



SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL

Highways Cabinet Member Decision

Report of: Executive Director, Place

Date: 14 July 2016

Subject: North Sheffield Better Buses – Barnsley Road near Orphanage Road/Scott Road

Author of Report: Ian Taylor / James Burdett

Summary:

The North Sheffield Better Buses project comprises 15 individual schemes between Ecclesfield and the City Centre. It aims to address problems for buses and other traffic along the route, reducing journey times and improving bus reliability.

One of these schemes is on Barnsley Road, near its junctions with Orphanage Road and Scott Road. Buses and all other vehicles are severely delayed in this area, with delays of over 8 minutes at peak times, over a distance of just 600 metres.

A scheme comprising the widening of Barnsley Road, a bus lay-by, revised waiting restrictions and a revised road layout on Scott Road was consulted upon in April/May 2016. Nine comments were received, raising a number of concerns but there are no formal objections and no longer any issues outstanding.

Reasons for Recommendations:

The revised scheme described in this report will contribute to improving journey times and reliability for bus services and other traffic along this route.

The scheme is being designed in detail with funding available to allow the scheme to be built in 2016/17 through to 2017/18.

Recommendations:

Approve and implement the scheme as shown in Appendix A, subject to any required re-confirmation of costs after detailed design (including any commuted sums).

Make the Traffic Regulation Orders relating to the proposed waiting restrictions in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Inform the respondents accordingly.

Background Papers:

Appendix A – April 2016 Scheme Proposal

Category of Report: OPEN

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
Cleared by: Julie Currey
Legal Implications
Cleared by: Paul Bellingham
Equality of Opportunity Implications
Cleared by: Annemarie Johnston
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
NO
Human rights Implications
NO
Environmental and Sustainability implications
NO
Economic impact
NO
Community safety implications
NO
Human resources implications
NO
Property implications
NO
Area(s) affected
Burngreave, Firth Park
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader
Councillor Mahzer Iqbal
Relevant Scrutiny Committee if decision called in
Economic and Environmental Wellbeing
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
NO
Press release
NO

NORTH SHEFFIELD BETTER BUSES – BARNSELEY ROAD NEAR ORPHANAGE ROAD/SCOTT ROAD

RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND RESPONSES TO A PROPOSED TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER

SUMMARY

The North Sheffield Better Buses project comprises 15 individual schemes between Ecclesfield and the City Centre. It aims to address problems for buses and other traffic along the route, reducing journey times and improving bus reliability.

One of these schemes is on Barnsley Road, near its junctions with Orphanage Road and Scott Road. Buses and all other vehicles are severely delayed in this area, with delays of over 8 minutes at peak times, over a distance of just 600 metres.

A scheme comprising the widening of Barnsley Road, a bus lay-by, revised waiting restrictions and a revised road layout on Scott Road was consulted upon in April/May 2016. Nine comments were received, raising a number of concerns but there are no formal objections and no longer any issues outstanding.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD PEOPLE?

The proposed scheme should help to reduce delays for buses and other vehicles, improving journey times and reliability for users of Barnsley Road, thus contributing to making the City a Great Place to Live.

OUTCOME AND SUSTAINABILITY

The proposals will contribute to improved bus services, improved journey times and a reduction in congestion, leading to a reduction in vehicle emissions in the vicinity of the scheme.

REPORT

Introduction

The North Sheffield Better Buses project (comprising Sheffield City Council, South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive (SYPTe) and local bus operators), has identified Barnsley Road, near its junctions with Orphanage Road and Scott Road, as the most frequent source of delay on bus routes between Ecclesfield and the City Centre.

Buses are often severely delayed for a number of reasons:

- The pedestrian crossing operates frequently at peak times. This is unavoidable due to the high numbers of pedestrians. The timings of the crossing have been made as efficient as possible.

- The road layout at the junction with Scott Road leads to drivers on Barnsley Road regularly giving way to traffic on the side road, thereby holding up traffic on the main road
- Buses cannot make the left turn into Scott Road when traffic is waiting to turn out, due to the restricted road width
- When buses call at the two stops near Orphanage Road, they frequently block the road meaning traffic can struggle to pass.

These factors combine to cause severe delays. Journey time data has shown that buses can sometimes take over 8 minutes to travel the 600 metres between Earl Marshall Road and Orphanage Road, when it should only take 2 or 3 minutes. The scheme should bring individual journey time savings of at least 2 minutes at peak times, as well as improving the reliability of bus services at all times, helping them to turn up on time. Significantly, all other vehicles on Barnsley Road will also benefit from the reduced congestion.

Proposal and Consultation

Officers developed a scheme to address the delays, comprising the widening of Barnsley Road, a bus lay-by, revised waiting restrictions and a revised road layout on Scott Road, which can be viewed in Appendix A.

Consultation with affected residents took place in April/May 2016. Local Members, the Emergency Services, Veolia and South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive were consulted. Additionally, signs were installed on street advertising the dedicated www.sheffield.gov.uk/northsheffield website, where the plans were available. A total of 108 separate visits were made to the website over the 3 week consultation period.

Nine comments were received from consultees. Four of these were supportive, whilst the others raised a number of issues but did not specifically object. All the issues are valid points that had been considered previously during the development of the scheme. These are detailed below, together with responses.

Crossing Barnsley Road, between Scott Road and Firshill Avenue, could be problematic for drivers

Outside of the busiest times, it is not envisaged that the situation will be any more difficult for drivers to cross, or turn right, from Firshill Avenue or Scott Road. There are regular gaps in traffic and the pedestrian crossing will continue to operate as it does now, providing opportunities for drivers to complete their manoeuvres. It is accepted that at peak times it is likely that these manoeuvres might be more difficult, however the pedestrian crossing traffic lights will continue to provide breaks in the traffic flows and some drivers will likely choose to use alternative routes, depending on their journey. It is also the intention to monitor the situation on site following implementation (should the scheme be approved) to determine if a yellow box/keep clear could be provided without reducing the benefits to the main road.

Would traffic signals be an alternative solution?

The first option considered was actually traffic lights at the junction, including full pedestrian facilities. The results showed, however, that there would likely be significant increased delays for all users of the junction, both during the busiest hours and also at quieter times. On Scott Road and Firshill Avenue, delays would likely be increased by almost 3 times at busy periods, something that clearly isn't acceptable.

The proposed pedestrian island on Scott Road will not provide pedestrians with good views of traffic turning into Scott Road from Barnsley Road.

Pedestrian walking routes were observed and showed that the vast majority of school children crossed Scott Road on the existing road hump before heading in an easterly direction. Very few crossed and then continued on Barnsley Road towards Firvale. Nonetheless, visibility on the central island has been maximised, and pedestrians will no longer have to look in both directions before crossing the road as they need only cross to the central island. Furthermore, as on all schemes, the proposals have successfully passed a Road Safety Audit where these issues were scrutinised.

The proposals show little respect for the needs of local citizens and their environment

Officers are always mindful of the impact on residents in adjacent neighbourhoods. It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to improve traffic flows on the main road whilst also maintaining local traffic movements at current levels. The existing road layout inadvertently leads to vehicles on the side roads getting an informal 'priority' over the main road, despite only being about 20% of the vehicles using the junction at busy times. Whilst it is appreciated that there could be some small increased delays for some vehicles exiting onto Barnsley Road, overall traffic movement should be much improved.

There is a real possibility that the extended and newly moved bus stops will provide waiting places at buses running on over-generous timetables, rescheduled as a cosmetic means of improving punctuality

The two stops in question are not timing points, so there is no reason to suspect that buses will wait for longer periods of time than necessary for passengers to board and alight. The stops are being upgraded so they are fully accessible to all users, together with bus stop clearways to ensure buses can get to the kerb edge properly.

Parking could get worse – can I have double yellow lines across my driveway?

Officers were very mindful of the impact on the parking situation on Scott Road. Numerous parking surveys established that despite the proposed alterations sufficient parking spaces would remain for the number of vehicles regularly parked. However it is acknowledged that the driveways could be blocked and it is recommended that H markings be installed across the driveways. They have been

shown to work effectively in situations such as this, and as with any case where a vehicle is causing an obstruction, the police can take enforcement action.

Can the small island next to the speed cushions be removed, freeing up space for parking?

The island was put in to ensure drivers did not swerve to avoid the speed cushions. At times when the demand for parking is low there could be a sufficient gap for drivers to swerve into the parking bay to avoid the cushions. On safety grounds it is felt that the island should remain. Parking surveys show that there should be sufficient parking space to accommodate demand.

Why isn't the inbound stop also being put in a lay-by?

A bus lay-by is only needed on one side, as getting buses off the main carriageway on one side will allow buses at the other side of the road to pull up and still get 2-way traffic past. To install a lay-by on the inbound side would also affect front gardens and green space.

Relevant Implications

Financial

The total cost of the revised scheme is estimated to be around £798k which includes for design, construction, supervision, contingency and commuted sum. It is to be funded from the Better Buses programme. Initial and Outline Business Cases, for the design stages, have been through the Great Places to Live (GP2L) Programme Board and Capital Programme Group (CPG). A Final Business Case is to be presented to the Thriving Neighbourhoods & Communities Board on 17 June 2016. Because of complex issues with Utilities' equipment and the nearby school we are seeking to undertake as much enabling work as possible during the Summer 2016 school holidays. This is likely to be mostly, if not all, statutory undertakers' diversions. Full funding remains committed from the Sheffield Bus Partnership.

The 25-year commuted sum for ongoing maintenance costs is estimated at about £5,000. This indicative sum was calculated following an assessment of the preliminary design, and the actual sum will be calculated by the New Works team in the Highways Maintenance Division once the detailed design has been signed off by the City Council and the Bill of Quantities provided by Amey. There is no revenue element in this Better Buses funded project, so the commuted sum will be funded out of TTAPS resources which, in this instance – as a bus-related scheme – could include camera enforcement income or using 'credit' from negative commuted sum calculations for other bus-related schemes.

Legal

Traffic Regulation Order: The Council has the power under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to make a traffic regulation order (TRO) where it appears to the

Council that it would be expedient to make it for, inter alia, avoiding danger to pedestrians and other road users or for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs. Before the Council can make a TRO, it must consult with relevant bodies in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. It must also publish notice of its intention in a local newspaper. Where objections are received Regulation 13 places a duty on the Council to ensure that these objections are duly considered. These requirements have been complied with. In making its decision the Council must also be satisfied that the approved scheme will secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians). Provided the Council is so satisfied it is acting lawfully and within its powers.

Highways Improvements: The Council, as the Highway Authority for Sheffield, has powers under Part V of the Highways Act 1980 to implement the improvements requested in this report.

Equality Impact Assessment

An EIA (reference 905) has been carried out for the Better Buses Area funded package of schemes. Overall there are no significant, positive or negative, differential equality impacts. However, it should prove positive for vulnerable road users such as the young, elderly and/or people with disabilities as it will increase safety and accessibility. This project aims to improve the reliability of some high-frequency local bus services and provide road safety benefits by reducing vehicle-to-vehicle conflicts at this junction. Together with other bus improvement schemes, the benefits to public transport users will be amplified. No negative impacts have been identified.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The alternative options, including an alternative design, have been discussed elsewhere in this report. Doing nothing would not address the issues that regularly occur at the location. The design as amended is, therefore, the preferred option.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The revised scheme described in this report will contribute to improving journey times and reliability for bus services and other traffic along this route. At the same time, it addresses the concerns of respondents to the original proposal.

The scheme is being designed in detailed with funding available to allow the scheme to be built in 2016/17.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Approve and implement the revised scheme as shown in Appendix A, subject to any required re-confirmation of costs after detailed design (including any commuted sums).

Make the Traffic Regulation Order relating to the proposed waiting restrictions in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Inform the respondents accordingly.

Simon Green

Executive Director, Place

14 July 2016

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