

**Decision Session – Executive Member for
Transport**

9th February 2021

Report of Assistant Director Transport, Highways and Environment

**Navigation Road Walking & Cycling Improvements - Consultation
Results & Final Proposals**

Summary

1. This report summarises the outcome of the recent consultation on various improvements for pedestrians and cyclists in the Navigation Road area and puts forward a list of measures.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - i. Instruct officers to complete the design and implement the following proposals:
 - Measures associated with the Foss Islands Road / Navigation Road junction safety scheme
 - Repositioning the bollards at either end of Hungate Bridge to ensure equalities and safety compliance
 - Improvements to signing and lining in the area between Navigation Road and Hungate Bridge

Reason: To improve safety for both pedestrians and cyclists passing through the areas.

- ii. Instruct officers to complete the design and introduce a Low Traffic Neighbourhood feature in the Navigation Road area by making an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) to convert a short section of the road to one-way.

Reason: To enhance safety in the area for local residents and for cyclists using the cross city centre route through Hungate by reducing the through-traffic running from Walmgate to Foss

Islands Road whilst maintaining essential vehicular access to premises.

- iii. Delegate authority for work to deliver other signing changes to complete other sections of the North – South cycle route from Hungate to the Minster, in parallel with these schemes.

Reason: To provide a clearer north-south alternative for cyclists to bypass the Footstreets area.

Background

3. Complaints have been received for some years from local residents living in the Navigation Road area and from other residents who pass through the area either on foot or by bike about the volume and speed of traffic using the road as a means of bypassing part of the inner ring road rather than waiting at the traffic lights on Walmgate.
4. Speed surveys undertaken on Navigation Road in early 2016 counted a weekday average of 2928 vehicles, of which 1602 were travelling southbound and 1326 northbound. The weekend average flows were 2378, of which 1391 were travelling southbound and 987 northbound. During weekdays there are morning and evening peaks which coincide with flows elsewhere on the network. On weekends the peak period is between lunchtime and late afternoon.
5. Concerns have also been raised by pedestrians and cyclists about areas of potential conflict between modes. Firstly between vehicles entering or exiting the Rowntree Wharf Car Park and pedestrians and cyclists heading to or from Hungate Bridge and secondly between pedestrians and cyclists at the southern end of Hungate Bridge where the current bollard arrangement forces all users through a relatively narrow gap.
6. Recent analysis of traffic-related casualties by Council officers identified a cluster of cyclist casualties on Foss Islands Road between the Navigation Road and Morrisons junctions, including on the shared use path running in front of the Travis Perkins and Majestic Wines businesses. As the majority of the collisions involved vehicles turning across the path of cyclists a local safety scheme has been drawn up to address these issues.
7. During the development of the local safety scheme the opportunity has been taken to expand the scope of the work slightly to improve the transition point between the off-road cycle path and the on-carriageway signed route along Navigation Road. This route links the north-south

cycle route described in the paragraphs below to the Foss Islands Retail Park and to residential areas beyond it such as Heworth, Tang Hall, Derwenthorpe and Osbaldwick. The route also forms part of the Way of the Roses coast-to coast cycle route and National Cycle Network route 658.

8. As part of the UK government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic the Department for Transport (DfT) announced a new emergency funding stream to encourage councils to install measures to accommodate increased levels of walking and cycling whilst enabling people to still comply with social distancing recommendations. The Council's bid to the DfT's Emergency Active Travel Fund (EATF) included an item to make improvements to a cycle route running between the northern and southern sides of the city centre.
9. This route gives cyclists an alternative to using the inner ring road when the Footstreet regulations are in place and cyclists are not permitted to ride through the city centre. As the Footstreet hours were extended to 8pm in order to help the economic recovery of city centre businesses following the first COVID-19 lockdown, the north-south route has become more important.
10. The route in question runs between Bootham Bar at its northern end and either Walmgate Bar or Fishergate Bar at its southern end, depending on where cyclists are heading to or coming from. Wherever possible, the route uses existing signed traffic-free or quiet roads. The route passes York Minster, runs through the Aldwark and Hungate areas and then uses quieter roads within the city walls which run parallel with the inner ring road. Two of the critical elements on this route which have been identified for improvement are Hungate Bridge and Navigation Road.

Consultation

11. Whilst the emergency response to Covid has contributed to bringing these measures forward at this point in time, it was also felt that consultation with residents in the Navigation Road area was important - an approach that is consistent with recent ministerial guidance for active travel schemes.
12. In order to reduce the number of consultations related to proposed schemes in this immediate area four separate schemes have been grouped together for consultation purposes. The schemes are listed below:
 - A. Creation of a low traffic neighbourhood on Navigation through the introduction of a short section of one-way street (the pre-

consultation design is attached as Annex A), this has the potential to remove over 1300 vehicle movements off Navigation Road on an average weekday and almost 1000 on an average weekend day based on the 2016 traffic flows.

- B. The expanded local safety scheme on Foss Islands Road and the Navigation Road junction (the pre-consultation design is attached as Annex B)
- C. Access and safety improvements at either end of Hungate Bridge
- D. Improved signage and road markings at the southern end of Hungate Bridge in front of the Rowntree Wharf car park entry and exit

Note: The detailed designs for the improvements to Hungate Bridge and the area in front of Rowntree Wharf are still being developed.

13. Prior to the consultation materials being finalised an online Zoom meeting was held with all three Guildhall ward members, the Executive Member, plus representatives from local residents' groups, the developers who built and manage the student accommodation in the immediate vicinity and the National Centre for Early Music. Feedback from the meeting about the measures being proposed was very positive with a few questions about specific issues being raised by participants. The group and the Executive Member signed off the consultation leaflet which was rolled out as below.
14. The formal consultation was launched on the 7th December and comprised several elements:
 - An online questionnaire via the Council website
 - A leaflet questionnaire delivered to all directly-affected properties in the Navigation Road area (a copy of the leaflet is attached as Annex C)
 - A dedicated e-mail address to receive comments
 - An e-mail sent out to other key stakeholders including the emergency services, bus operators etc
15. A press release was issued to promote the consultation to residents and an article was published in the York Press on the 7th December.
16. At the time of writing this report 218 completed responses had been received to the consultation. Some stakeholder groups were given slightly longer to respond. Responses from the three emergency services are yet to be received, however, any received after the report is published will be tabled at the meeting.

17. Some responses to the consultation were quite detailed and are summarised in Annex D, along with officer responses to the points raised. The responses to the online and leaflet questionnaire are summarised below.

Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	No opinion / no response	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The council need to take action to improve safety along Navigation Road	36.4%	18.7%	6.2%	9.6%	29.2%
2. A short one-way section on Navigation Road between Rosemary Place and Rowntree Wharf	34.9%	15.8%	4.8%	6.2%	38.3%
3. Improved shared path on Foss Islands Road and build-out kerb on Navigation Road junction	47.4%	15.8%	12.9%	5.7%	18.2%
4. Access and safety improvements at either end of Hungate Bridge	41.6%	22.5%	15.8%	6.2%	13.9%
5. Improved signage and road markings near Rowntree Wharf car park exit	40.2%	24.9%	19.6%	3.8%	11.5%

18. For all the measures proposed the overall positive responses outscore the negative responses, however, there was a more evenly divided response to the one-way section proposed on Navigation Road (although some respondents had misunderstood the proposed restriction in terms of direction of travel). In order to identify the level of local support for the measures the consultation responses were split into several zones:

- Zone 1 – the area which includes Navigation Road and all the side roads off it (39 responses)

- Zone 2 – Walmgate and the area between it and the River Foss including all of Piccadilly and Fossgate (11 responses)
- Zone 3 – Hungate development and Stonebow / Peasholme Green (3 responses)
- Zone 4 – the remainder of the York administrative area to the West of the River Ouse (50 responses)
- Zone 5 – the remainder of the York administrative area to the East of the River Ouse (93 responses)
- Zone 6 – responses from outside the York area (4 responses)

Note: 9 respondents did not give their postcode

19. The level of support for each measure, split by Zone can be seen in Annex E. Although the response from those residents living closest to the Navigation Road proposed one-way restriction is more negative than positive some respondents had, based on their comments, misunderstood the direction in which the one-way restriction would apply (3 out of 20 in Zone 1 and 2 out of 7 in Zone 2). This doesn't necessarily mean they would otherwise have supported the scheme but may have had an undue influence on their response. There was a fairly low response rate from Zone 1 (residents in the Navigation Rd area) of just over 10%.
20. A comments box was provided on the questionnaire to enable residents to express why they supported the proposals or not and for them to suggest other factors which need to be borne in mind. 151 out of the 219 respondents added comments, these include those who e-mailed the dedicated e-mail address set up for the consultation but not those who submitted a detailed response. Comments were categorised and are summarised below ranked in terms of how many respondents mentioned each.

Comment	Frequency
Against closure of "rat-runs" in general	26
Scheme is not needed	26
Great idea	22
Stupid idea	16
Will adversely affect locals	16
Will put too much pressure on Foss Islands Road	14

Build-out design needs to cater for all types of bikes / users	12
Queuing on Walmgate will be problem	11
Will increase pollution	10
Segregate cyclists from vehicles and pedestrians	10
Pedestrians and cyclists need priority at Rowntree Wharf car park exit and Foss Islands Rd	9
Make it a full closure of Navigation Rd	9
Have misunderstood the one-way proposal	8
Extra measures needed on Navigation Rd for cyclists leading to F.I. Rd	5
Wider ranging measures needed	5
Signing needs to be clear	5
Large vehicles and deliveries still need to be accommodated	5
Sort out traffic lights at nearby junctions	4
Road surface needs sorting on Navigation Rd	4
Cycles go too fast on Hungate Bridge and in the vicinity	3
Monitoring and Evaluation are Critical	2
Concerns about cycle / vehicle conflict at one way pinchpoint	2
Will adversely affect local parking	2
Will make crossing filter arm outside Walmgate Bar dangerous	2
Lower speeds needed	2
Right turns out of Navigation Road need improving	1
Need measures elsewhere on the "rat-run"	1

21. As can be seen above there have been quite a wide range of comments. Several people specifically referred to the closures in the Groves that they didn't agree with. There are some specific points which will need some serious consideration such as the safety of pedestrian movements across the left turn filter just outside Walmgate Bar. Some cyclists have pointed out that the with-flow cycle lane put forward won't necessarily

comply with the new LTN1/20 guidance so may need some modifications. Officers are currently undertaking the detailed design which will take account of the consultation responses where it is appropriate. A further decision will be needed by the Executive Member if the detailed design and Road Safety Audit stages raises significant issues.

22. Officers will be undertaking surveys before and after any measures are introduced to enable the impact of the scheme to be fully analysed. This will also include an assessment of the impact the scheme has on the Walmgate Bar signalised junction. A safety review of the left turn slip road outside Walmgate Bar will be undertaken to determine if improvements are needed to help pedestrians cross and if so, the type of measures which may be appropriate.

Options

23. Three potential options are proposed to the Exec Member:
 - A. Implement all the measures as proposed on a permanent basis and introduce the one-way plug on a trial basis using an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (subject to completion of detailed design and road safety audit). – this is the recommended option
 - B. Implement only the three minor safety schemes
 - C. Put forward alternative proposals (which may require further consultation)

Analysis

24. Option A – the main advantages of this option are that it enables the safety changes which have the highest levels of support to be delivered independently of the Navigation Road one way element, which can itself be introduced initially on a trial basis to understand the impact and the benefits it brings to the area. The scheme could be a significant contribution to the current administration's aim of reducing traffic levels in the city centre by 2023, with benefits beyond Walmgate by reducing through traffic using Leadmill Lane and Margaret Street as well as Navigation Road instead of the inner ring road. The scheme also reflects the Hierarchy of Transport Users which is adopted in the council's Local Transport Plan which puts the needs of pedestrians and cyclists above those of private car users. The main disadvantage of this option is that it

will cause some inconvenience for some car users with increased journey times at peak times and a slightly longer route.

25. Option B - the main advantage of this option is that it is less disruptive to vehicle movements in the area. The disadvantages are that it won't help achieve the main aim of the project to improve the safety of local residents and those passing through on foot or by bike through the removal of a significant proportion of the through-traffic and the reduction of traffic speeds.
26. Option C – the advantage of this option is that it enables the Executive Member to put forward alternatives to take into account the feedback from the consultation exercise. The disadvantage is that it will add a delay to the implementation process if design changes are necessary, further consultation is needed which need approval at a later meeting.

Council Plan

27. The proposals put forward in this report will contribute to the following key outcomes as listed in the 2019-2023 Council Plan:
 - A cleaner and greener city – reduction of vehicles trips through the city centre area will make it a more pleasant place to shop, work and live, supporting the local economy. More local trips made by walking or cycling will remove vehicle trips off the network.
 - Getting around sustainably – The improvements will encourage walking and cycling
 - Good health and well-being – providing safer conditions to walk and cycle in will encourage more people to be physically active
 - Safe communities and culture for all – removal of a significant proportion of the through-traffic will make the Navigation Road area safer to walk and cycle through
 - An open and effective council – implementation of the measures taking account of the feedback will demonstrate that the council listens to its residents and addresses their concerns

Implications

28. The following implications are associated with the recommendations of this report

- **Financial** – It is proposed to fund the delivery of the schemes using Active Travel Fund and Local Transport Plan funding in Transport Capital Programme.
- **Human Resources (HR)** – there are no HR implications
- **Equalities** – any measures implemented will need to be in accordance with Equality Act legislation. A Community Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the proposals and is included as Annex F
- **Legal** – there are no legal implications other than changes to Traffic Regulation Orders
- **Crime and Disorder** - there only implication will be from potential abuse of the one-way section which will be monitored closely at the early stages until it becomes established.
- **Information Technology (IT)** – there are no IT implications
- **Property** – there are no property implications
- **Highways** – changes will need to be made to existing TROs and clear signing in the vicinity will need to be provided to ensure drivers are aware of changes to the network. Awareness of changes will also be heightened through social media and traffic alerts at the time changes are made.

Risk Management

29. There is a risk that the measures proposed by this report will not realise all the positive benefits envisaged but undertaking some elements on a trial basis enables officers to make changes to mitigate against any disbenefits. Risks associated with road safety as a result of the introduction of any measures proposed will be taken through the safety audit process to enable potential problems to be identified and designed out. There are potential reputational risks associated with making any changes to the road network but these can be managed and good use of the in-house Communications team can help residents by ensuring users and residents are well-informed of the changes.

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Report
Approved



Date 01.02.21

Wards Affected: Guildhall

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

Annex A – Pre-consultation drawing of Navigation Road One-Way Plug

Annex B – Pre-consultation drawing of the Foss Islands Rd Local Safety Scheme

Annex C – PDF of the consultation leaflet

Annex D – Summary of detailed consultation responses

Annex E – Breakdown of responses by zone

Annex F – Community Impact Assessment

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

DfT – Department for Transport

EATF – Emergency Active Travel Fund
PDF – Portable Document Format
ETRO – Experimental Traffic Regulation Order
LTN1/20 – Local Transport Note 1/20