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## Meeting of Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel

11 December 2006

Report of the Director of City Strategy

### Proposed Pedestrian Refuge Island on A19 Main Street Fulford near Fordlands Road

#### Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to update members on proposals to help pedestrians cross Main Street Fulford in the vicinity of the Fordlands Road junction. The report notes previous consideration of proposals by the former Planning and Transport (East Area) Sub-Committee, the proposed Germany Beck development, and recent proposals to amend local bus services considered by this committee in July 2006.
2. The report identifies four options for consideration. It recommends that the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the waiting restrictions associated with the scheme is advertised and sets out a process for dealing with any objections. It also asks Members whether they then wish to proceed with the provision of the refuge straight away or whether the decision to proceed should be linked to the Secretary of State's decision on Germany Beck.

#### Background

3. At its meeting on 11 November 2004 the former Planning and Transport (East Area) Sub-Committee considered a report advising of the results of consultation on proposed measures to improve bus stop and pedestrian crossing provision on Main Street in Fulford. One of the measures proposed, as shown in **Annex A**, was a pedestrian refuge island approximately 50m north of Fordlands Road, which would provide access to the nearby northbound bus stop. To prevent parked vehicles from obstructing traffic flow or the sight lines of pedestrians using the proposed refuge, the scheme included waiting restrictions either side of the crossing. As a result of consultation, concerns were raised about the resultant loss of parking in front of two nearby properties (nos. 137 & 139) that have no off-street parking.
4. The residents of those two properties spoke against the proposed scheme on the grounds that they considered it wrong to remove the on-street parking fronting their properties without providing a convenient alternative. Both speakers also commented that their observations indicated that hardly any

pedestrians crossed Main Street in the vicinity of the proposed crossing and they questioned the need for a crossing in this location. In response to these concerns members deferred consideration pending a follow up report with more information on the justification for the refuge island.

5. The same Sub-Committee considered a further report at its meeting on 9 December 2004. This report gave information on observed pedestrian and traffic flows as below.

Pedestrian and traffic surveys were carried out in 2004 covering three separate one-hour periods on a single weekday. The numbers of pedestrians observed crossing Main Street, between Fordlands Road and the northbound bus stop, and the two-way traffic flows were as follows:

	AM Peak (08:00 to 09:00)	Midday (12:00 to 13:00)	PM Peak (17:00 to 18:00)
Pedestrians	11	4	2
Vehicles	1434	1384	1729

In general, traffic was in free flow throughout all three peak times, and the numbers equate to a car passing by every 2.5 seconds on average. The average waiting and crossing time for pedestrians was measured at 27 seconds during the AM peak.

6. The report concluded that the steady traffic flow makes it very difficult for a pedestrian to cross this section of road and, because there are bus stops nearby, the provision of crossing facilities would be beneficial. Although the numbers of pedestrians observed crossing in this area during the survey was not very high, this could point to a suppressed demand with many people feeling it necessary to walk further up Main Street to make use of the existing Pelican.
7. The report considered alternative locations and solutions. Relocating the crossing northwards would not overcome the loss of parking issue and would be in conflict with the bus stop. Relocating the crossing southwards so as to retain the residents on-street parking was not feasible due to inadequate verge and carriageway widths, proximity to vehicular accesses and proximity to the bend. Alternative solutions were either not feasible or inappropriate.
8. The report identified three options; proceed with the scheme, carry out further surveys and consultation, and not to proceed with the scheme. The Sub-Committee decided not to proceed with the scheme.
9. At its meeting on 26 May 2005, the Planning Committee considered an outline application by Persimmon Homes and Hogg Builders for approximately 700 dwellings and associated facilities on the Germany Beck site east of Fordlands Road. The Committee gave this application outline approval with some reserved matters that will require further consideration. Further information on this development, which subsequently became the subject of a public inquiry, is given later in this report.

10. Councillor Aspden presented a petition with 116 signatures at the meeting of full Council on 26 July 2005. This petition stated:

“Although the plans for improvements to the pedestrian crossing on Main Street and refuge near to Eliot Court, Fulford, are welcomed, we are disappointed that the East Area Planning Committee recently rejected the idea of a refuge near to Fordlands Road on Main Street. We would like to see the plans after much wider consultation with residents brought back to the Planning Committee or Executive Member as soon as possible.”
11. This petition was reported to the Planning and Transport (East Area) Sub-Committee on 13 October 2005. As part of the report giving the background, it was noted that a study on the A19 Fulford Road Corridor was proposed and the sub-committee agreed to reconsider the provision of a pedestrian crossing facility on this section of Main Street as part of that study.
12. Subsequent to the Planning Committee meeting, the Secretary of State decided that a public inquiry should be held into the Germany Beck planning application. The inquiry has been held and the Planning Inspector will be producing a report and sending his recommendations to the Secretary of State. It is expected that the Secretary of State’s decision will be issued in early spring 2007 (provisionally 11 April).
13. At its meeting on 17 July 2006, this Advisory Panel considered a report on tenders for the provision of subsidised bus services, including routes 22 and 23 which serve the Fordlands Road area. Members noted recent improvements to the frequencies of commercial bus services between York and Fulford and agreed that the new subsidised bus service contract be awarded for the continuation of routes 22 and 23, but on a reduced week day frequency between York and Fulford.
14. This reduction in the frequency of buses serving Fordlands Road directly has resulted in Fordlands Road residents applying further pressure for a pedestrian crossing facility on Main Street to get to and from the north (York) bound bus stop. As a result, Members have requested a report to enable the provision of an appropriate pedestrian crossing facility to be reconsidered.

### **Germany Beck Development Proposal**

15. The Germany Beck development proposal is for approximately 700 residential dwellings and associated facilities on 34ha of land adjacent to Germany Beck, Fulford. The proposed development would be accessed via a new signalised junction on the A19 just south of the existing Fordlands Road junction. There is a condition on development that this junction improvement must be carried out at the start of the development to be available as the construction access to the development. Linked with this improvement is a proposed signalised crossing immediately to the north of the existing Fordlands Road junction to provide access to the bus stop. This signalised crossing would only be 30 to 40 metres from the proposed refuge island crossing and hence the refuge

island crossing, if built, would become unnecessary and would most likely be removed.

16. The Secretary of State's decision following the public inquiry is expected in early spring 2007 (provisionally the 11 April). If approval is given to the development the above improvements could be in place within 12 to 18 months of getting approval. As such, if the refuge island crossing were built and Germany Beck development went ahead, the refuge island may only have a life of 12 to 18 months, though this could be longer.

### **Fulford Road Corridor Study**

17. A transport study of the A19 Fulford Road Corridor between the Naburn Lane junction and the Fishergate Gyratory has commenced. This study, which is being carried out by Halcrow, is considering bus priority measures, cyclist and pedestrian facilities, and other associated issues along this section of the A19. To date the consultants have been compiling background information, carrying out surveys, and identifying potential options for further consideration. However progress on this study has been delayed because of the number of major development proposals whose status is uncertain but which would impact on the corridor in some way or other. These include the proposed Germany Beck and University of York Heslington East developments, which have both been the subject of public inquiries, and the Barbican redevelopment.

### **Consultation**

18. Local consultation was carried out in October 2004 on the scheme shown on the plan in **Annex A** as part of a consultation on a number of proposals along Main Street, Fulford. However, the consultation area did not extend down Fordlands Road. Whilst there was some support for the scheme, objections were received from the occupants of two nearby properties without off-street parking who would lose the ability to park on-street in front of their properties and would have difficulty finding spaces nearby.
19. There would be a need to advertise the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the waiting restrictions which are an integral part of the scheme. This would be likely to lead to objections from or on behalf of the occupants of the two properties mentioned above.
20. Cllr Aspden, the ward member for Fulford, has been consulted and his views are as follows:

“I support the proposed pedestrian refuge on Main Street, as it is much needed for residents to be able to make best use of the bus services and local shops in Fulford. The refuge is something that local residents have been calling for over a long period of time. I would therefore support the option of advertising the TRO for the waiting restrictions and building the island if no objections are received.”

## Options

21. There are four options for consideration:

- **Option 1** is to advertise the TRO for the waiting restrictions associated with the scheme in **Annex A** and to implement the scheme, subject to funding approval, if no objections are received. If objections are received these would either be dealt with through the Officer In Consultation (OIC) process or reported back to this Advisory Panel.
- **Option 2** is to advertise the TRO for the waiting restrictions associated with the scheme in **Annex A** but to defer a decision on implementation pending the Secretary of State's decision on the Germany Beck development and the timing of any improvements associated with that development. The scheme would be implemented, subject to funding approval, if the Germany Beck development was not approved. However if Germany Beck development is given the go ahead the decision on the island would be deferred pending a further report on the improvements associated with the development.
- **Option 3** is to defer a decision on a crossing facility until after the outcome of the Germany Beck public inquiry and the Fulford Road Corridor Study.
- **Option 4** is to decide that a crossing facility is not appropriate on this particular section of the A19.

## Analysis

22. **Option 1** would be appropriate if this Advisory Panel consider that a pedestrian refuge island should be provided as soon as possible to assist residents of Fordlands Road to get to and from the nearest north (York) bound bus stop on Main Street and are not concerned that it may only have a short life before it is removed.
23. Although the numbers observed crossing are not very high, those that do find it very difficult. As a result there is a potential latent demand, as indicated from a previous petition.
24. This scheme, which is not in the current 2006/07 capital programme, is estimated to cost £20k. To advertise the TRO would require £1k to be made available for this scheme from this years capital budget. If no objections are received when the TRO is advertised the scheme would proceed without reference back to this EMAP once funding is made available. If objections to the TRO are received, as appears likely, these would need to be reported back for consideration. Subject to the agreement of this meeting, any objections could be considered through the Officer In Consultation process. Allowing time for advertising the TRO and reporting back any objections, the scheme could be implemented in early April 2007, subject to funding and scheme approval.

25. **Option 2** would be appropriate if this Advisory Panel support the provision of a crossing but would like to be better informed on improvements associated with the proposed Germany Beck development, if approved, before making a firm decision on this pedestrian refuge island crossing. This option would enable the initial process, advertising the TRO, to commence subject to £1k of funding being made available in this years capital programme.
26. If the Secretary of State's decision is not to agree to the Germany Beck development then, subject to the agreement of this meeting, any objections to the TRO could be considered through the Officer In Consultation process and a decision made as to whether to implement the scheme. Subject to when we receive the Secretary of State's decision and to funding and scheme approval the scheme could be implemented in May / June 2007.
27. If the Secretary of State's decision is to agree to the Germany Beck development, then a report would be brought back to this committee with more information on the proposed improvements. This would enable this Advisory Panel to decide whether the pedestrian refuge island crossing should be provided as an interim measure pending construction of the nearby signalised crossing facility. In view of the time required for initial discussions with the developer and the preparation of a report there would be a further delay in the provision of a crossing.
28. **Option 3** would be appropriate if this Advisory Panel wish to defer a decision on the crossing until after a decision on Germany Beck is known and there is further progress with the Fulford Road Corridor Study. Should a decision then be made to proceed with this scheme there would still be the TRO process to go through which could further delay implementation. Should a decision then be made to wait until a signalised pedestrian crossing can be provided as part of the Germany Beck development, residents would be waiting several years without a crossing facility. .
29. **Option 4** would be appropriate if this Advisory Panel consider there is insufficient justification for a pedestrian crossing facility on this section of the A19. However, residents have indicated a difficulty crossing the road to make use of the public transport services operating along the A19.

### **Corporate Priorities**

30. The provision of a crossing would be in line with corporate priority IS2 "Increase the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport" as it would make it easier to access the nearby bus stop on Main Street.

## **Implications**

- **Financial**

31. The scheme is estimated to cost £20k in total. The capital programme for 2006/07 agreed by members at previous meetings does not include an allowance for this scheme. There is however a separate item on this agenda with an update of the programme and funding options.
32. Should members decide to proceed with Options 1 or 2, nominal funding of £1k would need to be found in this year to cover the cost of advertising the TRO. The remaining costs would be incurred in 2007/08 should funding be made available and the scheme proceed.
33. Should members decide to proceed with Options 3 or 4 there would be no funding required in this financial year.

- **Human Resources**

34. There are no Human Resources implications.

- **Equalities**

35. The proposed scheme complies with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. The ramp on the eastern side is being provided specifically to assist the mobility impaired. The provision of the crossing would make it easier to cross the road and provide better access to public transport.

- **Legal**

36. The City of York Council, as the highway authority for the area, have powers under the following Acts and associated Regulations to implement improvements to the highway and any associated measures:
  - The Highways Act 1980
  - The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
  - The Road Traffic Act 1988
37. A new or amended Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) will be required as part of the scheme to cover the proposed waiting restrictions. This would be advertised in accordance with the afore-mentioned Road Traffic Regulation Act and any substantive objections reported back to this Advisory Panel or, subject to the approval of this Advisory Panel, considered through the Officer in Consultation (OIC) process.

- **Crime and Disorder**

38. There are no Crime and Disorder implications.

- **Information Technology**

39. There are no IT implications.

- **Property**

40. There are no Property implications.

- **Other**

41. Should the scheme proceed there would be likely to be objections from the occupants of two nearby properties without off-street parking who would lose their ability to park on-street near to their properties. Should the scheme not proceed they would be likely to be continuing complaints from Fordlands Road residents in particular regarding the difficulty crossing the road to use the public transport services.

42. Because of significant level differences between the footway and the carriageway and the need therefore to provide a ramped access parallel to the road, the proposed scheme would result in the loss of a section of verge along the eastern side.

## **Risk Management**

43. The only risk associated with the scheme going ahead is its potential limited life should Germany Beck development go ahead.

## **Recommendations**

44. That the Advisory Panel advises the Executive Member for City Strategy:

(a) To note the contents of this report.

Reason: For background information and to assist decision making.

(b) Which of the options above should be adopted, bearing in mind the contents of this report and the uncertainties surrounding the decision on the Germany Beck housing scheme both in terms of timing and detail.

Reason: To decide whether and when to proceed with the scheme.

(c) That in the event of options 1 or 2 above being chosen the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the waiting restrictions associated with the scheme in **Annex A** be advertised and, subject to no objections being received and the scheme proceeding, the Order be made.

Reason: To enable the waiting restrictions associated with the scheme to be implemented, should the scheme proceed.



- (d) To delegate authority to the Director and Executive Member for City Strategy in consultation with the Opposition Spokesperson and Ward Member(s) to consider any objections to the TRO at an Officer In Consultation (OIC) meeting.

Reason: To resolve any objections to the TRO.

## Contact Details

**Author:**  
**David Webster**  
**Project Leader (Projects)**  
**Engineering Consultancy**  
01904 553466

**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**  
**Damon Copperthwaite**  
**Assistant Director (City Development & Transport)**

Report Approved  Date 29/11/06

## Specialist Implications Officer(s)

**Financial**  
Patrick Looker  
Finance Manager, City Strategy  
01904 551633

**Legal**  
Suzan Hemingway  
Head of Civic Democratic & Legal Services  
01904 551004

**Wards Affected:** Fulford

All

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

## Background Papers:

- Planning & Transport (East Area) Sub-Committee meeting on 11/11/04 – Report & Minutes
- Planning & Transport (East Area) Sub-Committee meeting on 09/12/04 – Report & Minutes
- Planning Committee meeting on 26/05/05 – Report & Minutes
- Planning & Transport (East Area) Sub-Committee meeting on 13/10/05 – Report & Minutes
- Executive Members for City Strategy and the Advisory Panel meeting on 17/07/06 – Report & Minutes

## Annexes

Annex A – Scheme Layout