

Report of Chief Officer, Highways and Transportation

Report to the Director of City Development

Date: 19 December 2018

Subject: DEPUTATION - STOP THE PARK AND RIDE IN STOURTON

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Middleton Park; Hunslet & Riverside	<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. This report addresses the Deputation received at the Wednesday 11th July 2018 meeting of the Full Council from the Stop the Park and Ride in Stourton (SPARS) group regarding the claims that the proposed Stourton Park and Ride scheme will result in negative impacts for the local area of Belle Isle, Middleton and Hunslet, and together with concerns that only a small section of the community will benefit from the scheme.
2. Specific issues raised by the Deputation were:
 - 2.1. The proposed site is next to Hunslet Cemetery
 - 2.2. The scheme will increase traffic in the local area
 - 2.3. Concerns that no meaningful consultation carried out, with no real alternative sites investigated and that the existing park and rides sites in the area do not operate at capacity.
 - 2.4. The construction phase will cause major disruption along existing bus routes
 - 2.5. Environmental concerns relating to a deterioration of noise and air quality together with negative visual impact, destroying a local green field, and light pollution from the scheme
 - 2.6. Concerns of house values being negatively impacted

2.7. Concerns that the ground is not suitable for the proposal due to geotechnical reasons.

3. Leeds City Council recognise and empathise with the concerns raised by local residents in the Belle Isle, Middleton and Hunslet Area and want to work collaboratively to help develop schemes which help deliver against our best city ambitions.
4. There is an acceptance that there is further work yet to do to refine the Stourton P&R scheme and the wider Connecting Leeds programme. This programme will see over £500m invested in transport infrastructure over the next ten years. Improved infrastructure will deliver improved productivity, jobs, higher wages and a better standard of living.

Recommendations

5. The Director of City Development is requested to:
 - i) note the contents of the report, and the impact of the measures already implemented on zones across the city and within the Chapel Allerton ward; and
 - ii) agree the actions set out in section 3.2 in response to the Deputation.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to address the specific issues raised by Deputation received at the Wednesday 11th July 2018 meeting of the Full Council from the Stop the Park and Ride in Stourton (SPARS) group regarding the claims that the proposed Stourton Park and Ride scheme will result in negative impacts for the local area of Belle Isle, Middleton and Hunslet, and together with concerns that only a small section of the community will benefit from the scheme.

2. Background information

- 2.1. Leeds City Council recognise and empathise with the concerns raised by local residents in the Belle Isle, Middleton and Hunslet Area and want to work collaboratively to help develop schemes which help deliver against our best city ambitions.
- 2.2. There is an acceptance that there is further work yet to do to refine the Stourton P&R scheme and the wider Connecting Leeds programme. This programme will see over £500m invested in transport infrastructure over the next ten years. Improved infrastructure will deliver improved productivity, jobs, higher wages and a better standard of living.

3. Main issues

- 3.1. In response to this deputation there are a number of points to consider:
 - 3.1.1. The Stourton Park and Ride forms part of a wider strategy to improve journeys by bus, cycle and on foot between Wakefield, Lofthouse, Robin Hood, Middleton, Belle Isle, Hunslet and Leeds. By taking cars off the M621 motorway and the A61 South/A639 we can help improve air quality, bus journey times and the experience of cycling and walking along this route. The scheme as currently proposed includes over 5km of new cycle lanes and tracks to connect neighbourhoods throughout south Leeds.
 - 3.1.2. Moreover, the Wakefield to Leeds route is one of five routes we have identified for investment across Leeds. The proposals include delivering over 3,500 new park and ride spaces by enlarging existing sites and creating at least 3 new sites- including Thorpe Park and the airport P&R.
 - 3.1.3. The project team are working with local residents and visitors to the cemetery to design a scheme which limits the impact on this site, and resolves existing issues around vandalism, anti-social behaviour and rights of way through the cemetery. Following feedback the plans include extensive, and expanded areas of new trees, plants and shrubbery around the site. This is recognised as an emotive subject for many relatives of loved ones laid to rest in the cemetery. The team are confident they can find a solution which benefits everyone.
 - 3.1.4. A wide number of alternative sites have been considered, however the location of this particular site close to the M1, the M62 and the M621 makes it the clear preferred option. A number of options studies over the years have come to the same conclusion, and why this site has been allocated in the Local Plan for some

time, and recently reaffirmed as a key transport asset supporting the adopted Aire Valley Area Action Plan.

- 3.1.5. Detailed work to understand the impact the scheme will have on traffic and congestion has been undertaken. The results of this work have been independently reviewed and increased traffic along Belle Isle Road as a result of it opening is not anticipated. The scheme reduces traffic numbers around M621 J7, on the A61/A639 corridor into Leeds and the City Centre, and on the M621 route to Leeds, benefitting many residents of the same ward.
- 3.1.6. Ground conditions have been extensively assessed, and are considered suitable for the requirements of a surface car park and supporting environmental planting. Alternative areas for horses and other animals to graze will be investigated.
- 3.1.7. There is still work to be done to complete the planning for construction of the site and the route improvements. There will be some disruption but this will be managed by the contractor in order to keep it to a minimum. Widening roads, and constructing bus and cycle lanes, requires various activities such as resurfacing, kerbing, replanting and landscaping. However, the principle is that widening happens first, such that there is then more space than now to manage traffic flows, and minimise disruption. As with any work site and road works, there will be a certain level of noise, dust and temporary traffic diversions, taking account of traffic sensitive streets in the planning and approach. This planning work will be concluded with the Council's appointed Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme (LPTIP) Delivery Partner on conclusion of the planning application process.
- 3.1.8. Government have indicated a desire to move towards an all electric motor car fleet by the mid 2040's, but until then petrol cars will remain dominant, with a likelihood of a much lower proportion of diesel cars and a rapidly increasing number of electric vehicles continuing to travel into Leeds. Having the Stourton P&R and having better bus and cycle routes will help encourage people to use more sustainable transport modes. Furthermore, even when every car on the road is electric, our roads and streets will still not be able to cope with their numbers. Congestion will still be an issue and there is a need to get people out of their cars and onto shared vehicles (buses in this instance).

3.2. Action Plan

- 3.2.1. In summary, it is recognised and appreciated that people have concerns and the team are addressing these to help improve the proposals which will deliver significant benefits to south Leeds and the city as a whole.
- 3.2.2. Examples of such activities and responses that have already been instigated to ensure this, include:
 - i) The removal of the P&R expansion area
 - ii) The proactive development of Traffic Regulation orders in the area – to reduce impact of P&R site on community, should any be observed

- iii) Investigatory work to re-route the footpath away from Hunslet Cemetery - to help reduce existing resident concerns
- iv) More extensive landscape proposals – to act as visual and noise screen of P&R site (and motorway) from Hunslet Cemetery and the wider community, to which continued community involvement and engagement, with reps from the local community to ensure locally-led designs will be encouraged.
- v) Investment in Electric Buses – to further and proactively reduce bus based emissions and noise levels.
- vi) Enhanced CCTV proposals – P&R coverage - to include Hunslet Cemetery and any other anti-social behaviour prime location around the site, with local input to ensure the most effective security proposals are put in place.
- vii) Parallel A61 Public Transport improvements – to ensure existing bus services benefit from bus corridor proposals, and with parallel bus improvements to existing First Bus service no.s 2, 3, 12 & 13.
- viii) Adjacent bus priority measures along the A61 (S) to the P&R site, and approaching M621 J7. These will provide benefits to the existing bus routes to/from Wakefield and the villages around Rothwell, as well as their reliability
- ix) Wider Air Quality & Geotechnical monitoring – to record/confirm existing levels and compare against future levels. At the request of residents' views additional sites for monitoring have been included.
- x) Additional fencing/Barriers – to tackle existing problem with quad bikes/ antisocial behaviour becoming a future issue.

3.3. The Stourton P&R proposal is one piece of a much bigger plan to double bus patronage over the next ten years. There is a vision for what the city can look like and the tools to see it through. It is also symptomatic of a wider issue that faces the city. Tough decisions cannot and will not be made lightly.

3.4. Over the years the modifications to the transport system that were easier to implement – the ones that caused little or no disruption – have been made. There are no longer any simple changes that will generate meaningful benefits.

3.5. Significant changes are now required to allow Leeds to grow and flourish into the future. If Leeds genuinely want to put in place a much better public transport system, the bus system, which carries the majority of public transport passengers- and needs to do better, has to be upgraded to meet the future demands that are going to be placed upon it.

4. Corporate Considerations

4.1. Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1. Various Local Community and Ward Member consultations have taken place over the course of the scheme. Dates & venues are given below.

- 4.1.2. Initial public engagement between 5th September 2017 and 27th October 2017:
- i) Public events (exhibitions / displays)
 - Wednesday 20th September 10.00am to 19.00pm Briggate, Leeds City Centre
 - Tuesday 26th September 14.00-18.00pm West Grange Church, Belle Isle
 - Monday 2nd October 15.00-19.00pm, Hunslet Church of the Nazarene (Lupton Street)
 - Thursday 12th October 15.00-19.00pm, Windmill Community Centre, Rothwell
 - ii) Mini exhibitions (St George's Centre, Hunslet Library, Rothwell Library)
- 4.1.3. Further Community Group Engagement from October 2017 to June 2018:
- i) Carlton, Rothwell, Oulton & Woodlesford Neighbourhood Forums (25th October 2017, 6th February 2018 & 5th July 2018);
 - ii) Friends & Relatives of Hunslet Cemetery (16th November 2017 & 9th February 2018);
 - iii) Hunslet Carr Residents Association (7th December 2017);
 - iv) Hunslet Tenants & Residents Association (7th February 2018);
 - v) Leader of the Council and Ward Members (18th June at the Civic Hall)
- 4.1.4. LPTIP Consultation Events along A61(S) during June 2018:
- i) Saturday 23rd June – Hunslet Methodist Church
 - ii) Monday 25th June – Lofthouse Methodist Church
 - iii) Tuesday 26th June – St John's and St Barnabas Church, Belle Isle
 - iv) Wednesday 27th June – Leeds College of Building, Hunslet Campus
- 4.1.5. A special LPTIP Public Consultation event was arranged in July 2018, specifically to update on Stourton P&R proposals:
- i) Thursday 12th July 17.00-20.00pm West Grange Church, Belle Isle

4.2. Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1. An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening has been carried out and has determined there is no adverse impact and that an impact assessment is not required.

4.3. Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1. The Best City ambition is to improve life for the people of Leeds and make our city a better place. To create improvements to the Leeds transport network has the potential to contribute to the vision for Leeds 2030 to be the best city in the UK, and the following best Council Priorities;

- Inclusive Growth (Supporting growth and investment helping everyone benefit from the economy to their full potential)
- 21st Century Infrastructure (Improving transport connections, safety, reliability and affordability)
- Health and Wellbeing (Supporting health and physically active lifestyles)

4.4. Resources and value for money

4.4.1 The scheme funding is currently allocated in the LPTIP which comprises £183.3m funding from the DfT (£173.5m), LCC (£8.8m) and WYCA (£0.97m). In line with the governance arrangements, further funding approvals will be required from the Combined Authority for spend from the DfT and WYCA funding.

4.4.2 Approvals through WYCA Assurance Framework will need to be progressed to release the expenditure needed to deliver this scheme.

4.5. Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1. There are no legal implications and this report is not eligible for Call-In.

4.6. Risk Management

4.6.1 The LPTIP serves to make progress towards the Leeds Long Term Transport Vision and Keeping the city moving. If the project is not implemented, Leeds will not be able to develop in the way articulated above.

4.6.2 The scheme will be assured through the West Yorkshire Combined Authority framework set up for the governance of the West Yorkshire Transport Fund, already approved by the Department for Transport. Progression through this assurance process in a timely manner is necessary in order to avoid delays to the overall programme delivery.

4.6.3 An overall Programme Board has been established to manage delivery of the programme with satellite boards responsible for each package element. Risks are actively managed through these Boards.

5. Conclusions

5.1. The Best City ambition to improve life for the people of Leeds and make our city a better place will be fully realised when residents feel safe engaging in active travel modes on all roads in Leeds. However, to achieve this ambition, areas of greatest road safety concerns, or greatest demand, must be prioritised as part of improvement programmes, with the benefits gradually permeating the fabric of the

city. The scheme proposed at Stourton contributes to this approach by helping to pump prime new travel choices for journeys into the city centre which complements the ongoing development of wider longer term mode switch to public transport and other carbon modes such as walking and cycling for appropriate journeys.

6. Recommendations

6.1. The Director of City Development is requested to:

- i) note the contents of the report, and the impact of the measures already implemented on zones across the city and within the Chapel Allerton ward; and
- ii) agree the actions set out in section 3.2 in response to the Deputation.

7. Background documents¹

7.1 There are no background documents to this report.

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