

COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee: Main Planning **Ward:** Rural West York
Date: 20 February 2007 **Parish:** Askham Bryan Parish Council

Reference: 06/02604/GRG3
Application at: Grass Verge Opposite Askham Lane Junction Road A1237 From Askham Bryan Lane To Broad Lane Askham Bryan York
For: Proposed roundabout and associated measures to replace three existing junctions on the A1237 at Askham Lane, Askham Bryan Lane and Moor Lane including new link roads, drainage, signing, lighting and landscaping
By: City Of York Council
Application Type: General Regulations (Reg3)
Target Date: 23 February 2007

1.0 PROPOSAL

1.1 The applicant seeks planning approval for a roundabout and associated measures to replace three existing junctions on the A1237 at Askham Lane, Askham Bryan Lane and Moor Lane including new link roads, drainage, signage, lighting and landscaping.

1.2 The aim of the scheme is to replace the existing priority junctions on the A1237 York Outer Ring Road (ORR) at Moor Lane, Askham Lane and Askham Bryan Lane with a roundabout to improve accessibility to the south west area of the city and to address safety concerns.

1.3 The scheme has evolved from the A1237 York Outer Ring Road (ORR) Study and the subsequent Moor Lane Roundabout Study. The ORR study noted that leaving and joining the ORR at the existing priority junctions at Moor Lane and Askham Lane is difficult due to the volume of traffic on the main road and this would worsen as the volume of traffic on the ORR increases. A number of options were considered, including banned turns, signalising the junctions, and providing a roundabout or roundabouts. The ORR Study concluded that a roundabout was the most appropriate solution. The Moor Lane Roundabout Study was tasked with identifying appropriate location(s) and layout(s) for the roundabout as well as their potential impacts.

1.4 The proposed scheme involves a new roundabout on the A1237 between the existing Moor Lane and Askham Lane junctions with new connections to Moor Lane, Askham Lane and Askham Bryan Lane. The proposed scheme will affect approx. 6 hectares of Grade 2 agricultural land located within the designated Green Belt. The three existing junctions would be closed. Use will be made, where appropriate, of the redundant sections of side roads to provide direct shared uses for cyclists and pedestrians between Moor Lane and Askham Bryan Lane and between Askham Lane and Askham Bryan Lane avoiding the roundabout. Alternative routes are also being provided for A1237 cyclists who wish to avoid the roundabout.

1.5 Associated infrastructure, including street lighting, traffic signs and road markings will be provided. New drainage, boundary treatment and landscape/nature conservation features are also key components of this particular scheme.

2.0 POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Development Plan Allocation:

Air safeguarding Air Field safeguarding 0175

City Boundary York City Boundary 0001

DC Area Teams West Area 0004

2.2 Policies:

CYGB1

Development within the Green Belt

CYGP1

Design

CYT18

Highways

CYGP9

Landscaping

CYGP4B

Air Quality

CYNE1

Trees, woodlands, hedgerows

CYNE7

Habitat protection and creation

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

INTERNAL

3.1 Urban Design and Conservation - No Objections

"Landscaping proposals offer a significant opportunity to enhance the wildlife and biodiversity of the area. The scheme as proposed maximises the potential quite well although there may be opportunities to further this by providing some small ponds and scrapes that are not incorporated into the drainage system and are therefore less likely to acquire contaminants"

3.2 Archaeologist - No Objections

"Site does not lie in an Area of Archaeological Importance."

* An archaeological evaluation has been commissioned and this is currently being carried out by Halcrow.

- * A geophysical survey of the site has been completed. No evidence of archaeological anomalies on the site.
- * A field evaluation consisting of the excavation of a 2% sample of the application site has been agreed in order to determine that there are archaeological features within the development site.

3.3 Highway Network Management - No Objections

The decision to form a roundabout on the A1237 at the junctions of Moor Lane, Askham Lane and Askham Bryan Lane has been made by the authority. As such officers have purely considered the proposed roundabout in terms of technical capacity and design.

The application was accompanied by a Transport Assessment which identified the expected changes in traffic patterns and flows on the surrounding highway network that will arise as a result of the roundabout. Following discussions with officers further network modelling and sensitivity testing has been carried out including the running of microsimulation programs. The network modelling has included data from the authorities SATURN model and has taken into account traffic changes on the network as a result of committed and future development sites around the city. The results of this additional microsimulation model concur with the earlier data contained within the TA.

Following assessments of future year scenarios with and without the roundabout, it has been shown by the application that the proposed roundabout does not have a detrimental impact on the operation of the A1237 ORR.

The data provided has demonstrated that the proposed roundabout will not have a detrimental impact on the capacity of adjacent links and junctions nor on the wider highway network.

3.4 Environmental Protection Unit - No Objections (Conditions Included).

EXTERNAL

3.5 Marston Moor Internal Drainage Board - Awaiting Comments

3.6 Highways Agency - No Objections.

3.7 Environment Agency - No Objections (Condition Included).

3.8 York Cycle Campaign - Objections.

- * Insufficient information relating to cycle crossings.
- * Elements of the design would be hazardous and inconvenient to cyclists.
- * Poor visibility - with serious or fatal consequences.
- * Cycle routes are inconvenient and slow

3.9 Transport 2000 - Objections

- * Contrary to central government policy.
- * Expensive.
- * Benefits only a very small proportion of the Greater York Population.
- * Encourages more car usage.
- * Does not contribute in any way to the battle against Global Warming.
- * Increased traffic levels on the Outer Ring Road.

- * Strengthens the case for the eventual duelling of the road.

3.10 Natural England - No Objections

"However it is the advice of the Natural England that the recommendations outlined in Section 3.6, 3.7 and 3.8 of the Environmental Assessment and Section 7 of the bat survey report in Appendix 3 are made a condition of the Planning Permission."

3.11 Askham Bryan Parish Council - No Objections

The Parish Council voted 4-3 in favour of the proposal. Individual comments of the Parish Councillors were attached to the consultation papers and are set out below.

Comments

- * Reinstate weight limit on Askham Fields Lane.
- * Footpath/Cycle Lane to be designed to prevent use by motorcycles/scooters.
- * Existing accesses should be retained.
- * Bunding should be increased to deflect sound better.
- * Traffic Calming measures required in the village.
- * Additional informing signs should be considered/re-sited.
- * A more obvious "entrance" into the village is required.

Objections

- * Not a proper case to be made on the grounds of road safety.
- * Concerns about increased traffic, including HGV's.
- * Bunding Inadequate.
- * No lighting details

3.12 Cyclists Touring Club - Objections

- * Inappropriate and premature as it does not constitute sustainable development.
- * Transport Assessment based on assumptions about vehicle movements.
- * Inappropriate use of Green Belt land.
- * Intrusive signs and lighting will adversely affect the setting of York,.
- * Increase in noise levels.
- * Does not reduce congestion, adversely affects air quality, will not contribute to improvements to public health.

3.13 One letter of objection and one letter of support have been received from members of the public regarding the applicants' proposals. The letters raised the following issues.

Objection

- * Roundabout is too large.
- * Increased light pollution.
- * Concerns about the visual impact.
- * Would like the back garden extending 20 feet.

Support

- * Improves highway safety for villagers.

4.0 APPRAISAL

KEY ISSUES

Policy Context
Road Safety/Layout
Environmental Assessment
Residential/Visual Amenity
Landscaping/Nature Conservation
Lighting/Signage
Drainage

POLICY CONTEXT

4.1 Policy T18 of the Development Control local Plan states that increases to existing road capacity will only be supported if:

- a) they are absolutely necessary to overcome existing congestion levels; or
- b) they facilitate the Councils economic programme; or
- c) they open up vacant land for development; or
- d) they remove traffic from environmentally sensitive areas; or
- e) they improve road safety; or
- f) they reduce conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists; and
- g) they incorporate public transport facilities; and
- h) after careful evaluation of the environmental cost and benefits the scheme will result in tangible benefits.

In considering the design of new roads, the needs of pedestrian and cyclists must be taken into account.

4.2 Policy GB1 (Development in the Green Belt): states that planning permission within the Green Belt will only be granted where:

- a) the scale, location and design of such development would not detract from the open character of the Green Belt; and
- b) it would not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt; and
- c) it would not prejudice the setting and special character of the City of York

AND it is for one of a number of appropriate uses, which includes highway works.

4.3 Policy GP1 'Design' includes the expectation that development proposals will, *inter alia*; respect or enhance the local environment; be of a density, layout, scale, mass and design that is compatible with neighbouring buildings and spaces, ensure residents living nearby are not unduly affected by noise, disturbance overlooking, overshadowing or dominated by overbearing structures, use materials appropriate to the area; avoid the loss of open spaces or other features that contribute to the landscape; incorporate appropriate landscaping and retain, enhance or create urban spaces, public views, skyline, landmarks and other features that make a significant contribution to the character of the area.

4.5 GP4A 'Air Quality' Proposals for development in an AQMA (Air Quality Management Area) are required to assess their impact on air quality.

Proposals for development outside an AQMA will be required to assess their impact on air quality, where:

a) there is a cumulative significant impact of traffic generation (an increase of more than 5% traffic flow).

4.6 Policy NE1 'Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows' the aforementioned, which are of landscape, amenity, nature conservation or historical value, will be protected by:

- * Refusing development proposals, which result in their loss or damage; and
- * Requiring trees or hedgerows which are retained on development sites to be adequately protected during any site works; and
- * Making tree preservation orders for individual trees and groups of trees which contribute to the landscape or local amenity; and
- * Making hedgerow retention notices where appropriate to protect important hedgerows and; ensuring the continuation of green/wildlife corridors.

4.7 Policy NE7: 'Habitat Protection and Creation' - Development proposals will be required to retain important natural habitats and, where possible, include measures to enhance or supplement these and to promote public awareness and enjoyment of them.

Within new developments measures to encourage the establishment of new habitats should be included as part of the overall scheme.

4.8 Policy GP9 'Landscaping' - Where appropriate development proposals will be required to incorporate a suitable landscaping scheme, and this must:

- a) be planned as an integral part of the proposals; and
- b) include an appropriate range of indigenous species; and
- c) reflect the character of the locality and surrounding development; and
- d) form a long term edge to developments adjoining or in the open countryside.

4.9 Planning Policy Guidance Note 2 'Green Belts' sets out the purposes of including land within Green Belts and establishes specific categories of development that are appropriate within Green Belts.

- a) the scale, location and design of such development would not detract from the open character of the Green Belt; and
- b) it would not conflict with the purposes of including land within the Green Belt; and
- c) it would not prejudice the setting and special character of the City of York

AND it is for one of the following purposes:

- * minerals extraction, provided high environmental standards are attainable; or highway works or other essential operations including waste disposal; or park and ride facilities; or

All other development is deemed inappropriate and therefore harmful to the Green Belt. Policy E8 of the North Yorkshire County Structure Plan establishes a Green Belt around the City of York and Policy E9 states that planning permission will only normally be granted for the change of use or redevelopment of existing buildings in connection with agriculture, outdoor sport, cemeteries or large institutions and 'other uses appropriate in a rural area'. The boundaries of the Green Belt are detailed on the Proposals Map of the City of York Local Plan Deposit Draft (CYLPDD) and this site clearly falls within the Green Belt.

ROAD SAFETY/LAYOUT

4.10 As noted in paragraph 1.3 above the ORR study concluded that a roundabout was the most appropriate solution to the existing problems at the junctions with Moor Lane and Askham Lane this road safety requirement satisfies the requirements of policy T18(e).

4.11 Stages 1 and 2 of the Road Safety Audit highlighted potential problems and mitigation that has been incorporated into the design.

4.12 Facilities for pedestrians and cyclists have been provided within the schemes design. Such features consist of shared use pedestrian/cycleways leading to dedicated crossing facilities. On the A1237 ORR these crossing facilities consist of refuge islands North and South of the proposed roundabout allowing vulnerable highway users to cross the carriageway in two-stages.

4.13 . It is considered that the proposal complies with Policy T18.

RESPONSE TO YORK CYCLE CAMPAIGN - OBJECTIONS

4.14 Insufficient information relating to cycle crossings.

In an ideal world cyclists and pedestrians would cross the outer ring road (ORR) using grade-separated facilities, however, budgetary constraints mean that this solution can't be justified given the potential levels of use by non-motorised modes. There are existing crossings on the ORR which are proposed to be retained which enable cyclists to cross the ORR at-grade but in two stages. Cyclists are advised to dismount to use these crossings because of the volume, speed and type of vehicles travelling on the outer ring road, whilst this isn't ideal it is felt to be a safer option than cycling across the crossing.

4.15 Elements of the design would be hazardous and inconvenient to cyclists.

The comments about sharp bends and detours have been taken on board and the cycle route at the southern end revised to address these issues.

4.16 Poor visibility - with serious or fatal consequences.

The crossing point on Askham Lane was moved as a result of the Stage 1 Safety Audit which flagged up the existing crossing as potentially dangerous due to trees obscuring sightlines. The crossing point was moved further from the bend specifically to improve the sightlines, further safety audits will review this revised arrangement and any comments from these will be taken into consideration should any further amendments be required.

4.17 Cycle routes are inconvenient and slow

It is extremely difficult to provide safe cycle facilities on roundabouts of this size and capacity. It is expected that experienced cyclists will continue to use the ORR and that only less confident cyclists will divert to the route around the periphery of the roundabout which will be signed as A1237 North/South (avoiding roundabout). Whilst this may be a slight inconvenience, the reduction in danger from less confident cyclists not having to negotiate the roundabout is probably of more importance to cyclists.

RESPONSE TO TRANSPORT 2000 OBJECTIONS

4.18 Contrary to government policy

Government policy is directed toward a series of shared priorities. These being:

Tackling congestion, improving accessibility, road safety, air quality and other quality of life issues. The junction improvement will reduce the amount of waiting traffic, accidents and the amount of traffic seeking alternate routes on the remainder of the local road network.

4.19 Expensive

The scheme will provide benefits for many forms of transport, not just car users, and will contribute to achieving targets set within the second local transport plan for various modes and other improvements such as reductions in casualties

4.20 Benefits only a very small proportion of the greater York population

The scheme offers benefits to areas other than on the roads directly served by the improvement, as traffic will redistribute onto the ORR from less appropriate routes within the area. Relieving traffic from these less appropriate routes could offer benefits to cyclists and the public transport system.

4.21 Encourages more car usage

Existing congestion levels on the ORR are likely to remain a sufficient deterrent to generating significant traffic growth if this junction improvement is carried out in isolation.

4.22 Does not contribute in any way to the battle against global warming

It is intended that the junction improvements will reduce delays for joining the ORR, thereby reducing the amount of standing traffic at the approaches. This in itself should lead to a reduction in emissions from idling engines. In addition providing easier and more direct access onto the ORR may reduce the distance travelled by some motorists that would otherwise use longer routes to access the ORR.

4.23 Increased levels of traffic on the ORR

Existing congestion levels on the ORR are likely to remain a sufficient deterrent to generating significant traffic growth. However, this improvement is part of a package of improvements on the ORR to ease congestion. Once this package is complete, it is possible that more traffic will use the ORR than does at present, but it is also likely that this will be traffic reassigned from less appropriate routes within the confines of the ORR. Relieving traffic from these less appropriate routes could offer benefits to cyclists and the public transport system.

4.24 Strengthens the case for eventual dualling

Completing the package of junction improvements could equally obviate the need to dual the ORR. If the improvements perform well, congestion levels may be limited to such a level that dualling would no longer be appropriate. The case either way would be more accurately determined through effective monitoring of future improvements.

CYCLIST TOURING CLUBS OBJECTIONS

4.25 Inappropriate and premature as it does not constitute sustainable development

See response to 4.18 contrary to government policy.

4.26 Transport Assessment based on assumptions about vehicle movements.

Assumptions are initially made and later backed by transport modelling.

4.27 Inappropriate use of Green Belt land

Highway improvements are a permitted use of green belt.

4.28 Intrusive signs and lighting will adversely affect the setting of York

Signing and lighting will be in scope and scale with the remainder of the ORR. Improvements in lighting design and technology may reduce the impact.

4.29 Increasing noise levels

Noise levels are a complex function of traffic flow, composition and speed, the road surface and weather conditions. It is possible that noise levels will decrease through a more regulated even traffic speed with less standing traffic. Mitigation measures should be put into place to minimise the effects of noise.

4.30 Does not reduce congestion, adversely affects air quality, will not contribute to improvements to public health.

See response to 4.18 contrary to government policy.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

4.31 Air Quality - A screening assessment based on the Design Manual for Road and Bridges (DMRB) was used to assess the local air quality at 4 potentially sensitive receptors for five scenarios, using background concentrations taken from the National Air Quality Archive (NAQIA), and Traffic Data provided by Halcrow.

4.32 Further assessment (using the DMRB Screening Method) to predict the local air quality for a potentially sensitive receptor within the Askham Bryan Village was also undertaken.

4.33 Results show that air quality at all surrounding properties should remain well within the current health based objectives for nitrogen oxide and PM10. Traffic modelling also indicates a reduction in travel time and distances across the city during the AM peak, this subsequently reduces traffic and congestion in the city centre and contributes to the aims and objectives of the Air Quality Action Plan.

4.34 Contaminated Land - Historically, land use has been dominated by agriculture. However, in response to any unforeseen contamination issues, relevant conditions will be included.

4.35 Noise and Other Amenity Issues - The impact of the scheme has been assessed using the Calculation of Road Traffic Noise (CRTN) for the existing situation, the situation on opening (2008) and the future (2023). The result of this show that the nearest noise sensitive receptors will experience an unperceivable change in noise level, this is based on modelling with the proposed bunds to the east and west of the site in place and the proposed low noise surfacing to be applied to the scheme. Conditions have been included to ensure that the nearest sensitive receptors are not impacted upon by noise, dust and vibration during the construction stage.

RESIDENTIAL/VISUAL AMENITY

4.36 The urban fringe of York at Woodthorpe lies at a distance of between 200 metres and 400 metres to the east of the A1237 and West Field approx. 1.4km to the north. These areas are characterised by two storey brick built properties with pantile roofs.

4.37 The village of Askham Bryan, which is designated as a Conservation Area, lies approx. 800 metres to the west of the A1237 along Askham Lane and contains a range of late 19th Century and 20th Century properties. Properties currently existing on Askham Lane are located within 88 and 140 metres of any new additions to the Outer Ring Road.

4.38 The overall design of the roundabout, inclusive of the proposed bunding, landscaping and existing topography, represents little harm to the visual amenity of neighbouring properties. The roundabout as a detached entity would not be directly visible from any habitable vantage points. The western arm will be located closer to the aforementioned dwellings, however as no significant increases in traffic are anticipated the visual/residential harm is expected to be minimal. Such an assessment is bolstered further by the comments submitted by the Environmental Protection Unit.

LANDSCAPING/NATURE CONSERVATION

4.39 Two significant areas have been identified on the eastern and western sides of the roundabout, which are proposed to be appropriately contoured and comprehensively landscaped with indigenous species to screen the roundabout from nearby properties. To the west a 55 metre planting strip is proposed with a maximum of 35 metres provided to the east. The western and eastern bunds measure approx. 1.5 metres and 1 metre in height above the carriageway of the A1237 respectively. Taking the local topography into consideration the highest point of western bund is located approx. 4.157 metres above Askham Lane. To the east the aforementioned bunding and planting will be located approx. 10.849 metres above the properties on Coeside. New boundaries will be fenced and planted with indigenous hedging species. The Countryside Officer is of the view that the scheme maximises the wildlife and biodiversity potential quite well. Conditions are included to ensure that habitat mitigation measures are included at the construction stage and following completion.

LIGHTING/SIGNAGE

4.40 Lighting details have been forwarded to the Street Lighting Engineer for consideration. As such it is currently envisaged that the roundabout and its immediate approaches would be lit and the existing lighting on Moor Lane extended through to the roundabout. The lighting design will recognise the rural nature of this location and would be dark sky compliant to minimise any light pollution.

DRAINAGE

4.41 The new highway drainage system will incorporate a balancing pond to act as a containment facility and to cater for the additional run off and thus ensure that there will be no increase in flows at the outfalls as a result of these improvements.

4.42 The Environment Agency has no objections to the proposed roundabout. However, a condition is requested to ensure that surface water run off is "restricted to no greater than that which currently discharges from the site"

5.0 CONCLUSION

5.1 The proposed roundabout by virtue of its considered design provides environmental and nature conservation enhancements, improved accessibility to the A1237 from existing side roads and a reduction in area wide traffic levels and journey times, without compromising the visual/residential amenity of neighbouring properties and communities or the character and appearance of the designated Green Belt. As such it is considered to comply with the requirements of policies H18, GB1 etc etc

COMMITTEE TO VISIT

6.0 RECOMMENDATION: Approve

1 TIME2

2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out only in accordance with the following plans and other submitted details:-

TACYCB900/005 - Proposed Cross Sections.

TACYCB900/001 - General Arrangement.

TACYCB900/004 - Planning Application Boundary and Land Acquisition Plan.

TACYCB900/008 - Aerial Photo-Montage.

Transport Assessment.

Road Safety Audit - Stage 1 "Incorporating the Designers Response".

Environmental Assessment.

or any plans or details subsequently agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority as an amendment to the approved plans.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the development is carried out only as approved by the Local Planning Authority.

3 Any contaminated material detected during site works shall be reported to the local planning authority. Any remediation for this contamination shall be agreed with the local planning authority and fully implemented prior to any further development of the site.

Reason: To protect human health and the wider environment

4 Prior to any works commencing on site, a construction environmental management plan (CEMP) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The CEMP shall identify the steps and procedures that will be implemented to minimise the creation and impact of noise, vibration and dust resulting from the site preparation, groundwork and construction phases of the development. Once approved, the CEMP shall be adhered to at all times, unless otherwise first agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenity of occupants of adjacent and adjoining properties during the development of the premises.

5 No development shall take place until there has been submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority a detailed landscaping scheme which shall illustrate the number, species, height and position of trees, hedging and shrubs. This scheme shall be implemented within a period of six months of the completion of the

development. Any trees or plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless alternatives are agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: So that the Local Planning Authority may be satisfied with the variety, suitability and disposition of species within the site.

- 6 No hedging shall be fully removed before the 31st March 2007, unless otherwise agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests nature conservation.

- 7 Prior to the commencement of development, full details of the proposed balancing pond, including its overall capacity shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that surface water run off is no greater than that currently discharged from the site.

- 8 Prior to the development commencing, details showing how existing habitats used by amphibians, badgers, breeding birds and bats will be protected and or enhanced, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of nature conservation and habitat creation.

7.0 INFORMATIVES: **Notes to Applicant**

1. REASON FOR APPROVAL

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the proposal, subject to the conditions listed above, would not cause undue harm to interests of acknowledged importance, with particular reference to visual/residential amenity, area wide traffic levels or the open character of the designated Green Belt. As such the proposal complies with PPS1 and PPG2 and Policies T18, GB1 and GP1 of the City of York Development Control Draft Local Plan.

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