

CITY PLANS PANEL

TUESDAY, 25TH JUNE, 2013

PRESENT: Councillor N Taggart in the Chair

Councillors P Gruen, D Blackburn,
M Hamilton, S Hamilton, G Latty,
T Leadley, E Nash, N Walshaw, M Ingham,
J Cummins, B Anderson and J McKenna

12 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were no declarations of disclosable interests

13 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J Lewis and Councillor R Procter who were substituted for by Councillor J McKenna and Councillor B Anderson respectively

14 Chair's remarks

The Chair outlined the procedure for the meeting which would commence with a brief overview of the NGT scheme, followed by details of the 7 sections of the route being outlined, on a north to south basis, with the opportunity for registered speakers to have up to 6 minutes, per section of the route to address the Panel. There would be the opportunity for the NGT team to pick up on issues raised, together with further information from Planning Officers where relevant, which would be followed by questions and comments from the Panel, before moving to the next part of the route

The Chair stressed that the purpose of the meeting was not to discuss the merits or demerits of any transport system. The meeting was proceeding on the presumption that NGT had in principle approval from the Council's Executive Board and therefore the meeting would be focussing on the planning aspects of the scheme and seeing if improvements to it could be made to deliver the best possible scheme for the City. It was noted that the comments of the Panel were without prejudice to individual Members' views on the broader merits of the scheme

The Chief Planning Officer stated that that this was the final stage before the scheme was put before the Secretary of State for the Transport and Works Order Act, which would be followed by a Public Inquiry and the purpose of this meeting was to assist the Local Planning Authority in forming its views on its submission to that Order. There would be a further opportunity for City Plans

Panel to consider the proposals when these had been finalised, following further consultation

As discussions remained on-going about the impact on Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings etc, draft conditions had been drawn up but that these would be considered further and revised where necessary

15 Submission of the Transport and Works Act Order - Application for the New Generation Transport (NGT) Scheme

Members considered a report of the Chief Planning Officer on the submissions of the Transport and Works Act Order application for the New Generation Transport (NGT) Scheme. Appended to the report was a schedule of draft conditions proposed and a copy of the Design Statement

Plans, photographs and graphics were displayed at the meeting. To assist Members when considering the route of NGT, two screens had been provided, one showing the proposal in diagrammatic form and the other showing the site as it currently was, as depicted on Google Earth

Officers and representatives of the NGT team presented an overview of the proposals and provided information relating to:

- the policy basis for NGT
- possible extensions to the route in the future
- the improvements and on-going interventions already made to public transport
- funding issues and the rolling investment programme which would provide greater investment and opportunities
- the benefits of NGT
- greater efficiency and reduced journey times, with the trolley buses having transponders to allow them priority through the traffic
- consultation and engagement
- future timescales, with 2016-2020 being the timescale for construction and commencement of the scheme
- planning issues relating to the impact of proposals on Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings
- the provision for cyclists and pedestrians in the scheme, including the use of shared surfaces in some locations
- the number and location of substations along the route and the amount of overhead line equipment which would be necessary
- the impact of the proposals on taxi rank provision in the City Centre, with a temporary site being identified at Meadow Lane

In respect of the Design Statement, Members were informed that this was a key document which set out the design intent and standards and also

included issues relating to sustainability, environmental management and maintenance and would supplement the Environmental Statement

The main drivers of the design of the scheme were outlined as were the design objectives and overarching principles, which would include a co-ordinated and consistent design approach; the need to minimise the impact of infrastructure and to minimise clutter, with the project providing an opportunity to review and consolidate existing highway clutter

In terms of landscaping, NGT would create green corridors wherever practical. Whilst there would be some tree loss, there would be a 3 for 1 replacement policy, with 1500 – 1600 new trees to replace the 400 trees which would be felled to accommodate the proposals. Where particularly good trees were to be removed, this would be replaced by a 'super replacement specimen' mature tree, where appropriate.

Regarding woodland and scrub, some 3000sqm of this would be lost but this would be replaced by 30,000sqm of woodland and scrub land

In summary, the approach to design was to raise design quality and promote a fresh, new transport offer for Leeds which would have a co-ordinated approach to design and branding

Members commented on the following matters:

- the process of the scheme going to the Secretary of State and whether there would be flexibility built in so that changes in circumstances or new issues which arose could be dealt with
- the need for the text of the Design Statement to properly respect pedestrians and cyclists by not abbreviating these words
- that the images in the Design Statement should depict the trolley bus scheme being proposed and not trams
- tree planting; whether a greater number of trees would be provided in the south which currently did not benefit from as much greenery as in the north of the city; that as many species would be deciduous whether there would be safety issues as a result of leaf drop; the impact on Environmental Services with likely increased need for leaf clearing and how colour could be introduced along the route in the winter months
- the method to be used to ensure that what Members are shown on the schematics, will be what is provided and the need for information about the construction phase and measures to be taken to minimise the impact of this
- the overhead line equipment, whether building owners could refuse to agree to fixings being attached to their buildings and the need to appreciate that some modern buildings whilst appearing solid, were

clad in a relatively thin, artificial stone and whether these could withstand the weight of the fixtures to be attached to them

The following responses were provided:

- that there would be some flexibility in the TWOA documents and if made by the Secretary of State, would contain powers tied to the drawings and plans which would include limits of demarcation, i.e. margins of tolerance
- that the comments made about the text and images would be addressed
- that the approach to tree planting had been to maximise the provision of new trees along the route, although there were some restrictions in terms of available space and location of utilities, however there would be a large amount of tree planting in the south of the city, especially in Belle Isle
- that the possibility of achieving better winter interest or colour into the planting would be considered. In terms of leaf drop and safety, whilst noting the concerns, it was important to achieve green corridors and that in the long term, there could be a greater maintenance requirement
- that phasing of works, construction compounds and the construction strategy would form part of the TWOA and the Public Inquiry would consider the planning conditions and controls; that the draft conditions appended to the report addressed issues regarding construction and trees, and in respect of the cross sections displayed, these were theoretical but that the detailed plans would show planting, stops and surfacing etc
- concerning overhead line equipment, discussions would take place with building owners to ensure the building was adequate to take the equipment and that the Order would contain a mix of rights and process for owners to ask for the fittings to be sited elsewhere

The Panel then considered the route of the NGT, north to south, on a section by section basis

Holt Park to Bodington via Otley Old Road

Members were provided with the following information:

- this section was where the NGT would be mainly running on streets
- that the scheme was complimentary to the Holt Park District Centre where the aim was to separate NGT from general traffic to reduce congestion and delay
- that bus movements outside the Asda supermarket would remain

- there would 6 car parking spaces lost, with some spaces also being lost at the nearby health centre, although there would be re-provision in the main car park
- a plaza would be provided, which would house the NGT stop and would create a sense of place around the stop
- the location of substations in this section were highlighted
- that new planting would break down the impact of the overhead line equipment
- that a Park and Ride with 830 spaces would be provided in this section, which would be well screened
- that replacement sports pitches at Weetwood, Lawnswood and Bodington would be provided to mitigate against the loss of pitches with the possibility that the increase in provision could enable the public to have use of these facilities
- that the proposals would result in a net gain of 150 trees

The Panel then heard representations on the proposals for this section from three objectors. Concerns were raised in respect of the proposed park and ride scheme in Holt Park, its layout and the impact that this would have on accessibility to and from an adjacent children's nursery and related safety issues. Objectors also noted that this section of the route affected several conservation areas. These areas are of special architectural or historic interest, the character of which needs to be preserved or enhanced. Further issues were raised in terms of tree loss and the lack of information in terms of tree surveys. Concerns were raised with regard to the fact that the proposals would cause unnecessary environmental harm and create clutter in the streetscape, at odds with the character and appearance of the conservation areas

The Planning Projects Manager updated the Panel and advised that the second substation along this section was sited on greenspace and that measures would be needed to compensate for this loss

Receipt of a further representation was reported

Members discussed this section of the route and commented on the following matters:

- the relocation of the recycling facilities and that an alternative location for these should be sought
- concern about the Asda car park becoming an unofficial Park and Ride; the possibility of increased on-street parking and some reassurances about how this could be addressed, with a residents parking scheme being suggested

- the impact of the proposals on the nearby nursery and whether some car parking spaces could be reserved in the supermarket car park for a drop off/pick point for parents
- road safety issues and that some consideration should be given to traffic speeds in this area and that where possible, 20mph routes should be included
- the possibility of the Holt Park link being used as a drop off for Leeds Bradford Airport
- proposals to expand Lawnswood Cemetery and how these related to the NGT route
- the number of spaces at the Park and Ride and whether this was sufficient
- that the proposals conflicted with people's ability to access the Wellbeing Centre
- the entrance point to the Park and Ride needed to be reviewed to ensure that there was no conflict between pedestrian safety, cars and buses. Members also raised issues in relation to suggestions that the number of buses would be reduced there; that there would be more cars on the road and additional car parking spaces would be required. Members also sought confirmation that sufficient park and ride spaces would be provided
- the rationale for the spur leading up to Holt Park
- the proposals for the junction with Otley Road and Otley Old Road
- the need for more consultation with local people

The following responses were provided:

- that further consideration could be given to the location of the recycling facilities
- that there was no intention for the Asda car park to become an unofficial Park and Ride; that to address local concerns about this it would be possible to introduce limited waiting times for people parking and/or residents parking. On this approach, Members were not persuaded that this was appropriate and considered that measures should be planned for at this stage. In response to the possibility of introducing a residents parking scheme and how the cost of this could be met, Members were informed that it was not possible at this stage to provide such detail
- that during construction access to the nursery and health centre would be maintained at all times; that the existing footpath from the nursery would not be altered and that a boundary treatment could be provided, if required. Regarding a drop off/pick up point for parents, the existing arrangements could continue, despite slight

changes to the plaza design and that further discussions should take place with the operators on this matter

- that Highways were aware of the issues regarding traffic calming and that the traffic speeds had yet to be finalised
- that in respect of a link to the airport, it was felt that this would not be attractive to users
- that any expansion of Lawnswood Cemetery was a planning matter
- that a range of factors had been used to determine the level of parking at Bodington Park and Ride, with Officers being satisfied on this
- the spur, and that the Department of Transport had in the past considered an analysis of the route and passenger numbers and that it would generate revenue and attract passengers and was therefore critical to the viability of the scheme
- that the junction with Otley Road and Otley Old Road would be traffic lighted and fully signal controlled, with the trolley buses having precedence
- that further consultation would be carried out

The Chair advised that the proposals would come back to City Plans Panel in later in the year and that it was hoped that progress on issues raised could be made

The Panel then considered the next section of the route

Lawnswood and West Park – Ancaster Road to Otley Road/Otley Old Road junction, including Lawnwood Roundabout

Members were provided with the following information:

- this section contained a mix of NGT and public transport lanes
- that the key issue in this area was significant tree loss, due to the need for lane widening, although there would be a net gain on 150 trees
- that there had been design changes at West Park and that dialogue was continuing with local businesses on this
- that traffic modelling at Lawnswood Roundabout had shown that the proposals for the junction would provide the reliability NGT required
- that centre running for the vehicles had been considered over nearside running
- that it would not be possible to retain the trees to the north of the approach to the roundabout but that mitigation tree planting would aim to create a new tree structure, with an image shown of the likely appearance of the trees after 15 years of growth
- that soft green verges were being provided and that a grassed track was being proposed

- that the existing roundabout would be modified and the wall and trees by the police station would be retained
- that there would be an impact on some residential properties, with a 1.8 metre strip being required
- that the floral display and grassed area on the existing roundabout would be recreated in the new design of the roundabout

The Panel then heard representations on the proposals from an objector

The Planning Projects Manager updated the Panel and advised that the Conservation areas were West Park and Weetwood. The receipt of 5 additional representations was reported

Members discussed this section of the route and commented on the following matters:

- provision for cyclists, with clarity being sought on the current cycling provision and what was proposed
- how cycle lanes would be identified
- concerns about safety around Lawnswood School
- tree loss, the need for details of the number to be removed and the level of replanting and that winter flowering cherry would be a suitable species to brighten up this area
- the need for graphics to be provided showing the extent of the newly planted tree cover after 4-5 years growth
- that the roundabout regularly experienced congestion and traffic queuing; that there were proposals for future development in the area and how the NGT proposals would work in view of this
- whether when planning applications came forward for developments in this area, Metro would object to these on the grounds of congestion which would affect NGT journey times

The following responses were provided

- that cycling provision would comprise two different routes, to cater both for experienced and less confident cyclists. There would be the use of existing cycle paths and some new ones would be provided. For those cycle routes on the carriageway there would be sufficient lane width for buses to easily pass cyclists and the proposals represented a significant gain to cycling facilities
- that through discussions, it was made clear that cycling groups did not want the cycle lane demarcating on certain sections of the highway and this request had been met
- that if Lawnswood School had safety concerns about the use of shared surfaces close to the school, this could be looked at further

- that the level of tree loss and replacement planting was, to the north of the roundabout 38 trees removed and 63 replanted; to the south, around Lawnswood School, 23 trees removed and 19 replanted and at West Park 1 or 2 trees would be removed but that there was no room for replanting. That the trees would be 4 – 5m high when they were planted
- in terms of traffic congestion, that improvements on the A6120 traffic signals controls would deal with bottlenecks and that the trolley bus would have transponders which would enable them to get through, ahead of other vehicles. Regarding traffic growth, this had been taken into account. Whilst it was not possible to give guarantees about increased capacity as a result of other developments, what was being put in for the NGT would be for the betterment of the area and that as other developments came on board, it would be for those individual applications to address any highways and traffic issues arising from them. The Head of Planning Services stated that traffic modelling on future schemes would need to be taken into account by developers

The Head of Planning Services summarised the main concerns raised by the objectors as safety around Lawnswood School; the sharing of stops and the moving of the wall at Spenfield. It was stated that the full impact of the proposals on the Conservation Area would be better understood once the Environmental Statement had been published. Members' request for graphics showing tree growth in this section of the route after 4-5 years was reiterated

The Chief Planning Officer stressed the need for clarity about the segregation of cyclist facilities and pedestrian movements around Lawnswood School and beyond as Members did not appear to be fully satisfied on the information which had been provided

The Panel then considered the next section of the route

Otley Road Shaw Lane to Ancaster Road

Members were provided with the following information:

- this section was a mix of dedicated NGT and shared bus lanes
- that concerns had been raised about the loss of trees and verges, particularly at the Three Horseshoes Pub, where a new plaza was being proposed
- that there would be a net gain of 15 semi-mature trees in this section
- a substation would be located in this section, with this being set back from Churchwood Avenue and being screened by trees

- that the most significant change was the closure of Weetwood Lane, outside the Three Horseshoes Pub, to create a new public square
- to address the pinch point in this area, the corridor would be widened, although it would not be possible to retain the kerb lines and mature trees would be removed
- some resurfacing would be provided, with the tarmac being refreshed and an amount of York stone being laid

The Panel then heard representations on the proposals for this section from two objectors

Members discussed this section of the route and commented on the following matters:

- the closure of part of Weetwood Lane had not been discussed in the workshops which Members had attended and it was unclear as to what purpose this proposal served
- previous highway proposals to close part of Weetwood Lane had been rejected by Highways and Transportation Officers earlier this year
- the need for clarity about the 5 traffic lanes being proposed in this location
- whether commercial vehicles would be able to access the pub and the shops, for servicing and what the likely manoeuvre would be for a large vehicle delivering to the pub
- the need for a site visit to fully understand what was being proposed
- whether closing St Chad's Lane and keeping Weetwood Lane open had been considered
- what the provision for cyclists would be in this section of the NGT route
- the proposals to refresh the tarmac and that the opportunity should be taken to provide a better quality surface

The following responses were provided:

- that the proposals to close part of Weetwood Lane were not new and that the closure of this road, rather than St Chad's Road was to provide a better pedestrian environment and an opportunity to support the local shops in this area, although the proposal had not proceeded
- that highways had been considering a scheme to close part of Weetwood Lane, but as part of the proposed route was earmarked for NGT, it was felt, in the interests of transparency, that the previous proposals should no longer be pursued

- that the 5 traffic lanes would be required for inbound and outbound NGT; inbound and outbound general traffic and a right turn lane into St Chad's Road
- regarding servicing arrangements to the shops and pub, that small vehicles would be able to turn around and that larger vehicles would have the option of reversing into this area. It was accepted that these arrangements should be reviewed
- it was confirmed that new cycling facilities, between St Chad's and Weetwood Lane would be shared with NGT

In view of a site visit to this section having been requested, the Chair agreed to this and advised that this would take place at the next available opportunity

The Panel then considered the next section of the route

Headingley to Shaw Lane to Hyde Park Corner

Members were provided with the following information:

- This section had areas where the NGT would be incorporated with normal traffic, have dedicated areas and run on dedicated public transport areas.
- Parts of this section had the most significant areas of tree loss – where possible replacement trees would be provided.
- Details of walls that would have to be demolished and rebuilt.
- Bypassing Headingley Centre with a purpose built grass NGT track with pedestrian and cycle routes.
- The inclusion of an NGT turn round facility.
- Siting of substation.
- Need to carry out road widening – this would be easier to do on the southern side where there would be less disruption – this would include some demolition, rebuilding of walls and resurfacing of pavements.

An objector to the scheme raised concerns including the following:

- the loss of heritage in a conservation area
- the loss of mature trees, walls and buildings
- new planting to replace 100 year old trees was not acceptable
- Listed structures would be demolished
- all local resident and community groups were against the scheme
- the scheme would be detrimental to the wellbeing of residents
- particularly the old and vulnerable
- that the scheme did not represent the best use of public monies

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

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- additional objections that had been received in relation to the Headingley and Hyde Park Conservation areas lighting of the Headingley bypass. This would be unobtrusive low level lighting
- the inclusion of a turn round facility would allow for more frequent shorter journeys in to the city centre during peak hours
- the possibility of re-using stone from demolished walls and buildings over head line provision – where possible this would be tethered to existing pillars and buildings but there had been no detailed design yet
- material to be used for surfacing pavements

In summary to discussion on this section, key issues noted included the impact on heritage, particularly trees and structures

The Panel then considered the next section of the route

Woodhouse Moor – Clarendon Road to Hyde Park Corner Junction

Members were provided with the following information:

- significant changes included improvements to the public realm
- there would be widening of footpaths and demolition of a row of shops to create new open public spaces
- junction improvements to keep free flowing traffic
- grassed NGT section on Monument Moor – this would prevent widening of the current highway and removal of existing trees. There would also be improvements to steps and re-siting of the statue
- new pavements made with natural York stone

An objector to the scheme raised concerns including the following:

- the history of Woodhouse Moor and impacts on the heritage
- loss of greenspace and play areas
- reference to deputations that had been submitted to Council
- suggestion that the NGT should be kept to run along Woodhouse Street
- the scheme did not make the best use of public monies

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- provision for cyclists – this would be mixed across this section with some advisory lanes and some mixed with NGT/bus lanes
- the play area was on private land and currently disused. There were no children's play facilities. Members discussed the possibility of

including a children's play area and using felled trees to create an adventure playground

- there would be a net increase of 100 trees in this section
- potential environmental improvements to the area

The Panel then considered the next section of the route

Universities Area – Clarendon Road to the top of Cookridge Street

Members were provided with the following information:

- the most significant change to this section would be the creation of a public transport access only corridor along Woodhouse Lane
- measures to change current traffic including making Blenheim Way a two way system and the inclusion of a new roundabout to re-route traffic
- discussions had been held with the Universities regarding access to their sites
- pedestrian access including pedestrian routes to the Arena and pavement improvements
- siting of a substation

An objector to the scheme raised concerns including the following:

- the scheme would be detrimental to what was felt to be to most attractive route into the city centre
- new traffic schemes would seem to encourage more car users
- the NGT scheme was only 50% segregated from current traffic and would not improve access
- if the scheme went ahead this stretch of the A660 would be damaged irrevocably
- the scheme did not make the best use of public monies

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- impact of car use and congestion – as part of the business case it had to be ensured that congestion was maintained at similar or reduced levels and it was aimed to improve congestion. The proposed traffic scheme would allow more through movement of traffic and reduce congestion at junctions
- running speeds of the NGT and whether these would be an improvement on current journey times into the city.

The Panel then considered the next section of the route

City Centre – Cookridge Street to New Dock

Members were provided with the following information:

- locations of stops including Cookridge Street, The Arena, City Square and Trinity
- route through the City
- proposals to widen footpaths and create pedestrianized streets
- the use of building fixings rather than poles for overhead lines

An objector to the scheme raised concerns including the following:

- the scheme would run on previously pedestrian areas
- detrimental effect on the amenity of Millennium Square
- the proposal to remove the only large tree in the City Centre

A member of the public spoke in support of the scheme and raised the following issues:

- there was currently a distinct lack of connectivity between the north and the south of the city
- the NGT would provide opportunity for a transport link to assets such as the Royal Armouries and new developments in the south of the city

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- the road at the side of Millennium Square where the NGT was proposed to go had previously been left available for the Supertram scheme
- measures to denote the route of the NGT through pedestrian areas
- opportunities to tie in with developments at City Park and Brewery Wharf
- use of materials on surfacing in the city centre
- the location of the sub-station was acceptable

The Panel then considered the next section of the route:

Southern Section – New Dock to Stourton Park & Ride

Members were provided with the following information:

- this section would see the highest proportion of NGT only routes
- proposed route changes from Belle Isle Road to Belle Isle Circus
- creation of new routes for pedestrians and cyclists
- impact on way to Hunslet Town Centre through a pedestrianized residential area – screening would be offered

- changes in the scheme due to the HS2 proposals
- the NGT park and ride depot

Two objectors to the scheme raised concerns including the following:

- disruption the scheme would cause to residents and traffic
- impact on underground facilities
- damage to historical landmarks
- there would only be 3 stops between the start of the line and the city centre – this would not generate enough passengers as people would continue to use buses
- the scheme would damage business and property values
- alternative routes were suggested

In response to Members comments and questions, the following issues were discussed:

- concerns regarding the pedestrian area at Whitfield Square
- grass track through Belle Isle
- siting of substations
- design standards for the park and ride area
- concern regarding the route of the NGT which would pass Pym Street, blocking the end of this street and having an impact on local businesses and associated safety issues

Members were then asked to consider the recommendations as outlined in the report:

RESOLVED –

- (1) That Members' views on the draft planning conditions as set out in (appendix 1), the draft design statement as set out in (appendix 2) and the siting of sub-stations together with views on the planning issues identified in order to inform the progression of the Transport and Works Act Order application be noted
- (2) That the Panel support in principle the completion of a S106 agreement, or other suitable mechanism, to provide local training and employment initiatives which arise from the construction, management and operation of these NGT proposals
- (3) That the Panel support proposals for taxi parking at Meadow Lane on a temporary basis only, as this land is required as part of proposals for the city park, as proposed in the South Bank Planning Framework, and a replacement permanent facility will need to be identified and provided

16 Date and Time of Next Meeting

Thursday 4th July 2013 at 1.30pm

Minutes approved at the meeting
Held on 1st August 2013