

**Decision Session – Executive Member for
Executive Member for Transport**

16 November

Report of the Director of Transport Environment and Planning

Coppergate Temporary Traffic Regulation Order Proposal

Summary

1. The Coppergate Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) restricting traffic to one-way only, with cycling contraflow, introduced as an Emergency Active Travel measure in June 2020 ends on 19 December 2021. A decision needs to be made on whether the temporary one-way restriction should continue (subject to approval by the Secretary of State) or the operation of the street should revert to the previous two-way arrangement.
2. A technical assessment of the impact of the closure has been made by Council Officers and consultation with local residents and businesses has been undertaken in October/November to ensure their views are considered prior to making a decision.

Recommendations

3. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - 1) Instruct Officers to submit a request to the Secretary of State for Transport to extend the current Coppergate TTRO for an initial 6 months and to submit a request for a further 6 month extension if needed to complete the bus routing study and any permanent TRO statutory processes and also to instruct officers to carry out the necessary legal procedures following approval of the extension(s) by the Secretary of State, including the advertising of the continuation direction.

Reason: to enable the current restriction to remain in place pending a decision on the potential introduction of a permanent change to the TRO.

- 2) Instruct Officers to undertake the necessary feasibility work to enable a decision to be taken on whether to progress a permanent change to the TRO through the statutory processes.

Reason: To enable progression of a bus routing study and consideration of layout options prior to a decision on whether to progress the statutory process to introduce a permanent TRO change

- 3) Instruct Officers to make changes to the temporary layout to make more secure and widen to accommodate non standard cycles.

Reason: to ensure the temporary arrangement is secure and provides more space for cycles.

Background

4. The current traffic management intervention on Coppergate was introduced in June 2020 as a temporary measure primarily to provide more space for pedestrians on the narrow southern footway between the Piccadilly junction and the Coppergate Centre to enable social distancing on this busy route during the pandemic.
5. The Executive took the decision in August 2021 to undertake an informal consultation on whether a request should be made to the Secretary of State to extend the TTRO. The Executive also approved the removal of the temporary pedestrian barriers following the removal of social distancing requirements.
6. The current restriction enabled with a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order comprises two main elements:
 - a. One way operation in an uphill direction (ie westwards towards the River Ouse) for vehicle traffic

- b. A contraflow cycle lane, originally delineated at the eastern end with temporary wands (socket and bayonet fit, allowing their removal)

7. Coppergate is a valued low traffic bicycle and bus route through the heart of the city centre. When the road is open in both directions for all modes (restricted to buses/taxis 8:00am to 6:00pm), 12-hour counts (7 am-7 pm in March 2017) recorded 3056 journeys using Coppergate. The three highest movements were bicycle (35% - 1084), followed by buses (27%- 829), and taxis (25% - 779). For all modes except bicycle and bus (where it is split approximately evenly), more journeys (average 55%) travelled in the direction of Clifford Street. For example over 80% of large goods vehicles which use the street travel in the Piccadilly to Coppergate direction.
8. Counts taken in 2019 when one-way restrictions were in place (when a scaffold was erected for property repairs) show a reduction in the total number of journeys made on Coppergate (to 2067) with the number of motor vehicle movements reduced by approximately 40%. Cycle movements were approximately 20% lower. Note: the vehicle counts were on single days and may have been impacted by the weather or incidents on the network.
9. Road Safety – The last 10 years of accident records for Coppergate operating two way have been reviewed. Of the 18 casualties at the Coppergate/Piccadilly junction 14 were pedestrians, and of those;
 - Six were walking along the footways of Coppergate and were struck by buses,
 - One stepped onto the Coppergate carriageway to get past oncoming pedestrians into the path of a bus,
 - One was crossing Coppergate (possibly on a red man) and was struck by a bus turning into Coppergate from Parliament Street
 - One was crossing Coppergate (possibly on a red man) and was struck by a bus which turned left from Piccadilly into Coppergate
 - The remainder were either at the Pavement signalised crossing or on Parliament Street

10. Provisional accident data for the period between the 1st June 2020 up to 31st August 2021 whilst the restriction was in place, shows that there have been no reported casualty accidents.
11. The accident record suggest that there appears to be a pedestrian/vehicular conflict issue on Coppergate potentially due to the narrowness of the carriageway and footways which is made significantly worse when large vehicles are passing other vehicles travelling in the opposite direction or overtaking vehicles delivering to the businesses along the road.
12. Temporary traffic management measures have been put in place to delineate the contraflow cycle lane. The traffic management cylinders have been vandalised/removed on a regular basis leading to an ongoing revenue cost being incurred. The cylinders have recently been removed and replaced with cones as a safety precaution. The narrow width of the contraflow lane, also restricts access to some types of cycle. Alternative more robust temporary traffic management arrangements with a wider contraflow cycle lane would investigated if a decision is taken to apply for an extension to the TTRO.
13. A city centre bus routing study is due to be commissioned shortly to feed into the development of the Local Transport Plan. It is proposed that a decision on the progression of any permanent changes to the restrictions on Coppergate should be deferred until the outcome of this study has been reported. The progression of a permanent order would involve further advertisement and the public would have the chance to comment / object to any such proposal.
14. Funding – There is an allocation of £100k in the Capital programme which could be used to progress any changes to the layout.

Options

Option 1 - Continue with current arrangement (one way with cycle contraflow)

Option 2 - Revert to original layout (2 way flow)

Consultation

15. Consultation with residents and business owners took place between 21st October and the 4th November. The consultation was promoted via letters delivered to businesses, a press release and social media articles. During the consultation contact was made with the stakeholders groups such as taxi and bus operators and York Cycling Campaign to raise awareness and invite participation.
16. A number of complaints were raised by email from stakeholder groups and individuals about the notice, duration and quality of the consultation. These comments will be reviewed and amendments made to future consultations where possible/practical.
17. Respondents could provide their feedback via an online survey, phone or email. 290 survey responses and 13 emails were received during this period. 279 of the survey responses were from individuals and 11 were from organisations or businesses. A summary consultation report is available in Annex A.
18. Of the total survey responses 51% wanted to revert to the two way operation whilst 49% preferred the one-way arrangement to stay in place and supported an application to the Secretary of State to extend the scheme.
19. Of the responses which supported the one way restriction better environment for pedestrians was the most popular reason (91%) followed by better environment for cyclists (89%). This was a view also supported by walking and cycling stakeholder groups and the Civic Trust.
20. Of the responses which support reversion to two way operation the adverse impact on taxi services (80%) and bus services (81%) were the most popular reasons. This was also the view of taxi and bus operators. 26% of respondents who wanted the one way restriction removed also identified poorer access for loading as a reason. In

addition (10%) of the respondents who wanted the restriction removed cited the narrowness of the contraflow cycle lane as the reason.

21. Concerns were expressed that the one way system made increased bus and taxi journeys times, led to increased congestion and air pollution on other streets, had resulted in use of bus stops without shelters, made it more difficult for people who needed to use a vehicle due to mobility needs to travel and increased fares for people travelling by taxi.
22. A wide range of suggestions for how the scheme could be improved if extended were received from individuals and groups. A copy or weblink to the comments issued has been provided in Annexes C & D. The main comments/suggestions included:
 - a. Widening the pavement and reducing street clutter
 - b. Widening the cycle lane
 - c. Clearly demarking both bike lanes with colour or protection to reduce the risk of pedestrians coming into conflict with people on bikes.
 - d. Improved signage to make it clear cyclists could turn into the road from both ends.
 - e. Improving bus facilities on Piccadilly (near Banana Warehouse) be improved, to make them more attractive, lighter and feel safer.
 - f. Removing access for all motorized vehicles and permitting only people on foot and by bike.
23. If the decision is taken to request an extension of the TTRO the comments and suggestions will be incorporated into any changes to the temporary measures where possible and into the development of future designs.

Analysis

Option 1- Retain One Way operation

24. Summary of the Impact on Road Users –The one way operation on Coppergate has increased the journey time for buses/taxis which previously used the route during the day but it has improved the

amenity of the street by removing eastbound traffic and improved the environment and safety of cyclists/pedestrians in the area.

25. Traffic Levels – The number of vehicles on Coppergate is reduced by approximately half by the one way restriction. The restriction also has a wider impact on traffic levels on the Pavement/Stonebow/Peasholme Green corridor as the route through the city centre via Clifford Street/Tower Street/Piccadilly is no longer as attractive.
26. Pedestrians – Reduced conflict with vehicles owing to lower vehicle numbers and greater carriageway width. There is also the potential to widen footways if a permanent change was made to the arrangement.
27. Cyclists – Reduced conflict with vehicles owing to more space available for vehicles to pass. No vehicles pressurising cyclists travelling in the eastbound direction. Comments have been received about the width of the contraflow route restricting use by some types of cycle. Changes to the layout could be considered in the temporary and potentially permanent arrangement if this option is approved.
28. Bus Services - Continued longer journey times for bus services having to use Tower Street and the Inner Ring Road to gain access to Piccadilly. It introduces an additional journey time of c. 3 minutes for buses and their passengers which are required to detour via Tower Street and Piccadilly. The additional journey distance via Tower Street increases the annual bus mileage by approximately 30,000 bus miles leading to approx. 70 tonnes of additional CO2 emissions.
29. The increased distance travelled is a challenge to the use of electric buses on the routes.as the additional travelled distance makes it harder to achieve a day duty without needing to recharge the bus. First have indicated, in their response to CYC's Enhanced Partnership consultation that they wish to be able to operate on Coppergate in both directions again.

30. Diverted buses are no longer able to use the bus stops adjacent to the Merchant Adventurer's Hall and instead use the bus stop by Banana Warehouse. This bus stop has far poorer facilities for passengers, it has no shelter, seating or real time information. York Bus Forum have a campaign to improve this stop which they view as the most unsatisfactory in York.
31. The buses diverted away from Coppergate are displaced onto Clifford Street and Tower Street where they are an increased source of noise and disturbance. At present, none of the displaced buses stop on Clifford Street or Tower Street, although there is space for them to do so.
32. Taxis - Continued longer journey times for eastbound taxi services having to make use of Tower Street and Inner Ring Road to gain access to Piccadilly and Pavement/Stonebow.
33. Private vehicles – There is no eastbound route for private vehicles during the un-restricted period (6:00pm to 8:00am). The overall numbers of private vehicles is reduced by approximately half. It is anticipated that the majority of these trips will transfer to the inner ring road increasing traffic levels and potentially delays on this route.
34. Deliveries – All deliveries have to arrive from the Piccadilly end of Coppergate however it should be noted that approximately 80% of the larger delivery vehicles travelled along Coppergate in this direction even when the two way flow was permitted. Difficult of access for deliveries was raised by respondents in the consultation.
35. Road Safety – Based on provisional accident statistics for 2021 no reported accidents have taken place during the TTRO period. Provisional accident statistics from June 2020 to August 2021 The one-way operation reduces the potential for pedestrian/vehicle conflict significantly due to the reduced number of vehicles and increased space for vehicles on the carriageway. If the route was made permanent , there is potential for wider footways to be provided on the key stretch between Piccadilly and the Coppergate Centre.

36. Network Resilience – The one-way operation reduces network resilience to planned works and incidents. For example, the temporary restrictions on Coppergate had to be removed for one weekend in January to facilitate the removal of a crane from a development site on Piccadilly. If the one-way restriction wasn't temporarily removed, the bus network would have endured significant delays and passengers would need to use bus stops a significant distance from their destination. This is because the bus routes from Ouse Bridge to Stonebow or Walmgate would be displaced to the Inner Ring Road. A second example is in the event of very high flood levels which close Tower Street at Tower Gardens, in this incident the eastbound buses would have to be rerouted via Nunnery lane/Skeldergate Br or Lendal Bridge.
37. Cost Implications – Pending a decision on whether the one way operation would be made permanent interim changes would need to be made to the layout of the temporary traffic arrangements to address some of the comments that had been received – for instance the cycle lane width. The potential cost of permanent changes would be considered as part of further development work if this option is approved. It is anticipated that additional funding would be required to be identified if a future footway widening scheme was approved.

Option 2 – Revert to Two Way Operation

38. Summary of the Impact on Road Users – reverting to the two way operation on Coppergate would decrease the journey time for by buses/taxis which previously used the route during the day but would remove the environmental benefit for cyclists and pedestrians which have accrued during the temporary one way operation.
39. Traffic Levels – The number of vehicles on Coppergate would revert to similar levels recorded prior to the temporary restriction being in place. Traffic levels would also increase on the Pavement/Stonebow/Peasholme Green corridor.

40. Pedestrians – Traffic levels would return to pre-temporary restriction levels with the potential for conflict between vehicles and pedestrians being increased. There is very limited potential for the footways to be widened with two way operation of the road, particularly at the busiest section between the Coppergate Access and the Piccadilly/Coppergate junction.
41. Cyclists – With two way traffic flow Coppergate would still operate as a relatively low traffic cycle route however the provision of measures to provide more space/segregation for cyclists would not be possible due to the narrow carriageway width.
42. Bus Services – Current extended bus times would revert back to previous levels. Eastbound bus stop locations would revert to the original site on Piccadilly. The journey time reductions and quality of bus stop provision would be a significant benefit to the passengers who use the eastbound services.
43. Taxis – The journey times for eastbound taxi services would revert to previous levels providing advantage for these service particularly for routes from the Station through to the east of the city. During the restricted period Inner Ring Road to gain access to Piccadilly and Pavement/Stonebow.
44. Private Vehicles – The eastbound route for private vehicles during the un-restricted period (6:00pm to 8:00am) would be put back in place. Journey times for eastbound motorists would therefore be reduced during these times. There could be a reduction in the eastbound traffic levels on the Inner Ring Road during these hours as traffic would redistribute however as the route is only operational off-peak the reduction in journey time delays on the inner ring road would be limited.
45. Deliveries – Deliveries would be possible from both ends of Coppergate giving more routing flexibility however it should be noted that approximately 80% of the larger delivery vehicles travelled westbound on Coppergate even when the two way flow was permitted.

46. Road Safety – It is likely that the accident rate in the area would revert to the previous levels due to the increased vehicle numbers and narrow carriageway/footway widths. It would not be possible to widen the footways on the key stretch between Piccadilly and the Coppergate Centre Access if two way flow is permitted.
47. Network Resilience – Two way operation of Coppergate provides an alternative route for buses through the centre of the city if there is an incident or planned works on Piccadilly or if Tower street is closed during a Flood event
48. Cost Implications – There would be no cost implications of this option as the layout would revert to the previous arrangement.

Next Steps

49. Option 1 – If this option is approved then the next step will be to submit an application to the Secretary of State to extend the current TTRO for 6 months (and a request for a further 6 months if required) to complete the bus routing study and enable a permanent TRO to be progressed through the statutory processes. It is estimated that this work will take 6 – 9 months.
50. Option 2 – If this option is approved then the next step will be to arrange the removal of the current Traffic Management measures and work with the bus operators to reroute the bus services to the original arrangement.

Summary of Analysis (Consultation and Technical Review)

51. Coppergate is a narrow street with restricted footway width on a key pedestrian route between the main footstreet area and the Coppergate Centre/Cliffords Tower. It is a key bus and cycle route but when operated in two directions the narrow carriageway leads to a poor environment for pedestrians and cyclists and an increased risk of vehicle/pedestrian conflict. Approximately 49% of respondents to the consultation supported the retention of the one way restriction citing the improved pedestrian/cycling environment as the reason for their response. However the one way operation leads to increased journey

times and CO2 emissions for bus and taxi services. Air quality is anticipated to be improved in the immediate Coppergate area due to the lower number of vehicles on the street however additional vehicles will be using the diversion routes which may have a negative impact on those routes. Approximately 51% of the respondents to the consultation supported the removal of the temporary one way restriction citing increased journey times as a reason for their response.

52. Although slightly more respondents to the consultation supported the removal of the one way restriction, on balance, in accordance with the Council's Local Transport Plan, which has pedestrians and cyclists at the top of the transport hierarchy, and owing to the environmental and safety benefits of the reduced traffic levels in the area it is recommended that a request to the Secretary of State for an extension of the current Temporary Traffic Regulation Order should be made. However owing to the impact of the one way restriction on bus journey times in particular it is considered that further investigation of bus routing options should be undertaken prior to a final decision being made on whether to progress the statutory consultation on a permanent change to the TRO.

53. If the Secretary of State rejects the request for an extension to the TTRO the temporary restriction would be removed and the street would revert to two way operation from 19 December. However if the request is rejected it is still recommended for the safety and environmental reasons identified, that further investigation is undertaken on bus routing and the layout of the street prior to a report being presented to the Executive Member and a decision being taken on whether to progress a statutory consultation on a permanent change to the TRO to restrict traffic to one direction at a later date.

Council Plan

54. Both outcomes, would support the 'Greener and Cleaner City' and 'Getting around Sustainably' components detailed in the Council Plan. Reverting to the original arrangement would mean improve the effectiveness and resilience of the Public Transport network, whilst

extending the one-way system would provide a more attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

55. In the long term, the extension of the one-way system, could potentially mean permanent changes are made to provide a safer and more attractive environment for people travelling on foot and by bike which would mean the scheme also support the councils 'Good health and wellbeing objective'

Implications

56. There are the following specialist implications

- **Financial**

The cost of extending the TTRO will be met from existing budgets. There is an allocation of £100k in the transport capital programme which will be used to fund the cost of the interim changes to the traffic management layout if the TTRO extension is approved. If a permanent TRO is ultimately agreed this may require further funding to implement which will be considered as part of a future budget process.

- **Human Resources (HR)** No specific impacts identified.

- **Equalities**

The proposal has a neutral or slightly beneficial impact on some protected interest groups – see Annex B- Equalities Impact Assessment. Additional benefit could be achieved if the footways are widened if a permanent change is made to the TRO in the future.

- **Legal**

The Council, as a traffic authority, has the power to make temporary Traffic Regulation Orders under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and in accordance with the procedure contained in The Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) Procedure Regulations 1992. The traffic authority must be satisfied the traffic on the road should be restricted or prohibited for a reason set out in section 14(1) of the 1984 act.

Consideration should be given to the responses received to the informal consultation and to the assessment undertaken in respect of impact of the proposal upon those with protected characteristics before deciding whether to seek extension of the order by direction of the Secretary of State.

The Public Sector Equality Duty

Under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 a public authority must in the exercise of its functions have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. This is known as the Public Sector Equality Duty. A fair and proportionate balance has to be found between the needs of people with protected characteristics and the interests of the community as a whole.

- **Crime and Disorder** No specific impacts identified.
- **Information Technology (IT)** No specific impacts identified.
- **Property** No specific impacts identified.
- **Other - No specific impacts identified.**

Risk Management

57. If the recommended option is approved there is still a risk that the Secretary of State could reject the request for an extension to the Temporary TRO. This would mean that the current restriction would have to be removed on 19 December and there would be period when two way operation would be in place pending a decision on the way forward following further investigation work. .

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Approved

Specialist Implications Officer(s) List information for all

Financial:
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Legal:
Name
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Wards Affected: Guildhall

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

Annexes

Annex A – Consultation Summary Report
Annex B – Equalities Impact Assessment
Annex C – Summary of Consultation Email Correspondence
Annex D – Response to Consultation from York Civic Trust

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

CYC – City of York Council
TTRO- Temporary Traffic Restriction Order
TRO- Traffic Regulation Order