councillor George was circulated to members of the Committee at the meeting.)

A member of the public, representing residents in The Cedars, addressed the Committee outlining their objections to the proposals, which included concerns about increased traffic in Albermarle Road, that the road was used by school children, older people and carers, and that traffic safety problems at the junction at the bend in Albermarle Road would be exacerbated. (A copy of a letter from this speaker was circulated to members of the Committee at the meeting.)

Another member of the public challenged the veracity of the report, in particular paragraphs 24, 26, 34 and 35, and considered that the proposals did not take into account the effect on other roads in the vicinity. In his view the majority of local residents were opposed to the proposals.

A representative of the Mount Pleasant Action Group (comprising a committee of 4 residents who had led the campaign) said the majority of residents supported the proposed option 4. There was disappointment that the proposals did not include the implementation of speed tables, but this decision was accepted. The resident, whose house backed on to Arlington Lane, said currently the level of traffic in the Lane was trivial, at around 10 to 12 vehicles a day, and that he considered that it would be unlikely to become a rat-run because of its narrowness, road surface and access, but if it did a lockable post situated half way along would be a solution. The High School was aware of the proposals. It was important that the needs of the residents of Mount Pleasant were taken into account.

Another resident of Mount Pleasant then addressed the Committee outlining her objections to the scheme and expressing concern that 'No entry' signage would be confusing to motorists, making the junction at Newmarket Road unsafe, and that inconsiderate drivers would make Arlington Lane a rat-run. The Hewitt School had introduced a travel plan which had improved the problems of parking. She challenged the level of support for the scheme and said that it was a quiet safe road and that the proposals were not necessary.

Councillor Stephen Little, Ward Councillor for Town Close Ward, suggested that given the residents' concerns about additional traffic being generated on Albermarle Road and Arlington Lane, consideration be given to introducing the scheme on an experimental basis.

The Transportation Manager, Norwich City Council, said that permission was being sought to advertise the traffic regulation orders (TROs) and that there would be an opportunity for further consultation. It was accepted that there would be some additional traffic on Albermarle Road but it was considered that this was outweighed by the problems at the bottom of Mount Pleasant, where the road was so narrow drivers mounted the pavement. There would be signage of the 'No entry' sign from both directions of Newmarket Road. Members were advised that part of the scheme was a traffic island and that it would be necessary to find a temporary solution if the scheme was an experimental one.

Members considered that it was difficult to arrive at a solution that would satisfy everyone, but that option 4 was the best compromise to the problem.

RESOLVED to:

- (1) note the results of the public consultation which indicated a preference for 20mph speed limit for the area and speed humps and no entry from Newmarket Road in Mount Pleasant (Option 5) by the residents of Mount Pleasant and 20mph speed limit only (Option 2) by the residents of the whole area;
- (2) note that as a result of the decision to implement signed only 20mph speed limits throughout the City, it is difficult to justify speed humps in Mount Pleasant;
- (3) approve option 4, which consists of introducing a 20mph speed limit into the area, and a 'no entry except cycles' restriction at the Newmarket Road end of Mount Pleasant;
- (4) ask the Head of Transportation and Landscape and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to carry out the necessary statutory procedures associated with the 20mph speed limit for Albemarle Road and Mount Pleasant and the no entry restriction at Mount Pleasant at its' junction with Arlington Lane, as shown on plan number 06-HD-054-15.

5. REPORT ON NORTH EAST QUADRANT – SCHEME 2 ST AUGUSTINE'S STREET GYRATORY

Councillor Holmes, Ward Councillor for Mancroft Ward, addressed the Committee and explained his objections to the scheme, which had missed an opportunity to pedestrianise St Augustine's Street, did not take into account the views of the St Augustine's Residents Community Association; did not take into account differing highway arrangements given that the application for the Anglia Square redevelopment had been reduced by half; did not address the concerns of the Norwich Cycling Forum about the safety of Oak Street for cyclists, particularly entering or leaving Oak Street on to the Inner Ring Road; proposed no traffic calming for Magpie Road or Edward Street; and removed a bus stop from outside the Centre for the Blind in Edward Street.

A resident of St Augustine's Street then addressed the Committee and explained that this was an area of disadvantaged people which mitigated against them making a response to public consultations and that she regretted not setting up a petition because these local residents' views had not been obtained. The report did not state how much disruption there would be to Spencer Street and Silver Street.

A representative of the St Augustine's Community Together Resident's Association then addressed the Committee and considered that the gyratory traffic scheme would effectively isolate the area, making it a traffic island.

County Councillor McKay, County Councillor for Mancroft Division, said that the main objective for the scheme was to improve air quality and that she was pleased to see that the scheme included the pedestrian crossing that people had wanted.

The Head of Programme Management, Norfolk County Council, responded to the issues raised and explained that this was a major arterial route into the city and the scheme was primarily driven to improve air quality. The scheme offered the best solution but there was the dilemma of being required to divert traffic through less suitable routes to achieve significant improvements to air quality. The incorporation of the pedestrian crossing was dependent on the planning application for Anglia Square. The proposed gyratory scheme needed to go forward with the planning application for the redevelopment of Anglia Square. The developers were in discussions with planning officers at City Hall over the revised proposals. The Head of Programme Management and the Team Manager, Norfolk County Council, then responded to questions from members on the report. Members were advised that changes to Edward Street would allow two-way traffic for buses, but that all other traffic would be one-way.

Councillor Morrey referred to the experimental closure of St Benedict's which illustrated that pedestrianisation did not always work. The scheme was the best solution to improve air quality and distribute traffic on the roads. If this arterial route was closed to traffic drivers would find another route.

Councillor Lubbock considered that the scheme would further marginalise this area and called for a better integrated scheme that would be fit for the next century and avoid the existing problems.

Councillor Ward said that the gyratory scheme was part of the improvements to the North East Quadrant and without it other traffic schemes in the Sprowston Road area would be undermined.

A member of the public said that the report did not mention how the displacement of traffic into Sussex Street and Pitt Street would be affected. The Head of Programme Management said that traffic monitoring could be arranged to monitor traffic movement. He would not expect there to be a significant increase but as experienced in Silver Road, motorists' behaviour was sometimes perverse and did not always perform as exactly expected from traffic modelling.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1) agree that the scheme as described can proceed whilst noting that Planning Permission is required for the new link road, and that this will be sought as part of the proposals for the regeneration of Anglia Square;
- (2) authorise the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to implement in due course The Norwich City Council (St Augustine's Street, Magpie Road, Esdelle Street and Bakers Road) (Traffic Management) Traffic Regulation Order 2008, and The Norwich City Council (St Augustine's

Street, Magpie Road, Esdelle Street and Bakers Road) (20mph Zone) Speed Restriction Amendment Order 2008.

6. OBJECTIONS TO TRO AMENDMENTS IN PEEL MEWS AND THEATRE STREET

(Councillors Lubbock and Scutter had both declared a personal interest in this item.)

(Letters from the operator of the Road Train and from an objector were circulated to members of the Committee at the meeting.)

RESOLVED, having considered the report of the Head of Transportation and Landscape (Norwich City Council), to ask the Head of Transportation and Landscape and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to complete the statutory processes associated with changing the following TROs:-

- (1) Peel Mews introduction of double yellow lines for its entire length, as shown on plan number PL/TR/3329/688a;
- (2) make provision for tourist vehicles to use the coach parking bay on Theatre Street, as shown on plan number PL/TR/3329/691.

7. ST BENEDICT'S STREET – EXPERIMENTAL SCHEME TO PEDESTRIANISE ON SATURDAYS – SCHEME UPDATE

The Transportation Manager presented the report and answered members' questions. There had been problems with lack of enforcement of the road closure although a request had been made to the police. The poor weather and 'credit crunch' had also had an impact on the viability of the scheme. Traders had been concerned about the effect on their businesses.

Councillor Morrey said that he was saddened that this experimental scheme had failed as two years there had been unanimous support from residents and traders. It was difficult to imagine Gentleman's Walk before pedestrianisation, but there had originally been opposition when it was first closed for only half a day a week (on Saturdays). The traders in St Benedict's Street were understandably concerned about their businesses and up-in-arms against pedestrianisation. There had not been sufficient time for the experimental closure to work.

The Chair said that irresponsible drivers, who had ignored the road closure, had put pedestrians at risk. Forceful measures, such as bollards, would have acted as more of a deterrent.

RESOLVED to note that:-

- (1) the experimental Saturday closure of St Benedict's Street has ceased;

- (2) a further report analysing why the experiment was not successful and looking at possible options for the street will be brought before the Committee in due course.

8. RIVERSIDE ROAD – LOCAL SAFETY SCHEME – RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The Transportation Manager reported that since the report had been prepared and prior to the closing date for the consultation, three representations commenting on the proposals had been received, on the grounds that the road was too narrow at the junction and that the 20mph zone on St Matthew's Road and Chalk Hill Road was unnecessary. In response to those representations, the Transportation Manager said that the scheme had been safety audited and the narrowing was considered acceptable. She added that by introducing the 20mph zone the number of signs required could be reduced, therefore avoiding street clutter.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1) approve the scheme as shown on plan number O-HD-064-prop;
- (2) ask the Head of Transportation and Landscape and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to complete the statutory process associated with the speed restriction orders and changes to waiting restrictions as shown on plan number O-HD-064-prop.

9. SILVER ROAD ZEBRA CROSSING

In response to a members' question, the Transportation Manager said that construction of the zebra crossing was likely to commence in the autumn but completion would depend on the arrangements for the electrical connection being in place.

RESOLVED to approve the construction of a Zebra Crossing in Silver Road as shown plan number 08-HD-063-01, attached as Appendix 1 of the report.

10. AYLSHAM ROAD PEDESTRIAN REFUGES

RESOLVED, having considered the report of the Head of Transportation and Landscape, to approve the construction of the three pedestrian refuges, with associated amendments to waiting restrictions as shown on plan number 08-HD-056-07, attached as Appendix 1.

11. CHARGING FOR ON-STREET PARKING AND DECRIMINALISED PARKING ENFORCEMENT – END OF YEAR MONITORING REPORT

The Operations Manager, Norwich City Council, presented the report. He explained that the end of year surplus of income for the financial year 2007/2008 was £20,885 which was down from the estimated £47,500.

RESOLVED to note the report.

12. NORWICH HIGHWAY GATING TRIAL

The Principal Policy and Performance Officer, Norfolk County Council, referred to the report and said that the legislative process for the implementation of gating orders was a lengthy one, requiring two periods of consultation.

Councillor Ward said that there was a question of rights of way when highways land was involved. The Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership had put up alley gates on privately owned land. Gating orders applied to land on the highways.

The Principal Policy and Performance Officer said that the police had approached him to look into the possibility of gating orders for an area of Bowthorpe.

RESOLVED to:-

- (1) note the contents of the report;
- (2) support the recommendation to withdraw from the gating proposals in ` Magdalen Road/Magpie Road area of Norwich City at this time;
- (3) support the substitution of the Bowthorpe pilot, if found suitable, in lieu of the above scheme.

13. PERFORMANCE MONITORING OF THE HIGHWAYS AGENCY AGREEMENT

The Head of Transportation and Landscape presented the report and answered questions. He explained that the presentation of the data was experimental and that the targets shown on the graph about works on traffic sensitive streets were cumulative and would be labelled more clearly in future.

RESOLVED to note the report.

14. MAJOR ROADWORKS – REGULAR MONITORING

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

CHAIR