

**Decision Session (Public) –  
Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning and  
Sustainability**

2 August 2012

Report of the Director of City and Environmental Services

**A59 Phase 1 Bus Priorities Consultation**

**Executive Summary**

1. City of York council has been successful in securing funding for the Access York scheme to expand Park & Ride capacity in the city. One key element of this is a new site at Poppleton Bar. To support the successful operation of the Poppleton Bar site bus priority measures will be implemented at three locations along the A59 corridor into the city.
2. This report provides details of the consultation exercise carried out for the highway works forming Phase 1 of the A59 bus corridor scheme (from Plantation Drive to Carr Lane) as shown in its wider context in the plan attached as Annex 1.
3. This report also updates the Cabinet Member on the changes which have been made to address issues identified during consultation and the outline design period. The report recommends that an amended scheme layout should be approved for construction during this financial year.

**Recommendations**

4. The Cabinet Member is recommended to:-
  - Note the comments raised by the public, Councillors and interested organisations.
  - Note the Officer's response to the comments and any proposed amendments to the design.
  - Approve the further design development of the scheme in line with the recommended improvements to the original

consultation layout drawing (Annex 3) as set out in the drawing Annex 4 – to enable the project to be constructed during the present 2012/13 financial year.

- Authorise the advertisement of Traffic Regulation Orders for the new bus lane.

## **Background**

5. The Access York Phase 1: Park & Ride development will make a significant contribution to addressing the severe congestion experienced at peak times in the City of York. By removing additional vehicles and providing a high quality sustainable public transport service it will reduce pollution in the city centre.
6. A successful Park & Ride service is a cornerstone of York's transport strategy and the current plans have been developing since 2003. Following a review of transport schemes by the UK Government the Access York Phase 1: Best and Final Funding bid was approved in November 2011.
7. The proposals consist of a new Park & Ride site off the A59 near Poppleton and supporting bus priority measures comprising of a series of improvements to the existing traffic lights and construction of two sections of bus lane along the A59 between Plantation Drive to Princess Avenue and a further inbound bus lane from the junction of Holgate Park Drive to Windmill Rise, as shown in the plan in Annex 1.
8. The A59 Boroughbridge Road bus priority works referenced in this report will help achieve significant journey time savings for Park & Ride and other service buses using the A59 and represent an important part of the operation of the new Poppleton Bar Park & Ride and the city-wide Park & Ride and public transport system.

## **Consultation**

9. The consultation strategy enabled local residents, stakeholders and others opportunities to make their views known on the proposed highway works whilst ensuring value for money; accessibility for all; and adherence to the overall project timetable.

10. The consultation letter circulated is included as Annex 2 and the consultation layout drawing as Annex 3. The internal consultation ran from 22 May 2012 to 30 May 2012, and the public consultation ran from 1 June 2012 to 22 June 2012.
11. The consultation exercise included the following elements:
  - Internal consultation with council departments
  - External consultation with interest groups and emergency services
  - Letter drop of local properties
  - Attendance at the Acomb Ward Committee meeting on 13 June 2012
  - Consultation materials uploaded onto the City of York Council website
12. Seven responses were received via email. A number of comments were made covering a wide range of issues. The main comment areas are listed in the table below and summarised in the subsequent paragraphs.

*Table 1 - Summary of Main Comments Received*

<b>Response</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Right turn movements out of the accesses	5
Concern about vibration	3
Footpath width	3
Pedestrian crossing issues	3
Existing trees	3
Traffic speeds	2
Verge narrowing	2
Statutory undertakers plant	2
Park & Ride Cost	2
Cycle lane Width	2

## **Analysis of Consultation Comments and Officer Response**

### Right Turn Movements out of the Accesses

13. The most common comment received was concern regarding the additional lane required to negotiate when turning right out of the access points on Boroughbridge Road. Further safety

concern was registered concerning cyclists turning right into the new cycle lane with reference to a serious accident on Fulford Road in 2010 involving a cyclist.

#### *Officer Response*

14. The safety of any major minor priority (give way) junction or manoeuvre is dependent on three main factors: visibility, traffic speeds and flow.
15. Current best practice guidance for the geometric design and alteration of roads with traffic flows similar to the A59 (and adopted on other parts of the A59 as part of the Access York project) is presented in Manual for Streets 2 (MfS2). MfS2 has been successfully used in previous case law and is recommended by the CIHT and UK Government.
16. MfS2 stipulates that for a given major road speed limit (in this case using the posted speed limit of 30mph) then a Stopping Sight Distance (SSD) should be provided sufficient to achieve a visibility splay of 2.4m x 45m from each side road junction or access point. This requirement has been significantly bettered at all six of the driveways affected by the works, showing that there is excellent visibility towards the traffic streams on the main road.
17. Given the very low traffic flows into the driveways and the low number of driveways affected we determine that this is a reasonable and safe provision for the situation. This is validated by the safe performance of a number of other similar bus lanes with frontage access in York, such as The Mount and Malton Road.
18. As regards cyclists turning into and out of properties along Boroughbridge Road the numbers turning and manoeuvring in the area are expected to be very low, thus differing from the context of Fulford Road. Given the likely numbers it is not sensible to provide turn/crossing facilities for individual cyclists and there is insufficient road space to achieve this.
19. The scheme has been subject to a Road Safety Audit and has been designed in consultation with, and with input from, the Council's Walking and Cycling Officer to ensure a safe and compliant design has been reached. Cyclists who regularly travel in the local area should be aware of the proposals as they progress to completion and should continue to be mindful

of the Highway Code which states that cyclists should look all around before moving away from the kerb, turning or manoeuvring, to make sure it is safe to do so.

### Concern about Vibration

20. Concern has been expressed at the possible increase in vibration and concern over potential nuisance and damage to buildings.

### *Officer Response*

21. The effects of vibration on buildings and their occupants is a very technical and complex subject. UK research reported in *BRE Digest 353 of July 1990 Damage to structures from ground-borne vibration* states: "Although vibrations induced in buildings by ground-borne excitation are often noticeable, there is little evidence that they produce even cosmetic damage (i.e. small cracks in plaster)".
22. It is generally accepted that people perceive vibrations at a much lower level than the intensity which would be required to damage a building as the human body is extremely sensitive to vibration. A common misconception occurs when people hear a large vehicle passing, feel small vibrations and expect those to be of detriment to the building that they are within, if the vehicle was silent these vibrations might pass unnoticed.
23. The impact of ground borne vibration is governed by many factors including the foundation of the dwelling; intensity of vibration; distance from the source and medium of transmission.
24. The condition of the road surface near a building can also have a significant effect on the levels of transient vibration; vehicles on a smooth road surface create much lower levels of vibration than do similar vehicles travelling at similar speeds on an uneven surface. Poor road surfaces with badly filled potholes or service trenches will generate vibrations, particularly if the traffic is fast moving and/or heavy.
25. As part of this scheme the road lanes will be realigned to make maximum use of the available space, and any road widening has been kept to a minimum. As such the existing lanes will be narrowed, reducing speeds over the existing situation, reducing vibration.

26. The heaviest vehicles (Heavy Goods Vehicles) will travel inbound in Lane 2 (the offside inbound lane) and as such these heaviest vehicles will actually be moved further away from the residences on the north side of Boroughbridge Road, reducing vibration over the existing situation.
27. Buses and taxis will traffic the new bus lane, which is closer to properties, however the frequency of passing vehicle is expected to be around 1 vehicle every 5-10 minutes, which is much lower than the levels of general traffic currently passing the edge of carriageway.
28. Vibration from road surfacing will be minimised as part of this scheme through the provision of full re-surfacing of the entire A59 road width over the length from Plantation Drive to Princess Drive. In addition any ground borne vibration from the new bus lane will be mitigated by an entirely new heavy duty road surface built to full depth construction sufficient for bus traffic.

#### Footpath Width

29. Concerns have been raised over the potential narrowing of the existing footways to the north of Boroughbridge Road and the impact on pedestrians particularly children.

#### *Officer Response*

30. The existing footway to the north of Boroughbridge Road is approximately 2.6 metres wide. As part of the scheme this footway will be re-constructed to 1.8 metres width.
31. It is standard council policy to construct footpaths to 1.8m wide, unless the pedestrian counts are sufficiently high to necessitate it being wider for safety reasons. This would only be the case in key city centre locations where crowds of people may jostle or result in people walking in the road due to high levels of footfall.
32. Multiple observations by officers at this location during peak times have determined there to be low numbers of pedestrians using this stretch of footpath, and the majority of use during the day only takes place during the morning and afternoon school run periods. This is further backed up by the pedestrian count commissioned at the pedestrian crossing island.

33. The standard footway width dimension of 1.8m has been set as it provides sufficient width to accommodate two wheelchairs/push chairs/prams passing in opposite directions along the same section. Therefore the footpath as proposed is sufficient and will be constructed to 1.8m wide and to existing longitudinal gradients.

#### Pedestrian Crossing Issues

34. There is an existing crossing point located adjacent to the entrance to the Church of the Holy Redeemer on the inbound side and the Gate House flats outbound. The existing 4.1m by 1.9m central pedestrian refuge island is said to be used extensively. Comments and concern has been raised about the impact on this island and increased difficulties crossing to it over the new bus lane.

#### *Officer Response*

35. A pedestrian survey was carried out in July 2012 to record the numbers of pedestrians crossing the A59 at the island. Table 2 summarises the flow of pedestrians.

*Table 2 – Pedestrian Survey Results*

	<b>NORTH - SOUTH</b>		<b>SOUTH – NORTH</b>	
	<b>ADULT</b>	<b>CHILD</b>	<b>ADULT</b>	<b>CHILD</b>
Mon	31	25	39	29
Tue	28	28	35	29
Wed	43	39	47	33
Thur	29	23	33	33
Fri	32	30	51	17
Sat	28	10	32	7
Sun	14	9	19	12

36. As can be seen from Table 2 that daily pedestrian totals from the survey are low, with a pedestrian crossing the road approximately only every 5-6 minutes or so. Use of the crossing dwindles at the weekend. For the levels of crossing use recorded in the table a standard refuge island is considered to be the appropriate, justified provision. There are many locations across York where pedestrians safely cross two or more lanes of traffic from a central refuge island including at islands further down the A59 near Malvern Avenue and Lavender Grove.

37. An internal consultation response requested that consideration be given to realigning the approach to the island to make the transition around it less of a chicane.
38. After surveying the below ground conditions through trial holes it has been found that this is possible in engineering terms, however this would result in the complete loss of the refuge island.
39. The island represents an appropriate crossing facility particularly valuable for mobility restricted pedestrians. Furthermore the current carriageway alignment on approach to the island acts as a means of calming traffic speeds. Therefore it is not proposed to realign the kerblines or remove the island.
40. To mitigate the hazard that pedestrians will face crossing an additional lane of traffic improvements will be carried out to enhance the visibility of the island and any pedestrians using it. This will be done by mounting a 'Guardian light' column with internally illuminated panels and surmounted with a lit globe and additional 'Keep Left' signage on the island.
41. Drivers will be alerted to the pedestrian crossing and approach speeds reduced through the provision of 'SLOW' markings applied on approach to the crossing. At the island the crossing itself will be highlighted through the use of red textured surfacing patches across the carriageway.

#### Existing Trees

42. Concern has been expressed at possible impact on the existing mature trees along the corridor. There are three locations of trees that are of concern these being: the mature Cherry tree outside Nos. 114 and 116 Boroughbridge Road; the mature Horse Chestnut tree adjacent to the entrance to the car park for the Holy Redeemer church; and the line of mature trees outside Sovereign House, opposite the BP garage.

#### *Officer Response*

43. It is standard practice when working adjacent to trees to have discussions first with the Council's arboricultural officer and any excavation to be undertaken in accordance with agreed tree protection measures. These essentially consist of excavation by hand in areas at the base of the tree and root



covering measures to minimise or prevent root damage occurring.

44. In some cases even after taking these precautions root damage may still occur and the tree may die off. It is anticipated that the only tree that may be affected by these works in such a way is the mature Cherry tree. It is the Council's policy to plant a number of similar new specimens to replace any lost trees, resulting in a net gain of trees.
45. Property owners have been informed of the possibility of replacement trees being required, however the consensus on location and type of tree was not reached, further discussion will take place on site should this eventuality occur. If there is a requirement to replant trees it may be possible to do so in other areas along the corridor, again after discussion with the relevant Council Officers and landowners.

#### Traffic Speeds

46. Concern was raised by local residents about traffic speeding on Boroughbridge Road in the scheme area and the potential for increased vibration due to the high speeds.

#### *Officer Response*

47. The existing speed limit for the road is 30 mph. There are no previous speeding complaints along this section of the A59 therefore there is no traffic speed data on record. Site visits by Officers during daylight hours gave no indication of speeding issues.
48. As discussed previously the scheme will result in the slight narrowing of the general traffic lane widths, reducing traffic speeds. Other marking and lighting improvements will reduce speed on approach to the pedestrian crossing island.
49. The most suitable course of action is to consider monitoring traffic speeds in the area post implementation of the proposed scheme, if residents concerns persist. Should a speeding problem be detected then appropriate action can be taken.
50. However, it should be noted that as the A59 is a primary emergency route into the city it is not permitted to incorporate any speed reduction or traffic calming methods that use vertical deflection such as speed humps and speed tables. As

the speed limit is 30 mph repeater signs or roundel markings on the road are also not permitted.

### Verge Narrowing

51. Concern has been raised by residents about the proposals to narrow the existing verge area and the impact this may have on vehicle parking.

#### *Officer Response*

52. An exemption in the traffic orders for the city allows for a vehicle to be parked on a vehicle cross-over providing it doesn't overhang the carriageway or footway. Therefore this only applies if the verge is around 5m or more wide.
53. When the scheme is constructed these verges will be reduced to approximately 3 metres wide, making it impossible for a standard car to park without causing an obstruction to the footpath, and therefore be liable for a parking ticket. However properties fronting on to the scheme all have an adequate amount of parking space within their boundaries for at least two vehicles.

### Statutory Undertakers Plant

54. Comment has been made as to whether the planned works have taken into account the statutory undertakers plant in the verge.

#### *Officer Response*

55. In line with *New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 - Diversionary Works* as the scheme has progressed responses were requested from the utility companies and our own departments as to the type, location and diversion/protection requirements of any utility equipment present above or below ground.
56. Inspection trial holes were dug at various locations in early 2012 to fix the positions of underground obstructions, including cables and tree roots.
57. As regards the detailed comments from residents we have ascertained that there is an 11 kVA electricity supply cable in the back of the verge, it has been agreed that this can be

protected by buried concrete covering slabs. The telegraph pole adjacent to number 110a is at the back of the new footpath and the telephone box is far enough back from the proposed edge of carriageway to either be left in-situ and the foot path constructed around it, or it can be repositioned.

58. It should also be noted that Northern Power Grid are planning upgrade works to install new electricity cables through this section of road in Summer 2012 and this may result in the existing 11 kVA cable being made redundant. This will be dealt with through the standard statutory powers and communication procedures.

#### Cost of Park & Ride

59. Two responses raised an issue that it was cheaper to use a private car and park within York's city centre car parks, than take a family of 5 (2 adults 2 children and 1 child over 16) on the Park and Ride buses.

#### *Officer Response*

60. This issue is outside the scope of the consultation and will be passed onto the relevant council officer.

#### Cycle Lane Width

61. During the public consultation it was identified by a number of different responders, including CTC York that the proposed 1.0m wide cycle lane might be insufficient and might require widening.

#### *Officer Response*

62. Although the layout is very constrained it is now proposed that the cycle lane should be re-designed to be 1.2m wide, which will be an improvement for cyclists and should be adequate as the lane exists within the bus lane and not in a general road lane for all other types of traffic. This approach works well already in other areas of the city such as the cycle/bus lane on The Mount.

#### **Member Views**

63. Officers consulted with Acomb Ward Councillors Horton and Simpson-Laing on the proposals. Their responses were summarised as follows:

64. Holgate Ward Councillor Alexander attended the special Acomb Ward meeting deputising for Councillor Horton and had no significant issues with the consultation proposals.
65. Council Party leaders were also consulted and at the time of writing, no responses had been received.
66. Councillor Simpson-Laing made the following comments:
  - Clarification needed on impact on the verge areas;
  - Confirm impact and give due consideration to driveway drainage;
  - Clarify proposals for the pedestrian refuge island; and
  - Consideration of through traffic on Cranbrook Avenue area.

*Officer Response to Member Views*

67. As detailed in previous responses concerning footway width; the pedestrian refuge island; and impact on verge and driveway areas, the impact of the scheme has been carefully considered. Where necessary we have sought to design the scheme to minimise impact as much as possible on driveways, potentially improving drainage and gradient. Additional measures are being introduced to enhance the visibility of the pedestrian island.
68. In addition to the carriageway works there is to be an amount of re-profiling of the verge areas in front of the existing properties. The carriageway is designed to extend at existing cross falls into the verge, thus lowering the footpath levels and the edge of the carriageway. This will mean that the driveways are less steep and where possible drainage placed across access ways to take water generated from within highway land away from residential properties. As part of the scheme the accesses to properties off the highway will be improved as necessary in agreement with the property owners and any other reasonable accommodation works will be carried out as agreed by the engineer on site.
69. Through traffic on Cranbrook Avenue has been considered by the project team and is expected to reduce as a result of the scheme due to the introduction of the bus gate at Princess Drive and further downstream changes to traffic signals at Carr Lane (Phase 2 of the Bus Priority Scheme).

70. Although potentially outside the scope of the bus priority highway works preliminary discussions have taken place with the member to discuss potential options for Cranbrook Avenue should a resident led scheme come forward.

### **Summary**

71. To summarise the consultation exercise, seven responses were received covering a wide range of issues.
72. The council has fully considered the major points of concern being cognisant of current Government and Council policy and has evaluated the situation using available evidence and considering potential impacts.
73. Where concerns were deemed justified the scheme design has been revised to incorporate the following improvements and mitigation measures:
- Kerblines amended and carriageway slightly widened to provide a wider 1.2 metre wide cycle lane in the bus lane;
  - Footpath to be retained at existing width across Plantation Drive to be kept on existing alignment;
  - Right turn arrow removed from ghost island for right turn into the block of flats neighbouring the BP garage;
  - Additional 'guardian' light and keep left signage on pedestrian refuge island;
  - New 'SLOW' markings on approach to the pedestrian refuge island;
  - Pedestrian crossing highlighted with red textured surfacing patch; and
  - New tactile paving to assist pedestrians crossing the BP garage forecourt accesses.
74. These changes are shown in the Scheme drawing appended as Annex 4. These changes as applied to the initial consultation layout (Annex 3) and represent the current recommended scheme.

## Options

75. The Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning and Sustainability therefore has the following options:
1. Approve the original consultation scheme layout drawing (Annex 3 only)
  2. Approve a revised scheme layout drawing as indicated in Annexes 4 and 3
  3. Reject the scheme design

## Analysis

76. If the Cabinet Member chooses Option 1 then the decision may result in a less compliant scheme being taken forward, that does not address residents' concerns or technical design development. This choice may be subject to further scrutiny.
77. If the Cabinet Member chooses Option 2 (**RECOMMENDED**) this will enable the scheme design to be developed, traffic orders to be advertised and the scheme to move towards construction in this financial year.
78. Choosing Option 3 would require the extensive re-modelling of the bus priority scheme in compliance with DfT requirements, potentially reducing the journey time savings for Park & Ride and potentially undermining the Poppleton Bar Park & Ride site and the entire Access York Phase 1: Park & Ride project. It would also introduce additional cost requirements and may mean that large values of work done to date would have been abortive. There are no opportunities to put bus priority measures anywhere else along the A59 other than in the proposed locations.

## Estimated Costs

79. The scheme is estimated to cost around £250,000 which will be met from the overall Access York project budget.

## Programme

80. As there are statutory undertaker upgrade works planned to take place within the highway in this area in Summer/Autumn 2012 construction of this phase of the works is proposed to commence in early 2013.

## **Council Plan Priorities**

81. The highway works proposed as part of the Access York Park & Ride project will contribute to the following priorities of The Council Plan:
82. Create jobs and grow the economy – Construction of the highway works represents a substantial package of work for the CAN directorate providing a secured forward workload. Construction will benefit the local construction industry and construction material suppliers.
83. Get York moving – The public transport improvements will provide a boost to the priority reducing delays for existing bus users and benefiting new Park & Ride users when the site opens.
84. Protect the environment - Encouraging modal shift onto Park & Ride buses will provide environmental benefits in terms of reduced carbon emissions and better air quality in the city centre.

## **Implications**

85. The following implications have been considered:
  - **Financial** – Funding for the project has been approved by the Council and will be funded from the Access York Park & Ride project allocation.
  - **Human Resources (HR)** – There are no Human Resource implications
  - **Equalities** – The highway works have been designed to meet accessibility requirements, and will be designed to current design standards within very tight layout constraints.
  - **Legal** – There are no legal implications
  - **Crime and Disorder** – There are no Crime and Disorder implications

- **Information Technology (IT)** – There are no IT implications
- **Property** – There are no Property Implications
- **Other** – There are no other implications

### **Risk Management**

86. A full risk register for the delivery of the project has been prepared and mitigation measures applied where necessary. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy measured in terms of impact and likelihood, the risk score has been assessed at less than 16. This means that at this point the risks need only to be monitored as they do not provide a real threat to the achievement of the objectives of this report.

### **Contact Details:**

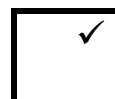
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#### **Chief Officer Responsible for the Report:**

Richard Wood  
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**Report Approved**



**Date** 2/ 8 /12

**Wards Affected: Acomb**

**All**

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

#### **Background Papers:**

None

#### **Annexes:**

- Annex 1: Project Area and Context
- Annex 2: Consultation Leaflet
- Annex 3: Initial Consultation Layout Drawing
- Annex 4: Post Consultation Layout Changes Drawing