
Meeting of Executive Members for City Strategy and Advisory Panel

30 October 2006

Report of the Director of City Strategy

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO HOPGROVE ROUNDABOUTS

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to advise Members of a proposed partnership scheme, involving the Highways Agency and the Council, to improve and signalise the two Hopgrove Roundabouts (A64 / A1237 and A1237 / A1036) and the linking section of the A1237 York outer ring road.
2. The report seeks approval to the scheme. It also seeks approval to advertise any associated permanent Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) and to make the orders subject to successful resolution of any objections. Delegated authority is sought for the Director of City Strategy to enter into a Section 4 Agreement with the Highways Agency to cover works on our road network and an operation and maintenance agreement to cover any facilities on our network for which the Highways Agency would remain responsible.

Background

3. Both Hopgrove roundabouts were originally part of the trunk road network. With the subsequent de-trunking of the A1237, the Highways Agency retained responsibility for the A64 roundabout and the Council became the highway authority for the A1237 and the A1036 roundabout.
4. The A64 Hopgrove Roundabout experiences severe congestion in peak periods and at weekends, in particular when the volume of traffic heading to the east is high and reaches the capacity of the single carriageway section of the A64 east of the roundabout. As eastbound A64 traffic builds up it becomes increasingly difficult for motorists to exit from the A1237 onto the roundabout. This leads to long queues building up on the A1237, which in turn results in some motorists seeking alternative routes through nearby villages and the city centre to access the A64. The general growth in traffic together with additional traffic generated by developments, in particular those in the Monks Cross area, will only exacerbate the problem.
5. The Highways Agency have taken the lead in the preparation of a scheme which addresses congestion on the trunk and non-trunk elements of the highway. The scheme is a key element of the Monks Cross Transport

Masterplan which was prepared in 2002 to ensure that the traffic implications of all of the proposed developments in the area were considered at the same time. A number of options have been considered and council officers and the Police have been involved at various stages in the discussions. For any scheme to progress at the present time it would need to be below the Highway's Agency's threshold for its Local Network Management Schemes (£5m) and be accommodated within existing land boundaries. Safety is a prime concern and some of the signalised junction options were rejected because of their potential for high speed accidents. The option which gives the best value for money, whilst addressing safety issues and providing scope for further improvements at an appropriate time in the future, is to improve and signalise both the A64 and A1036 roundabouts and to locally improve the A1237. This is calculated to cater for traffic growth and planned developments in the York area, in particular those at Monks Cross, over the next ten years.

6. This option has been developed further into the scheme which is the subject of this report. Council officers and the Police have been involved in discussions regarding technical aspects of the scheme during the design process.

Proposed Improvements

7. The following is a summary of the main measures proposed. **Annex A** contains a detailed description of the scheme which is also shown on the plan in **Annex A1**.
 - Both the A64 and the A1036 roundabouts will be improved and signalised. In view of the potential high approach speeds some of the signal arrangements will be double headed. In addition, traffic signals on masts cantilevered over the carriageway will be required on the A1237 westbound approach to the A1036 roundabout and on the A64 south-eastbound approach to the A64 roundabout.
 - The A1237 between the two roundabouts will be widened to dual three lanes, with one eastbound lane specifically for traffic heading for the A64 north-eastbound and two for the A64 south-westbound.
 - The existing street lighting and signing will be enhanced, including three new gantry signs. One gantry will be across the A1237, one will be across the A64 north-eastbound approach, and the other across the north-eastern part of the A64 roundabout.
 - As the A1237 is a designated oversize load route, there would be a minimum headroom of 6.45m to the gantry signs and over-arm signals to provide clearance for high loads.
 - Provision is being made for future CCTV cameras covering both roundabouts.
 - A 50 mph speed limit is proposed on the A64 approaches, with a 40 mph speed limit on the A64 roundabout and along the A1237 from the A64

roundabout to just west of the A1036 roundabout, and on part of the old Malton Road.

8. The Highways Agency provisionally plans to commence work in January 2007, and it is envisaged these will take about 9 months to complete.
9. There will be implications on traffic movements during the contract with the risk that motorists would divert to other routes to avoid congestion and delays. Discussions have commenced regarding appropriate restrictions on working and traffic management measures during the contract. These discussions will not only concentrate on the roads in the immediate vicinity of the works, but will also consider the implications on alternative routes that motorists may use as well as interaction with other proposed roadworks on the eastern side of York.

Consultation

10. As noted above discussions have taken place between the Highways Agency, their consultants, council officers, and the Police as part of the development of this scheme. Discussions are ongoing regarding appropriate construction traffic management measures.
11. There has been no public consultation to date. We are awaiting the Highways Agency's proposals, as project sponsors, regarding public consultation and these will be conveyed to members in due course.
12. The respective Ward Councillors have indicated support for the proposed improvements but expressed concerns about the potential disruption to traffic whilst the scheme is being constructed.

Options

13. There are three options for consideration:
 - **Option 1** is to agree to proceed with the scheme as proposed;
 - **Option 2** is to support the scheme in principle but to request officers in discussion with the Highways Agency to review any issues about which members have concerns;
 - **Option 3** is to not proceed with the scheme.

Analysis

14. **Option 1** will provide a scheme that will cater for the general growth in traffic and from planned developments over the next ten years. In particular, it will make it easier for motorists to exit from the A1237 onto the A64 in peak periods. This option is not recommended.

15. **Option 2** would be appropriate if members support the principles of the scheme but have concerns about any aspects of the scheme. However should issues be raised that would cause the scheme to be delayed or additional measures requested that would increase the cost, there is a high risk that the scheme would be postponed and the opportunity to improve these roundabouts would be delayed. With the above proviso this option is recommended.
16. **Option 3** would be appropriate if members do not support the principles of the scheme and feel that the existing layout and operation should be retained. It would delay any prospect of improvements to these roundabouts in the short term which, as the volume of traffic grows, would increase the congestion and the potential for traffic diverting through local roads in the area. This option is not recommended.

Corporate Priorities

17. The improvements to the Hopgrove roundabouts has been accorded a high priority in the Council's Local Transport Plan for 2006 – 2011.
18. This scheme has been identified in the Council Plan 2006/07 as helping to achieve Corporate Aim 1 : "Take Pride in the City, by improving quality and sustainability, creating a clean and safe environment."

Implications

- **Financial**

19. The scheme is currently estimated to cost £4m. The bulk of the funding would come from the Highways Agency with a £0.5m allocation from the City of York Local Transport Plan section of the 2006/07 Capital Programme as indicated at the City Strategy EMAP in April 2006. A large proportion of the works proposed by the Highway Agency involves amendments to the highway which is under the control of the Council. The scheme is one of the key projects within the LTP funding with the improvements to the junction meeting many of the objectives of the LTP including providing better access and egress to the Monks Cross Park and Ride site, and improving journey times and safety on the A1237 leading to a reduction in the amount of traffic re-routing through adjacent residential areas and the city centre. The Section 106 agreements for the developments at Monks Cross also include contributions to the construction of the improved roundabout – the transfer of these funds, if / when received, is the subject of further negotiation with the Highways Agency.

- **Human Resources**

20. There are no Human Resource implications.

- **Equalities**

21. There are no Equalities issues.

- **Legal**

22. The City of York Council and the Highways Agency, as respective highway authorities for the area, have powers under the following Acts and associated Regulations to implement improvements to the highway and any associated measures:

- The Highways Act 1980
- The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984
- The Road Traffic Act 1988

23. New or amended Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) are likely to be required as part of the scheme to cover the following:

- Changes to existing speed limits.
- Changes to existing clearway restrictions.

These would be advertised in accordance with the afore-mentioned Road Traffic Regulation Act. This Council would be responsible for any TRO covering our roads whereas the Highways Agency would be responsible for any on the A64.

24. The Head of Network Management has delegated authority for any temporary TROs that may be required on our roads during the course of the project, and the Highways Agency have authority for their roads and our roads (with our consent).

25. An agreement will need to be entered into with the Highways Agency to cover those works that they propose to undertake that are on sections of road for which this Council is the highway authority. This is known as a Section 4 Agreement as prescribed in that section of the Highways Act. Delegated authority is sought for the Director of City Strategy to enter into such an agreement with the Highways Agency.

26. Discussions are ongoing with the Highways Agency as regards operation and maintenance responsibility for of some of the elements of the scheme on our road network, such as traffic signal equipment and gantry signs. Subject to the outcome of these discussions, an agreement may need to be entered into with the Highways Agency and delegated authority is sought for the Director of City Strategy to enter into an appropriate agreement.

- **Crime and Disorder**

27. There are no Crime and Disorder implications.

- **Information Technology (IT)**

28. There are no IT implications.

- **Property**

29. There are no Property implications.

- **Other**

30. There will be some visual intrusion resulting from the need for gantry signs at three locations. The two overhead traffic signals and the double headed traffic signal arrangements as well as the enhanced street lighting will also result in some additional localised visual intrusion.

31. There will be implications on traffic movements during the contract. Officers are in discussions with the Highways Agency, their contractor, and the Police to determine traffic management plans and working practices to minimise the impact and disruption to the public whilst the works are in progress.

Risk Management

32. In compliance with the Councils risk management strategy, there are no risks if members accept the recommendations of this report. Any financial risks associated with this scheme lie with the Highway Agency as our contribution is fixed. However should members consider that elements of the scheme need further review or the scheme should not proceed, there would be a significant risk of up to £0.5m under-spend on this years LTP programme. Owing to competition for funding from other large schemes programmed for next year it would be difficult to fund the proposed Hopgrove contribution in 2007/08.

Recommendations

33. That the Advisory Panel advises the Executive Members for City Strategy:

a) To endorse the proposed improvements to the Hopgrove roundabouts as detailed in **Annex A**.

Reason: To improve traffic movements through these roundabouts and reduce the delays at peak times.

b) That any permanent Road Traffic Regulation Orders associated with the scheme covering roads for which the Council is the highway authority be advertised and, subject to no objections being received, the Order(s) be made. Any unresolved objections to be referred back to Members for consideration.

Reason: To enable any changes to restrictions on stopping and any changes to speed limits on roads other than the A64 to be implemented.

c) To delegate authority to the Director of City Strategy to enter into a Section 4 Agreement with the Highways Agency.

Reason: To permit the Highways Agency to carry out works on roads for which this council is the highway authority.

- d) To delegate authority to the Director of City Strategy to enter into an operation and maintenance agreement with the Highways Agency to cover any equipment on our roads for which they would be responsible for operation and / or maintenance.

Reason: To ensure that operation and maintenance responsibilities are properly defined.

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Wards Affected:
Huntington & New Earswick; and Strensall

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

None

Annexes

Annex A – Proposed Improvements to Hopgrove Roundabouts
Annex A1 – Scheme Layout