
**Decision Session –
Cabinet Member for City Strategy**

1st December 2011

Report of the Director of City Strategy

City Centre Footstreets Review

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to briefly review the operation of the footstreets, put forward proposals to improve / update the ongoing management of traffic in the central shopping area and highlight possible future alterations requiring further investigation.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Cabinet Member approves the following (see also the summary of recommendations in paragraph 68:
 - Consult on the introduction of experimental Traffic Regulation Orders to rationalise the hours of operation of the footstreets and extend the regulations to include Fossgate.
 - Investigate the issues surrounding use of the footstreets by blue badge and green permit holders.
 - Note the investigation into the scope for future civil enforcement of moving traffic regulation orders for potential expansion into the footstreets.
 - Consult further on, as part of the potential experimental TRO period above, the options for permitting cycling in parts of the pedestrian zone if / when / where drivers with mobility difficulties are allowed.
 - Note the ongoing implementation of additional cycle parking.
 - Introduce permanent Traffic Regulation Orders to close a route into Blake Street from Duncombe Place.
 - Install advisory 10mph signs at key entry points to the pedestrian zone.
 - Revoke the existing Traffic Regulation Orders relating to the one way system and pay and display parking on an evening.
 - Note the initiation of a Freight Transhipment scheme business case.

- Approve further investigations into expanding the pedestrian zone further towards Monk Bar and amending the traffic management arrangements in Micklegate to enhance pedestrian facilities.
- Approve the implementation of an “A” boards zero tolerance zone.

Reason:

In order to reassert the general principles of the pedestrian zone, give a good foundation for future changes / additions to be build on, provide an improved level of self enforcement and to enable a more straight forward enforcement regime of the regulations where and when necessary.

Background

3. The new council administration made a manifesto commitment to improving the footstreets and city centre (see plan of existing footstreets area in Annex A). A report commissioned by the city council in 2010 recommended the following issues regarding the operation of the footstreets be investigated with a view to implementing some short term changes as part of a longer term strategy of improvements for the city centre area:
 - Standardising the hours of operation,
 - Extending the hours of operation,
 - Including Fossgate into the footstreets regulations,
 - Allowing cycling through the footstreets in some places,
 - Amending the exemption that allows some drivers with mobility difficulties to drive into the pedestrian zone.
4. Also, whilst investigating the above key areas some additional matters have been considered aimed at achieving further improvements or are put forward for future consideration, these are:
 - Implementing a transhipment system to reduce the size and weight of vehicles in the central area to reduce the physical intrusion, damage to highway surfaces and improve air quality.
 - The introduction of an advisory 10mph speed limit.
 - Noting the longer term plans for the Duncombe Place public realm enhancements and consider the short term option of closing off the slip road from Duncombe Place to Blake Street.
 - Alterations to the existing one way system and banned turns
 - Extension of footstreets to include more of Goodramgate, Deangate and College Street area.
 - Removal of pay and display parking provision in the central area.

- Changing the traffic management arrangements in Micklegate.
 - The use of “A” boards in the central area.
5. There are clearly many competing demands on highway use, especially in the central area of a city like York where a high number of activities take place throughout the day, week and year. Balancing those demands so that everyone is content with the outcome is unrealistic, hence before setting out the reasoning for or against possible changes the high level principles of the footstreets area need to be understood and any actions taken within the area should be referenced back to these aims to ensure they accord with and further the overall aspirations for the future of the city centre.
- The city centre is to be a vibrant destination, not a through route for traffic. Hence, it is not just about shopping; there are also events, festivals, street cafes, the city’s ancient heritage and tourism. This aim will help enable York’s city centre to compete with the growth in out of town shopping centres such as Meadow Hall.
 - Pedestrians are at the top of the city’s hierarchy of road user,

Outline of the Footstreet

6. York’s footstreets were created in their current layout and regulations in 1987 (with a few relatively minor modifications since) and was for the time a radical bold move in giving over priority in the street to the pedestrian in a large proportion of the city centre for much of the day. Other benefits of restricting vehicle activity in the central area was the ability to create large areas of public space for a whole variety of uses, such as the Food and Drink festival, Christmas fairs, exhibitions, etc. These events are continuing to grow, not only in number but also in size, and provide a vibrant area of activity that benefits residents, local business and visitors to the city. Complimenting these public areas are the street cafes where private businesses have been given a license to trade in the public highway. These changes transformed the city centre from the traditional street scene of roads lined with vehicles and narrow footways crammed with pedestrians into a series of large open public spaces (such as St. Helen’s Sq. and Parliament Street) and where despite the downturn in the global economy businesses are continuing to trade, expand and new ones open.
7. Although referred to generally as the footstreet or pedestrian zone the area does not operate under a single Traffic Regulation Order, rather it is a patchwork of many different regulations, operating at different times which overall form the footstreet area. This approach was taken in order to meet the needs of the time, but the

consequences are that the regulations can be misunderstood, are not straight forward to remember and in some instances introduce enforcement difficulties for the Police and the Councils Civil Enforcement Officers.

8. Although very successful (see Annex B, photos of typical congestion in the 1960s for comparison) there are ongoing complaints about abuse of the traffic regulations. The current situation is that the council's Civil Enforcement Officers are able to take action if a parking offence is committed, but are not able to take enforcement action on moving traffic offences (though staff do advise drivers that they should be elsewhere). Only the Police have the necessary powers to take action against a driver for a moving traffic offence such as driving into or through Davygate during footstreet hours. It is recognised that the Police have limited resources to put to this type of enforcement and some short term assistance has been provided by the council to aid enforcement action. It should be noted that work has been commissioned to investigate civil enforcement of moving Traffic Regulation Orders using CCTV or rising bollards. This work will initially be centred on removing the illegal use of Coppergate as a through route. Depending on the success and practicality of using such hi tech solutions these measures could be used elsewhere to bring about greater compliance.
9. An additional consequence of the multitude of different regulations referred to above is the subsequent traffic signing required. There is often very little leeway permitted in the design regulations and in conservation areas this can lead to what appears to be a jarringly inappropriate piece of street furniture (see Annex B) which doesn't show the city off at its best. Hence, where recommendations are put forward for traffic restrictions information is also provided on what the likely signing regime would be.

Some Key Changes Over the Last 25 Years

10. Since the footstreets were first implemented there have been changes to legislation, public opinion / expectations and methods of working: for example,
 - A shift of traffic regulation (parking) enforcement to the local authority and a corresponding move of Police resources to their more core duties of crime prevention and detection.
 - Changes to National legislation; for example the traffic regulations governing signing and lining.

- Some streets permit disabled blue badge holders (a national scheme) access, other streets allow access to holders of a green badge issued by the city council
13. In terms of being vehicle free the most successful parts of the footstreet zone are, perhaps not surprisingly, those streets that are physically closed off with bollards put in place at the start of the footstreet period, for example Parliament Street. The ability to extend this form of physical restriction on use by vehicles would lead to the greatest increase in compliance with the regulations.
 14. A consistent set of times and restrictions for the majority of the streets in the area would help reinforce the pedestrian zone operating hours and conditions. Exceptions to standardised times and conditions would only be put forward for streets like the Shambles and Stonegate. In order to encouraging shoppers and visitors to stay longer in the central area and be a catalyst for further boosting the early evening economy in the city centre it would be desirable to extend the hours of operation through the early evening lull to at least 7pm. However, to go from the current operation to a unified system extending into the early evening may well lead to increased concerns / resistance being raised and it is therefore suggested that a more gradual approach be set in motion so that the benefits can be seen and appreciated which would then lead to increased support for the longer term aim.
 15. Informal camera surveys have been carried out to observe the number of vehicles using part of the city centre before and after the footstreets regulations come into operation (see table below).

Day	8am to 10.30am Spurriergate corner	4pm to 6pm Coney St mid way
Monday	220	98
Tuesday	184	115
Saturday	136	36

Please note: these surveys have not distinguished between those vehicles loading or unloading and those merely gaining access in to the area. However they do give a good indication of the level of activity currently taking place and therefore what could reasonably be expected to take place in the future.

It is reasonable to assume that if the hours for access by vehicles are reduced as a result of extending the footstreets hours of operation this volume of traffic would be further concentrated into

the remaining hours of the day when deliveries normally take place. Therefore if the end time of the footstreet hours co-insides with or is later than the bulk of the businesses closing time all deliveries are likely to take place during the morning before the footstreet regulations begin.

16. Servicing on a weekend however is lower than during the week, hence whilst there may be some initial difficulties due to changes these would likely quickly resolve themselves and retail businesses would benefit from the improved environment.
17. It should be noted that a Traffic Regulation Order of an absolute prohibition on access to premises by vehicles of more than 8 hours duration within a 24 hour period would, if it attracted an objection, lead to a public enquiry. The time periods put forward for consideration are:
 - A. 10.30am to 4.30pm (6 hours duration) – these are the times currently enjoyed on a Saturday and are considered the minimum that should be taken forward as a first step to achieving the aim of footstreet hours of greater duration.
 - B. 10am to 5pm (7 hours duration) 7 days a week – (Note: a 10.30am start could also be considered within this option). This is a more ambitious recommendation than A above and is likely to attract more concerns being raised and, as with A above should be considered a first step in a process of, and provide a firm foundation for, extending the footstreet hours to 7pm.
 - C. As B above but extend the footstreet hours to 6pm.
 - D. Keep the hours of operation during Monday to Friday as they are, that is 11am to 4pm, but increase the hours on Saturday and Sunday from 10.30am to 4.30pm and Noon to 4pm respectively to 10am to 6 or 7pm. In the medium term these hours of operation could also be considered for regular Thursday late night trading. This is the recommended option as it sets the scene for the longer term aim. It is also suggested that a commitment be made to reassess the hours of operation after a period of 12 to 18 months with a view to taking the end time up to 6 or 7pm daily
 - E. 10am to 7pm (9 hours duration) – (Note: as above a 10.30am start could also be considered within this option). This is not the recommended option at this time due to likely increased levels of concern raised related to operational issues for businesses and residents in the central area that would be difficult to overcome or give reassurance over.

18. The conditions outside the footstreets hours put forward for consideration are:
 - A. Keep the current mix of except for loading and except for access in different streets. This is not the recommended option because it is inconsistent and can be confusing.
 - B. Outside the footstreet hours it is suggested that the conditions be unified to just prohibiting motor vehicles except for access and blue badge holders. This is the recommended option.

Fossgate

19. Fossgate at present is covered by a No Motor Vehicles except for loading 8am to 6pm Monday to Saturday Traffic Regulation Order. This restriction like all other access only type restrictions has only limited success and relies on enforcement by the police, which as mentioned above is an unrealistic expectation for regular ongoing attention given their other priorities. Although there are yellow line parking restrictions down both sides of Fossgate for most of its length (some parking is permitted during the evening in some areas) daytime parking is quite extensive. This parking if not illegal will be either for the purposes of loading and unloading or the driver will have a blue badge.
20. The options here are to:
 - A. Leave the restrictions as they are. This is not the recommended option.
 - B. Change the restrictions to the same as those taken forward for the footstreets. This is the recommended option and will have the effect of extending the footstreets zone into this busy street in a clear, concise manner.
 - C. Introduce a variant of the above. This is not recommended.
21. Again, in terms of absolute control over access during footstreet hours this would be most reliably achieved using removable bollards to physically prevent abuse of the regulations. Any compromise to the access limitation will likely reduce very significantly the success of the pedestrian regulations.

Cycling

22. At present cycling is not permitted in the footstreets during the varying hours of operation; however these regulations are subject to abuse by a noticeable minority and are an ongoing source of complaint from individuals and groups for enforcement action to be carried out by the Police.

23. Undoubtedly much of the abuse of the regulations will be intentional. However, without wishing to condone these actions there are circumstances that may give the impression to some that cycling is acceptable. For example, some car drivers are allowed to drive through part of the pedestrian zone which weakens the overall car free environment understanding and, there are many cycle parking racks in the central area that arguably could lead to an expectation that they are immediately accessible by cycle.
24. The most direct East to West cross city centre route that cyclists are able to use during footstreet hours is via Coppergate. This route skirts the edge of the footstreets and is on a reasonable desire line. The shortest North to South route on the other hand is off the desire line, lacks an attractive draw to encourage its use and involves cyclists competing with significant motor vehicle traffic and large vehicles. The table below gives a comparison of cycle journey times along various routes. Please note: these times were recorded during the servicing hours when there were few pedestrians in the street. It can reasonably be assumed that during the core pedestrian hours when the streets are thronged with pedestrians that cycle times would be considerably greater.

Route	Journey time
Duncombe Place to Piccadilly via Goodramgate, Aldwark, Stonebow	3:30
Duncombe Place to Piccadilly via Davygate and Parliament Street	1:45
Piccadilly to Duncombe Place via High Ousegate, Coney St & Lendal	3:00

Other routes for cyclists to avoid the footstreets area involve more extensive use of the inner ring road.

25. A relatively straight forward, though quite minor, improvement for cyclists would be to allow them to travel through Bootham Bar from the Bootham direction to the Minster. This would require an amendment to the Traffic Regulation Order, but by treating this section of road differently to the main footstreets area there is potential to remove the need for the large variable message sign from the front of Bootham Bar (see photo in Annex E).
26. Some cities permit cycling in their pedestrian zones and other cities don't. Arguments can be put forward for both approaches and there

is no conclusive evidence that can be put forward to confirm to either those very much in favour of or those totally opposed to permitting cycling, the safety or lack of safety when pedestrians and cyclists are allowed to mix in the same space. It would be fair to assume, however, that if cyclists were permitted to use just some of the footstreets the likelihood is that there would be an increase (possibly unintentionally due to ignorance of the changing regulations within the pedestrian zone) in the illegal use of the other footstreets.

27. In considering this matter it is also worth bearing in mind that whilst York's pedestrian zone is regarded as very large for a pedestrian zone, especially for a city the size of York, in actual fact the main shopping area is quite compact and is comparable in size to the Meadowhall shopping centre. Walking from one side of the pedestrian zone to the other by someone of average health and mobility takes:

Duncombe Place to Piccadilly 5 ½ minutes

Nessgate to Deangate 6 ½ minutes

The time taken to walk from the edge of the pedestrian zone to some of the cycle parking facilities in the central area is only a few minutes at most.

28. Another issue regarding cycling in the footstreets is that not only are the access restrictions abused by some cyclists but also the one way streets are cycled along the wrong way. Again, as with abuse of the access restrictions, enforcement action for ignoring no entry signs can only be taken by the police.
29. Some investigations have been carried out into the practicality of providing a cross town centre route for cyclists, initially centring on the Colliergate, King's Square and Petergate route. Whilst there looks to be sufficient road width available to achieve a cycle by pass of the no entry signs in accordance with the regulations (please note: it would appear from recent changes to the signing regulations that there is now scope for requesting special approval for a more simple exemption to the No Entry regulations) it is very doubtful given the volume of pedestrians in Petergate in busy periods that this would be an attractive route due to the street being thronged with pedestrians. Hence, consideration has also been given to reinstating the old Davygate contra flow cycle lane that ended at New Street and then routed cyclists down New Street and part of Coney Street. Again, the Coney Street section of the route will at busy times be almost impassable by a responsible cyclist. Alternatively, consideration could be given to allowing the route to

continue along Davygate to St. Helen's Square and Lendal, but further more detailed investigation would be necessary.

30. Bearing the above in mind, the decision on what action should be taken is more of a "lifestyle" type of choice than one based on hard facts, the options put forward for consideration are:
- A. To make no change to the existing regulations and maintain the prohibition on cycling during footstreet hours. This is not the recommended option.
 - B. Using the principle of "if it's safe for a limited number of cars to use a route through the pedestrian zone then it's safe for cyclist to use as well", allow cycling along the same routes as the Blue badge / green permit holders use for a trial period. This is the recommended option, but is tied very closely with the options in the following section on blue badge and green permit holders. Added to that, additional design work is required before a practical workable solution can be confirmed.
 - C. To change the Traffic Regulation Order for High Petergate between the Bar and Duncombe Place to allow cyclist to use this route at all times whilst prohibiting all other vehicles except for access outside the footstreet hours. This is a recommended option.
 - D. To allow unrestricted cycle use within the pedestrian zone. This option whilst not recommended at this time is put forward as a potential longer term alteration to the regulation and should be reviewed again in 5 years.

Cycle Parking

31. The following areas close to the city centre (see also plan in Annex F) have been identified as having potential to accommodate additional cycle parking that will be attractive and convenient to use.

Location	CCTV Coverage
Piccadilly (A)	Yes
Piccadilly (B)	Yes
Blake Street	Yes
St. Sampson's Sq.	Yes
North Street	No

Micklegate	Yes
Library Square	No
Exhibition Square	Yes
Market area	No

32. It is recommended that these new cycle racks continue to be implemented at the earliest opportunity using existing cycle budgets.

Blue Badge and Green Permit Holders

33. It should be noted at the outset that there is no legal requirement for the Highway Authority to provide vehicle access into pedestrian areas for those with mobility difficulties. However, being mindful of the mobility difficulties some members of the community have, measures to mitigate the consequences of implementing stringent access restrictions should be put forward for consideration.
34. The Davygate, St. Sampson's Square, Church Street route through the pedestrian zone is available during the footstreet hours for use by those blue badge holders (national scheme) who have qualified for a green permit (City of York Council scheme). This Green permit scheme was introduced at the start of the footstreets in 1987 as a compromise to try to resolve concerns related to those with the greatest mobility difficulties and the size of the pedestrian zone.
35. There are regular complaints about the misuse of the footstreets by blue badge holders. The blue badge scheme is a national system for those with mobility difficulties that allow the holder to park for up to 3 hours on yellow lines where there isn't also a loading restriction; the local Highway Authority has no powers to deviate from this national scheme. The green permit system was introduced by the city council to allow access into part of the footstreet zone for those with the most severe mobility difficulties. This green permit system is managed by the City Centre Managers office and conditions can be altered by the City Council in its role as Highway Authority.
36. Those blue badge holders who choose, either knowingly or by mistake, to drive past the access restriction into the city centre using the route set aside for the green permit system cannot have enforcement action taken against them by the city council's CEO's because the driver is committing a moving vehicle offence. If the driver then decides to stop on the yellow lines to park they are permitted by the Blue Badge regulations to park for up to 3 hours

and no parking enforcement action can be taken until that 3 hours is up despite the fact they have travelled there illegally. Unsurprisingly this situation is a source of frustration for those issued with a Green permits who are then unable to find a parking space.

37. There is also much greater use of the area by motor vehicles than was ever anticipated because drivers enter the area to, often unsuccessfully, find a parking spot. Hence the Davygate / Church Street route has become something of a through route rather than somewhere a small number of drivers can access to park and then leave again once their business is completed. To give some idea of the numbers involved:

- The length of road can accommodate parking for around 50 cars (see plan in Annex G),
- The current number of green permits in circulation is approximately 2000.

38. In addition, it should be noted that the route from the Goodramgate direction results in drivers ending up in what is effectively a cul-de-sac because once past the turn into St. Sampson's Sq. they can't proceed along Parliament Street, Feasegate or Davygate. The driver then has to do a turn in the road in busy pedestrian conditions. During the most recent Food and Drink festival these conditions escalated to a point that resulted in an emergency road closure being put in place at the Church Street / King's Sq. junction for the remainder of the festival during pedestrian hours.

39. A recent spot check on blue badge / green permit vehicles parking along the Davygate to Church Street route revealed under half of the vehicles parked (see table below) were displaying a green permit and whilst this observation was made during a period when utility works were taking place on Colliergate it is thought likely to be reasonably representative.

Time	Davygate	St. Sampson's	Church St.	Total.
No badge	2	1	0	3
Blue badge	5	7	1	13
Green permit	1	10	2	13

40. To sum up, the City Council's Green permit system for the city centre whilst well intentioned and initially quite successful has failed

to a large degree in the longer term in regard to excluding non-green badge holders vehicles from the footstreets and has not provided, in recent years, the increased access for those with the greatest mobility difficulties that the scheme was implemented for. It is also thought unlikely that the implementation of a new scheme to replace the green permit scheme would result in greater compliance with the regulations if the two schemes were to run seamlessly from one to the other as many drivers would remain unaware, as now, of the regulations in place that prohibits them from entering the area.

41. Whilst there are a number of options and variations within those options that could be considered, for example:
- Remove the Davygate, St. Sampson's Square and Church Street route for green permit holders.
 - A re-launch of the Green permit scheme together with revised signing and a better access control option.
 - Allow access along the route only from the St. Helen's Sq direction.
 - Allow access to St. Sampson's Sq only from the Goodramgate direction, creating in effect a minor traffic cell that eliminates through parking.
 - Extend, or transfer if the existing route is closed, the green permit scheme to cover the Blake Street, Lendal and Goodramgate, Colliergate loops.

It is considered essential to carry out detailed consultation with those affected by any changes to the green permit scheme before measures are put forward for formal consultation for either permanent changes to the Traffic Regulation Order or an Experimental scheme. Also, further investigation will be carried out into how other authorities tackle such issues taking into account the scale of their pedestrian schemes and what mitigating measures they use or have tried.

42. Some initial thoughts have been given to the issue of more sophisticated enforcement such as CCTV, number plate recognition and / or rising bollards. However, these require much more detailed investigation to understand the likely very high installation costs, ongoing running costs, reliability, likely high visual impact on the street scene, etc. and will be subject to a further report at a later date with recommendations.
43. The ability to create additional parking spaces on street in a city like York has limitations due to the nature and character of the highway network, particularly in or close to the central shopping area.

However, there is potential for additional spaces on Piccadilly (see plan in Annex G). The greatest potential for providing additional parking is to give over more of the spaces in the council run car parks for exclusive use by blue badge holders.

44. It should also be noted that a shopmobility scheme operates from Piccadilly car park. Blue badge holders are allowed to park for no charge in council run car parks and the shopmobility scheme allows those with reduced mobility to hire electric mobility scooters for the day at a charge of £3 (there is also an annual fee of £12).
45. The Dial-a-Ride bus, which is adapted to carry those with mobility difficulties and their wheelchairs, is also permitted to enter the pedestrian zone via the Davygate, Church Street route and there are no proposals to remove this ability to access the central area.
46. The following options are put forward for consideration:
 - A. Leave the current regulations as they are. This is not a recommended option because this system has been compromised and recovery from this position is not considered a viable option.
 - B. Carry out consultation regarding possible changes to the current Green permit scheme. This is a recommended option and would result in a further report to this meeting at a later date to consider how these issues would be best taken forward.
 - C. Investigate further the practicalities of implementing a “hi tech” solution to enforcement of the traffic regulations for the medium term. This is a recommended option for the medium term.
 - D. Create a disabled persons parking bays for 3 hours maximum on Piccadilly as shown on the plan in annex F. This is a recommended option.
 - E. Increase promotion / awareness of the Shopmobility in Piccadilly car park and Dial a Ride schemes. This is a recommended option.
 - F. Increase the number of disabled car parking bays in City Council operated car parks, and by a higher amount in those closest to the central area (Piccadilly, Castle, Bootham Row and Monk Bar) in corresponding numbers to those potentially removed from the route through the central area. This is a recommended option and whilst not committing the authority to reductions in city centre on street parking would complement such action if taken forward at a future date.

Freight Transshipment Scheme

47. Work is currently being taken forward to look at a business case for the introduction of a freight transshipment scheme for the city centre. This will be the subject of a further report at a later date.

Speed Limit

48. The speed limit through the pedestrian zone area is 30mph. This is because there are street lights in place and as such the speed limit is at the national standard. A city wide 20mph strategy is currently in the process of being developed, the aim of which will be to reduce the speed limit on much of the built up highway network 20mph. Bearing in mind it is more than likely that even 20mph could still be considered inappropriately fast in the central area for a lot of the time due to the pedestrian activity, the low number of vehicles allowed in the central area and the fact that the majority of those vehicles do travel at very low speeds (fully appreciated that some do drive at inappropriate speeds) the value of enforceable or correctly designed / positioned signs is questionable at this time.
49. The success at reducing vehicle speeds will be best achieved through the design / appearance of the central area road network. However due to the high costs such work would entail this is a longer term aim and in the meantime until the 20mph strategy is in place it is suggested that an advisory maximum speed limit be signed at the entry points only (see example in Annex H).
50. The options put forward for consideration regarding speed restrictions are:
 - A. Take no action at this time. This is not recommended option.
 - B. Make a commitment to achieve the longer term aim of creating a street environment through design that results in drivers reducing their speed to in the order of 10mph. This is the recommended option and it is further recommended to approve the installation at suitable locations advisory "maximum speed 10mph" signs as a first step to this aim.

Duncombe Place Public Realm Enhancement

51. Work is currently being taken forward to develop a scheme to improve and showcase the last section of the approach from the Station to the Minster. A key element of this would be the design of the Duncombe Place junction. Whilst redesigning the Duncombe Place junction opportunity can also be given to considering a redesign of the Blake Street junction to enhance the approach to the footstreets so as to further discourage vehicles from entering

through design rather than by enforcement of regulations. The plan in Annex I illustrates an outline concept.

52. The slip road from Duncombe Place to Blake Street (see Annex I) seems to serve very little purpose; rather it appears to be little more than a left over road alignment dating back to when Duncombe Place was a through route (the A64). The road alignment makes it possible for a driver to enter the pedestrian zone from Duncombe Place at speeds higher than is desirable. In addition, whilst perhaps not as frequently used as other entry points to the pedestrian zone the same signing regime is required as at the main entry points, hence the need for the large variable message sign in place, regular observation of which doubtful.
53. Although on the face of it there may seem to be little benefit in considering this action there are some ongoing cost savings that can be achieved, whilst still allowing the route to be used for events (parades, cycle races, etc.). There may also be scope for some additional cycle parking provision in the area, though at present a scheme has not been developed for consideration.
54. The options put forward for consideration here are:
 - A. To take no action.
 - B. To close the route to traffic, except pedal cycles, using one or more removable bollards. This is the recommended option for the reasons given above.
 - C. It is also recommended to develop a scheme for additional cycle parking.

One Way System and Banned / Mandatory Turning Movements

55. Almost all the streets within the existing pedestrian zone are subject to one way traffic regulation orders. However, whilst these may have originally been put in place in accordance with the regulations there are now virtually no one way signs on street that would enable a successful conviction. There are however still all the necessary no entry, banned and mandatory turn signs which can be enforced and it is these signs and the character and design of the streets that achieve the desired one way working rather than the non-existent one way signs. Consequently removing the one way orders should not lead to a change in current driver behaviour as there is nothing at present to indicate their existence on entering a street.
56. There is no benefit having unenforceable traffic restrictions in place on street or in the Traffic Regulation Order. The options put forward for consideration here are:
 - A. To take no action. This is not the recommended option.

- B. To bring the signing regime up to standard required for the regulations. This is not the recommended option because it would cost many thousands of pounds to implement and achieve virtually no change to traffic management.
- C. To revoke the one way system and rely on the existing no entry plugs, banned and mandatory turning movements. This is the recommended option because it reflects largely what is currently in place and will allow a reduction in illuminated signing in Parliament Street.

On Street Pay and Display Parking

57. At present during the evening there are some streets in the central area where on street parking for any driver is allowed. Some of the consequences of this are:
- Drivers enter the central area seeking one of the limited number of spaces to park. This then increases the number of vehicles driving through the area, which although not a footstreet during the evening erodes the status of the central area as not for general traffic.
 - The parking regulations have to be signed and lined and ticket machines put in place along with the occasional bollard aimed at preventing damage. For example there are 7 items of street furniture associated with the 9 or 10 parking bays on Blake Street, most of which is quite unsightly.
 - A reduced opportunity for blue badge holders to park up for 3 hours when attending an evening event or going to a restaurant.
58. The options put forward for consideration are:
- A. To take no action.
 - B. To remove the formal parking bays in the central area (see plan in Annex J) and replace with no waiting at any time restrictions. This is the recommended option.

Extending Footstreet Regulations further along Goodramgate

59. The existing start point of the pedestrian zone on Goodramgate is at its junction with Deangate / College Street (see Annex K). This location has some practical advantages however there is little difference in environment between the 2 sections of Goodramgate and there would be benefits for shoppers, and therefore businesses as well, if general traffic usage could be reduced further.
60. Initial thoughts are that the use of regulations would be problematic due to the access requirements of residents off Aldwark and for

formal events at venues like St. William's Collage and the Treasure's House. Hence at present the options put forward for consideration are:

- A. To take no further action at this point.
- B. To approve further investigation into the possibilities of amending the local road network, regulations and built environment aimed at achieving reduced vehicle flows. This is the recommended option.

Potential for Alterations to Traffic Management in Micklegate

61. Micklegate has some parallels to the footstreets in that it is lined with retail properties for most of its length, but it is clearly still dominated by general traffic, much of it through traffic, that doesn't bring any real benefit to the local retailers. Obviously Micklegate does differ quite significantly from the central shopping area as there are significant numbers of residents living in and directly off Micklegate who would need to be accommodated and the section between George Hudson Street and Ouse Bridge is a key bus corridor; hence full pedestrianisation for the full length of the street is unlikely to be a realistic option. However, there may be scope to restrict traffic flow / movements and undertake some partial pedestrianisation, particularly at the Bar and along the central section of Micklegate, that would enable the implementation of features aimed at improving the space available for pedestrian use and further encourage the growth of activities such as pavement cafes and restaurants on suitable buildouts to improved local trade. Some additional locations could also be provided to facilitate additional cycle parking. Clearly such proposals would need much more detailed investigation and even modest proposals are outside the scope of this report. The options are therefore:

- A. To take no further action. This is not the recommended option.
- B. To approve exploratory discussions with the Micklegate Traders group and residents in the area, plus initial investigations as a consequence of these discussions. This is the recommended option.

“A” Boards

62. Current practise is to tolerate “A” boards on the highway unless complaints are made and generally speaking this works quite well given the resources available. However, in the central area if action is taken it is often regarded as “unfair” because we haven't issued notices to every business to clear the whole area. Clearly because the central area has the greatest number of businesses competing

for trade the unchecked use of “A” boards could, or possibly already has (see photo in Annex L) undone much of the Council’s efforts to clear the streets of unnecessary items of street furniture. It is suggested therefore that a zero tolerance approach be taken to the streets in the footstreets (plus a few others close by).

63. The options put forward are:

Take no action at this time to amend the current practise.

Designate the area outlined in the plan in Annex M as a zero tolerance zone and initiate a brief campaign to initially encourage businesses to remove their boards and then implement action to remove those boards left in place. Once the zone is established it should become much easier and swifter to resolve complaints from the public about obstructions. This is the recommended option.

Consultation

64. A limited amount of informal consultation has been carried out so far to gain a feel for how some of the possibilities under consideration would be received. The responses are summarised in Annex N, but the headline result is that the wants and needs of the differing groups cut directly across each other in many instances and even within the wider definition of some groups there are conflicting interests.
65. Any changes to the current traffic management in the city centre will have to go through a formal Traffic Regulation Order process. There are two routes available:

Firstly, the permanent Traffic Regulation Order. This is the usual option and is put forward where there is a high degree of certainty as to the outcome in terms of managing traffic, the expectations of the travelling public and those living / working in the area. The minimum legal requirement for a permanent TRO proposal is they have to be advertised in the local press, giving 3 weeks to make a formal representation (York’s current practise is to exceed to legal minimum requirements). Any objections made would be reported back to a council meeting for a decision on whether to proceed as planned or not.

Secondly, the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (for 18 months maximum). This option is often used where there is a desire to try out regulations where there is a degree of uncertainty as to the outcome and where some changes may be considered desirable within a short time of the scheme being implemented in order to resolve problems. Experimental orders are implemented without going through the objection period first, but any objections made

during the first 6 months would have to be considered in much the same manner as for a permanent order and changes can be made to the scheme. At the end of the 18 month period the experimental order would either have to be made permanent or it would be removed and the previous restrictions would be reinstated.

66. There are also organisations that have to be formally advised of TRO proposals. Again, City of York Council current practise is to circulate information more widely than is required by law and it is considered in this case that all reasonable efforts should be made to ensure details are made available to groups in York with an active interest in the footstreets area.
67. Some of the proposals put forward are of a relatively straight forward nature and are ideal for the permanent TRO route. However, given the potential scope of the remaining changes in terms of area, times and operational conditions being put forward it is suggested that following some more detailed consultation the experimental TRO route be used. This gives the most flexibility to the authority and will allow users the opportunity to experience the proposed changes and, if problems are realised, construct a better informed representation during the experimental period.

Summary of Recommended Options

68. The following is a summary of the recommended options above.

Carry out further discussions with city centre retail, business, church groups, etc. with a view to implementing an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order as outlined below:

Core Pedestrian zone streets (see Annex O):

No vehicles 11am to 4pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 7pm Saturday and Sunday. This would be controlled by the use of bollards put in place at the start and end of the period.

No motor vehicles except for access and blue badge holders for the remaining hours.

Stonegate and The Shambles to remain as they are at present.

Pedestrian zone outer streets (see Annex O) to be:

No motor vehicles 11am to 4pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 7pm Saturday and Sunday except for permit holders.

No motor vehicles except for access and blue badge holders for the remaining hours.

Petergate between Bootham Bar and Duncombe Place

Advertise a permanent Traffic Regulation Order permitting cyclists to use the street at all times and prohibiting all other traffic except for access and Blue badge holders outside the footstreet hours.

Hold further discussions with city centre retail, business, church groups, etc. on the proposals outlined above for the operating times of the footstreets

Fossgate:

Hold further discussions with city centre retail, business, church groups, etc. for Fossgate to operate as a footstreet under the same conditions as the pedestrian zone core streets, including the use of bollards (see Annex O).

Cycling in the pedestrian zone:

No change to the present, unless a green permit type vehicle access exemption is retained in which case cyclists be permitted to use the same route (this would also be part of the further discussions with city centre retail, business, church groups, etc.

If cycling remains prohibited this issue should be reviewed again in 5 years time.

Cycle Parking:

Continue implementing additional cycle parking racks.

Blue badge / Green permit holders:

Carry out detailed consultation with groups representing those with restricted mobility, particularly those with the most severe difficulties on options regarding the continuation of the existing green permit scheme or a revised scheme.

Create an additional parking for disabled drivers on street in Piccadilly.

Increase the number of parking bays for blue badge holders in the council run car parks.

Boost awareness of the shop mobility and dial a ride schemes.

Speed limit:

No change, but erect signs indicating a maximum speed of 10mph at strategic entry points.

Blake Street slip road:

Advertise a permanent traffic regulation order to close the road to motor vehicles.

One way system:

Advertise a permanent traffic regulation order to revoke the one way traffic regulations and rely on the no entry, banned turns and mandatory movement signs.

Pay and Display parking bays

Advertise a permanent traffic regulation order to revoke the regulations permitting parking overnight in Blake Street, Lendal Goodramgate and Duncombe Place.

Further expansion of the Pedestrian zone:

Carry out an investigation into the feasibility of extending the pedestrian zone along Goodramgate towards Monk Bar and by association this would have to include Deangate and College Street.

“A” boards

Implement a zero tolerance zone in the central area.

Micklegate Traffic Management

Enter into discussions with Micklegate area traders and residents.

Carry out an investigation into the feasibility of amending the traffic management arrangements in Micklegate to achieve a better environment for shoppers and reduce the impact of unnecessary through traffic.

Council Plan

69. Considering this matter contributes to the corporate strategies of Thriving City, Inclusive City and City of Culture.

Implications

70.

Legal	There are no legal implications.
Financial	There are no financial implications.
Human Resources	There are no HR implications.
Crime and Disorder	There are no crime and disorder implications
Sustainability	There are no sustainability implications
Equalities	There are no equalities implications at present
Property	There are no property implications

Risk Management

71. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy there are no risks associated with the recommendations in this report.

Contact

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Chief Officer Responsible for the Report

Richard Wood
Assistant Director City Strategy

Report
Approved



Date 17/11/2011

Wards Affected: Guildhall

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Annex A - Plan of existing footstreets zone area

Annex B – Photographic 1960's congestion

Annex C – Sign outside Betty's, Davygate

Annex D – 2011 list of street festivals and markets

Annex E - Bootham Bar vehicle prohibition sign photo

Annex F - Cycle rack location plan and cross town walking journey times

Annex G - Green Permit Parking Availability

Annex G1 Piccadilly – potential disabled parking

Annex H - Example of advisory 10mph maximum speed limit

Annex I - Duncombe Place / Blake Street junction + slip road closure

Annex J - City centre on street pay and display parking spaces

- Annex K Potential Goodramgate extension to the footstreets
- Annex L Multiple “A” board example photograph – Goodramgate
- Annex M Plan of proposed zero tolerance “A” board zone
- Annex N Preliminary consultation letter + summary of responses
- Annex O Plan of revised pedestrian zone proposals for consultation

Background Information

None