

## **Bishopthorpe Rd Decision - Annex 1**

### **COVID 19 – Concerns about Footway Space on Bishopthorpe Rd**

#### **Pinch Points on Footways**

1. Generally footways across the city are not wide enough for pedestrians to comply with social distancing guidance and pedestrians need to take care when passing other people.
2. The limited width is currently being further reduced at some locations where footway space is taken up by people queuing before entering shops. A review of a number of locations where there are essential retailers across the city suggests that queuing is not generally causing significant concerns however there are a number of locations where the footways are particularly narrow or the roads are busy where measures may be appropriate. The Traffic team are currently investigating more than 15 locations across the city. The initial review suggests work should be undertaken at Bishopthorpe Rd and that measures may be warranted at the city centre food shops on Piccadilly, Low Ousegate and Micklegate and these should be prioritised for further investigation and potential implementation of measures..
3. It should be noted that where highway space is limited the provision of more space for pedestrians will reduce the space available for other modes including cyclists and/or may complicate the layout of highways – making it harder for deliveries or road users to understand and/ or navigate.

#### **Bishopthorpe Road**

4. A number of comments have been received about the number of pedestrians having to use the carriageway to pass shop queues on Bishopthorpe Road. The narrow footways have also been further constrained by the way that businesses were managing queues and displaying goods. The initial review has identified that, compared to other locations across the city, this should be the highest priority as the footway widths are narrow and there is a relatively high number of pedestrians in the area.
5. Businesses along Bishopthorpe Road have been contacted and advice given about queuing arrangements and instructions that they should not be using the public footway for the display of goods. All businesses have understood the issue and are endeavouring to ensure their activities have the minimum impact possible. A section of the carriageway has already been coned off on Bishopthorpe Rd so that vehicles are encouraged to travel further away from the kerbline.
6. However there remain concerns about the lack of footway space and it is considered that the most effective way to resolve this issue in the short term is to implement a southbound road closure. This would mean that the southbound lane would be closed to motorised vehicles, however this will mean significantly more extensive traffic management measures (including

pedestrian barriers along the full length) being needed with diversion routes for southbound vehicles via Nunnery Lane, Blossom Street and Scarcroft Rd. This would impact on the current bus services (11, 26, 21) which would need to be diverted via the same route. This diversion is considered to be acceptable with the current traffic levels but may not be appropriate at higher levels as there is a constrained (for large vehicles) left turn at the Mount/Scarcroft Rd junction. A temporary bus stop would need to be put in place on Scarcroft Rd. The cost of the traffic management would be approx.. £4k for installation and removal with maintenance costs of approx.. £2k/week. The maintenance cost could reduce if there were other traffic management schemes in the city at the same time. There are Highway Maintenance works in the area which may mean that the road closure would need amending for a few nights in mid May.

7. As high priority footway Bishopthorpe Road could be considered for an early emergency southbound TRO intervention in order that the Council can assess the effectiveness of this type of intervention then should further pressure be placed on the network as we come out of lockdown officers can provide advice to members on a more informed basis.

## **Implications**

### **Financial**

8. There are no specific budgets available to undertake the initiatives outlined in the report. Many of the physical measures are temporary and therefore capital funding is not applicable. It may be possible however to reprioritise a number of other budgets within Transport that aren't necessarily required in the current circumstances.
9. It should be noted that across the Transport budgets there are significant financial pressures around income levels relating to Parking and a number of fees within Network Management.

### **Human Resources (HR)**

10.N/A

### **Equalities**

- 11.Changes to the use of the highway impacts different sectors of the community in different ways. The impact on different communities will be assessed prior to the implementation of measures.

### **Legal**

12. Closures (or other changes) of the highway will follow standard processes amended where permissible to address COVID 19 requirements. E.g. changes to TRO processes identified in Government Guidance.

**Recommendation - Bishopthorpe Road**

That the Chief Executive instructs the implementation of an Emergency Southbound TRO for Bishopthorpe Road (possible to be in place by 8 May if decision taken on 5 May) to respond to this high priority area and monitor effectiveness in order to inform any future interventions on the network as we come out of lockdown yet retain the need for social distancing.