
**Meeting of Executive Members for City Strategy
and Advisory Panel**

8 December 2008

Report of the Director of City Strategy

Petition to request changes in traffic management in Walmgate and Navigation Road.

Summary

1. The report advises members of the receipt of a petition from the residents and businesses in Walmgate and Navigation Road, to highlight various traffic management concerns. It also investigates a number of issues and recommends a course of action to address some of these.

Background

2. At a meeting of the Navigation and Walmgate Community Association in March 2008 some residents of Navigation Road expressed concerns about difficulties of crossing Navigation Road and Walmgate to gain access to the shops. There have been other issues relating to new building schemes on Navigation Road where residents feel there has been an increased volume of traffic in relation to the building work. With a press article reporting that a review of foot streets was to take place and include Fossgate, the Association proposed an open day event to find out the views of the local residents and businesses.
3. A public open day was held on 7th May 2008 where a total of 89 people signed a petition requesting that: -
4. *“City of York Council gives consideration to improving the traffic situation. Take account of the increased volume of traffic since the opening of the Foss Island development and to look at reducing the speed limit in Walmgate and to provide a pedestrian crossing to the shops by the Post Office.”*
5. The report from the Community Association, which accompanied the petition, put forward the following proposals, which have been investigated by officers.
 - a. *Consider changing the speed cushions in place in Walmgate/Navigation Road to full width or chicanes*
 - b. *A 20 mile speed limit for both Walmgate and Navigation Road*

- c. *Look at lighting sequence to Walmgate Bar*
- d. *Access to Navigation Road only – to stop through traffic*
- e. *The issue of cyclists turning left into Foss Island Road from the Bar to be reviewed*
- f. *A crossing is provided at Bretgate for residents from that development and Navigation Road to cross safely to the shops*
- g. *Review of traffic speed restrictions and provision of a crossing at the Walmgate Day Nursery.*

Alteration of traffic calming measures (speed tables) in Walmgate and Navigation Road.

- 6. A plan and photographs of the area are shown in **ANNEX A**, which highlights that, Navigation Road is already traffic calmed with speed tables that cross the full width of the road. Walmgate has build outs and speed cushions.
- 7. Full width speed tables could not be put in Walmgate for 2 reasons,
 - a. It is identified on the Speed Management Plan as a “mixed route” which carries a variety of traffic, including buses, which find the full-length speed tables difficult to negotiate. The Speed Management Plan was drawn up and agreed with all partners including the bus companies and emergency services.
 - b. Full width measures could also cause issues with vibration and noise to properties close by.

A 20-mile speed limit for both Walmgate and Navigation Road.

- 8. There would appear to be general confusion between 20mph limits and 20mph zones. The criteria for a 20mph limit is that traffic is already travelling at an average of less than 24mph WITHOUT traffic calming. A 20mph zone, is for residential areas, and can be enhanced by traffic calming measures.
- 9. As both Walmgate and Navigation Rd have traffic calming measures a 20mph zone could be considered – but not a 20mph limit.
- 10. Normally all requests for speed issues are put through the Speed Review Process, which is there, and funded, for the purpose of casualty reduction. Criteria for the Speed Review Process are shown in **ANNEX B** along with the most recent accident record and speed data for Navigation Road and Walmgate. This highlights that under the Speed Review Process these roads would be classed as “low priority” and not warrant any further action in terms of engineering. If, however, trials of the new Speed Indicator Device (SID) Programme were successful then this would be offered for community use, on these roads from next January.
- 11. The low-recorded speeds indicate that the existing traffic calming measures

are working effectively.

12. Although the speeds reflect that these roads could be considered for a 20mph zone, there are issues which would need consideration:-
 - 20mph zones are only provided in residential areas, where over 50% of residents are in favour of the scheme.
 - As speeds are already recorded as very low, it is highly unlikely that a 20mph zone would reduce speeds any lower, and may not give any value for money spent.
 - Extra signage would be required at both ends, and entry points to the zone, which would add to the street furniture on already narrow pavements and could cause issues for pedestrians.
 - Funding would need to be identified for the consultation and possible implementation of the zone. As the area does not fulfil the criteria for funding under the Speed Review Process, if it were to be funded by this means another area with a casualty or speed problem would have to go without funding. It is possible that the community feel strongly enough to identify other means of funding, maybe via the Ward Committee or Community Association. It is estimated that a budget of at least £7,500 would be required for signage on the entrances to Walmgate and Navigation Rd, with possibly a further £5,000 - £7,500 for consultation. It is possible that overall funding in the region of £10,000 – 15,000 would be required.
13. One issue raised, was the speed of buses. Particular interest has been paid to the speed surveys taken by the Post Office on Walmgate in relation to buses and it can be reported that 1% of buses (or other vehicles over 11m in length) travelled over the 30 limit over the 7 day period.
 - a. 13% of buses (or vehicles over 11m in length) travelled between 24 – 30mph
 - b. 86% of buses (or vehicles over 11m in length) travelled at 23mph or under.
 - c. 86% travelling at 23mph or under highlights that most buses (or long vehicles) are travelling at responsible speeds – even if when they are passing on narrow pavements it doesn't feel like it.

Look at lighting sequence to Walmgate Bar

14. A pedestrian improvement scheme is currently under review for Walmgate Bar and is to be reported on at this meeting.

It must, however, be made clear that priority at this junction will be for traffic coming from Lawrence Street, as this is one of the main arterial routes into/out of the city. A short green phase at Walmgate Bar should discourage motorists

from using Walmgate. An extension to the green phase at Walmgate Bar would encourage motorists to use Walmgate and also cause delays and possible tailbacks on Lawrence Street and onto the A1079 Hull Road, which is potentially a bigger danger than the current situation on Walmgate.

Access to Navigation Road only – to stop through traffic

15. A large part of the planned new build on Navigation Road is to be student accommodation for St Johns University. CYC Planning information highlights that this should not result in any regular increase in traffic on either Walmgate or Navigation Road. There may be a slight increase in traffic at the beginning and end of term when students are moving in/out, however there are arrangements in place for this to be done in an ordered way with as little impact on the existing road network and other residents as possible. It is envisaged that this student population will make a positive impact to the local economy and community.
16. Navigation Road is often used as a cut through by traffic, from Walmgate, wishing to turn left and avoid standing at the lights at Walmgate Bar. Experience suggests that signage alone would not stop through traffic.
17. Discussion with Engineering and Modelling Teams have considered both the blocking off of Navigation Road, or a section of one way system, located near to Percy's Lane. Discussion with the Community Association representatives highlighted that a small section of one way - in the direction of Walmgate would be preferable.
18. Traffic modelling highlighted that although this would much reduce the traffic travelling along Navigation Road (from Walmgate to Foss Islands Road) it would result in MORE traffic having to wait to turn left at Walmgate Bar and this could lead to increased standing and queuing traffic on Walmgate
19. Bus services and access for business could also be adversely affected.
20. Consultation with CYC Network Management have highlighted that the introduction of a one way often creates as many problems for local residents as they solve due to them having to detour from the preferred routes they're currently taking. One way systems can lead to increased speeds due to the lack of opposing traffic. Even a short length of one way would be quite expensive to introduce due to the signing requirements - probably around £8K. Also, because the suggested one way is quite short there is an increased chance of motorists choosing to ignore the restriction as they do elsewhere in the city.
21. Navigation Road is a key road to be used in case of diversion or emergency and hence a one-way system or blocking off would not be appropriate.

The issue of cyclists turning left into Foss Island Road from the Bar to be reviewed.

22. Discussion with the Cycling Officer suggests that most cyclists wishing to turn

left would cycle down Navigation Road, avoiding the Walmgate Bar lights. As upgrade work is due on the road and lights on Walmgate at the Bar, cyclists will be taken into consideration. Advanced stop boxes for cyclists will be maintained as it is statistically safer to have cyclists in front of traffic at junctions so that they are able to move off first.

A crossing is provided at Bretgate for residents from that development and Navigation Road to cross safely to the shops.

23. Bretgate is the development that sits on the corner of Walmgate and Navigation Road. The parade of shops is towards the bottom of Walmgate and includes the Post Office.
24. Uncontrolled crossing points are already provided at each end of the parade of shops, one with a traffic island so the road can be crossed in two sections and one with a build out, and speed cushion so that traffic is slowed and pedestrians have a short distance to cross, see **ANNEX A**. From site visits, with an engineer, it can be reported that there are tactile dropped kerbs at both these crossing points. Observation showed that there were plenty of gaps between the traffic for people to cross safely. This has been further backed up with traffic surveys, which highlight that the average speed of traffic in this area is between 19 – 21 mph.
25. It is also worth noting that if the crossing was upgraded to be a controlled crossing (zebra or pelican) most of the parking spaces, in front of the shops, which are provided for Parking Permit holders only, would have to be removed in order to comply with the DfT recommendations for zig zags approaching the crossing point.*

**(Zig zag recommended, standard pattern of 8, 2m marks on both sides of crossing, chapter 5 Traffic Signal Manual, DfT)*

26. When the loss of parking to provide a controlled crossing was highlighted to community representatives, on a site visit they seemed to think that this would alter the support for a crossing, particularly with the shop owners.

Review of traffic speed restrictions and provision of a crossing at the Walmgate Day Nursery.

27. The road by the Nursery is one way. An uncontrolled crossing point is provided by means of a build out and dropped kerbs. Average speeds of traffic at this point is 18mph highlighting that traffic is slow enough for pedestrians to have plenty of time to cross. The road is straight and the crossing point has double yellow lines with loading restrictions to ensure visibility is good, see **ANNEX A**. There are a few parking spaces provided nearby (again permit holders only) and if this crossing point were to be upgraded to a controlled crossing, these parking places would probably have to be removed and replaced by zig zag lines, which again brings into question if community support would be there for a controlled crossing if it were at the expense of parking?

28. In the past, the Nursery have asked for a pedestrian barrier to be added, but the narrowness of the footpath at this point means a barrier would take up valuable pavement space and could cause issues with people stepping round it, into the road or worse still, having to wheel pushchairs/wheelchairs in the road because the barrier would cause an obstruction on the footpath.
29. The Nursery has also requested in the past Road Safety Education for its members. This is available from the Road Safety Team in the form of "Family Road Safety Education Sessions" which are deemed by the DfT to be the most valuable for the very young. There are also Road Safety Resources available that the Nursery could loan for a time to help raise the issues of safety with members.

Consultations

30. Consultation has taken place on the above points with representatives of the Walmgate and Navigation Community Association, CYC Road Safety Engineers, CYC cycling officer, North Yorkshire Police, Traffic Management Section and CTC planning section.

Options

- iv) **Option 1.** Continue to support the Speed Management Review process which highlights no further action, in terms of engineering is required, but that these areas could be ideal for Community Groups to become part of the new Speed Indicator Device (SID) programme, which is just being trialled by the Safer York Partnership and to offer this initiative to the Community Association.
- v) An upgrade at Walmgate Bar is due, which would look at the phasing of the lights along with a proposed pedestrian crossing at Walmgate Bar.
- vi) To offer a Family Road Safety session and the loan of Road Safety Resources to the Nursery on Walmgate.
- vii) To support the Community Association/Ward Committee if they wish to fund consultation and possible implementation of a 20mph zone.
- viii) **Option 2.** To not support the Speed Management Review process and find the funding to consult and deliver on some, or all of the community requests, however it has to be made clear that other proposed projects, where casualty reduction or high speed are an issue would have to be denied for funding to be redirected.

Analysis

- ix) **Option 1** Sits within the current speed management policy, and under that policy offers the use of the Speed Indicator Device to the community. This would promote continued low vehicle speeds and

address perceived issues. It would ensure that there is one process for responding to requests about speeds and target funding at areas where casualty and speed reduction is considered “high” under the criteria.

- x) The upgrade at the Bar will take into consideration the light phasing which will incorporate a pedestrian phase, adding a light controlled crossing to Walmgate, as well as the existing uncontrolled crossings at either end of the Post Office parade of shops.
- xi) **Option 2** Does not sit within the current speed management policy and could lead to two processes for responding to requests and complaints. As data suggests there is neither a speed nor high casualty issues on the named roads. To direct funding resources at what is a “low priority” within the speed management strategy without consideration of how the strategy might need to be amended or without complete evidence on why it should be amended, could lead to criticism.
- xii) It also needs to be recognised that whilst consideration is given to the wider benefits of speed reduction in Government and Council strategies, the Council is measured and assessed against casualty reduction targets.

Corporate Priorities

- xiii) A data led approach of assessing road safety issues and prioritising schemes meets the Council’s corporate priorities to create a safer city. It also supports the aims and objectives of the Road Safety Strategy as part of the Second Local Transport Plan.

Implications

- xiv) **Financial** - As the requests do not meet the criteria for funding, this would have to be found by diverting the funding from another proposed project that does meet the criteria.
- xv) **Crime and Disorder** - Speeding is a criminal offence and the Council has a responsibility to deliver an effective Speed Management Strategy.

Risk Management

- xvi) In compliance with the Council’s risk management strategy. There are no risks associated with the recommendations of this report.

Recommendations

That the Advisory Panel advise Executive Member for City Strategy to :-

- i) Continue to address speed management issues under the current

policy, and offer the use of the new Speed Indicator Devise programme to the community for use in the New Year.

- ii) Note the proposal to upgrade Walmgate Bar, including a light controlled pedestrian phase.
- iii) Offer family Road Safety Training and resources to the Nursery.

Reason: This would give continuity to the Councils Policy's on speed management and ensure that priority is given to achieving set targets to lower casualty statistics in York.

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Background Papers:

None

Annexes

Annex A – Photographs and Site Plan

Annex B – Accident Record and Speed Data for Walmgate and Navigation Road
Criteria for Speed Management Review Process and Data