



Report of Joel Dodsworth, UTMC Manager

Report to the Chief Officer Highways & Transportation

Date: 09 February 2021

Subject: Traffic Signal Operation at Standalone Crossings

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input 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

1. Main issues

- Traffic signal controlled crossings provide a safe facility for non-motorised road users to cross the road that is vital for connecting communities. They are particularly important for protecting more vulnerable road users.
- The Climate Emergency requires a greater focus on active travel and the importance of walking and cycling has also been highlighted since the beginning of COVID-19 restrictions.
- Technological advances have presented an opportunity to operate more sophisticated control strategies that are more responsive to pedestrian demand.
- This report proposes the adoption of several design features as policy. The aim of this is to provide a formal basis to benchmark the practical operation of signal control at standalone crossings against more strategic objectives such as the draft Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy and Vision Zero principles.

2. Best Council Plan Implications

- The Best Council plan outlines how Leeds City will achieve its ambition to become the Best City in the UK and Leeds City Council the best Local Authority.

- The policy changes documented in this report contribute to several aspects of the Best Council Plan:

Health and Wellbeing. The Best Council Plan states objectives of “supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles”. Changes to signal controlled crossing design and operation will contribute by promoting greater priority for pedestrians/cyclists.

Sustainable Infrastructure. The Best Council Plan states objectives of “improving transport connections, safety, reliability and affordability” and “less wasteful, more resource efficient, low carbon economy”.

- a) Increased responsiveness of controlled crossings contributes to achieving these objectives. Reducing waiting times contributes to increased safety as pedestrians are more likely to wait for the green man to appear before they cross.
 - b) Changing the behaviour of the signal operation in the absence of any vehicle demands (i.e. showing a red to any approaching vehicles) will help to reduce vehicle speeds without adding delay since the signals will change before they reach the stop line.
- The proposed improvements provide a safer and more efficient method of traffic signal control that benefits active travel without significantly impacting other road users.

3. Resource Implications

- There are no specific resource implications related to the contents of this report.

Recommendations

The Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) is requested to:

- a) Note the contents of this report; and
- b) Approve the proposed policy regarding traffic signal operation at standalone signal controlled crossings for:
 - i. **Walking speed:** A reduction in design walking speed from 1.2 m/s to 0.8 m/s and adoption of LTN 1/20 cycle clearance times.
 - ii. **Maximum waiting time:** Adoption of a maximum 25 second pedestrian waiting time unless there are specific mitigating factors.
 - iii. **Control method:** Implementation of the MOVA control strategy at all new crossings outside the City Centre with bespoke conditioning to minimise pedestrian waiting times based on the Pre-Timed Max concept.
 - iv. **Pedestrian demand:** Adoption of a feature that places pedestrian demands without the need to press the button at all new/refurbished crossings, subject to successful trials. This also applies to people on bikes waiting at Toucan and/or cycle crossings.

- v. **Green man extension:** Adoption of dynamic green man extensions using kerbside detectors at all new/refurbished crossings, subject to successful trials.
- vi. **Operation:** Adoption of reversion to all-red in the absence of any demands, with the exception of the City Centre where reversion will be to the green man. This will be reviewed on a site-by-site basis.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To seek approval for introduction of a new policy regarding traffic signal control at standalone crossings.

2. Background information

- 2.1 For avoidance of doubt, where this report refers to pedestrian crossings, it should be inferred that this also applies to Puffin, Toucan and cycle crossings.
- 2.2 There are a number of guidance documents for traffic signal controlled crossings that have been produced by the Department for Transport over the course of many years such as LTN 2/95, TAL 1/01, TAL 5/05 and the Puffin Good Practice Guide. More recently Chapter 6 of the Traffic Signs Manual and LTN 1/20 have been published. These documents include guidance on the physical layout and equipment, timings (including safety clearances) and the control strategy to be used at crossings.

Walking/cycling speed

- 2.3 The walking speed of pedestrians has generally been assumed in guidance to be 1.2m/s. However, in Chapter 6 of the Traffic Signs Manual, a walking speed of 1.0m/s is suggested as something that could be introduced at specific sites or as an area-wide policy. A 2012 study demonstrated that the mean walking speed for those aged over 65 years was lower, at 0.8m/s. The walking speed determines the clearance time, after the green man has terminated, for pedestrians to cross.
- 2.4 Updated cycle clearance times are included in LTN 1/20. At some locations this will increase the clearance times at existing crossings which may have a slight impact on general traffic capacity.

Pedestrian waiting times

- 2.5 Waiting time for pedestrians varies from one site to another depending on various site specific factors (i.e. waiting times may be longer if linked to a nearby junction). The waiting times also vary depending on policy and guidance available at the time those crossings were installed.
- 2.6 The TRL report, PPR241, cites various studies that report on the influence of pedestrian waiting times on compliance with the green man. The report notes that “longer waiting times were associated with larger numbers of pedestrians crossing on red in a number of studies”. Whilst the evidence linking this increased non-compliance to an increase in collisions involving pedestrians is limited, it is clearly beneficial to minimise non-compliance.
- 2.7 In some guidance (i.e. LTN 2/95), the maximum waiting time for pedestrians is stated as 40 seconds and some research suggests that waiting times longer than this would lead to a significant rise in non-compliance. However, in the UK, other research suggests this figure is closer to 30 seconds and, in a Japan study, 21-28

seconds was reported as being the waiting time invoking a feeling of impatience. Clearly, whatever the threshold of non-compliance (which will vary from one person to another) the longer pedestrians have to wait, the more likely it is that they will try to cross against the red man.

- 2.8 However, other factors also influence pedestrian behaviour. If large gaps in traffic are observed but the signals do not change accordingly/intuitively then it increases the likelihood that pedestrians will attempt to cross against the red man.
- 2.9 The latest version of MOVA, the adaptive control strategy that is now implemented at most new junctions in Leeds, allows engineers to write bespoke conditioning to influence the operation of the optimiser. This provides the opportunity to introduce a method of control similar to Pre-Timed Max (PTM), whereby the maximum vehicle green is timed by the controller from the end of the previous pedestrian stage rather than from when the button is pressed. MOVA will find gaps in traffic more readily than the conventional method of control and so, when combined with a PTM-style operation, it significantly reduces the waiting times for pedestrians and makes signal changes more intuitive.
- 2.10 PTM often results in minimal waiting times for pedestrians, especially at crossings with a relatively low volume of pedestrians, but benefits do reduce with higher volumes of pedestrians as the waiting time tends towards the maximum value. By using MOVA but introducing a PTM style operation, waiting times for pedestrians can remain low until MOVA detects that general traffic is oversaturated, at which point the pedestrian waiting time will gradually increase up to the maximum. Once MOVA detects that general traffic is under-saturated, the pedestrian waiting times will immediately drop back to the lowest values.

Sensors

- 2.11 Conventional kerbside detection, used to detect the presence of pedestrians and cyclists, uses radar technology which was initially developed for other applications, including reversing warning systems for the automotive industry. This detection has already been identified as sub-optimal in a previous report and LCC is in the process of installing thermal imaging sensors at new and refurbished sites.
- 2.12 The increased reliability of detection promised by the newer technology provides the opportunity to demand the pedestrian stage at a crossing from the kerbside 'above-ground' detection, thus negating the requirement for a pedestrian to push the button. The kerbside technology is also capable of detecting people still waiting to cross at the end of the green man.
- 2.13 There are a number of products that have been developed even more recently aimed at improving accessibility. These products use a variety of different technologies to assist users in navigating the road network and placing demands at crossings. Some examples of this are 'touch-free' push button units and mobile apps to place demands at crossings via Bluetooth.

Operation

- 2.14 At traffic signal controlled junctions it is common, in the absence of any vehicle demands, to revert to all-red (i.e. a red signal is shown to all approaches). This feature is incorporated into many sites across Leeds and helps to reduce vehicle speeds on the approach to a junction during periods of low traffic flow.
- 2.15 Conversely, signal controlled crossings are almost always configured, in the absence of any demand, to revert to green for vehicles. The historical reasons for this are likely to be to minimise delay to vehicles and to minimise the vehicle

detection required. However, TAL 1/01 suggests that pedestrian crossings can be configured to display a red signal to all road users in the absence of demand as it “allows the signals to change quickly for pedestrians or vehicles on a “first come-first-served” basis”.

- 2.16 More recently, Transport for London has begun to reconfigure some of its crossings to revert to displaying the green man in the absence of any demand. Evidence from a similar three-year trial in Hull demonstrated that it reduced collisions with a 36% reduction in injuries and 67% drop in child collisions. This configuration makes sense in high volume pedestrian areas where it is likely that pedestrians will arrive during this time. However, it may lead to unnecessary delays elsewhere as the minimum green man time and clearances must first be served before moving back to vehicle green.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 Traffic signal controlled crossings provide a safe facility for non-motorised road users to cross the road that is vital for connecting communities. They are particularly important for protecting more vulnerable road users.
- 3.2 The Climate Emergency requires a greater focus on active travel and the importance of walking and cycling has also been highlighted since the beginning of COVID-19 restrictions.
- 3.3 Technological advances have presented an opportunity to operate more sophisticated control strategies that are more responsive to pedestrian demand.
- 3.4 This report proposes the adoption of several design features as policy. This will provide the basis of a working document that can be regularly reviewed to ensure that it reflects the latest guidance and is in line with the Draft Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy and Vision Zero objectives.

Walking speed

- 3.5 The latest guidance (Chapter 6 of the Traffic Signs Manual) suggests lower walking speeds could be used as an area-wide policy. A 2012 survey suggests a lower walking speed of 0.8m/s may be more appropriate. It is proposed that a 0.8m/s walking speed is adopted by Leeds City Council as policy in the design process for signal controlled crossings.
- 3.6 It is proposed that the cycle crossing clearance times set out in LTN 1/20 are adopted as policy to ensure that there is sufficient clearance time for all users. This is unlikely to have a significant effect at shorter crossings but may have a slight impact on general traffic capacity at very long crossings.

Pedestrian waiting times

- 3.7 It is proposed that Leeds City Council adopts a policy at standalone signal controlled crossings of a maximum 25 seconds waiting time for pedestrians. This will be implemented at every new/refurbished crossing and efforts will be made to modify existing crossings where resource allows. The only exception to this is if the crossing is close to an adjacent junction that requires coordination. In this case, every effort should be made to design the linking in a manner that minimises delay to pedestrians.
- 3.8 It is proposed that the MOVA control strategy is installed at every new signal controlled crossing with bespoke PTM-style operation as policy and that funding opportunities will be sought to retrofit this method of control to crossings that are

being refurbished. It is envisaged that this will significantly reduce average pedestrian waiting times across the city without a significant adverse effect on general traffic delay. The exception to this control method is in the City Centre where an alternative optimiser is being developed.

Sensors

- 3.9 With the introduction of more reliable sensors, it has been possible to introduce 'contact free' demand for pedestrians. This has already proven invaluable at crossings where pedestrians tend to cross without pressing the button and waiting for the green man as 'above ground' detection enables a demand to be registered anyway, thus resulting in the signals changing and reducing risk to the pedestrian. However, 'contact free' technology also provides a benefit in terms of reducing the risk from COVID-19. It is proposed that, subject to successful trials, this feature is introduced at all new and refurbished crossings and efforts made to retrofit to other sites where resource allows.
- 3.10 A secondary benefit of using newer sensor technology is that it becomes possible to extend the green man automatically if there are pedestrians still waiting to cross at the end of the initial green man. The green man is an invitation to cross and, at crossings with nearside facilities, is designed to provide enough time for pedestrians to step from the kerb onto the crossing. However, for people with impaired mobility, parents with young children (or a pushchair) and at sites with sporadically higher volumes of pedestrians (e.g. near schools) it can take longer for pedestrians to start crossing. In these situations, using the kerbside detectors to provide a longer green man time when appropriate will minimise inefficiency at those times when it is not required. This feature is currently being trialled and it is proposed that, if proven reliable, it is included at all new and refurbished sites.
- 3.11 Technology to improve accessibility will be regularly reviewed and accessibility groups consulted extensively to ensure that any potential adoption of technology is beneficial and not just 'technology for the sake of technology'. Specifically, it should be an enhancement of the existing infrastructure and not a 'sticking plaster' for poorly designed infrastructure.

Operation

- 3.12 It is proposed that, in order to provide a more equitable service to pedestrians, all new and refurbished standalone controlled crossings are configured to revert to all-red in the absence of any demand. Initially this policy would apply to crossings in areas with speed limits up to 30mph but may also be trialled at higher speed sites where detection is installed far enough away from the crossing to trigger a change back to green without introducing unnecessary stops for vehicles.
- 3.13 The exception to this is in the City Centre where pedestrian volumes are higher. It is proposed that here, pedestrian crossings and junctions instead revert to the green man.
- 3.14 It is proposed that all new/refurbished crossings are installed with this feature but with the facility to switch it on/off as default. This will ensure that if there are any unforeseen site-specific issues, the operation can be changed simply and quickly.
- 3.15 A secondary benefit of introducing this feature is that it may reduce vehicle speeds on the approach to pedestrian crossings during periods of lower vehicle demand. It is proposed that surveys are undertaken before and after the introduction of this feature at various locations to determine whether this is indeed the case.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 The Executive Board Member for Climate Change, Transport and Sustainable Development has been consulted regarding this proposal.
- 4.1.2 The proposals set out in this report reflect feedback that officers have received via various forums such as the Street Charter and the outcomes of this report will be shared with the relevant groups.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 A screening document has been prepared and an independent impact assessment is not required for the approvals requested.
- 4.2.2 The proposals set out in the report will result in reduced waiting times at standalone crossings for pedestrians and cyclists (with the exception of cyclists on carriageway). This will help to reduce community severance.
- 4.2.3 Increased safety clearance times and green man extensions will help to provide more comfort to users of the crossings that take more time to cross (i.e. young children and those with impaired mobility) and contribute to more inclusive infrastructure.
- 4.2.4 The proposed technology will remove the need for pedestrians to press the button. For people with impaired mobility, this will make it easier to navigate crossings across the city.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

The scheme proposals contribute to several aspects of the Best Council Plan.

- 4.3.1 **Health and Wellbeing.** The Best Council Plan states objectives of “supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles”. The proposals in this report will contribute by promoting improving service for cyclists and pedestrians at traffic signal controlled crossings.
- 4.3.2 **Age-Friendly Leeds.** The newer technologically advanced detectors will provide reliable detection of pedestrians waiting to cross the carriageway and the reduction in design walking speeds will increase the time in which pedestrians can cross. The green man extension feature will help to cater for those who take longer to step onto the crossing.
- 4.3.3 **Sustainable Infrastructure.** The Best Council Plan states objectives of “improving transport connections, safety, reliability and affordability” and “less wasteful, more resource efficient, low carbon economy”.
 - a) The proposals in this report contribute to achieving these objectives by improving the level of service for walking and cycling both in terms of safety and reliability.

- b) The introduction of new technology and more sophisticated control systems will increase efficiency.

4.3.4 The proposed improvements provide a safer and more efficient method of traffic signal control that will provide substantial benefits for walking and cycling without significant impact on other road users.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.5 These proposals make a major contribution towards Leeds City Council's response to the Climate Emergency. Walking and cycling are key alternatives to the use of the private car for short and medium length journeys, and the provision of safe walking and cycling infrastructure has been proven to increase sustainable journeys on those routes.
- 4.3.6 Transport is a major source of CO₂ emissions that contribute to climate change. Private cars emit around 130g of CO₂ per km in the UK, and travel around 8500 miles per year on average (13,600km). This represents an average annual emission of 1.8 tonnes of CO₂ per car.
- 4.3.7 The proposals contained in this report contribute to the Leeds target reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 by improving facilities for walking and cycling and to encourage these transport choices as an alternative to short car journeys.
- 4.3.8 The adoption of some of the proposed measures as policy may result in a minor increase in vehicle stops, and thus emissions, from vehicular traffic. However, it is envisaged that this will be negligible and must be considered in the wider context of making sustainable modes of transport more attractive.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 There are no specific resource implications related to the contents of this report.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

- 4.5.1 The scheme is not subject to Call In and there are no grounds for treating the contents of this report as confidential with the Council's Access to Information Rules.

4.6 Risk management

- 4.6.1 Failure to adopt the proposals set out in the report as policy will result in the continuation of 'business-as-usual' and will limit the benefits to walking and cycling that could otherwise be provided.
- 4.6.2 There is a potential risk associated with some of the proposals. In particular, changing the operation of the signals in the absence of any demand could prompt queries regarding the potential impact on emissions due to additional vehicle stops. It is proposed that an appropriate strategy is developed to communicate the reasons for the change to road users, specifically in regard to the wider context of road safety and more equitable service to active travel modes.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 This report proposes the adoption of several standalone signal controlled design features as policy. Some of the proposals draw on the outcomes of studies that suggest road safety benefits and others are practical measures to improve service to pedestrians.
- 5.2 Many of the proposals have been made possible through advances in technology and some (i.e. contact-free demand and green man extension) will be subject to the reliability demonstrated in on-going trials.
- 5.3 It is anticipated that adopting these design features as policy will help to provide a formal basis to benchmark the practical operation of signal control at standalone crossings against more strategic objectives such as the draft Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy and Vision Zero objectives.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) is requested to:
 - a) Note the contents of this report; and
 - b) Approve the proposed policy regarding traffic signal operation at standalone signal controlled crossings for:
 - i. **Walking speed:** A reduction in design walking speed from 1.2 m/s to 0.8 m/s and adoption of LTN 1/20 cycle clearance times.
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 - vi. **Operation:** Adoption of reversion to all-red in the absence of any demands, with the exception of the City Centre where reversion will be to the green man. This will be reviewed on a site-by-site basis.

7. Background documents¹

- 7.1 None.

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.

8. Appendices

8.1 EDCI Screening

Appendix 1

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening

As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.

A **screening** process can help judge relevance and provides a record of both the **process** and **decision**. Screening should be a short, sharp exercise that determines relevance for all new and revised strategies, policies, services and functions. Completed at the earliest opportunity it will help to determine:

- The relevance of proposals and decisions to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.
- whether or not equality, diversity, cohesion and integration is being/has already been considered, and
- Whether or not it is necessary to carry out an impact assessment.

Directorate: City Development	Service area: Highways & Transportation
Lead person: Joel Dodsworth	Contact number: 3788128

1. Title: Traffic Signal Operation at Standalone Pedestrian Crossings
Is this a:
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Strategy / Policy <input type="checkbox"/> Service / Function <input type="checkbox"/> Other
If other, please specify

2. Please provide a brief description of what you are screening
The screening process relates to the adoption of several design features for standalone traffic signal controlled crossings as policy.

<p>3. Relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration</p> <p>All the council's strategies/policies, services/functions affect service users, employees or the wider community – city wide or more local. These will also have a greater/lesser relevance to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration.</p> <p>The following questions will help you to identify how relevant your proposals are.</p> <p>When considering these questions think about age, carers, disability, gender</p>
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reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation and any other relevant characteristics (for example socio-economic status, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background and education or skills levels).		
Questions	Yes	No
Is there an existing or likely differential impact for the different equality characteristics?	X	
Have there been or likely to be any public concerns about the policy or proposal?		X
Could the proposal affect how our services, commissioning or procurement activities are organised, provided, located and by whom?		X
Could the proposal affect our workforce or employment practices?		X
Does the proposal involve or will it have an impact on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminating unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment • Advancing equality of opportunity • Fostering good relations 		X

If you have answered **no** to the questions above please complete **sections 6 and 7**

If you have answered **yes** to any of the above and;

- Believe you have already considered the impact on equality, diversity; cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 4**.
- Are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration within your proposal please go to **section 5**.

<p>4. Considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration</p> <p>If you can demonstrate you have considered how your proposals impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you have carried out an impact assessment.</p> <p>Please provide specific details for all three areas below (use the prompts for guidance).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How have you considered equality, diversity, cohesion and integration? (think about the scope of the proposal, who is likely to be affected, equality related information, gaps in information and plans to address, consultation and engagement activities (taken place or planned) with those likely to be affected) <p>The proposals set out in the report will result in reduced waiting times at standalone crossings for pedestrians and cyclists (with the exception of cyclists on carriageway). This will help to reduce community severance.</p> <p>Increased safety clearance times and green man extensions will help to provide more comfort to users of the crossings that take more time to cross (i.e. young children and those with impaired mobility) and contribute to more inclusive infrastructure.</p> <p>The proposed technology will remove the need for pedestrians to press the button. For people with impaired mobility, this will make it easier to navigate crossings across the city.</p>

• Key findings
(think about any potential positive and negative impact on different equality characteristics, potential to promote strong and positive relationships between groups, potential to bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other, perception that the proposal could benefit one group at the expense of another)

 Improving the service for walking and cycling at signal controlled crossing facilities will reduce barriers between communities, without significant impact on other road users.

• Actions
(think about how you will promote positive impact and remove/ reduce negative impact)

 The potential negative impact of the proposals set out in this report is that there will be a slight increase in stops for buses at crossings. This is being mitigated by introducing bus priority at each new crossing that will ensure that the green signal can be extended for buses.

5. If you are not already considering the impact on equality, diversity, cohesion and integration you will need to carry out an impact assessment.

Date to scope and plan your impact assessment:	N/A
Date to complete your impact assessment	N/A
Lead person for your impact assessment (Include name and job title)	N/A

6. Governance, ownership and approval
 Please state here who has approved the actions and outcomes of the screening

Name	Job title	Date
Joel Dodsworth	UTMC Manager	27/01/2021

7. Publishing

Though **all** key decisions are required to give due regard to equality the council **only** publishes those related to **Executive Board, Full Council, Key Delegated Decisions** or a **Significant Operational Decision**.

A copy of this equality screening should be attached as an appendix to the decision making report:

- Governance Services will publish those relating to Executive Board and Full Council.
- The appropriate directorate will publish those relating to Delegated Decisions and Significant Operational Decisions.
- A copy of all other equality screenings that are not to be published should be sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk for record.

Complete the appropriate section below with the date the report and attached screening was sent:

For Executive Board or Full Council – sent to Governance Services	Date sent:
For Delegated Decisions or Significant Operational	Date sent:

Decisions – sent to appropriate Directorate	
All other decisions – sent to equalityteam@leeds.gov.uk	Date sent: