

Report to Norwich highways agency committee

Item

24 November 2016

Joint Report of Head of city development Services and Executive director of community and environmental services

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Subject Transport for Norwich - St Crispin's shared use crossing

Purpose

To seek agreement to consult on proposals for a wide conspicuous at grade crossing over St Crispin's Road from St George's to Botolph Street and to note that the subway will be filled in.

Recommendation

That the committee:

- (1) Agree to consult on the scheme to improve the existing cycling facilities, and improve the provision for cyclists & pedestrians across St Crispins Road as shown on Plan Nos. PE4112-HP-7000-001 PR GENERAL ARRANGEMENT attached in Appendix 1
- (2) Ask the head of city development services to advertise the necessary notices to implement a signal controlled crossing required as part of the scheme
- (3) Note that the consultation responses received will be considered by a future meeting of the committee.
- (4) Note that the subway, which was stopped up (highway rights removed) in 2009 as part of redevelopment proposals will be filled in.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority to provide a safe, clean and low carbon city and the service plan priority to implement the Local Transport Plan and Norwich Area Transportation Strategy.

Financial implications

The budget for the scheme is £900,000 to be funded from the Cycle City Ambition Grant from the Department for Transport

Ward/s: Mancroft

Cabinet member: Councillor Bremner – Environment and sustainable development

Scheme Timescales

- A 4 week public consultation of scheme proposal in February 2017
- Consideration of feedback in March 2017
- Detailed design for committee for approval in April 2017

- Subject to legal processes the outcome of the consultation the scheme is planned for construction in quarter 3 of 2017.

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Background documents

Options considered and safety audit report on final agreed option.

Report

Strategic Objectives

1. Norwich and its surrounding area is becoming an increasingly popular area to live, work and visit. It is the number one shopping destination in the Eastern Region and becoming one of the Nation's premier cultural centres. To ensure the Greater Norwich Area continues to be popular and grow, the transport systems need to be able to cope with the increased demand.
2. Norwich is a medieval city with a narrow road system; incorporating a 21st century transport system to cope with the increased demand without sacrificing highway space for a particular transport mode or at the expense of green space and historic buildings is challenging.
3. The Norwich area Transportation Strategy (NATS) now more widely known as Transport for Norwich (TfN), is the adopted strategy which will deliver the transport improvements needed over the next 15 plus years. The strategy recognises everybody's journeys are different and does not look to force people to use one particular mode. It does look to give people viable options on how they choose to travel and actively promote sustainable transport. To do this in some areas of the network there needs to be a re-balance of the highway space available.
4. The Strategy details the plan for future delivery of improvements in order to develop sustainable transport, reduce congestion and improve air quality within the Greater Norwich area. The strategy has already delivered key improvements such as the award winning Norwich Bus Station, St Augustine's Gyratory, a network of Park & Ride facilities, St Stephens and Chapel Field North and various Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) improvements. It also includes the recently completed Postwick hub and the Northern Distributor Road which is due for completion late 2017.
5. The implementation plan for the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATSIP) was agreed by Norfolk County Council in April 2010 and updated in November 2013 ([see link for updated implementation plan http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/view/NCC158241](http://www.norfolk.gov.uk/view/NCC158241)). The plan sets out the range of transport measures, together with their general intended phasing, for delivery over the short to medium term.
6. The plan has now been updated to take account of what has been delivered since 2010, and to reflect the latest position on future scheme delivery, given progress with implementation, and now that the growth plans for the area are more clear ([see joint core strategy document: http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/dmsdocument/1953](http://www.greaternorwichgrowth.org.uk/dmsdocument/1953)).

Cycling is on the increase for both recreation and commuting nationally and the area has a thriving cycling community. The implementation of a City wide cycling network (see link to cycle map <http://www.visitnorwich.co.uk/assets/Uploads/PDF/Cycling-Map.pdf>) is a key part of the Transport for Norwich Strategy as by delivering a comprehensive city network this reduces a number of short distance car journeys removing pressure on the network, as well as offering improving quality of life and the health benefits that have been well documented.

7. The Greater Norwich area is one of eight urban areas across the country that has been successful in bidding for Cycle Ambition funding from the Department for Transport to comprehensively improve the quality of cycling infrastructure across the Norwich cycle network a copy of the application documents can be found here

<http://www.norwich.gov.uk/TransportAndStreets/Transport/Cycling/Pages/CycleCityAmbitionGrant2015.aspx>.

Scheme Objectives and Benefits

8. The route yellow pedal way crosses the ring road at St Crispin's and currently cyclists and pedestrians have no specific crossing facility other than to use the subway which is no longer public highway, after highway rights were in 2009 as part of proposals to substantially redevelop the area at the time. The current subway route is unattractive, indirect and brings users into conflict with pedestrians. In order to make the yellow pedal way more attractive an 'at grade' crossing of the ring road is needed.
9. The key objective of this scheme is to provide a wide, conspicuous and direct at grade crossing over St Crispin's Road in order to facilitate easy pedestrian and cycle movements across the inner ring road between St George's Street and Botolph Street. The subway will be filled in and wing walls removed allowing the space to be used for planted areas and segregated cycling and walking paths to the north and south of St Crispin's Road.
10. This arrangement will tie in with redevelopment proposals that are currently under discussion-for the Anglia Square area. Weston Homes in association with Columbia Threadneedle have appointed Broadway Malyan to prepare an overarching vision for the site that includes an improved retail offer, an aspiration to deliver around 1000 new homes and improved connectivity within the site. In particular this will strengthen the north south route that links St Georges Street, across this new pedestrian and cycle crossing through the site to link with Edward Street. This route will significantly enhance access from the north of the city to the City Centre for pedestrians and cyclists and the new crossing will provide a much enhanced 'gateway' into the regenerated area
11. The subway will be filled in rather than retained in parallel with the crossing for the following reasons:
 - It has already been legally extinguished as a public highway
 - The subway attracts anti-social and criminal behaviour and these would become even worse if very few people used the subway when the new crossing exists
 - Removing the subway and its approaches releases land that can be used to improve the alignment of paths and improve the environment in the area.
 - The subway is difficult for people with mobility problems to use because it involves ascending and descending ramps and steps
 - There is an ongoing revenue budget implication involved in cleaning, repairing, lighting and pumping water out of the subway

Existing Pedestrian & Cycle survey

12. A video survey of subway usage has been undertaken to show typical flows, undertaken on Wednesday 4th November 2015. 07:00 to 18:00.

	Total Count		North Bound		South bound	
	pedestrians	Cycles	pedestrians	Cycles	pedestrians	Cycles
male	1161	132	522	39	629	93
female	694	18	331	4	363	14
children	36	20	24	5	12	15

13. There is an expectation that the levels of cycling will rise significantly if facilities are improved, and providing priority to cyclists is necessary to achieve the improvement in quality on this route.

Design Proposals

Options Considered

14. Five options were tested as part of the traffic assessment model:

- Option 1 – staggered pedestrian crossing and separate straight across cycle crossing in the vicinity of St Georges Street
- Option 2 – staggered Toucan crossing in the vicinity of St Georges Street
- Option 3 – staggered pedestrian crossing and separate straight across cycle crossing in the vicinity of Calvert Street
- Option 4 – staggered Toucan crossing in the vicinity of Calvert Street
- Option 5 – staggered pedestrian crossing and separate straight across cycle crossing in the vicinity of Calvert Street. In addition this would result in the closure of the left turn out of Calvert Street.

15. Option 1 was discounted following concerns that pedestrians may try to use the straight through cycle phase with insufficient time for them to cross in one movement. Options 3, 4 & 5 were discounted as Calvert Street is off the desire line from St Georges Street to Botolph Street and does not accord with the re-routing of the yellow pedal way away from Magdalen Street. These were modelled however to ascertain any differences with a crossing being further west in terms of traffic flows on the ring road.

Preferred Option & Design Guidance

16. The survey shows a peak hour flow of 144 for pedestrians and 22 for cyclists. Assuming an increase of 50% in peak hour cyclists the flow would be categorised 'very low' by London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS) [0-60 per hour], requiring a shared use width of 2.2m. Discussions with the Road Safety, Network Analysis the ITS (traffic signals) teams resulted in a desire to keep the pedestrians and cycles running together, resulting in a blend of options One and Two
17. The project proposes construction of the following elements which are shown on the plan attached as appendix 1, Drawing number PE4112-HP-7000-001 PR GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
 - (a) Signalised crossing point on St Crispin's together with a further signalised crossing point to the north to allow users to also cross Botolph Street.
 - (b) Widened central reservation to 4.5m along St Crispin's to accommodate new crossing point of 5.4 m to accommodate shared use pedestrians and cycles.
 - (c) Removal of the existing underpass to create areas for landscaping.
 - (d) Realignment of existing kerblines to the central reservation, southern kerblines and roundabout approaches.
 - (e) Alignment of Botolph Street crossing point to be determined and finalised in conjunction with designs for Anglia Square redevelopment. The detail currently shown on the plan assumes that no changes are made to the current arrangements here, but it is expected that very significant improvement will be forthcoming as part of the Anglia Square proposals
18. In terms of traffic modelling and timings the preferred proposal would operate as option Two with the following design principle being adopted. Timing of the pedestrian crossing will be linked to St Crispins signalised roundabout to maximise the capacity of the inner ring road, the result of this would be to ensure that traffic travelling along the inner ring road is not stopped twice. As a result the northern crossing point (Inner Ring Road West to East) would be active when traffic is turning left from Pitt St.

Traffic impact - Inner Ring Road traffic West to East

19. In the current situation, at peak times, queues can form on the approach to St Crispin's Road roundabout and often extend back to Barkers St / Barn Road roundabout.
20. Testing of the current proposal suggests the addition of a crossing point would be unlikely to incur extra delay in terms of journey time along the inner ring road.

Traffic impact - Inner Ring Road traffic East to West

21. In the current situation, at peak times, queues can form on the approach to Barkers St / Barn Road roundabout and often extend beyond the signalised roundabout at St Crispin's and past the location of the proposed crossing point.

22. Testing of the current proposal suggests the addition of a crossing point would be unlikely to incur extra delay in terms of journey time along the inner ring road

Traffic Regulation Orders and notices

26. Legal processes will be required to implement the crossing.

Traffic impacts

27. Traffic management will be required during the work and delays to traffic are likely. It is intended to issue a press release for information closer to the start of construction. Work will be programmed to minimise impact on the road network where possible.

Environment

28. The city council's landscape architect will be included in design discussions in relation to the proposed design. Further advice will be sought in relation to areas constrained by trees as noted and in relation to the proposed development of Anglia Square.

Accident reduction

29. There have been 1 accident in the vicinity of the proposed scheme in the last 5 years categorised as 'slight'.

Public Consultation

30. A four week public consultation of scheme proposals is planned. Consultation will also be carried out for any TROs or Notices required. The consultation feedback and any objections will be reported to a future NHAC meeting for consideration on how to proceed with the scheme.

Timescales

31. Subject to legal processes the scheme is planned to be constructed during 2017-18 quarter 3.

Stakeholder views

32. Stakeholders, including businesses in the area, local residents and local interest groups, will be included in the consultation.

Conclusion

33. The project is rooted in strategy documents that have been adopted by Norwich City and Norfolk County Councils and the proposals will meet the requirements of the brief by providing benefits to cyclists and pedestrians. The proposals as presented would provide the next phase of improvement on the yellow Pedal way and will improve this section of the cycle network to provide a facility that is safer and more pleasant to use and create landscaping opportunities to link to the new Anglia Square development.

Resource Implications

33. Finance: The TfN programme forms an integral part of strategic infrastructure as set out in the Joint Core Strategy. The delivery of this work is funded by government grants by way of the City Cycle Ambition programme and Section 106 funding.
32. Staff: The project will be delivered through joint team working involving both county council and city council officers.
33. Property: The proposals cannot be provided within the existing highway boundary. Adjacent land is owned by Norwich City Council and strips of this will be acquired as highway in order to provide the shared use facilities.
34. IT: None.

Other implications

35. Legal Implications: None
36. Human Rights: None.
37. Communications: Transport for Norwich programme updates are issued monthly to inform the public and stakeholders of current schemes and future programme

Section 17 - Crime and Disorder Act

38. The scheme will be designed to ensure it has a positive effect on crime and disorder where possible. Care will be taken during construction to minimise opportunities for crime and disorder, for instance the secure storage of construction equipment and materials.

Risk Implications/Assessment

39. A risk assessment has been undertaken for development of the NATS Implementation Plan (TfN). The key risks for delivering this are around funding, timescales and planning. These risks are being managed through active project management and ongoing engagement with stakeholders.
40. A risk register is being maintained as part of the technical design and construction delivery processes.

Appendix 1

