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

14 July 2008

Report of the Director of City Strategy

### MANOR SCHOOL - HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENTS

#### Summary

1. This report summarises the outcome of consultation on a package of highway improvements linked to the relocation of Manor School to a new site on Millfield Lane. Issues arising are discussed, and possible amendments to the proposals are considered. Approval of a final scheme layout is sought, along with authorisation to advertise some related traffic regulation orders.

#### Background

2. On 5 March 2007 the Planning Committee gave permission for a new and larger Manor School to be constructed on a site off Millfield Lane, subject to a number of detailed conditions being met. These conditions include several highway improvements which must be put in place to ensure the new school has safe and sustainable transport links. **Annex A** provides a plan giving a general overview of the highway improvement scheme, and the more specific requirements of the planning conditions are summarised below:-
  - A 20mph School Safety Zone on Millfield Lane to enhance road safety around the new school frontage.
  - A lowering bollard to facilitate bus and emergency vehicle access through the existing Low Poppleton Lane road closure.
  - Widening the existing segregated pedestrian/cycle path along Millfield Lane.
  - Widening the existing footway on the west side of Low Poppleton Lane to provide more space for pedestrians.

- The provision of improved crossing facilities on Boroughbridge Road and Beckfield Lane to serve the main pedestrian and cyclist movements at the junction.
  - Widening the existing footway along Beckfield Lane, for a distance of at least 70m back from Boroughbridge Road, to provide an off-road segregated cycle path.
3. In taking this work forward, it was recognised that the proposals to allow buses and emergency access between Low Poppleton Lane and Millfield Lane was a key component of the whole scheme. Therefore more detailed feasibility work was carried out, which led to the conclusion that an automatic lowering bollard scheme could be designed to operate at the existing closure position. Following on from this, the necessary Traffic Regulation Order was advertised in September 2007 and a report on objections received was considered by this EMAP on 29 October 2007. A decision was made to implement the proposal as advertised.
4. Following resolution of the bollard scheme, further design work has taken place to develop a more comprehensive highway improvement scheme for the area, as shown on the revised overview plan provided as **Annex B**. This includes several enhancements above the basic planning conditions to help achieve increased benefits for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users in line with Local Transport Plan (LTP) objectives. The key additions to the original plan (**Annex A**) are:-
- Extending the off-road segregated cycle path along Beckfield Lane beyond the minimum provision of 70m, to at least its junction with Newlands Drive (there is an allocation within the 08/09 LTP capital programme for extending this facility further along Beckfield Lane, subject to a detailed feasibility assessment).
  - Signalisation of the Boroughbridge Road / Beckfield Lane / Low Poppleton Lane junction to provide the enhanced crossings required under the planning conditions, and to facilitate the increased movement of buses in and out of Low Poppleton Lane (linked to the introduction of a lowering bollard at existing road closure point).
  - Providing an off-road segregated cycle path along Low Poppleton Lane, and around into Millfield Lane, to join up with the existing off-road facilities running along the southern side of Millfield Lane.

- It is proposed to build the off-road segregated paths along Beckfield Lane and Millfield Lane with a 1.8m footway and a 2.0m cycleway. The combined width of 3.8m is 0.3m wider than required under the planning conditions, but this extra space will make the facilities more comfortable and safer to use.
5. More detailed plans showing the enhanced scheme proposals are provided in the following annexes:-

**Annex C** Beckfield Lane - pedestrian/cycle facilities.

**Annex D** Beckfield Lane / Boroughbridge Road - traffic signals.

**Annex E** Low Poppleton Lane - pedestrian/cycle facilities.

**Annex F** Low Poppleton Lane / Millfield Lane - bus access and pedestrian/cycle facilities.

**Annex G** Millfield Lane - School Safety Zone, pedestrian/cycle facilities, speed limit alterations, and new bus stops.

## Consultation

6. Public consultation has recently been undertaken on the detailed scheme proposals. This involved a letter and plans being sent to around 185 households and businesses in the local area that would be most directly affected by the proposals. In addition, an exhibition of the proposals was held at the existing Manor School on the evening of 10 June 2008. Details were also sent to various other interested parties for comment, such as Ward Councillors, the emergency services, and road user groups. The feedback is summarised below:-

### Residents/Businesses

7. A detailed list of the points raised by residents/businesses is provided in **Annex H**, along with Officer comments on each matter. The main issues are summarised below:-

- Due to proposed changes to the Route No. 10 bus the drop off point for Low Poppleton Lane would be a considerable distance to walk. Need a bus stop closer to Low Poppleton Lane

*Officer comment* - In order to ensure that the outbound lane functions unhindered the outbound bus stop on Boroughbridge Road adjacent to Beckfield Lane could be relocated. In order to maintain this facility for residents wishing to use the Harrogate/No. 10 services it is proposed to relocate the stop to the area of the pedestrian crossing at the existing Manor School entrance.

- Comment received from a local business regarding the proximity of the raised crossing point on Low Poppleton Lane. The users are concerned that the level of vehicular usage of the entrance would pose a risk to users of the crossing.

*Officer comment* - The crossing is now proposed to be relocated further towards the A59. In moving the crossing this should provide a clear space for vehicles using the adjacent business to interact safely with the crossing point. It is not possible to relocate the crossing point closer to the rising bollard as it would compromise the bus waiting area. Visibility of people using the crossing would be compromised should a bus be waiting in Low Poppleton Lane while another uses the gate from Millfield Lane, resulting in a safety risk to pedestrians.

- Properties directly adjacent to the inbound lane on Boroughbridge Road could potentially have problems accessing their properties due to queuing traffic.

*Officer comment* - In order to minimise the land take and potential problems for local residents officers are looking into the extent of the road widening. The potential to widen the road on the opposite side of the carriageway is also being explored.

### Councillors

8. The local Ward Councillors (Acomb and Rural West York) and Councillor R Potter (as Shadow Executive Member for City Strategy) were consulted.

A written response has been received from Councillor Tracey Simpson-Laing which is included in this report as **Annex I**.

The other councillors have not put forward any specific comments for inclusion in this report. However, it is understood that some of these councillors do intend to speak at the EMAP meeting on this matter, either as members of the Advisory Panel or by registering to speak.

### Other Consultees

9. **York Cycle Campaign** and the **Cyclist Touring Club** have made a number of detailed comments on the cycling aspects of the proposals. The main points are listed below -

- The inclusion of advance cycle stop lines at the proposed traffic signals is welcomed.
- *Officer comment* - noted

- Concern that a 2m wide cycle path for two-way use will be inadequate for cyclist to pass each other safely, and would like to see 3.0m specified.

*Officer comment – unfortunately there is insufficient space available to achieve a 3.0m cycle path without removing a large number of trees from verge areas or narrowing the carriageway to an unacceptable extent. Hence 2.0m is considered a reasonable compromise, and potential conflicts should be reduced because the peak cycle flows will be tidal in nature, being linked to movements to and from school.*

- Concern that cyclists heading north on Beckfield Lane will need cross over to use the off road cycle path. Suggest that a refuge island may help them.

*Officer comment – cyclists should have ample opportunities to move across to the other side of the road when a suitable gap appears in the traffic flow because access to the off-road path will be available via many vehicle cross-overs, as well as at the Newlands Drive junction. A refuge island would require expensive road widening, would be difficult to locate due to vehicle cross-overs, and is thought unlikely to be well used.*

- Concern over safety at the proposed raised crossing point on Low Poppleton Lane. Suggest “cyclists crossing” and appropriate road markings are provided. Also, question if it may be safer to have the crossing point coincident with the automatic bollard.

*Officer comment – appropriate signs and markings will be looked at within the detailed design, but this is not a major concern because regular bus drivers should be well aware of the situation. The proposed crossing point location will be highlighted by being on a speed table, and has a good open aspect and will provide a clear view for the bus driver of cycle and pedestrian activity ahead.*

*Locating the crossing at the closure point was looked at, but it was thought that there would be risks linked to bus drivers feeling under pressure to get through the closure quickly when the bollard is lowered, rather than fully paying attention to what pedestrians and cyclist may be doing.*

- Need to ensure that adequate “reservoir “space is provided for cyclists waiting to use the proposed signalised crossing on Boroughbridge Road to avoid any overspill onto the carriageway.

*Officer comment – the waiting areas will be shared use and are considered to be adequate for the anticipated levels of use.*

- On Millfield Lane, would prefer to see the cycle path made continuous across the entrance to Villa Court and a field access, so that cyclist have priority.

*Officer comment – the cycle path will be continuous across the minor field access, but this is not considered appropriate for the Villa Court access which is effectively a minor side road junction. Visibility is also restricted for drivers exiting Villa Court. Therefore, the provision of suitable warning signs and road markings will be looked at in the detailed design to make sure that both cyclists and motorists are aware of each other.*

- Measures are needed at the new school vehicular access to ensure motorists enter/exit the site slowly and are aware of the off-road cycle path.

*Officer comment – again the provision of suitable warning signs and road markings will be looked in the detailed design to make sure that both cyclists and motorists are aware of each other.*

10. At the time of finalising this report no other consultees had submitted any comments. An update on any further feedback will be given at the EMAP meeting.

## **Amended Scheme Proposals**

11. Following consultation on the detailed scheme plans, a number of amendments and additional proposals have been developed. These are outlined below.
  - It is proposed to slightly alter the position of the raised crossing point on Low Poppleton Lane to reduce potential conflict with vehicles entering and leaving nearby business premises. This is shown in **Annex J**.
  - It is proposed to establish a new outbound bus stop on Boroughbridge Road close to the position of the existing Pelican crossing, to minimise walking distances for local residents when services start to use Low Poppleton Lane. Linked to this, it is proposed to remove the exiting bus stop west of the Beckfield Lane junction which could potentially cause problems for traffic flow when the traffic signals are introduced. These proposals are shown in **Annex K**.

- The proposed plans, if approved, will be subject to minor changes resulting from detailed design and safety audit recommendations. A number of the issues raised by residents during the consultation, as discussed in Annex H, will be addressed if possible as part of the detailed design process.

## Options

12. Following on from the consultation there are two basic options:-
  - **Option 1** is to approve the highway improvement scheme as consulted on with no changes (i.e. as per the plans in Annexes C to G).
  - **Option 2** is to approve the highway improvement scheme as consulted on with the amendments set out in Annexes J and K, plus any further changes Members would like to see made.

## Analysis

13. Consultation on the detailed scheme proposals has highlighted some problems and generated some helpful comments which have led to some additional proposals being developed. These changes will help to overcome some of the concerns raised and enhance the overall highway improvement scheme. Hence **Option 2** is recommended.

## Corporate Priorities

14. The scheme will help towards achieving the council's priority of increasing the use of public and other environmentally friendly modes of transport. It will also help with improving the health and lifestyles of many people by providing facilities to encourage walking and cycling.

## Implications

This report has the following implications:

- **Financial**
15. The scheme is being funded by a combination of sources. A substantial proportion of the scheme, being linked to planning conditions, will be paid for via the funding arrangement for the construction of the new school.
  16. Within this, the planning conditions state that a specific contribution of £45,000 has to be made towards the provision of improved crossing facilities at the Beckfield Lane /Boroughbridge Road junction. The proposed signalisation of the junction is estimated to cost around £350,000, and will be primarily funded using Section 106 money linked to development

of the former Donnelly's site, which was obtained by the Council for making transport improvements along Boroughbridge Road. The remaining funding will be provided by a contribution from the Local Transport Plan.

17. The off-road cycle facilities along Low Poppleton Lane, Beckfield Lane (beyond the 70m length covered by the planning conditions), and Millfield Lane (above the basic requirements of the planning conditions) will be funded from the 08/09 Local Transport Plan capital programme.

- **Human Resources**

18. There are no human resources implications.

- **Equalities**

19. The proposed measures will benefit vulnerable road users such as pedestrians and cyclists. In particular improved crossing facilities will benefit the young and the elderly as well as the mobility and visually impaired, whilst more reliable public transport services will benefit non-car owners who tend to be low income families or the elderly.

- **Legal**

20. The City of York Council, as highway authority for the area, has 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

21. New or amended Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) will be required to cover the some elements of the overall scheme. The main ones will cover:-

- Changes to the existing speed limits on Millfield Lane (including the proposed 30mph limit and 20mph Zone near the school –see Annex G).
- The introduction of new parking restrictions on Millfield Lane close to the new school (double yellow lines and enforceable “School Keep Clear” markings – see Annex G)
- The removal of some existing parking bays from Low Poppleton Lane to protect visibility at the new raised crossing point (see Annex J).



These would be advertised in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act and, in accordance with the delegation scheme under the Council's Constitution, any objections would be considered by the Director for City Strategy in consultation with the Executive Member for City Strategy.

- **Crime and Disorder**

22. Where practical and appropriate the proposed improvements would include measures to enhance the safety of all road users, in particular vulnerable users such as pedestrians and cyclists, as well as minimising the risks of crime.

- **Information Technology**

23. None

- **Land & Property**

24. All the proposed works would be within the adopted highway.

## **Risk Management**

25. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy, the main risks linked to this report are discussed below:-

### **Strategic**

26. The new school is programmed to open on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2009. There is a small risk of not meeting this strategic objective if the conditions on the planning approval are not met in time. To avoid this it is intended to implement the highway improvement scheme by February 2009.

### **Physical**

27. The main physical risk to achieving implementation on time is thought to be the need to move or protect services in the ground, where the layout of the highway is being altered. Close liaison with the Utility companies is taking place to identify and programme any necessary works to fit the overall implementation timetable.

### **Financial**

28. There is also a potential risk that the scheme costs may exceed current estimates. Again, the need to move or protect underground services poses the main area of financial uncertainty about the overall cost of the scheme.

### Organisation/Reputation

29. Some local residents are known to be unhappy with aspects of the school re-location and associated highway improvements. However, consultation has taken place via the planning process and the more recent consultation on the detail of the highway proposals. Of greater significance would be the reputational issues the Council might face if the school could not open as planned because the required highway scheme was not implemented in time.
30. Measured in terms of impact and likelihood, the risk score for all these risks has been assessed at less than 16 (see table below). 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.

<b>Risk Category</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Score</b>
Strategic	High	Unlikely	10
Physical	High	Possible	15
Financial	High	Possible	15
Organisation/Reputation	High	Unlikely	10

### Recommendations

31. That the Advisory Panel advises the Executive Members for City Strategy to :-
- a) Approve Option Two as set out in paragraph 12 for implementation, subject to resolution of any Traffic Regulation Order issues and possible minor amendments required by further detailed design and the road safety audit process.
- Reason: To deliver the required highway improvements as conditioned within the planning approval for the new Manor School, and to respond to issues and concerns raised through consultation on the detailed scheme plans.
- b) That any Road Traffic Regulation Orders associated with the highway improvement schemes be advertised and, subject to no objections being received, the Orders be made. Any unresolved objections to be referred to the Director of City Strategy to consider in consultation with the Executive Member for City Strategy.

Reason: To enable any necessary restrictions on parking, use of any section of carriageway or footway, and changes to speed limits to be introduced.

## Contact Details

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Report Approved



Date 23/06/08

### Specialist Implications Officer(s)

#### Financial

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Wards Affected: Acomb and Rural West York

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

## Background Papers:

- “Proposed Manor Church of England School Site, Millfield Lane, Nether Poppleton, York” --- report to the Planning Committee dated 5 March 2007.
- Minutes of the Planning Committee held on 5 March 2007 (which contains full details of the planning approval decision, including the specific highway related conditions).
- “Millfield Lane / Low Poppleton Lane Traffic Regulation Order Objections” --- report to the meeting of the Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel held on 29 October 2007.

## Annexes

**Annex A** Original overview plan showing highway improvement scheme agreed at planning approval stage.

**Annex B** Revised overview plan showing the more detailed and comprehensive highway improvement scheme proposals.

- Annex C** Beckfield Lane - pedestrian/cycle facilities.
- Annex D** Beckfield Lane / Boroughbridge Road - traffic signals.
- Annex E** Low Poppleton Lane - pedestrian/cycle facilities.
- Annex F** Low Poppleton Lane / Millfield Lane - bus access and pedestrian/cycle facilities.
- Annex G** Millfield Lane - School Safety Zone, pedestrian/cycle facilities, speed limit alterations, and new bus stops.
- Annex H** Points raised by local residents and businesses.
- Annex I** Letter from Councillor Simpson-Laing
- Annex J** Proposed scheme amendments in Low Poppleton Lane.
- Annex K** Proposed amendments to bus stop positions on Boroughbridge Road.