

Policy Committee Decision Report

Title of Report:	Responses to Traffic Regulation Order for the 'Connecting Sheffield - City Centre Scheme'
Date of Decision:	27 November 2024
Report To:	Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee
Report Of:	Kate Martin, Executive Director, City Futures
Report Author:	Philip Loy, Senior Transport Planner (Projects)

Executive Summary: To report the receipt of objections to the advertised Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) required to fulfil the objectives of the City Centre Active Travel and Public Transport Scheme. If approved, the TRO will revoke other, existing TROs and introduce new provisions as necessary so as to implement bus gates, one-way restrictions, prohibition of motor vehicles and changes to loading and waiting restrictions.

The report also sets out a brief background to the scheme which the order is intended to facilitate, other consultation comments, officer feedback and recommendations



Council Plan outcomes: City on the Move, Great Neighbourhoods that people are happy to call home

Policy Committee remit: This report is to be considered by the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Policy Committee as its remit includes functions arising from the Council's roles as Highways Authority and Road Traffic Authority, including transport and parking matters, where these relate to the Capital Programme.

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? No

Recommendations:

The Transport, Regeneration and Climate Polity Committee is recommended to:

Approve that the TRO be made (with an amendment to the order to provide a 'loading area' of 13.5 metres to enable vehicles with a permit to load and unload on Surrey Street, near the junction with Norfolk Street) in accordance with the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

Objectors will then be informed of the decision by the Council's Traffic Regulations team and the order implemented on street subject to no road safety issues being identified through a Road Safety Audit (RSA) at the detailed design stage

Financial Implications: Yes - Approved by: Damian Watkinson

Legal Implications: Yes - Approved by: Richard Cannon

Equality and Inclusion Implications: Yes – Approved by: Ed Sexton
[Full Equalities Impact Assessment completed with EIA number: 2896]

Climate Change Implications: Yes – Approved by Katryn Warrington

Background Papers: None not already publicly available – through the Connecting Sheffield Have your say page.

Appendices:
Appendix A: TRO Proposal as advertised.
Appendix B: Summary of TRO responses.
Appendix C: Design amendment to TRO proposal.

1. Background to the issue

- 1.1 Through the Transforming Cities Fund (TCF), Sheffield City Council (SCC) has the opportunity to implement a series of transformative sustainable travel projects on a scale not undertaken for decades in the city.
- 1.2 Connecting Sheffield is the overarching ambition for transforming travel in Sheffield within which the City centre Active Travel and Public Transport Scheme sits, launched in November 2020. The City centre scheme has been designed to reinforce the regeneration of the City centre - helping to improve the built environment and linking The Moor – The Heart of the City project and Fargate with high quality cycling and walking infrastructure and public realm, providing attractive spaces for people to spend time. In tandem with the investment through the Future High Street Fund, the scheme provides a new event space at the top of Fargate too.
- 1.3 More people are living and working in the city centre, so we need to develop our transport infrastructure to enable people to access work, education and leisure opportunities sustainably.
- 1.4 The funding for the City Centre project has been allocated £21 million in funding from the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA).
- 1.5 The improvement works are designed to help regenerate the City Centre and will involve changes being made to streets. This will include making changes to restrictions on waiting and loading, speeds and general traffic management arrangements. In order to make these changes and fully implement the scheme, a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is required.
- 1.6 A proposal for the TRO to enable this scheme was required to be advertised for a period of 28 days before potentially being made, at which point its provisions come into permanent effect. If no objections were received, the TRO can be made under officer authorisation. If objections are received, they have to be considered at committee prior to any decision to make the TRO. Objections were received against the proposal and the purpose of this report is to enable those objections to be considered by the committee..

2. Proposal

- 2.1 The TRO was advertised to enable the enhancements proposed through the TCF City Centre scheme, including:
 - Bus lanes or gates on Arundel Gate and Furnival Gate
 - Prohibition of motor vehicles including Barker's Pool, Charles Street (part), Pinstone Street and Surrey Street (part)

- One-way traffic on various streets
- No Waiting and No Loading on various streets
- Disabled Persons' Badge holder parking - maximum stay 4 hours no return within 2 hours on parts of Leopold Street, Union Street and Union Lane and various times on Norfolk Street and Surrey Street.
- Facilities for loading at various locations

2.2 The TRO (included as Appendix A) was advertised from 19th September 2024 to 17th October 2024 using (i) the Council's website page for TROs, (ii) the Sheffield Telegraph, (iii) hard copies in the 'First Point' council reception, and in addition the TRO was also (iv) advertised on the 'Have your say' consultation hub.

2.3 Letters were also sent to around 1,500 addresses within the geographical scope of the scheme and the businesses in Surrey Street were visited by officers too.

2.4 A total of nine responses were received to the advert, six of which stated an objection, two were supportive and one made a comment on the detail of the proposals. A summary of the responses are included in Appendix B, but the more frequently mentioned issues can be categorised under the following headings - with a response to each included in the following sections too:

(i) Removal of parking and impact on access and businesses (6 comments) and objections to the bus gates (3 comments).

2.5 The City Council's objective is to create a thriving City Centre to live, work and visit. This can be aided with the creation of streets that are primarily for people rather than motor vehicle traffic. A thriving City Centre will be an economic boost to local businesses. Furthermore, the promotion of walking, cycling, and public transport will improve access to the area and avoid the problems of congestion associated with motor vehicle traffic which can hinder access.

2.6 As part of the ongoing communications plan we will continue to highlight that there are around 200 on street pay and display bays within a five minute walk of the Town Hall on Surrey Street. Additional spaces are available off street too.

(ii) Parking and Loading on Surrey Street (4 comments).

2.7 Whilst general parking will be removed for the reasons above, the Council has considered the needs of local business and after consultation, revised the proposed design for Surrey Street to facilitate loading with a permit whilst the restriction is in place from 10am to 6pm. Specifically, the proposal is to amend the advertised order to provide a 'loading area' of 13.5 metres to enable vehicles with a permit to load and unload on Surrey Street, near the junction with Norfolk Street at all times. This change has

been welcomed in mitigating concerns around daytime loading and waiting opportunities, so has been treated as a withdrawal of the specific objection related to loading and unloading opportunities. The amendment to the design is shown in Appendix C.

(iii) Presence and increase of taxis (2 comments)

2.8 The restrictions on motor vehicle traffic also applies to taxis, so any concerns of an increase in taxis in the City Centre should be addressed with enforcement.

2.9 Also, greater use of taxis implies lesser use of private motor vehicles which would help reduce the total number of vehicles in the area.

(iv) Turning to alternatives like Meadowhall (2 comments)

2.10 This is a variation of (i) above, and as stated above, these measures are being proposed to enable a thriving City Centre based on more active street activity, especially as more people are expected to live in the City centre over the coming years.

(vii) Cost of alternative to on street parking (2 comments)

2.11 Outside of the parking provided via the designation of parking places by the Council on street, or its provision of off street parking places, the Council has no ability to determine the cost and availability of car parking, such as where it is provided off street by others on a commercial basis. Responsibility for that falls outside the scope of this project and report.. However, consideration has been given to the overall effect of the proposal on the suitability and adequacy of parking on and off street. With regard to these factors, the delivery of the scheme is deemed to provide benefits which on balance outweigh concerns expressed in respect of its effect on parking – an effect which, in any event, is not deemed to be significant.

(viii) Disabled Access (2 comments)

2.12 Concerns that there will be greater distances to walk from the proposed disabled bays are being addressed in part with additional seating in the scheme. We are maintaining the loading places available for pick up and drop off on Surrey Street and Norfolk Street – but they will be available for blue badge parking in the evening too. Hours of operation for disabled parking bays will continue to aim to provide for a variety of daytime and evening uses.

(x) Construction Progress (2 comments)

2.13 Concerns about disruption should be kept to a minimum as contractors will work in stages and allow access to frontages.

***(xi) Money better spent on resolving antisocial behaviour/
Homelessness (2 comments)***

- 2.14 The funding of the project comes from a grant aimed at delivering sustainable travel schemes, so the cost of the scheme does not affect the Councils 'core' budget. The issues raised are also outside the scope of this project and report.

3 How does this decision contribute to the Council Plan?

3.1 Council Plan outcome

- 3.1.1 The TCF CC project has a very good fit with the Councils strategic objectives, it aims to encourage mode shift to sustainable travel modes away from the private car – with its associated health and air quality benefits. The scheme objectives complement the City Centre Clean Air Zone (implemented February 2023) and supports growth through reduced severance and improved connectivity, as well as contributing towards a change in culture towards walking and cycling for short journeys.

3.2 People – Prosperity - Planet

- 3.2.1 The Council Plan's aspiration is to deliver a successful city through its triple-lock policy of 'People, Prosperity and Planet'. **People:** The City Centre scheme aims to regenerate the city and aims to provide a focal point for people of the city to live, work and as a social and retail destination. **Prosperity:** A revitalised city centre will help the economy of the city and its prosperity. **Planet:** The transport objectives of the scheme encompass health and wellbeing with active travel as well as environmental considerations with less reliance on private motor vehicles and incorporation of sustainable drainage.

4 What community or partner engagement has been undertaken and how has it informed the proposal?

- 4.1 The proposals for this scheme have been publicised using the Council's consultation hub ('Connecting Sheffield' and 'Have Your Say'), outlining the changes using text and visualisations, and linking this scheme to the wider city centre regeneration that this is a part of. Over 1,500 letters were sent out too.
- 4.2 The TRO requires a formal process in addition to the consultation hub above, whereby the details of the traffic order are publicised using printed and, optionally, online media. There is a 28-day deadline for responses to this advertised traffic order, and they are reviewed to assess whether they are objections.

- 4.3 In addition, several local businesses on Surrey Street were visited by council officers to discuss the TRO proposals, both prior to the TRO being advertised and during the formal consultation period. Three of these businesses had submitted a petition to the Council at its meeting on 4th September 2024. Comments from businesses on Surrey Street have led to a change in the design to maintain loading for vehicles with a permit nearer their premises across the day.

5 What alternative options did we consider?

5.1 Alternative Option 1:

Surrey Street: Loading Requirements

One alternative that was considered were amendments to the design on Surrey Street to accommodate loading requirements of the shops at all times of day, but this was not pursued as it would remove one of the aims of the scheme, which is to improve the overall vision for - and attractiveness of - the useable public space in the City centre.

5.2 Alternative Option 2:

Surrey Street: TRO not progressed

Another option would be progress the TRO as advertised except for the proposals for Surrey Street, i.e. to leave Surrey Street in its present highway layout but progress everything else. This was not pursued as it would remove one of the aims of the scheme, which is to improve the overall vision for - and attractiveness of - the useable public space in the City centre.

6 How has equality, diversity and inclusion been actively considered?

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken. The proposal aims to enhance Sheffield city centre by improving active travel routes, public transport networks, and public realm. It is expected to have both positive and adverse impacts on various groups, but overall the scheme is expected to be broadly positive.
- 6.2 Adverse impacts link to changes in traffic, parking and public transport routes which may disproportionately affect disabled people, older people, and those with sensory sensitivities or learning disabilities - although the Sheffield Connect city centre orbital bus services are now in place to help mitigate this issue. The re-location of some disabled parking spaces may also impact mobility for disabled individuals, although there is a net gain of 2 places overall and additional seating is being installed in the scheme.

- 6.3 Positive impacts include improved air quality, noise reduction, and enhanced safety for pedestrians and cyclists. The reduction in vehicle traffic and the increase in pedestrianised areas are expected to improve air quality and reduce noise pollution. This will benefit people who are disproportionately affected by poor air quality and high noise levels, such as older people, younger people, and those with health conditions.
- 6.4 However, potential adverse impacts include increased walking distances due to relocated bus stops - although the Sheffield Connect city centre orbital bus services are now in place to help mitigate this issue, temporary construction disruptions, and challenges for individuals with disabilities or sensory sensitivities in adapting to changes.
- 6.5 Continuous monitoring, community feedback mechanisms, and stakeholder engagement are essential to address any emerging issues and ensure the scheme benefits groups equitably. Overall, the EIA concludes that all possible actions and mitigations have been considered to minimize the impact and risks associated with the proposed scheme.

7 Financial and Commercial Implications

- 7.1 There is an approved allocation within the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authorities 'City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement' for the City centre Active Travel and Public Transport Scheme is £21,000,001, This is based on outline design prices (plus risk and contingency) submitted by the successful contractor procured through a tender process. Contract award prices are expected in mid December 2024. Full budget for the scheme will be brought for approval to Finance and Performance Policy committee via the Councils capital gateway process.
- 7.2 There will be a requirement for a commuted sum to be paid for the City centre Active Travel and Public Transport Scheme. The commuted sum is expected to be funded through the Local Neighbourhood Transport Complimentary Programme (LNTCP) funds for 25 years of maintenance.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ("the 1984 Act") allows the Council, in its capacity as traffic authority, to make and vary Traffic Regulation Orders to prohibit, restrict or regulate the use of roads. A TRO may be made where it appears expedient to the Council to do so for the reasons set out in section 1 of the 1984 Act - this includes the avoidance of danger to people or traffic, for facilitating the passage on the road or any other

road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians), preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs and for any of the purposes specified in paragraphs (a) to (c) of subsection (1) of section 87 of the Environment Act 1995 (air quality). The proposal in this report is considered to align with these purposes.

- 8.2 Where it appears necessary for the provision of suitable parking places for vehicles, Part IV of the Act gives the Council powers to designate parking places on a highway by way of legal order and to make such provision as appear to it to be necessary or expedient for regulating or restricting the use of any parking place designated by that order.
- 8.3 Before the Council can make an order containing the aforementioned provisions, it must consult with relevant bodies and publish notice of its intention in a local newspaper in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 as well as take such steps as it considers appropriate for ensuring that adequate publicity is given to the proposed order. This includes the display of notices on street. The Council has complied with these requirements.
- 8.4 The Council is required to consider all duly made objections received and not withdrawn before it can proceed with making an order. Those objections are summarised and presented for consideration in this report.
- 8.5 The Council may modify a proposed order, whether in consequence of any objections or otherwise, before it is made. The modifications described within this report are not considered to be substantial changes in the proposed order for which the Council considers it appropriate to take additional steps so as to inform those persons likely to be affected by the modifications.
- 8.6 In deciding whether to make a TRO, the Council must have regard to its duty under section 122 of the 1984 Act to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) as well as the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway, so far as practicable while having regard to the matters specified below: (a) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises; (b) the effect on the amenities of any locality affected and (without prejudice to the generality of this paragraph) the importance of regulating and restricting the use of roads by heavy commercial vehicles, so as to preserve or improve the amenities of the areas through which the roads run; (bb) the strategy prepared under section 80 of the Environment Act 1995 (national air quality strategy) (c) the importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles; and (d) any other matters appearing to the Council to be relevant. The proposal detailed in this report is considered to align with the objectives of the aforementioned duty.

- 8.7 The Council is under a further duty contained in section 16 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 to manage their road network with a view to securing the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network, so far as may be reasonably practicable while having regard to their other obligations, policies and objectives. This is called the network management duty and includes any actions the Council may take in performing that duty which contribute for securing the more efficient use of their road network or for the avoidance, elimination or reduction of road congestion (or other disruption to the movement of traffic) on their road network. It may involve the exercise of any power to regulate or co-ordinate the uses made of any road (or part of a road) in its road network. The proposals described in this report are considered to fulfil that duty.

9 Climate and Environmental Implications

- 9.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency in February 2019 and through its 10-Point Plan for climate action is committed to a carbon neutral target by 2030.
- 9.2 Transport is a major contributor to CO2 emissions in Sheffield and schemes such as this are important in contributing towards providing better alternatives with an aim of achieving safer and less congested roads while contributing towards improving air quality.
- 9.3 A climate impact assessment has been undertaken for the scheme, with an outcome that the scheme provides a significant positive contribution to climate goals through enhanced pedestrianisation, active travel infrastructure, and prioritised public transport.
- 9.4 While construction activities introduce embodied carbon and waste, mitigation measures such as the use of lower-carbon materials and adherence to the waste hierarchy are in place in this project to minimise these impacts.

10 Other implications

- 10.1 There has been public opposition to the introduction of the scheme. Surveys to monitor the impact of the scheme will be undertaken once the scheme has been in place for several months. If the scheme is not meeting its objectives, and subject to the availability of funding, additional measures will be considered to improve the schemes outcomes.

11 Reasons for decision

- 11.1 As outlined in Section One, the location of the City Centre scheme, and the potential impact it would have on improving the retail vitality and cultural offer, makes this a high profile and significant proposal. Approving the TRO with amendment as detailed in Section 2.7 will enable a positive transformation of the City Centre, the opportunity and funding for which would be lost if not progressed at the present time.



Appendix A: TRO Proposal as advertised.

Appendix B: Connecting Sheffield: City Centre TRO response analysis.

Appendix C: Design amendment to TRO proposal.

