

APPENDIX 'F'

Other Consultees – Representations and officers response

Local Ward Councillors were consulted and a subsequent briefing meeting was held. The following issues were raised :-

- Councillor Cate McDonald expressed concerns that the Blackstock Road/Gleadless Road proposals did not include controlled crossing facilities for pedestrians. Officers explained it was likely the time lost by introducing additional phases into the signals would severely erode the time-saving benefits calculated to accrue from provision of the bus lane. However, a review of the signal arrangements is currently being undertaken to determine if the scheme will still produce significant bus time-savings if pedestrian phases were to be introduced. Officers added that the proposed pedestrian refuges on Blackstock Road would, however, be a significant improvement on the existing situation.

Note : The outcome of the assessment was unavailable prior to completion of this report. Consequently, Officers will report the details verbally at the ICM meeting.

- Councillor Tim Rippon requested that the zebra crossing proposed on Gleadless Road be implemented irrespective of decisions about the bus lane scheme.
- Councillor McDonald was concerned that the proposed scheme at Prospect Road/Myrtle Road would exacerbate congestion at the junction. Members were informed that a number of options are under consideration to identify the optimum arrangement at this location to ensure the junction operates as efficiently as possible. It is proposed to undertake further localised consultation when the most appropriate junction layout has been identified. The extent and scope of the bus lane is unlikely to change and could be incorporated irrespective of the junction arrangement.

The Councillors requested that they be informed of the responses to the public consultation. Details of the representations received and officer responses were provided upon completion of the consultation period.

Ann's Grove Primary School – (Richards Road and Spencer Road/Prospect Road)
The Head-teacher was contacted and an Officer was invited to attend a Governor's meeting at the school to outline the proposals to the Staff and Governors. Officers subsequently responded to the points raised at the meeting, as follows :

- Concerns were expressed with regard to potential increases in traffic volumes as a result of the scheme.

Officer response :- Widening of the carriageway over the relatively short distance of 150m is highly unlikely to attract additional traffic to the route.

- Request for provision of school warning signs and carriageway markings to address the potential increase in vehicular speed.

Officer response :- Amey will be requested to ensure these will be provided. Additionally, Officers will investigate provision of a further two sets of calming features along the widened section to link with the traffic calming that exists along the school frontage.

- Request for the school/pupils to be involved in the new landscaping proposals.

Officer response :- Request acknowledged, to be arranged with Amey colleagues.

Heeley City Farm - Officers also met with the Chief Executive who had raised a number of points with regard to the Richards Road and Spencer Rd/Prospect Road schemes, as follows :-

- Request that the consultation period be extended into September/October to enable Ann's Grove School to be consulted.

Officer response :- The school has already been consulted (see above).

- Consideration should be given to control of vehicular speeds/volume on Spencer Road/Richards Road.

Officer response :- The widening is unlikely to attract additional traffic to the route. It is proposed to investigate provision of a further two sets of speed reducing features along the section of Richards Road affected by the widening proposals to address any potential increase in speed. The measures will complement the existing traffic calming on Spencer Road in the vicinity of the school.

- Consideration should be given to the adverse effects of pollution caused by increased traffic volumes.

Officer response :- It is not anticipated there will be any increase in traffic volumes. Additionally, the proposals are designed to address the delays caused by the narrow width of carriageway/on-street parking and it is well-documented that exhaust emissions from moving traffic are less harmful than emissions from standing traffic.

The Cyclist's Touring Club, (CTC – Right to Ride Representative) have expressed the following concerns:

- The proposed parking lay-by on Richards Road creates the potential for cyclists being hit by motorists opening car doors, request the footway be made segregated or shared use.

Officer response :- The new parking arrangement is no different to many other locations where cyclists need to ride past vehicles parked on-street adjacent to the kerb. Additionally, the up-hill gradient of Richards Road along this length is likely to

limit the speed of cyclists and provide adequate opportunity for cyclists to avoid any instances of careless door opening.

- Concerns relating to restricted carriageway widths on Blackstock Road resulting from the provision of pedestrian refuges - request that a zebra crossing be provided instead.

Officer response :- Carriageway widths at refuges are tailored to enable cyclists to ride past the restrictions safely by having either adequate width to accommodate a car overtaking a cyclist (preferred), or narrow enough to discourage motorised vehicles overtaking until the cyclist is clear of the constraint. Unfortunately, the necessary land required to accommodate the preferred arrangement is not available at this location. Provision of a zebra crossing has been considered previously, but this would require the introduction of speed cushions on each approach to address the higher vehicular speeds. This in turn would require the introduction of additional waiting restrictions, to the detriment of local residents who, in the absence of off-street parking availability, park on-street along the section which would require parking control. Revisions to the scheme lay-out have already been made to address objections to the waiting restrictions required under the initial layout.

The Gleadless Valley Wildlife Trust –

- GVWT have objected to the Blackstock Road bus lane scheme on the grounds of the severely detrimental effect on the mature trees which occupy areas of the south-west quadrant which would be affected by the proposed bus-only left slip road. Additionally, there is potentially a detrimental impact on a Pear tree which forms part of what remains of a Victorian orchard on the north side of Blackstock Road.

Officer response : Trees affected by the proposals will be replaced with semi-mature specimens which are robust and fit-for-purpose. The area of parkland affected by the relatively short length of new slip-road (approx. 50m) is not excessive and the areas adjacent to the new highway will be landscaped (as appropriate) and maintained to maximise the attractiveness of the parkland and soften any impact resulting from the new length of highway. Detailed design of the proposals will specifically aim to minimise the extent of encroachment and the number of trees affected. The new length of footpath to link with the existing route to the subway will be re-aligned to avoid affecting the Pear Tree

The Gleadless Valley Community Action Group (GVCAG) –

The GVCAG have raised a number of concerns and objections to the Blackstock Road/Gleadless Road widening scheme, as follows :-

- Proposed Links with the existing footpath to/from the subway under Gleadless Road.

Officer response : The new length of footpath to link with the existing route to the subway will be re-aligned to avoid affecting the Pear Tree.

- Crossing Location Proposal:

Officer response : The location of the zebra crossing (close to the pedestrian underpass) is in response to public requests to provide an alternative to the subway as many users had personal safety concerns and felt intimidated when using the underpass at certain times of day, particularly after dark.

- Destruction of trees and parkland where new bus route is proposed:

Officer response : Any trees affected by the proposals will be replaced with specimens which are robust and fit-for-purpose. The area of parkland affected by the relatively short length of new slip-road (approx. 50m) is not excessive and the areas adjacent to the new highway will be landscaped (as appropriate) and maintained to maximise the attractiveness of the parkland and soften any impact resulting from the new length of highway. Detailed design of the proposals will specifically aim to minimise the extent of encroach.

- No popular reason or call locally for the changes.

Officer response : The proposals were developed following provision of journey-time data supplied by the Bus Service Operators which demonstrated the significant delay to buses used by local people due to queuing traffic, mainly during peak hours, but also on other (less frequent) occasions.

- Possible subsidence concerns

Officer response : There are no indications that the works will result in an increase to the threat of subsidence. However, the City Council's PFI partners, Amey (who undertake all works in the highway on behalf of the Council), will ensure that any such issues are quickly and appropriately addressed in the unlikely event of this occurring.

- Disruption and inconvenience

Officer response : Any works of this nature unfortunately result in a certain amount of disruption and inconvenience for the local community and all users of the highway, to a lesser or greater degree. However, all possible steps will be taken to minimise the impact of the operations, which will be completed as quickly and efficiently as possible.

- Waste of public money, when there are probably more important locations and uses for the money.

Officer response : These measures are grant-funded by Central Government and the City Council and its BBAF partners (SYPT, Bus Operators etc) are not permitted to utilise this funding for any other purpose or in unrelated areas or fields of work.

- The congestion at the junction of Blackstock and Gleadless road occurs only at rush hour and is not so severe as to warrant these disproportionate changes.

Officer response : It is acknowledged that the highest level of delay and congestion occurs during the morning peak. However, based on data supplied by the service operators, delays can occur periodically throughout the day. Furthermore, provision of bus lanes or other bus priority measures provide the service operators with a degree of certainty when projecting figures with regard to fuel consumption, bus time-tabling etc.

- It will make the Blackstock Road/Bankwood Road area less pleasant due to the 'bypass' nature of the road changes.

Officer response : It is not felt the proposed measures will have a severe impact on the immediate environment due to the large areas of existing public open space, grassed verges and parkland which more than offsets the relatively short additional lengths of carriageway.

