

Traffic Issues at Junction of Water Lane, Clifton Green, Westminster Road, and The Avenue

Comments from the Economic & City Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee Task Group on the report being presented to the Executive Member for City Strategy on 05.01.2010

Comments from Cllr Pierce

1. I'm very disappointed (but not surprised) by the report's recommendations which appear to fly in the face of confirmation of the high volumes of traffic claimed by residents, the officer's assessment that the high response rate by residents was 'representative', and (their) majority support for a prohibition of driving order (road closure). Only a very small proportion of traffic exceeds 20 mph. So the impact of the speed limit will be minor. I suspect that some officers may realise that the Water End junction could not handle the increased vehicle flows that closure of the 'rat-run' would generate. Indeed, the 'success' of the Water End scheme depends on Westminster Road/ The Avenue providing a relief road. So, in practice, the best solution may be to dismantle the Water End 'improvement' scheme to allow higher volumes of traffic to use the junction without diverting onto Westminster Road/ The Avenue AND examine the alternative options for rerouting cyclists suggested by Councillor Scott (to the side of John Burrill Almshouses). The scrutiny task group was advised that the cost of reverting to the previous lane arrangements would be approximately £6,000.

Comments from Cllr Hudson

2. It was not my understanding that there was a problem with the speed on Westminster Road rather the volume of traffic, the report states that the average speed is 20 mph and I also understand that a 20 mph limit is unenforceable, therefore I must agree with Councillor Pierce.

Comments from Cllr Scott

3. I agree with and endorse Councillor Pierce's view.

Comments from Cllr D'Agorne

4. A question arises in my mind in the interpretation of the results of the resident's survey: Given the recommended action of only introducing a 20mph limit, how many would chose to also have road narrowings, as 'second best' to a road closure to deter the rat running? I suggest that further consultation of residents is needed in the light of the known results of the survey as views may change now that this picture of preferences has emerged.

I don't see a problem with introducing the 20mph limit - this should help reinforce the impact of the humps on traffic speeds.

I cannot endorse Councillor Pierce's view. The report indicates that there are conflicting views of residents as to where a closure might be located and the fact that the response rate is insufficient to know whether those who failed to respond would support or oppose a formal closure order. If you are to make representations to the Executive member on behalf of the Task Group I would not wish to be associated with suggestions that the junction layout revert to the original and would point out that when this was touched on in our discussions it was only to ask the question of costs and implications - we did not draw any conclusions.

I would endorse a view that further consultations should take place with residents in the light of the findings of the survey and would support a 20mph limit which is of course Labour and Green party policy for residential streets in York (with or without humps!)

5. Task Group Members:

Cllr Pierce
Cllr D'Agorne
Cllr Hudson
Cllr D'Agorne