



Norfolk County Council

Joint Committee for Transport for Norwich Minutes of the Meeting Held on 13 January 2022 at 2pm on Microsoft Teams (virtual meeting)

Present:

Cllr Martin Wilby (Chair)
Cllr Barry Stone (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Emma Corlett
Cllr Sue Lawn
Cllr Kay Mason-Billig
Cllr Mike Stonard
Cllr Ian Stutely
Cllr Brian Watkins

Representing:

Norfolk County Council
Norfolk County Council
Norfolk County Council
Broadland District Council
South Norfolk District Council
Norwich City Council
Norwich City Council
Norfolk County Council

Officers Present:

Alexander Cliff
Amy Cole
Jonathan Hall
Martin Oertelis
Stuart Payne
Ed Parnaby
Jeremy Wiggin

Title:

Highway Network Digital Innovation Manager
Project Engineer
Committee Officer
WSP Engineer
Project Engineer
Transport Planner
Transport for Norwich Manager, Norfolk County Council

1. Apologies for Absence

1.1 Peter Joyner was absent.

2. Minutes of last meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2021 were agreed as an accurate record.

3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 No interests were declared.

4. Items received as urgent business

4.1 There were no items of urgent business, but the Chair advised that with agreement of the committee item 6 Ipswich Road Active Travel Fund would be taken first before Item 5.

In addition, item 5 was complex, and it was agreed that it would be broken down into 4 key segments, namely Exchange Street and the surrounding area, St Andrew's Street and Duke Street, St Benedicts Street and other updates within the Connecting the Lanes scheme, with each segment being discussed in turn.

5. Connecting the Lanes

- 5.1 The Joint Committee received the report which outlined proposals for several elements of the Connecting the Lanes schemes that went out to consultation in 2021 and are a fundamental part of the strategy to improve the sustainable Transport networks across the city. Schemes presented for consideration and recommendation are:
1. A city centre eastbound traffic restriction on **St Andrews Street**, incorporating **Duke Street**;
 2. **Exchange Street** and the surrounding area;
 3. **St Benedicts Street** and **St Margaret's Street**; and
 4. Updates on **other schemes** within **Connecting the Lanes** that were consulted on and some of these would be brought back to a future meeting.
- Public consultation on the Connecting the Lanes schemes was carried out in the summer of 2021 and nearly 1000 people responded. A specific question that came out of the consultation was whether access and loading times could be reviewed and changed from the current arrangement of allowing access and loading from 5pm to 10am to between 4pm and 10am. This proposal was subsequently consulted on separately and revisions reported to the committee. The scheme elements were presented separately to aid discussions.
- 5.2 The Transport for Norwich Manager introduced the report to the Joint Committee in four different stages and advised:

Exchange Street and surrounding area

- The provision of a 3.5 tonne delivery route to enable small van access at all times was specifically requested by the Norwich BID and local businesses and enables smaller deliveries to be made throughout the day at all times. Other deliveries in this area can be made after 4pm or before 10am and would be consistent with other city centre areas
- St Peter's Street will remain unchanged, with two-way traffic permitted with low volumes of northbound traffic due to the Exchange St restrictions as is the case currently.
- Local businesses and market traders requested that commercial vehicle loading and unloading on Gaol Hill should be extended to 20 minutes. The proposal would be more straightforward to enforce.
- The proposal to change the time restriction on the existing disabled parking bays on Theatre Street was removed as a recommendation as any changes to on street city centre disabled parking should be undertaken as part of a wider review, which has not yet been undertaken.
- There was an ambition for Exchange Street to be paved in a similar style to Gentlemans Walk, if general traffic was removed permanently, subject to appropriate future funding being secured.

- 5.3 The following points were discussed and noted:
- The concerns from the Police about general access to and from Bethel Street had been answered. It was noted since the scheme at Grapes Hill had been completed that traffic flow on to the inner ring road was greatly improved. The Police would still be able to access Exchange Street in an emergency or direct traffic down that route if required.

- Concerns about longer journey times to the railway station for taxis were expressed and the environmental effect that this would have.
- The relocation of the taxi rank in the area was not part of the proposals and would be brought back to the committee at a later date. Early consultations with various groups had produced a divergence in views.
- Although through traffic would be prevented from using Exchange Street, vehicles would still be able to access the area, although it was hoped that significant signage would deter most motorists entering the area and from having to turn round at the bottom of Gaol Hill.
- It was noted that Norwich BID wished to be more involved in understanding the traffic modelling that had been undertaken before making further comment.
- Elderly people, although not necessarily blue badge holders, may be more inconvenienced if dropping off on Gaol Hill was a deterrent.
- Access to the disabled parking spaces on Gentlemans Walk and London Street remained unaffected.
- It was thought generally that the proposals encouraged greater use of walking and cycling and made the city centre a more attractive place for all residents and visitors.
- The temporary closure of Exchange Street had been in place for the last 18 months without too many issues arising, although it was felt that the pandemic may have an effect on traffic levels and footfall.

5.4 St Andrews Street and Duke Street

The Transport for Norwich Manager introduced this part of the report and advised:

- That 52% of those that responded to the consultation liked the proposals to restrict eastbound traffic on St Andrews Street and improve Duke Street (33% disliked).
- Any vehicles using Exchange Street would only be able to turn left into St Andrew's Street. Emergency vehicles responding to emergency calls will be permitted to travel eastbound on St Andrews Street.
- Vehicles will be required to turn left from Charing Cross into Duke Street as they will not be able to travel eastbound along St Andrews Street.
- Footways would be widened on St Andrew's Street and the northern end of Duke Street.
- A 2-way fully segregated cycle track would be installed on Duke Street and St Andrew's Street.
- Zebra and parallel crossings will be provided on St Andrew's Street.
- A new loading bay would be provided on Charing Cross that can be used as a loading bay during the day and a taxi bay at night. A new loading bay will also be provided on St Andrew's Street.
- Traffic will be prevented from driving from Duke Street to Colegate through the Premier Inn car park.
- The traffic flow and cycle contraflow on Muspole Street will be reversed preventing motorists bypassing the St Andrew's Street eastbound restriction.

- 5.5 The following points were discussed and noted:
- It was noted that vehicles coming from the west would find access to St Andrew's Hall more restricted than currently.
 - Concerns were raised that no right turn by St Andrews Street would place more traffic on the inner ring road.
 - On average 250 vehicles a day undertake the undesirable manoeuvre through the Premier Inn car park. These manoeuvres happen at anytime and did not appear to be related to the nearby school's drop off and pick up times.
 - The proposals promote behavioural change by encouraging the use of walking and cycling. It was noted that a million additional bike miles had taken place since the arrival of the Beryl Bikes scheme in Norwich and this change had to be accommodated by reducing general traffic from unsuitable areas.
 - A provisional confirmation of funding from Greater Norwich Growth Board had been received for the Wensum Missing Link project.

5.6 St Benedicts Street and St Margaret's Street

The Transport for Norwich Manager introduced this part of the report and advised:

- Since the Summer of 2020, St Benedicts Street has been a pedestrian and cycle zone between St Margaret's Street and Charing Cross with loading permitted at any time. There has been no entry (except cycles) into the street from Charing Cross. General traffic is therefore prohibited and some business have been granted licenses for outdoor seating.
- Overall 54% of those that had responded to the consultation liked the proposals for St Benedicts Street and St Margarets Street, whilst 32% disliked the proposals.
- The pedestrian and cycle zone between St Margaret's Street and Charing Cross would become permanent.
- Loading bays on St Benedict's Street and St Margaret's Street would be provided.
- Pay and display parking, disabled parking and Car Club parking would be provided on St Benedict's Street to the west of its junction with St Margaret's Street.
- Loading and waiting prohibition on the west corner of St Benedict's Street and St Margaret's Street would be introduced Street to improve visibility.
- Current ambiguity with loading and parking arrangements arising from the current temporary arrangements will be resolved.

- 5.7 The following points were discussed and noted:
- Generally, traders and residents were positive about the proposals. Initial issues concerning enforcement of traffic regulations had now been resolved.
 - The introduction of licenses for outdoor seating for some business had been well received and added to the overall ambiance of the area.

5.8 Updates on other proposals within Connecting the Lanes Scheme

The Transport for Norwich Manager introduced this part of the report and advised:

- Wensum Missing Link: 245 people had provided comments on this scheme and there was overall support. Confirmation of funding on this scheme is awaited before proceeding with further development work.
- St Mary's Plain: the proposed scheme to prevent traffic turning left from Duke Street into St Mary's Plain has been removed following traffic survey information and feedback received during the consultation. Although traffic survey data suggests that this route is being used as a short cut, it is considered that the inconvenience it would cause to residents and emergency services would outweigh any benefits at this time. The provision of a zebra crossing at this location will be reviewed at a later date subject to available funding
- St Giles Street: there was overall support for the proposals. Further design work is needed on this scheme before this is brought back to this committee for consideration.
- Guildhall Hill: Proposed relocation of the taxi rank required further work to be undertaken and this will be brought back to a future Committee meeting.

5.3 The Joint Committee considered the scheme and **agreed to recommend** to the proposals as follows:

1. The proposals and statutory procedures for Exchange Street and associated streets as shown on Appendix D and outlined below:

- a. Pedestrian and cycle zones to be closed to motorised traffic except for loading between 4pm and 10am;
- b. Reversal of the one-way restriction on Upper Goat Lane;
- c. Provision of a 3.5 tonne weight restricted loop to enable small van access for loading at all times;
- d. St Peter's Street northbound will become a no through route in practice due to the other restrictions proposed and signage will be provided to allow drivers adequate time to turn around if required;
- e. Loading for commercial vehicles only on Gaol Hill, time restricted to 20 minutes (no return within 1 hour).

2. The proposals and commencement of statutory procedures for St Benedict's Street and St Margaret's Street as shown on Appendix C and outlined below:

- f. Make permanent the pedestrian and cycle zone between St Margaret's Street and Charing Cross which allows loading and access at all times with no entry (except cycles) into St Benedict's Street from Charing Cross;
- g. Provision of loading bays on St Benedict's Street and St Margaret's Street;
- h. Provision of bays for pay and display parking, disabled parking and Car Club on St Benedict's Street to the west of its junction with St Margaret's Street;
- i. Introduce loading and waiting prohibition on the west corner of St Benedict's Street and St Margaret's Street.

3. The City Centre Eastbound through-traffic reduction scheme (incorporating Duke Street and St Andrew's Street) and associated statutory processes as shown in Appendix B and outlined below:

- j. Force residual vehicles to turn left from Exchange Street into St Andrew's Street;
- k. Force vehicles to turn left from Charing Cross into Duke Street;
- l. Widen footways on St Andrew's Street and the northern end of Duke Street;
- m. Install 2-way cycle tracks on Duke Street and St Andrew's Street;
- n. Provide zebra and parallel crossings as shown (including the removal of traffic signals on St Andrew's Street);
- o. Provide a bay on Charing Cross to be used as a loading bay during the day and a taxi bay at night. Provide a loading bay on St Andrew's Street;
- p. Prevent vehicles driving from Duke Street to Colegate through the Premier Inn car park which will include a no entry restriction on Colegate immediately east of the car park exit;
- q. Reverse traffic flow and cycle contraflow on Muspole Street (to prevent motorists bypassing the St Andrew's Street eastbound restriction).

4. To note the updates provided on all elements of the Connecting the Norwich Lanes proposals including the Wensum Missing Link, St Mary's Plain and St Giles Street and consideration of relocating the taxi rank on Guildhall Hill and acknowledge that further information will be provided on some elements at future Joint Committee meetings.

6. Ipswich Road Active Travel Fund

6.1. The Joint Committee received the report and following the scheme proposals presented to the Transport for Norwich Joint Committee in October 2021, further engagement had been carried out with local members, Town Close School and the City College to further develop the proposal to introduce mandatory cycle lanes that offer cyclists protection from general traffic, whilst continuing to allow vehicle access to both Town Close School and City College. The paper outlined the further engagement that has been carried out and presents two options for the consideration of the committee for mandatory cycle lanes on Ipswich Road.

6.1.2 The Transport for Norwich Manager introduced the report to the Joint Committee:

- Some proposals within the scheme were brought to this committee in October 2021 and were agreed. However, officers were asked to review whether there were alternative options for segregated cycle lanes to remain but where consideration was given to concerns raised around loss of on-street parking on Ipswich Road

- Further engagement with Town Close School, City College and local members presented two options for consideration by the committee for mandatory, segregated cycle lanes to be implemented on Ipswich Road. These proposals are fully consistent with central government's requirement that this funding should be used to physically separate and protect cyclists from high volume motor traffic at junctions and on the stretches of road between them.
- Members are asked to note that further work is being undertaken to identify appropriate interventions to reduce vehicle speeds and address concerns over parking on Town Close Road.

Option A

This option presented mandatory, segregated cycle lanes on both sides of the road from the Harford Manor School to the St Stephens Road / Newmarket Road junction. Parking restrictions would be provided along this length.

Option B

This option also presented mandatory, segregated cycle lanes on both sides of the road. On the City College side, these extend the same length as in Option A. However, on the Town Close School side, the segregated cycle lane is shorter in length and extends from opposite the junction with Cecil Road to the St Stephens Road / Newmarket Road junction. Parking restrictions would be provided where the cycle lane is but the existing parking bay near Lime Tree Road would remain and the existing coach bay would become available for general parking. This option therefore provides more on-street parking than Option A (where these parking areas are removed and replaced by the cycle lane), albeit not directly outside the Town Close School or City College

Both Options

Elements that are common to both options are the removal of parking outside Town Close School and the relocation of Zone T parking onto Grove Avenue and Town Close Road

Whilst Option B retained a safe, segregated area for cycling in the busiest section of the road and tries to offer the most appropriate balance between catering for on-street parking and protecting those cycling through the area, Town Close School and City College remained concerned that without a significant change in behaviour, both options will heighten the pressure on the existing Town Close School car park drop- off/pickup arrangement, leading to congestion in the area

Both Town Close School and City College were very supportive of encouraging sustainable travel but both recognise the difficulty in encouraging this when so many vehicles are accessing their sites and travelling through the area.

Both options represent very high value for money in government appraisal terms.

6.2 The following points were discussed and noted:

- It was felt that option A provided full benefits for walking and cycling whereas Option B was limited in its effect around drop off and pick up times during school terms only.
- Concerns were raised that if Option B was selected parents of the school

children had previously indicated they did not like this option and their behaviours would not change.

- Option B was considered by some members to be a reasonable compromise although it was felt that maybe discussions with City College should continue to see if a drop off point on their premises could be arranged.
- It was noted that engagement with residents by local members indicated a preference for Option A.
- It was thought by some members that the park and ride facility offered by Option A was unreasonable for younger children attending the pre school (ages 3 to 4) to walk the distance required to the school.
- It was noted that most City College students did either use public transport or walked and cycled to the college.

6.3 The Joint Committee **agreed to recommend** to:

1. Option B presented in Appendix B, the option enabled the construction of segregated mandatory cycle lanes on Ipswich Road, as well as the removal and relocation of permit parking and the reduction and relocation of time-restricted parking.
2. To commence the statutory procedures associated with the chosen option from Recommendation 1 and progress with the new legal Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) and any amendments to existing TROs.
3. Note the further work being undertaken to identify appropriate interventions to reduce vehicle speeds on Town Close Road and address concerns over parking.

The Meeting ended at 3.42pm

Next meeting: 24 March 2022

**Cllr Martin Wilby, Chair,
Joint Committee for Transport for Norwich**



If you need this document in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 or 0344 800 8011 (textphone) and we will do our best to help.