

**YORK OUTER RING ROAD IMPROVEMENTS – PROPOSED
A1237/B1224 WETHERBY ROAD JUNCTION UPGRADE –
APPROVAL OF LAYOUT**

Summary

1. This report is about the design and consultation of the proposed upgrade of the A1237/B1224 junction ('The Wetherby Road junction'). The report is seeking the Executive Member for Transport and Planning's approval to proceed with the detailed design and construction stages of the scheme.
2. Consultation and business case processes have recently been completed and it is now time to conclude the detailed design and move to the construction stage. This report sets out what has been achieved over the last few months and asks approval to progress to the delivery stage.

Recommendations

3. The Executive Member is asked to:
 - 1) Confirm that the results of the consultation process have been considered and incorporated in the design where possible.

Reason: To enable the detailed final design of the Wetherby Road junction upgrade.
 - 2) Note the general arrangement design for the junction upgrade and give approval for preparations and implementation of construction (See Annex 1).

Reason: To enable arrangements to be made to commence construction of the Wetherby Road junction upgrade.

Background

4. In July 2017 City of York Council Executive approved a report setting out the proposed approach and management of the York Outer Ring Road (YORR) Improvement Project. Specifically, the report gave delegation of operational and detailed decision making for the design and delivery of the scheme to the Executive Member for Transport and Planning. Progress has been made over recent months on the scheme and it is now time to move to the next stage. The decisions which are relevant at this stage are:
 - a. Note the consultation results.
 - b. Note the final layout of the Wetherby Road junction upgrade.
 - c. Note the phasing of the programme.
5. Running in parallel to the endorsement by City of York Council Executive, the scheme is being funded through the West Yorkshire Plus Transport Fund. The fund is administered by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and is governed through a programme management process, see Annex 2. A Final Business Case for the improvement programme was submitted in late 2017 (Decision Point 4) and WYCA have subsequently approved £3.6m funding for the Wetherby Road junction upgrade.
6. The project team are currently making preparations for a final sign off process (Decision Point 5) which will secure the £3.6m funding for this upgrade scheme.

Consultation

7. A public consultation process has been held during January and early February 2018.
8. Before the consultation process commenced, an opportunity was taken to present proposals on the principles of the YORR

improvement programme to the Westfield Ward meeting at Acomb Explore library on the 1st November 2017 and also at Working Together - the Annual Parish Council liaison forum – at the Rock on the 29th November 2017.

9. Early in 2018, a formal public consultation process relating specifically to the Wetherby Road junction proposals was arranged, see Annex 3. The proposals were discussed at the following events:

- Wednesday 10th January 2018 at Lidgett Grove Church coffee morning.
- Thursday 11th January 2018, at Sanderson House Community Hub.
- Monday 15th January 2018 at Knapton with Rufforth Parish Council meeting.
- Thursday 18th January 2018 and Monday 22nd January 2018, Acomb Explore Library.
- Exhibition Boards and leaflets have also been available at West Offices reception throughout the period.

10. A leaflet was produced and circulated to approximately 1200 properties in the Wetherby Road and Chapelfields area, see Annex 4.

11. In addition a dedicated e-mail address and on-line consultation has taken place from Monday 8th January to Friday 2nd February 2018. A copy of all the comments received are attached as Annex 5.

12. The project team received a total of 170 comments. Some common themes are prevalent and the top six are as follows, ranked in order with the most frequently occurring first:

- The roundabout should include designated pedestrian / cyclist facilities
- Spending money on this roundabout, and all the other roundabouts, is deemed “a waste of money”
- Additional signing / roadmarkings are required to ensure that vehicles merge in turn as part of the upgraded roundabout proposals
- The A1237 should be dualled
- The scheme is a good idea

- Why is this roundabout being upgraded first when other roundabouts are deemed to require upgrading first

13. The following section of the report summarises the officer responses to the main comments:

- The number of existing and projected cycling and pedestrian movements at the junction is very low. It is not considered justified to provide segregated facilities for pedestrians and cyclist in the form of an underpass. However the proposed layout has been changed to upgrade and widen the footway on the southern side of the B1224 to shared pedestrian/cycle route standard to enable users to cross at surface level to the B1224 heading west.
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- It should be noted that there are no onward facilities on the A1237 or B1224 roads. However the City Council is working in partnership with Rufforth with Knapton Parish Council and Sustrans to provide an off road cycle route from Rufforth to Acomb via Knapton (see Annex 6). It is proposed to deliver the section of the Rufforth to be Knapton Cycle route between Knapton and Northfield Lane using Local Transport Plan funding subject to confirmation of the budget allocation proposed in the Transport Capital Programme which is also on the 15th March Decision Session agenda.
- City of York Council can demonstrate that upgrading the junctions reduces journey times and provides good value for money. Following evaluation of other recent junction upgrades, it is possible to clearly see the reduced journey times in Table 1 below. This table shows the overall reductions in delay since 2012 at the A59/A1237 junction. It should be noted that these reductions in journey times have to be appreciated in the context of increased usage of the junction. Since 2012, traffic counts have indicated that traffic volumes have increased on the A1237 northbound by more than 30% in the AM peak and over 20% in the PM peak. The total traffic throughput has increased by over 10% in the AM and PM peaks. This shows that in spite of significant increases in traffic volume the improvements are still providing reduced journey times. In turn this demonstrates that this type of junction upgrade provides a high benefit to cost ratio.

Route and Direction	Weekday Delay Savings
A1237 Northbound approach (2.2km from A1237/Wetherby Road roundabout exit) AM peak	AM peak average delay reduced by over 4 mins
A1237 Southbound approach (0.8km from A1237/Great North Way roundabout exit) AM peak	AM peak average delay reduced by over 0.5 mins
A1237 Northbound approach (2.2km from A1237/Wetherby Road roundabout exit) PM peak	PM peak average delay reduced by over 2.5 mins
A1237 Southbound approach (0.8km from A1237/Great North Way roundabout exit) PM peak	PM peak average delay reduced by over 1.5 mins
A59 Eastbound approach (2.3km from junction with Newlands Lane) AM Peak	AM peak average delay unchanged
A59 Westbound approach (1.5km from junction with Plantation Drive) AM Peak	AM peak average delay reduced by 1 mins
A59 Eastbound approach (2.3km from junction with Newlands Lane) PM Peak	PM peak average delay reduced by over 1.5 mins
A59 Westbound approach (1.5km from junction with Plantation Drive) PM Peak	PM peak average delay unchanged

Table 1 - A1237/A59 Roundabout weekday delay savings (2011/12 compared with 2015/16)

- The concerns of people about driver behaviour and ability to merge on the junction exit lanes have been noted. Work is in progress to review signage options to encourage merging in turn.
- Whilst there is no financing package in place to fully dual the YORR, a study is being undertaken to provide an up to date case for dualling to present the case to central government if funding is made available. . WYCA are funding this study through their Growth Deal Transformational Fund.

- Wetherby Road junction is the first of seven roundabouts to be upgraded on the YORR Improvement Programme. This opportunity is being taken to get an early construction start on the junction upgrade programme. Other junctions with higher levels of congestion, such as Haxby Rd, are included in the delivery programme but require significantly more development work e.g. planning approval and therefore will take longer to get to the construction stage. The period for investment and construction is set at 2017-2021 and any opportunity to make early progress is being taken by the City Council.
14. The detailed design for the junction has been completed following the technical review and public consultation processes. Any issues raised have been considered and incorporated in the design (Annex 1) where possible as follows:
- a. proposed widening of the footway on the southern side of the B1224 to provide shared pedestrian/cycle route standard to enable users to cross at surface level to the B1224 heading west (see para 13 above)
 - b. proposed maintenance layby incorporated into the roundabout island
 - c. increase in provision of landscaping around the junction and on the roundabout island

Design of Wetherby Road Junction

15. The objective of the design is to increase the capacity of the junction to reduce delay at the projected traffic flow levels and more closely match the capacity of the section of carriageway between the roundabouts. In addition the objective is to improve the facilities for pedestrians and cyclists where it is warranted by the demand.
16. The proposed design for the Wetherby Road junction upgrade is based upon previous improvements to junctions at the A19 and A59 roundabouts which have delivered the average journey time improvements shown in Table 1 above i.e. A1237 approaches widened to 3 lanes, A1237 exits widened to 2 lanes, minor arm approaches widened to suit traffic flows, provision of walking and cycling improvements. The upgrades will also be constructed to allow for dualling of the carriageways in years to come.

17. The upgraded roundabout is projected to deliver reduced journey times and lower the level of queuing in the area. The overall saving in journey times in the opening year (2019) between Wetherby and Monks Cross is in excess of 20% and in excess of 10% in the design year (2036). Note that these projections are based on the whole route being improved.

Traffic Modelling

18. The proposed junction upgrade is modelled and designed in accordance with current Department for Transport standards. Detailed analysis of this modelling is documented in the Final Business Case approved by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) in February 2018. This modelling considers the growth of traffic and ability of the junction to work until 2036. This is a standard approach.

Current Activity

19. A Final Business Case Submission was submitted to WYCA in November 2018. This was approved with an estimated scheme cost of £3.6m for the Wetherby Road Junction upgrade. These costs are currently being reviewed and if within 10% of the approved figure will be accepted by WYCA.
20. In accordance with City of York Council Procurement Rules, a direct award of the works package (i.e. civil engineering work) is to be made to the City of York Council Delivery Team. The main considerations for this award are that savings in time and expenditure can be demonstrated over traditional tendering. Also the work package is well within the technical capability of the Delivery Team. Preparations are in progress for the Delivery Team to commence work in June 2018.
21. Negotiation for land acquisition is currently in progress across the whole of the YORR improvement scheme. At the Wetherby Road junction, two out of the three owners involved have agreed a settlement for the transfer of land. Land transfer costs will remain confidential until the completion of the whole scheme as negotiations elsewhere are still in progress.

22. It is proposed to commence work on the Wetherby Road junction upgrade in June 2018. The details have yet to be finalised but it is anticipated the works will be complete by January 2019. An indicative programme for the whole of the YORR Improvement project is included as Annex 7.
23. During this period, although localised disruption during construction is inevitable, the project team will seek to minimise it as far as possible by careful programming of the works.
24. Also, the project team will aim to keep noise, vibration and disruption to nearby properties to a minimum. The need for any road closures will be kept to a minimum and will only be required for short periods of time for specific activities such as when tie-ing in the new surfacing with the existing road. Access for emergency services will be maintained at all times.
25. A communications plan for the YORR programme has been prepared and through the measures outlined in this document road users and residents around Wetherby Road will be kept informed about the progress of the work. This will include signing on the junction approaches and updates relating to site activities. This will take place before work commences and during the construction when regular updates will be given. Information will also be available through the City Council's website.

Council Plan

26. The YORR Improvement proposals are embedded in the Council's Plan 2015-19. The implementation of this programme of highway improvements will be an integral part of the key priorities to "provide a prosperous city for all"; to ensure it delivers the services people want and work in partnership with local communities. Improvements to transport infrastructure are key drivers for improved productivity, this in turn leads to economic growth and the increase in wealth.
27. Residents will be consulted about the junction upgrades to ensure that consideration of the potential impact of decisions in relation to health, communities and equalities has been made.
28. Improved journey times will support the following aims from the Plan:

A city where:

- Local businesses can thrive.
- Residents have the opportunity to get good quality and well paid jobs.
- Efficient and affordable transport links enable residents and businesses to access key services and opportunities.
- Environmental Sustainability underpins everything we do

Implications

Financial Implications

29 The estimated cost for the Wetherby Road upgrade scheme is currently £3.6m. This price includes works, land, fees, project management and utility diversions. Release of funds from the WY+TF will be processed through satisfying the Project Assurance process and meetings of WYCA. WYCA have committed to fund £3.6m at the Combined Authority Meeting on 1st February 2018. The project team are currently finalising costs with the internal delivery team to include in the Final Business Case with Costs. This will be considered in late March 2018 by WYCA. A funding agreement between WYCA and CYC will be drawn up for this purpose.

Human Resources (HR) Implications

30 There are no known human resource implications.

One Planet Council / Equalities

31 The One Planet Council Better Decision Making Tool has identified the following areas which can be explored further during the design and development of the whole YORR improvement programme:

- Greater consideration of renewable materials during construction.
- Consideration about the reduction of crime where subways are proposed.
- Enhanced Landscaping.
- Use of Public Art to provide attractive spaces for residents.

Legal

- 32 Land is required for the Wetherby Road junction upgrade. The Council is actively pursuing the purchase of land for the scheme by private agreement. Legal Services will provide resources to process the conveyancing and land transfer agreements.
- 33 Currently there are no plans to acquire land through Compulsory Purchase Order unless as a matter of last resort. However the Council have engaged the services of a law firm to prepare the documentation for Compulsory Purchase in order that it is prepared to make an order if necessary. Support from Legal Services will be required to manage the process.

Crime and Disorder

- 34 There are no known crime and disorder implications

Information Technology (IT)

- 35 IT opportunities are currently being considered as follows:
- Implementation of the Smart Travel Evolution Programme (STEP)

Property

- 36 Property Services are involved in this project acting as land managers for the City Council. New pieces of land will be acquired for the junction upgrades, the title of which will belong to the City Council. Property Services will also advise and assist the Project Team in supervising the work of the Land Valuers and Legal Firm.

Other

- 37 There are no other known implications.

Risk Management

- 38 In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy the main risks that have been identified in this report are those which could lead to financial loss, damage to the Council's image and reputation and failure to meet stakeholders' expectations. Measured in terms of impact and likelihood, the land acquisition risk has been assessed at 20. This is classed as Major/Probable and is the most

significant live issue on the project. Other risks have been assessed at 14 or below. At this point the risks will be monitored and managed. A risk allowance has been estimated and is included within the current cost plan for the project. The top two risks currently affecting this project are:

- a. Risks associated with land acquisition. As described above, there is a high risk that some landowners will be unwilling to sell land to the City of York Council by private agreement, or in a timely manner. This presents a programme risk potentially prolonging the time to complete the project. In order to mitigate this risk, preparation of a CPO in parallel to land negotiation is proposed as described in paragraph 21 above. At Wetherby Road, negotiations are in progress to acquire land at Low Fields Farm where there is a risk that the owners will not sell. A mitigation plan is being developed to enable the delivery of the scheme without taking the land in the early stages of construction.
- b. Risks associated with utility diversions being more complex than anticipated. These could lead to programme delays and have a cost implication. In the case of Wetherby Road junction, early meetings with utility companies are planned to mitigate these risks.

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Wards Affected: List wards or tick box to indicate all

All tick

Rural West York
Westfield
Acomb

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

1. Paper to Executive 13th July 2017

Report of the Corporate Director of Economy and Place
Portfolio of the Executive Member for Transport & Planning

Title: “PROPOSED YORK OUTER RING ROAD IMPROVEMENTS – APPROACH TO DELIVERY”

Annexes

Annex 1 – Proposed Wetherby Road Junction Upgrade General Arrangement following Consultation and Technical Review

Annex 2 – WYCA Project Assurance Process.

Annex 3 – Layout presented for public consultation

Annex 4 – Wetherby Road Leaflet

Annex 5 – List of comments received from the public consultation

Annex 6 – Indicative off route cycle path Rufforth to Knapton

Annex 7 – Indicative YORR Improvement Programme

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

CPO – Compulsory Purchase Order

WYCA – West Yorkshire Combined Authority

YORR – York Outer Ring Road