

## **CCfA – Water Lane Consultation Comments**

### CLlr Stephen Galloway – Executive Member for City Strategy

1. The decision to implement the Clifton Green scheme won cross-party support last year.
2. My view is that the scheme should - like other similar schemes - be given time to settle down. Changes to the traffic light phasing have been made and this seems to have eased some of the congestion issues. Refinements to the cycle path markings have also been made recently.
3. I understand that the road humps will be reinstated near the St Peter's School building works shortly and again we need to assess the "before" and "after" reinstatement situation particularly as far as vehicle volumes and speeds are concerned.
4. The situation on Westminster Road could be considered as part of the ongoing programme of traffic reviews. However there are other similar situations in the City and I would not wish officer time to be taken away from work which is already programmed and which residents now have an expectation will be progressed quickly.
5. I have not received any representations from any of the Clifton Councillors on this issue.
6. None of the Clifton Councillors registered to raise this issue at the last Executive Member decision meeting.

### Damon Copperthwaite – Assistant Director – City Development & Transport (CYC)

1. The topic will be supported and resourced from the City Development and Transport Group in City Strategy. Whilst this is an unexpected piece of work we will manage the group's programme of work to provide the resources needed.
2. The changes to the capacity of the Water End / Clifton junction to accommodate new cycle lanes and the issue of traffic management in the Westminster Road / The Avenue area of Clifton is of concern to local residents supported by a recent special ward committee and two petitions from residents. Given their concerns this is an issue, which should be investigated, and proposals developed and solutions implemented. Decisions will need to be made about which proposals should be adopted and how they may be implemented.
3. At the October meeting of the Executive Member and Advisory Panel a decision was made to implement a cycling scheme on Water End that reduced the number of traffic lanes entering the Water End / Clifton junction. Subsequently adjustments were made to the traffic signal timings to restore the capacity on this leg of the junction. Following this officers have been approached to resolve the consequent problems on Westminster Road and The Avenue as a result of increased traffic flows.

Petitions have also been received from residents in the streets and a special ward committee held to discuss the issue. Officers do not have delegated authority to either remove the new cycle lane or introduce new traffic regulation orders on Westminster Road or The Avenue without Executive Member approval. Officer recommendation is to take a report to the Executive Member Decision Session in either September or October to review the options and to adopt solutions to address all the issues raised by the CCfA and by the petitions. I am not aware of any other opportunities that exist to resolve the concerns that have not already been explored.

4. Two petitions have been received from residents in Westminster Road and The Avenue seeking closure of Westminster Road to through traffic. These will be dealt with, in accordance with the constitution, in a report to the Executive Member Decision Session at either the September or October meetings.

### Ruth Egan – Transport Planning Unit (CYC)

1. The changes to the Water Lane/Clifton Green area are part of a wider remit to improve facilities for sustainable travel and encourage people out of cars. To do this will inevitably have an impact (at least short term) on traffic flow and distribution until we are able to change attitudes to car use. The objective - to increase use of sustainable travel modes will take much longer to achieve. The impacts on traffic flow, queuing etc of this particular scheme were reported to a meeting of the Executive Member for City Strategy and Advisory Panel.
2. Officers advised at recent Ward Committee meetings that a 'settling-in' period would be required before proper 'after scheme' monitoring could take place but no exact timescales were given as to how long after implementation would be required. My estimation would be at least 6-9 months but this is not my area of expertise. Traffic monitoring has been taking place, hence we know that there has been increased traffic flows on Westminster Road/The Avenue, however what we do not yet know (a survey has just taken place but not analysed) is the origin/destination of these journeys to understand how much is through traffic and how much is resident or school traffic. A comparison of other residential areas will also be required to understand how this residential area compares to others in terms of traffic flow. A closure of either Westminster Road/The Avenue would have to be based on full residents' consultation - by Network Management colleagues. I believe the school already has a travel plan but we could undertake to work with them to improve it. This could potentially mean that a member of staff stops working with another school in order to develop a more substantial plan with St Peter's depending upon the level of support required.
3. A report is being prepared to consider the options available to dealing with the increased traffic flow and it is hoped that this will be presented to the Executive Member for City Strategy Decision Making Session in

September. This report will, hopefully, also respond to the petitions recently received via the Full Council meeting.

### Cllr D'Agorne – Current Cycling Champion

1. This has caused widespread local concern, inflated by sensational media coverage. I feel that efforts from officers to address the issue are being undermined or ignored in the political interests of securing a scrutiny of the topic
2. I am seriously concerned that detailed work by officers on this one detailed location would reduce available staff time needed to ensure future stages of the cycle route are appropriately designed and fully promoted to potential users. In terms of topics that fall within the remit of the scrutiny committee, I feel that scrutinising the city's response to the economic downturn is a higher priority and one that has implications for a wider cross section of residents in the city.
3. As the cycle champion, I feel that the main benefit of a scrutiny would be to demonstrate the strategic importance of the orbital cycle route, for safe sustainable travel. However in order to do this it would be necessary to wait for the Crichton Ave section to be completed and time for further marketing and promotion of cycling in the area. This would not satisfy the demands of the proposers.
4. Members should work with officers to properly assess the scale of the problem and identify a way forward, as any ward Councillor would do!
5. I would point out Joe Watt's correction to the assertion made in the topic registration form: "A point of detail - I intended to resign anyway after a year as Cycling Champion - a point that I made in the Press articles at the time. However, this was one of several measures I could not support - even had I continued as Champion." Joe Watt
6. The media hype was thus more about the political perspective of the post holder than the particular change made.
7. As cycling champion I do not support this as the focus of a scrutiny, as I feel it is a local ward issue where a particular combination of circumstances apply, far less significant than many other important issues within the remit of the Economic Development and City Strategy Committee. It is a sad to see Labour Councillors seeking to undermine the potential contribution of a government initiative that could make a step change in cycling in this city.

### Councillor Watt – Ex Cycling Champion

1. This is an excellent topic for scrutiny - addressing a major issue which has wide reaching implications with respect to the Council's approach to the

hierarchy of road use and the use of congestion as a tool for controlling traffic.

2. A point of detail - I intended to resign anyway after a year as Cycling Champion - a point that I made in the Press articles at the time. However, this was one of several measures I could not support - even had I continued as Champion.

### Paul Hepworth – CTC – National Cyclists’ Organisation

1. The road networks in York and other UK cities have finite capacity, and cannot be stretched to accommodate the instinctive demands of many private car users. That’s why successive Governments are encouraging Local Authorities to promote alternative travel modes e.g. car sharing, short-term car hire, cycling, walking and taking the bus. This is particularly encouraged through the Local Transport Plan (LTP) process, and national planning guidance such as PPG13, which seeks to reduce car dependant developments. Specific support by competitive bid, has additionally been given for some UK “Demonstration” towns and cities, including York, by the Department for Transport (DfT) offshoot Cycling England.
2. Over 60% of peak hour car trips in York are less than five miles long, and most are single occupancy. We know that more residents will switch to cycling or use the bus if travel by these means is made safe and reliable. In some cases, this can only be achieved by reallocating road space. This was done some years ago, on the inbound side of The Mount. Despite dire predictions at the time, it is now working well and more reliable bus, taxi and cycle travel has been achieved.
3. This has suppressed the rate of growth in private car trips, which benefit the above user groups, plus deliveries, servicing and emergency vehicles, and essential private car journeys. Car sharing schemes, and short-term car hire (Whizzgo) can also contribute significantly to peak traffic reduction.
4. The Water End route post-commissioning tweaks need time to settle down and Westminster Road speed humps reinstated after the school works, before a true “before and after” comparison can be made. The scheme’s benefits will broadly mirror those achieved on The Mount.
5. A cornerstone of York’s planned expenditure of its Cycling England grant, is a suburban orbital ring route. The Water End scheme will be incorporated into this, and cyclist user levels will rise predictably, thereafter.
6. One principal difficulty with the Water End scheme has been the “availability” of an alternative rat run via Westminster Road and The Avenue. In the aftermath of commissioning, this has been widely publicised in the local media. The concurrent removal of Westminster Road’s speed humps, for work at St Peter’s School complex, has

exacerbated the situation for local residents. This had led to calls for reinstatement of the left turn filter lane at Clifton Green, to the A19 outbound.

7. The usefulness of this short filter lane has been much overrated, by objectors to the cycle scheme. Compensatory longer green time has been introduced. It will be helpful if data can be downloaded from the UTC (Coordinated Universal time) records, to publicly demonstrate the minimal impact which the filter lane's removal has had, on the highway network's capacity.
8. A principal disappointment is the apparent unwillingness of the Governors of St. Peter's school complex, to co-operate with sustainable travel initiatives viz Safe Routes to Schools and Travel Plans. There seems to be a preponderance of parents bringing their offspring by private car, which includes a significant proportion of SUV type 4 x 4 vehicles. Scrutiny of the school website does not reveal any commitment to green travel. This significant impact upon Westminster Road and The Avenue, plus the wider local highway network, seems not to have been assessed.
9. CTC suggests that if Officer time is available, CYC's Transport Planners could model the impact of green travel implementation by the school, on the local highway network. This may then usefully form the basis of formal debate with the school's Governing Body. The advantages can be demonstrated, of car sharing, school bussing, walking and cycling, so far as is achievable in the school's citywide catchment area.