

Report to Norwich Highways Agency committee
20 December 2018
Report of Head of city development services
Subject Essex Street Safety Scheme

Item

7

Purpose

To consider the responses from the consultation and approve installation of further improvements described in this report.

Recommendation

To:

- (1) approve the installation of:
 - (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).

A plan of the recommended proposals can be seen in Appendix 3.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority a safe, clean and low carbon city

Financial implications

£10,000 funded through the city council's cycle ambition funding

Ward/s: Town Close

Cabinet member: Councillor Stonard - Sustainable and inclusive growth

Contact officers

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Background documents

None

Report

Background

1. The pink pedalway cycle route runs east-west across Norwich. Essex Street forms a key part of this route owing to its alignment with the highly used cycle route along The Avenues.
2. Previously a one-way street for all traffic, the routing of the pink pedalway, allowing two-way cycling on Essex Street was agreed by this committee in July 2014. The associated works were completed in November 2015, which included introduction of westbound contraflow cycling.
3. The scheme was subject to a stage 2 safety audit in February 2015 at the design stage and a stage 3 safety audit in December 2015 after implementation. Following a public question raised by Councillor Corlett at this committee in March 2017, a stage 4 safety audit was completed in April 2017.
4. Since the implementation of the scheme, there has been no significant change in the reported accident figures, which remain low in both frequency and severity. The stage 4 safety audit concluded that although no injury accidents have been reported on Essex Street, the potential for conflict is clear. The safety audit recommended that consideration be given to the need for mitigation measures or changes to the scheme.
5. Aside from the safety audit, concerns over conflict between vehicles and cycles on Essex Street have been raised by the public. Such conflict is also seen in the video monitoring carried out as part of the stage 4 safety audit.
6. The concerns more specifically refer to:
 - (a) A small number of motor vehicles being driven at excessive speed;
 - (b) Motor vehicles being driven illegally in a contraflow direction;
 - (c) Contraflow cyclists feeling pressured or at risk when meeting an oncoming motor vehicle;
 - (d) With-flow cyclists feeling pressured or at risk when followed closely by motor vehicles;
 - (e) Pedestrians feeling at risk if with-flow motor vehicles mount the footway to overtake with-flow cyclists;
 - (f) Pedestrians feeling at risk if contraflow cyclists mount the footway to avoid an oncoming motor vehicle.
7. A week-long 24 hour a day count in 2017 recorded an average 1,200 vehicles per day between 7am and 7pm traveling eastbound with another 180 with-flow cycles and 60 contra-flow cycles per day.
8. The survey shows that the average speed in Essex Street is 18.7mph and the 85th percentile speed is 23.9mph which indicates good overall compliance with the 20mph speed limit. However, 351 drivers of the 9507 observed over the period of a week vehicles recorded, were travelling over 30mph and 40 of those were over 50mph. These excessive speeds are above what is normally expected on roads with an average speed below 20mph. With two-way cycling

in a confined space, there is a need for vehicle speeds to be managed here more carefully than on most city streets.

9. Illegal driving against the one-way traffic order has been recorded on the survey and was also observed during the daytime hours in the on-site assessment.
10. During ten hours of intermittent recording, seven instances of contraflow cycling on the southern footway were observed. No instances of drivers overtaking on the footway were observed. It was observed that some with-flow cyclists were appeared to feel pressured by vehicles following too closely.

Consultation

11. In March 2018, members of this committee gave permission to advertise and consult on changes to Essex Street which included:
 - (a) Change of priority at the Essex Street / Suffolk Square junction
 - (b) Building a traffic island with cycle bypass at the entry to the contra flow cycle lane
 - (c) Installing additional 20mp signage 20 mph roundels
 - (d) Introduce sections of marked contra flow cycle
12. Following a request from local members at the March committee, a further measure of including a pinch point / cycle bypass on Essex Street to slow traffic and increase drivers awareness of those cycling towards Unthank Road was included in the consultation. To facilitate this pinch point, a 20 metre section of residents parking would need to be removed and this was addressed in the consultation materials. The proposals are shown on the plan attached as appendix 1.
13. This consultation was held from 22 June to 17 July 2018. Details of the proposal were advertised in the local press, road notices were erected, statutory consultees and transportation consultees were directly informed. Local residents and businesses were written to and details were posted on the Norwich City Council website.
14. Along with press adverts, stakeholder emails, street notices and webpage content, 218 letters were sent to nearby residents and businesses.

Responses

15. In total, 28 responses were received including one from Norfolk Constabulary Road Policing who supported the proposals. Over half of responses were from residents of Essex Street.
16. With the exception of the loss of parking to facilitate the pinch point, there was support for the proposed measures with 10 responses supporting a clearer 20mph restriction, 6 responses asking for the one-way restriction to be made clearer and another 6 responses supporting the proposals as a whole.

17. Although not part of the proposals, there were 7 responses asking for road humps to establish lower speeds.
18. There were 12 objections to any loss of residents parking on Essex Street.
19. Of the responses, 7 felt the contraflow cycle lane should be removed or routed down Trinity Street.
20. A summary of all responses can be found in Appendix 2 and the above points will be considered further below.

Considerations

21. The additional sign and line work required to reinforce the 20mph restriction and marking the parking bay on the north side of Essex Street are low cost ways to help manage speeds and manage parking.
22. It is noted that a number of residents would like to see physical traffic calming and this is view supported by the local members. However this committee has adopted a policy of when traffic calming should be provided and that concluded that on roads with average speeds of less than 26mph, that physical traffic calming methods such as road humps are not justified. Given that average speeds on Essex Street are 18.7mph, introducing traffic calming on Essex Street would not fit this criteria.
23. It has been argued that as the 24 hour traffic survey showed a slightly higher than expected proportion of drivers travelling at excessive speed then an exception should be made for Essex Street. However, given there is no history of recorded injury accidents and measures to make the 20mph limit more visible are being recommended for implementation, an exception to the policy is not warranted at this time.
24. The change of priority at the junction between Essex Street and Suffolk Square will help make the one-way restriction to motor vehicles more clear and make it more challenging for those wishing to drive against the one-way traffic to do so. It is expected that drivers will approach Essex Street with more caution as they will need to give way on occasion. This should also help reduce vehicle speeds.
25. The pinch point / cycle bypass would offer some benefit to those cycling in a contraflow direction but the clear response from the consultation was that the loss of parking required to achieve this was not acceptable. This element of the proposals is not being recommended.
26. The routing of the Pink Pedalway has been considered by this committee on a number of occasions and it has been concluded that Essex Street offers the most appropriate route considering factors such as alignment, directness and the avoidance of awkward right turns. Contraflow cycling was observed on Essex Street before the contraflow facility was installed and would likely continue to some level if it was removed. The most appropriate option is to encourage safer driving and more consideration by all users.

Conclusion

27. In weighing up the positive safety record on Essex Street with the concerns of users of the route and residents, along with the Norwich City Council 20mph policy and national guidance; it is recommended that the following proposals are implemented (Appendix 3):

- (a) A changed priority at the junction between Essex Street and Suffolk Square;
- (b) Installing additional 20mph signage and road markings;
- (c) Installing road marking to delineate a parking bay on the northern side of Essex Street.

28. The creation of a pinch point with a cycle bypass and associated loss of parking provision for a length of 20 metres is not recommended for implementation.

Integrated impact assessment



NORWICH
City Council

Report author to complete

Committee:	Norwich Highways Agency Committee
Committee date:	20 December 2018
Director / Head of service	David Moorcroft/ Andy Watt
Report subject:	Essex Street safety scheme
Date assessed:	9 November 2018
Description:	A report to seek approval for safety improvements to Essex Street

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reducing conflict and raising awareness of 20mph
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICT services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Economic development	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Improving the access to education and employment
Financial inclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Improving the access to low cost transport options
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Human Rights Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and well being	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lowering traffic speeds and enforcing the one-way restriction better will improve the street environment for walking and cycling

	Impact			
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advancing equality of opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will provide safe and low cost transport options
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lowering traffic speeds and enforcing the one-way restriction better will improve the street environment for walking and cycling
Natural and built environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Waste minimisation & resource use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will encourage use of zero emission transport
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy and climate change	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Will encourage use of zero emission transport
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments

	Impact			
Risk management	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Recommendations from impact assessment	
Positive	
There are a number of positive outcomes for safety and active travel that will be achieved with this scheme	
Negative	
N/A	
Neutral	
N/A	
Issues	
N/A	



Transport for Norwich



Area of no parking and lane separation

Improved road markings

Give way lines move to change priority of junction

Essex Street consultation plan

Appendix 2
Consultation responses

Objection / comment	Frequency	Response
Object to reduced parking spaces	12	This element of the proposals will <u>not</u> be taken forward
Support clearer 20mph / more markings needed	10	This element of the proposals will be taken forward
Speed bump to force traffic to slow down / road hump needed near Number 1 Essex Street to establish appropriate speeds	7	A road hump could bring down speeds further but with the average speeds described in section 8 of this report, taking this forward would not be in line with our published 20mph policy. Section 22 of the report considers this question in more detail.
Cycle contraflow is bad idea / Shouldn't cycle lane be rerouted down Trinity Street and up Essex Street / disappointed that option for removal of contraflow is not being considered	7	Rerouting the pedalway down Trinity Street appears to offer an alternative but it needs to be noted that owing to the alignment of Essex Street with what is a popular pedalway route, it avoids a more challenging right turn onto Unthank Road. Added to this contraflow cycling was observed before the contraflow facility was installed and would likely continue to some level if it was removed. The most appropriate option is to encourage safer driving and more consideration by all users.
Support the proposals as a whole	6	Noted
Make one-way signage clearer / drivers ignore the no-entry signs	6	The proposals will make the one way restriction clearer and discourage illegal driving
Cycle lane should be solid line to keep cars out / give those cycling clearer priority	4	Making the line solid is not possible as we cannot introduce what is legally a mandatory cycle lane that would require drivers to frequently encroach and can also reduce its effectiveness. The aim on Essex Street is for lower speeds, improved awareness and more consideration between all users.

Objection / comment	Frequency	Response
No need to change junction priority /unsure whether changed priority will help.	4	This change is being recommended to discourage the recorded incidence of fast driving and illegal northbound driving.
Essex Street is a candidate for a mini Holland such as scheme in Walthamstow / Close Essex Street to through traffic and make this filtered permeability / make Essex Street an <i>access only</i> road / Prioritise pedalway route to and from Jenny Lind park	4	This option has considerable impact on access for waste collection, loading to nearby shops and potentially for residents and is being considered at this time.
Marking 1.8m wide bay is a waste of money / not sure what this achieves	3	Whilst most drivers park with consideration, marking the parking bay will help ensure the usable space is maximised.
Drivers will race to where there is no parking to avoid slowing down	2	The proposed design featured a raised separator which necessitate that motor vehicles negotiate through what is in practice a chicane and would inevitably reduce speeds, there would be no advantage gained for drivers to race towards this.
Urge Norwich city council and Norfolk county council to increase the amount of funding to at least £10 per person per year.	1	There are many established reasons to increase the spending on cycling which benefit all in society such as reduced pollution, increased physical activity, reduced health spending and the limited road space required per road user. However council budgets are under considerable pressure with the majority of cycle infrastructure schemes being delivered as part of the Cycle City Ambition Grant funding from the Department for Transport. In 2018 we have been successful in bidding for significant funding for two further schemes related to the green pedalway and where further funding opportunities become available we will look to progress further programmes of cycle improvement schemes.

Objection / comment	Frequency	Response
Have there been any safety incidents here?	1	There have been no recorded accidents since two-way cycling was introduced however we get more reports of safety concerns here than would normally be expected. The County council safety audit found that potential for conflict warranted
Can double yellow lines be painted outside the Synagogue with four marked bays on the private land a new dropped kerb?	1	There is not enough room to satisfactorily guarantee that vehicles would not overhang the footway. This would also require the loss of two further short stay spaces used by all visitors to residents on Essex Street
Use Give way to <i>oncoming vehicles</i> signage to slow drivers	1	We cannot use this prescribed sign on a one-way street
Can the spaces outside the Synagogue be designated to the charity?	1	We do not designate spaces on the public highway. Doing so would provide limited benefit to an organisation at their peak times but create a loss of parking for all others at all times.
Reversing the junction priority is a good idea	1	Noted
Marking bays is a good idea	1	Noted
Stagger the parking to calm speeds	1	This would calm speeds but would be create a significant obstacle to safe cycling, reduce available parking for residents and may limit access by waste collection or fire services.
Low kerb makes it too easy for drivers to mount the footway	1	Raising the footway here would involve substantial cost and disruption. Given the low level of observed driving or cycling on the footway, raising the kerb height is not being considered at this time. There are some existing dropped kerbs here for access.
Where are those in the new developments going to park?	1	Residents on any new build or converted (split etc) properties cannot obtain on-street parking permits.
Agree with 20mph restriction being made clearer	1	Noted

Objection / comment	Frequency	Response
One bay of no parking is not enough, at least two are needed	1	See above. This element is not being taken forward.
Worried about safety risk from those cycling	1	There have been no recorded injury accidents between those walking and cycling. Although there is always some level of risk, this is overwhelmingly presented by motorised vehicles and no measures are needed here slow or discourage those cycling
Make the cycle lane clearer with red or blue asphalt	1	Coloured asphalt has to be used very sparingly such as where an established accident record has been identified as being caused by drivers failing to give way at a junction and pulling into a cycle lane. It's cost and the absence of sufficient maintenance budget mean that if used where cars frequently drive, it will wear quickly and cannot be readily be replaced
Compensate for the loss of parking spaces on Essex Street by allowing residents to park behind their houses in Suffolk Square	1	See above. This element is not being taken forward.
Drivers will have to reverse down the street to the 'waiting point' which is unsafe	1	See above. This element is not being taken forward. What was being proposed was not a waiting point, cars would not need to reverse.
Loose the short stay parking by the church and the synagogue as they have their own car park and parking at the rear respectively	1	See above. This element is not being taken forward.
Drains on Essex Street are dangerous and need levelling out	2	Highways maintenance have been notified and will assess whether works are required to level the drains on Essex Street.

Appendix 3



Transport
for Norwich

Improved road markings

TRINITY STREET

ESSEX STREET

UNTHANK ROAD

SOMERLEYTON ST

Give way lines move to
change priority of junction