

Report of the Director of City and Environmental Services

**ST LEONARD'S PLACE / BOOTHAM / GILLYGATE JUNCTION –  
LOCAL SAFETY SCHEME – SIGNING & MARKING IMPROVEMENTS**

**Summary**

1. The St Leonard's Place / Bootham / Gillygate junction has been identified as an accident cluster site. The area is likely to benefit from a major project as part of Reinvigorate York in the next couple of years. However, in the interim, a minor scheme has been developed to help address the types of accidents that are occurring, by improving the signs and road markings.

**Recommendations**

2. That the Cabinet Member approve the implementation of the signing and road marking improvements shown in **Annex B**.

Reason: To improve road safety, and reduce the number and severity of collisions.

**Background**

3. Every year, the latest police injury accident data for the Council area is analysed to identify any clusters or patterns, with a view to introducing measures to improve road safety at these locations. The junction of St Leonard's Place with Bootham and Gillygate has been identified as an accident cluster site with nine injury accidents recorded in the last three years.
4. Most of the recent accidents occurred on the St Leonard's Place approach to the traffic signals. Although there is little similarity between the accidents, it does appear that poor lane discipline may be

a contributory factor. There has also been a shunt type accident involving a cyclist at the signals on Bootham, and site observations suggest that at peak times the advance stop line box is not large enough to accommodate the number of cyclists.

5. In addition, there are long lengths of guardrail around the junction, and whilst most of it serves the important purpose of preventing pedestrians crossing where visibility is extremely poor due to the historic walls, there are some sections that appear unnecessary.

### **Proposals**

6. Proposals have been developed to ensure that the traffic lanes on St Leonards Place are signed clearly, increase the amount of space available to cyclists prior to the stop line on Bootham, and reduce the amount of guardrail. These are shown in **Annex A**.
7. On St Leonard's Place these improvements comprise adding another set of destination road markings and installing a lane destination sign in a more prominent position to replace an advance direction sign which in its current position is prone to being obscured by tree branches. In addition, it is proposed to extend the cyclist's advance stop line box on Bootham by 2m, and remove two surplus lengths of guardrail which did not appear to be necessary.

### **Consultation**

8. Consultation has taken place with relevant Councillors and the Police. The proposals are not considered to affect any residents. The responses are summarised below:

### **Ward Member Views**

9. Councillor J Looker – would like changes on a far larger scale.

### *Officer comments*

There are likely to be major changes in the area as part of the Reinvigorate York programme in the next couple of years. As a result, these proposals have been kept minor and low cost, but will hopefully provide some improvement to the accident rate in the interim period.

10. Councillor B Watson – would also like more major improvements including changes to the signal timings. Regarding the minor proposals, Cllr Watson commented that moving the direction sign may increase the likelihood of it being obscured by buses, and would prefer that the guardrail remains to protect pedestrians.

*Officer comments*

The area is the subject of a major project as detailed in paragraph 9. The existing advance direction sign is mounted high so it is visible above the electronic car park sign, but this makes it difficult to read as the text is small and it is partially obscured by trees. It is therefore considered that the proposed sign, which would be the same size text as the car park sign and in a more noticeable position, would be more visible than the existing advance direction sign.

After this consultation began, the guardrail near the Bar has been removed by Network Management as part of an ongoing 'de-cluttering' programme, which involves removing unnecessary signs and street furniture. However, the other length of guardrail on Bootham remains, and it has come to light that it was originally installed to prevent delivery vehicles stopping on the carriageway to unload outside the public house. This action caused a significant amount of disruption, as vehicles queued back and blocked the junction. There are no records of accidents related directly to this length of guardrail, so it is recommended that it should remain to prevent a reoccurrence of the delivery vehicle issue. These amendments to the proposals are shown in a drawing of the revised scheme in **Annex B**.

**Other Member Views**

11. Councillor A D'Agorne – would welcome any removal of guardrail but recognises the need for the occasional bollard to keep vehicles out of pedestrian areas. Cllr D'Agorne is also concerned about the impact of a larger sign near the remains of the roman wall.

*Officer comments*

Guardrail is discussed in more detail in paragraph 10. Unfortunately the installation of bollards would not prevent unloading outside the public house unless they were installed close enough together to prevent a person carrying the goods through them, so an alternative to guardrail cannot be recommended. The scheme would reduce two sign assemblies to one with no increase in the number of posts, which

is considered to achieve an appropriate balance between providing information to drivers and treating the area sensitively.

12. Councillor J Galvin – is concerned over proliferation of signs in historic areas, but notes that there is no overall increase in signing as a result of the scheme.

*Officer comments*

These comments are noted and the impact of signing has been kept to a minimum. This is also in line with the aims of a 'de-cluttering' programme currently being undertaken by Network Management.

13. Councillor D Merrett – asked if the cyclist's advance stop line box could also be extended on St Leonards Place.

*Officer comments*

The existing stop line is currently the recommended minimum distance of 1.5m in advance of the nearside primary signal to ensure the signal heads are clearly visible from the stop line. Therefore it would not be possible to extend the box in this direction without relocating the signal heads. In addition, bus manoeuvres restrict the modifications that could be made here, particularly the left turn of the park and ride bus which passes very close to the existing cyclist's advance stop line box. The distance between the stop line and the yellow box marking also has to be considered so coaches do not encroach in either. However, it would be possible to slightly increase the amount of space in the cyclist's advance stop line box by widening the offside traffic lane and lengthening each box by about 1m as shown in **Annex B**.

14. Councillor A Reid – had a number of comments suggesting more major improvements. Regarding the minor proposals, Cllr Reid commented that enlarging the cyclists advance stop line box on Bootham may result in the reduced space leading to the yellow box marking being blocked at the Bootham Row junction.

*Officer comments*

Only a relatively short extension of 2m is proposed for the cyclist advance stop line box which would allow another row of bicycles into the area. It is not anticipated to have a significant effect on the number of vehicles queuing between the stop line and the yellow box at the Bootham Row junction.

## **Police Views**

15. North Yorkshire Police's Traffic Management Officer has no comments.

## **Options**

16. The Cabinet Member has three options to consider:

Option One – approve the scheme as shown in **Annex A**, to address the types of accidents that are occurring at the junction, and reduce the amount of guardrail in the area;

Option Two – approve the revised scheme as shown in **Annex B**, to address the types of accidents that are occurring at the junction. This plan reflects the guardrail which has recently been removed, and proposes the retention of a length near the public house to avoid re-introducing an issue with delivery vehicles. It also includes extended advance stop line boxes for cyclists on St Leonards Place;

Option Three – note the contents of the report, but take no further action.

## **Analysis of Options**

17. This junction has been identified as an accident cluster site, with a combination of different accidents including lane discipline issues and shunt type collisions involving cyclists. A major project as part of the Reinvigorate York programme is currently expected to be implemented in 2014, however in the meantime, it is considered that a minor scheme of signing and marking improvements could result in a reduction in the number and severity of accidents. Consultation has demonstrated concerns about certain elements of the proposals, some of which can be accommodated in a revised scheme shown as **Annex B**. As a result, option one to approve the original scheme would not address the issue of vehicles unloading and disrupting traffic flow through the junction and is less accommodating to cyclists, so is not recommended, and option two to implement a revised scheme is the preferred course of action. Option three to take no action would not address the accident problem and is not recommended.

## Council Plan

The potential benefits for the priorities in the Council Plan are:

18. Get York moving – Safety improvements to cycle facilities should make cycling more desirable with less unnecessary car use as a result.
19. Protect vulnerable people – A safer highway environment has benefits for all users.

## Implications

20. This report has the following implications:
  - **Financial** – The scheme is included in the Safety Scheme block of the Transport Capital Programme and is estimated to cost in the region of £4,000 including fees, which is less than the £10,000 initially budgeted for.
  - **Human Resources** – None.
  - **Equalities** – It is likely that more vulnerable road users would benefit the most from safety improvements.
  - **Legal** – The City of York Council, as Highways Authority of the area, has powers under the Highways Act 1980 and associated Road Traffic Regulations Act 1984 to implement the measures proposed.
  - **Crime and Disorder** – None.
  - **Information Technology** - None.
  - **Land** – None.
  - **Other** – None.

## Risk Management

21. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy, no risks associated with the recommendations in this report have been identified.

## Contact Details

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Report  
Approved



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## Specialist Implications Officer(s)

There are no specialist implications.

**Wards Affected:** Guildhall

**All**

**For further information please contact the author of the report.**

## Background Papers

None.

## Annexes

Annex A St Leonards Place / Bootham / Gillygate junction – Local Safety Scheme – Signing and marking improvements

Annex B St Leonards Place / Bootham / Gillygate junction – Local Safety Scheme – Signing and marking improvements – Revised scheme