

Report to the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation)

Date: 25 November 2014

Subject: Otley Parking Strategy Experimental Order

Capital Scheme Number: 16922 / 000 / 000

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Otley & Yeadon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. The Best Council Plan 2013-17 outlines how Leeds City will achieve its ambition to become the Best City in the UK and Leeds City Council the best local authority. Accordingly the Best Council Plan, the success of the Best Council objective: ensuring high quality public services, will be partly measured through working proactively to optimise the support given to business and by providing a good and efficient transport infrastructure, to support economic growth.

2. Leeds City Council developed an Otley Parking Strategy which is a document that recommended changes to the car parking provision within Otley to support the aims and ambitions of the Best Council Plan.

3. As part of these proposals and to ensure the expeditious movement of vehicles and to facilitate the required parking demands along certain streets a one-way scheme has recently been introduced on Walkergate, Nelson Street and Charles Street, which has created some concerns to local residents.

4. It is also proposed as part of the experimental order to implement peak period loading restrictions on Crossgates to remove unnecessary obstructive parking which has contributed to the current problems. This will also assist the efficient and effective operation of the bus station.

5. This report seeks approval to undertake the advertisement and implementation of an experimental Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) and authorisation to carry out appropriate works to make necessary amendments to the one-way system and to implement peak period loading restrictions on Crossgate.

Recommendations

6. The Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) is requested to:
 - i) approve the scheme to amend the direction of the one-way traffic flow along Walkergate, Nelson Street and Charles Street;
 - ii) Approve the implementation of peak period loading restrictions on Crossgate; and
 - iii) request the City Solicitor to advertise an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order, as shown on the attached drawing number TMW-27-1-1760-4a; and at the end of the 18 month experimental period for the Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) to give appropriate consideration to making the Order permanent.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider and approve an experimental traffic regulation order and authorise appropriate works to make amendments to the one-way system on Walkergate, Charles Street and Nelson Street, Otley in order to resolve congestions issues within the town centre.

2 Background information

- 2.1 In 2008 and 2009 a study was undertaken on behalf of Leeds City Council into parking patterns and provision in Otley town centre. This study was designed to make recommendations for a strategy for parking management in the town, covering commuter parking, short stay parking and disabled facilities
- 2.2 The Otley Parking Strategy was completed in 2010. 9 key issues were identified covering long and short term strategic actions. One of these issues was the introduction of a one-way traffic flow on Walkergate, Nelson Street and Charles Street.
- 2.3 The issues on the three streets are caused by insufficient available road width due to parked vehicles, causing frequent conflict between opposing traffic. Two schemes to resolve this were proposed, one of which removed parking on-street. This was rejected by various stakeholders including Ward Members due to the high demand for on-street parking in Otley.
- 2.4 To maintain both the flow of traffic and available on-street parking provision, surveys were undertaken. These showed a roughly equal distribution in terms of directional flow which led to a proposed set of one-way directions. Following consultation those were amended in favour of the balance of opinions offered by local Ward Members, Town Councillors and residents/ businesses.

- 2.5 A report which included these proposals was approved at Highways Board on 6 August 2013. Subsequently, recommendations made in response to objections received during the legal advertisement period were considered and approved in an objection report tabled at Highways Board on 1 April 2014. At that time, the objections related to the parking restrictions around the town and not to the one-way proposals.
- 2.6 Works to install the approved one-way flows began in October 2014 and have since been recently completed. The initial disturbance to traffic flows caused by the construction and implementation of the one-way system generated a good deal of local concern relating to an increase in congestion and journey times at peak periods. Whilst support for the one-way initiative has been reported from some residents of Walkergate, it is felt that the current direction of one-way flows have added too much additional traffic onto the Crossgate/Boroughgate junction which, in turn, is creating traffic build-up on the surrounding network.
- 2.7 UTMC colleagues have tried to improve the situation by adjusting the timings on traffic signals within Otley, but this has not resolved the issues being experienced.
- 2.8 Having given a short period of time for the scheme to settle down and for drivers to change their habitual driving routes, it is apparent that the situation has not eased and local concerns remain.

3 Main issues

3.1 Design Proposals and Full Scheme Description.

- 3.1.1 To help resolve the concerns speedily and to give engineers the scope to make further amendments if needed, It is proposed to advertise an experimental TRO in order to amend the direction of flow for traffic along the three streets and to introduce peak period loading restrictions at key location which create unnecessary obstruction of the network particularly around the bus station.
- 3.1.2 Initially, the flow on Charles Street and Walkergate will be reversed. . It is considered that will remove the additional flows onto the Crossgate / Boroughgate signalised junction and will be successful in easing congestion. However, the experimental order will allow for amendments to be made during the 18 month period of the experiment, if considered necessary. There is the potential for newly created parking provision to be amended or removed as part of the experiment.
- 3.1.3 The works to amend the flow of traffic can initially be done by swapping sign plates and changing road markings only. Minor alterations to the new pedestrian island on Nelson Street may be required if the flow of traffic on Nelson Street is subsequently changed.
- 3.1.4 Once a successful layout has been found for the area, this will be sealed as a permanent order. There is the potential, under the Order, to return the streets to their original layout if that arrangement proves to be the most acceptable. The experimental order shall include provisions empowering the Chief Officer (Highway and Transportation), following consultation with the Chief Officer of Police to modify or suspend the operation of any provision of the order:-

- In the interests of the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic;
- In the interests of providing suitable and adequate on street parking facilities;
or
- For the preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road affected by the orders run. This approach will allow the restrictions to be varied and changed as the situation develops, for the betterment of residents and the local environment.

3.2 **Programme** – Initial works will be carried out immediately following approval and subsequent one week advertisement period, to resolve the ongoing concerns before the commencement of the Christmas shopping period.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 A meeting was held with Ward Members on 12 November 2014 to discuss the congestion issues around Otley. The potential to make changes using an experimental order was discussed and agreed at the meeting. All three Ward Members have subsequently confirmed their support of the proposal and requested that initial changes be made as a matter of urgency.

4.1.2 The emergency services and Metro will be advised of the changes as part of the initial advertisement of the experimental Order.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 A further screening document is not necessary for this report.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 Local Transport Plan (LTP): The proposals are in line with the objective to improve road safety for all road users and to ensure the expeditious movement of vehicles.

4.3.2 Environmental policy: There are no specific implications arising from these proposals.

4.3.3 Community Safety: The proposals contained in this report have implications under Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and these are as follows: the measures will reduce the incidences of anti-social driving behaviour.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 The cost of these additional works can be contained within the original approved budget.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 The scheme is not subject to Call In. It falls below the relevant thresholds and affects only one ward

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 There are no risks – other than those normally encountered when working on the highway – associated with this scheme

5 Conclusions

5.1 The immediate and continuing negative effects of the one-way Order require addressing as a matter of urgency. It is considered that an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order is the appropriate means of facilitating alterations both quickly and flexibly, whilst providing for potential changes during the life of the Order.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Chief Officer (Highways and Transportation) is requested to:

- i) approve the scheme to amend the direction of the one-way traffic flow along Walkergate, Nelson Street and Charles Street;
- ii) request the City Solicitor to advertise an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order, as shown on the attached drawing number TMW-27-1-1760-4a; and
- iii) at the end of the 18 month experimental period for the Chief Officer (Highways a Transportation) to give appropriate consideration to making the Order permanent.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available for download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.