

City Square Traffic Regulation Orders

Date:

Report of: Traffic Engineering

Report to: Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

The closure of City Square to through traffic is a long standing ambition for Leeds City Council, and in March 2020 the Executive Board approved this closure. The closure took effect in September 2022 and has been successful in reducing the volumes of motor traffic and enabling the delivery of an enhanced public space.

In April 2022 the Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) approved the advertisement and introduction of a package of traffic regulation orders to enable and support the closure. Since this time it has been identified that additional restrictions on the movement and waiting of vehicles would offer further benefits and support to the main proposal, and this report seeks approval to advertise traffic regulation orders to facilitate these.

Recommendations

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

- a) Note that in April 2022 the Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) approved the advertisement and introduction of a package of traffic regulation orders to support the closure of City Square to through traffic; and
- b) Note that since advertisement of parts of that package some minor design changes have taken place on site such that amendments to the previous approval are required; and
- c) Approve the revised package detailed on attached drawing 999/LCC/22/XX/DR/TM/02a; and
- d) Instruct the City Solicitor to advertise Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) as detailed on attached drawing 999/LCC/22/XX/DR/TM/02 and subject to no objections being received to make and seal the Order as advertised.

What is this report about?

- 1 In March 2020 Leeds City Council's Executive Board approved the adoption of the Our Spaces strategy, which included a proposal to close City Square to through traffic. A number of reports relating to the City Square closure have been approved since, including a report to the Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation) in April 2022 which obtained approval to advertise and make traffic regulation orders facilitating and managing the closure.
- 2 During delivery of the City Square project and some of the ancillary works it has become apparent that there are additional benefits to be obtained through a further package of supporting traffic regulation orders, primarily relating to prohibited movements and loading restrictions.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 3 The traffic restrictions set out in this report will ensure the safe and free use of the highway network, and will support the success of the City Square closure project approved by Executive Board.
- 4 Movement restrictions are limited to two signalised junctions and alternative movements are readily available on adjacent roads. These restrictions have been carefully designed in conjunction with colleagues from across Highways & Transportation and will facilitate safe pedestrian movements through these junctions as well as efficient bus operations.
- 5 Loading restrictions are proposed on East Parade where a bus gate has recently been installed to support the public transport network. These restrictions will ensure that buses are not impeded by inappropriately parked vehicles.
- 6 A contra-flow cycle lane is proposed on East Parade to support active travel use and to complement the recent work on Calverley Street.
- 7 Some minor kerbside restrictions including loading bays and disabled parking supports the final iteration of the City Square design and enables these uses to be protected in the vicinity of the project.
- 8 In addition to the above it has become apparent in recent weeks that Bedford Street has become integral to the operation of the area between East Parade and Park Row. There is demand for loading but where this takes place outside the marked loading bay there is potential for obstruction of free flow of traffic.
- 9 In order to address this it is proposed to convert some existing Pay & Display parking bays to loading bays to increase the overall capacity, and to introduce a loading restriction along the remaining length of Bedford Street.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 10 The proposal supports the City Square scheme which aims to improve public transport and reduce reliance on the private car, to facilitate growth through the creation of a new high quality public space in the city centre, and to improve air quality in a key city centre location.
- 11 *Inclusive Growth.* By helping bus services to operate more efficiently, the proposal will contribute to inclusive growth by making it easier for residents who do not have access to a car to access jobs and services Leeds city centre. By making walking in the city centre safer and more convenient, the proposal will contribute to making Leeds city centre a more attractive destination, which will, in turn, support economic growth.

12 *Health and Wellbeing.* By making active modes of transport (in particular, walking) safer and more convenient, the proposal will promote healthier lifestyles as well as physical and mental wellbeing.

Climate Emergency. By making sustainable modes of transport (in particular, bus services and walking) quicker and more reliable, and therefore more attractive to prospective users, the proposal will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from transport by helping to facilitate modal shift from the private car to sustainable transport

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: Little London & Woodhouse

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

13 Ward members are aware of and are kept up to date with the developments at City Square. Members will be consulted in writing in parallel with the TRO advertisement process.

What are the resource implications?

14 Costs for this work are borne by the City Square project. The TROs will be drafted and delivered by the Traffic Engineering team as part of their annual programme.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

15 Key risks relate to potential objections to the TRO advertisement and proposals. This is mitigated by the wider City Square communications activities, and the proportionality of the proposals contained in this report.

16 Under the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996/2489, a public inquiry must be held where objections are received to any proposal to prohibit (amongst other matters) the loading or unloading of vehicles either at all times or before certain hours. This may have particular relevance to the proposals for East Parade, but to date, there are no indications that such objections are likely to be received.

What are the legal implications?

17 The proposals set out in this report will be implemented in accordance with the requirements of the Road Traffic Act 1984, as well as the Local Authorities Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996/2489.

18 This report is not eligible for call-in as the proposals fall below the relevant threshold.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

19 The alternative option would be to omit some or all of these TRO proposals. This is likely to have a detrimental effect on the success of the City Square scheme.

How will success be measured?

20 Successful delivery of the TROs will enable the delivery of the wider package of highway and public realm works

21 The closure of City Square helps facilitate the Best City ambition by creating opportunity for a world class public space, releasing highway for improved realm in other city centre locations, improving the environment, encouraging more city centre living, enabling investment, improving

health outcomes through improving active travel facilities, and future-proofing the city centre for the arrival of key transport projects including mass transit and high speed rail.

22 A programme of monitoring and evaluation has been proposed within the business cases submitted to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) and is a condition of the grant funding.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

23 The TROs will be advertised in the 2023/24 financial year, with the Traffic Engineering team responsible for this process.

Appendices

- Appendix A – Drawing 999/LCC/22/XX/DR/TM/02a
- Appendix B – EDCI Screening

Background papers

- N/A