

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Agenda
Item No.

Report of Deputy Chief Executive (Place)
to
Traffic Regulation Working Party
& Cabinet Committee
on
6th December 2018

Report prepared by: Peter Geraghty,
Director for Planning and Transport

Queensway Right Turns Junction Improvement

Cabinet Member: Councillor Moring
Part 1 Public Agenda Item

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 For the Traffic Regulation Working Party and Cabinet Committee to review the justification for retaining the right turn component of the proposed amendments on Queensway at the junctions with Whitegate and York Road.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Traffic Regulation Working Party and Cabinet Committee will:-

- a) Note Officers comments and agree implementation of the Queensway Right Turn Improvement scheme in the original format;
- b) If approved, further agree that in the event of there being no objections to the proposals, that the proposed changes to Traffic Regulation Orders stated in section 5 be approved;
- c) Note that all unresolved objections will be referred to the Traffic Regulation Working Party for consideration.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Working Party will be aware that the principle of this scheme has been approved as part of the Better Queensway project as part of the transport proposals along with the Council's Capital Programme.
- 3.2 At its meeting on 1st November 2018 (Minute 417 refers), the Cabinet Committee considered the views of the Traffic Regulations Working Party on this matter and resolved:

That the proposals as submitted not be progressed and that that officers requested to investigate the feasibility of introducing a revised scheme to improve access to the Warrior Square Car Park excluding, if possible, the introduction of the right turns from Queensway in to Whitegate Road and York Road, through:

- (a) the introduction of the left turn from the northbound carriageway of Queensway into Whitegate Road;
 - (b) the revocation of the existing one way traffic flow in the section of Whitegate Road from the eastern most exit of Warrior Square Car Park to the eastern extremity of Whitegate Road, enabling two way traffic flow in this section; and
 - (c) the revocation of the existing “no waiting at any time restriction” at the existing western exit of Warriors Square car park and the introduction of a section of Payment Parking (Zone_TC) 9am-6pm (Tariff_1) restriction.
- 3.3 Due to limitations with the funding timescales this scheme must be delivered by the end of this financial year or funding will be lost. Furthermore, there is a comprehensive programme of gas maintenance works planned across the borough but particularly around the Southchurch area. After several months of negotiations between the Council and Cadent we have agreed a window in their works to deliver this scheme at the beginning of 2019. If the current construction programme is not adhered to then this scheme would be pushed back to 2020 and it could only be constructed if alternative funding were sourced.
- 3.4 Around one third of trips to the town centre are made by car, one third by walking and cycling and one third using the bus and train. Traffic arrives along two major routes (A127 and A13) and is then directed around or through the central area. This leads to congestion, especially during high seasonal peaks, which limits economic growth and residential development. Congestion also interferes with the potential to improve facilities for walking, cycling and public transport access. Traffic accessing the main car parks circulates unnecessarily and leads to confusion over access, parking and alternatives.
- 3.5 Congestion and journey delays make Southend Town Centre a less attractive place to visit. By improving car park access which subsequently reduces town centre traffic volumes and associated travel delays will make the town more appealing to visitors.
- 3.6 The air quality in the town centre is poor which is exasperated by idling vehicles queued in traffic. In order to improve air quality traffic volumes need to be reduced and traffic flows improved.
- 3.7 Maximum occupancy is currently not achieved at either the Warrior Square or York Road/Tyler’s Avenue car parks. It is anticipated that occupancy levels can be increased by improving vehicular access.

3.8 This was originally part of the Better Queensway Improvement scheme but was transferred to the Parking and Access Strategy. Funding has been secured through the National Productivity Investment fund.

4.0 Original Scheme Proposals

4.1 This scheme seeks to eliminate the issues highlighted in section 3 by allowing vehicles to turn right from Queensway. This will reduce the volume of vehicular traffic in the town centre, most notably on Chichester Road. In order to achieve this, a number of physical changes to the highway are required which are explained in sections 4.2-4.7 and the drawing in Appendix 11.1.

4.2 Kerb realignment to the central reservations on the southbound approaches to both Whitegate and York roads to allow the construction of right turn lanes to both junctions.

4.3 Installation of traffic signals at the junction with Whitegate Road to ensure the safety of right turning vehicles and prevent excessive queuing at the junction.

4.4 Following discussions with the Traffic Regulation Working Party & Cabinet Committee, the scheme will allow a left turn from Queensway into Whitegate Road.

4.5 It is proposed to close the accesses to Warrior Square Car Park from Warrior Square which will ensure that all access/egress to the car park is via Queensway and Whitegate Road and not from the town centre network.

4.6 Currently, there is a Toucan crossing at the junction with York Road which crosses the southbound carriageway to the north of the junction. It is proposed to relocate the southbound crossing to the south of the junction to reduce crossing times when the additional right turn lane is installed.

4.7 There are associated changes to traffic signs, street lighting and road markings as shown in the drawings in section 12. Background Information.

4.8 To allow the above changes to the highway, some alterations to Statutory Undertakers Plant are required at the junction with Whitegate Road with both Cadent (Formerly National Grid) and Vodafone apparatus affected.

Scheme Proposal Review

4.9 The Working Party will be aware that the principle of this scheme has been approved as part of the Better Queensway project as part of the transport proposals.

4.10 At its meeting on 1st November 2018 (Minute 417 refers), the Cabinet Committee considered the views of the Traffic Regulations Working Party on this matter and resolved:

- 4.11 That the proposals as submitted not be progressed and that that officers requested to investigate the feasibility of introducing a revised scheme to improve access to the Warrior Square Car Park excluding, if possible, the introduction of the right turns from Queensway in to Whitegate Road and York Road, through:
- (a) the introduction of the left turn from the northbound carriageway of Queensway into Whitegate Road;
 - (b) the revocation of the existing one way traffic flow in the section of Whitegate Road from the eastern most exit of Warrior Square Car Park to the eastern extremity of Whitegate Road, enabling two way traffic flow in this section; and
 - (c) the revocation of the existing “no waiting at any time restriction” at the existing western exit of Warriors Square car park and the introduction of a section of Payment Parking (Zone_TC) 9am-6pm (Tariff_1) restriction.
- 4.12 As a result, officers’ have undertaken a thorough review of the scheme. The outcome of the review indicates that the exclusion of the right turns from Queensway would not be appropriate because it was considered that if these movements were removed from the scheme then the desired outcome would not be achieved. The purpose of the scheme is to reduce congestion and improve air quality in the town centre along with achieving better utilisation of the Warrior Square and Tyler’s Avenue car parks in periods of high demand.
- 4.13 If southbound traffic could not turn right from Queensway then the most desirable route to Warrior Square and Tyler Avenue Car Parks would be via existing town centre routes. It is accepted that allowing a left turn into Whitegate Road would allow traffic to access Warrior Square Car Park from the northbound Queensway but it is likely that drivers would continue to use Seaway car park rather than continue on to Warrior Square or Tyler’s Avenue. Given the likelihood that driver behaviour would remain unchanged a revised scheme excluding the right turns would fail to result in an increase in car park occupancy in Warrior Square Car Park or a reduction in vehicle movements in the town centre.
- 4.14 Officers also considered allowing straight across movements at York Road. The review concluded that if this movement was allowed it would introduce additional phases in the traffic signal timings. In this scenario, delays on Queensway would be significant, particularly northbound at York Road, as traffic would be held on red for right turning traffic from Queensway and then held for 2 separate phases for both sides of York Road. In periods of high demand this would have the potential to cause traffic congestion onto the Queensway/Chancellor Road Roundabout. There would also be a detrimental impact on southbound traffic as they would be held for the 2 York Road phases, potentially causing significant congestion, particularly in periods of high demand, making it a less desirable route which could undermine the scheme objectives with motorists continuing to use town centre routes.

- 4.15 A safety audit has been carried out on the proposed designs and this raised no significant issues and the designs have been amended to resolve all of the issues raised.
- 4.16 Accordingly to ensure the aims of the scheme are successful the Working Party and Cabinet Committee are now recommended to approve the scheme as originally proposed.

5.0 Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's)

- 5.1 In order to facilitate the construction phase some alterations to the current TRO's are required, these are identified in section 5.

5.2 One Way Street

- 5.2.1 The TRO prohibiting people from causing a motor vehicle to proceed in a westerly direction on Whitegate Road from the junction with Queensway to the junction with Chichester Road will be revoked. This will be replaced with a TRO that prohibits motorists from causing a motor vehicle to proceed in a westerly direction on Whitegate Road from the junction with the improved car park access to the junction with Chichester Road.

5.3 Parking Restrictions

- 5.3.1 Two sections of Payment Parking (Zone_TC) 9am-6pm (Tariff_1) will be revoked on the north and south side of Whitegate Road at the junction with Queensway and replaced with No Waiting at Any Time restrictions.
- 5.3.2 One section of No Waiting At Any time restriction at the existing western car park exit will be revoked and replaced with a section of Payment Parking (Zone_TC) 9am-6pm (Tariff_1) restriction.

6. Key Risks

- 6.1 Stakeholder support: Works are proposed in highly sensitive locations within the town centre, which will require support from residents, commuters, and business owners.
- 6.2 Traffic delays during construction.

7. Mitigation of Risks

- 7.1 Effective communication with all Stakeholders through multiple channels clearly identifying the benefits of the proposals and the resultant positive impact on the Town Centre.
- 7.2 Well planned traffic management operating at off peak times outside of high seasonal periods will limit traffic delays during construction.

8. Reasons for Recommendations

- 8.1 To ensure best use of limited resources on justifiable projects that address and resolve network management issues.
- 8.2 To reduce congestion and improve air quality in the town centre.

9. Corporate Implications

9.1 Contribution to Council's Vision & Corporate Priorities

- 9.1.1 Local Transport and Implementation Plan, Safe and Prosperous.

9.2 Financial Implications

- 9.2.1 The Major Projects and Strategic Transport Policy Group has successfully bid for funding to implement this project from the DfT.

9.3 Legal Implications

- 9.3.1 All changes are to comply with the relevant legal requirements as appropriate

9.4 People Implications

- 9.4.1 All necessary works will be undertaken by existing staff.

9.5 Property Implications

- 9.5.1 None.

9.6 Consultation

- 9.6.1 No consultation has been completed at this stage.

9.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 9.7.1 The prioritisation of the Traffic & Parking Working Party's programme is on the basis of improving safety, reducing accidents or improving pedestrian/traffic flows. The objectives of improving safety takes account of all users of the public highway including those with disabilities.

9.8 Risk Assessment

- 9.8.1 None.

9.9 Value for Money

- 9.9.1 All works are undertaken by the Council's term contractors which have been through competitive tendering process.

9.10 Community Safety Implications

- 9.10.1 The prioritisation of the Councils' Working Party's programme is on the basis of reducing accidents or improving traffic flows and takes into account the implications for community safety.

9.11 Environmental Impact

- 9.11.1 All schemes are designed to improve quality of local environment

10. Background Papers

10.1 Draft Minutes from the 1st November TRWP meeting.

11. Appendices

11.1 Proposed scheme drawing SBCC10384-128-SBC-QW-C-0151-B

12. Background Information

12.1 Table of scheme drawings

Appendix 11.1 – Scheme Drawings

12.1 Background Information – Table of Scheme Drawings

Drawing number	Title
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-0151-B	General Arrangement
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-0201-A	Site Clearance - Sheet 1 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-0201-A	Site Clearance - Sheet 2 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-0201-A	Site Clearance - Sheet 3 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-0211-A	Existing Sign Schedule
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-0401-A	Pedestrian Restraint Systems - Sheet 1 of 2
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-0402-A	Pedestrian Restraint Systems - Sheet 2 of 2
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-0601-A	Earthworks - Sheet 1 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-0602-A	Earthworks - Sheet 2 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-0603-A	Earthworks - Sheet 3 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-0701-A	Road Pavement - Sheet 1 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-0702-A	Road Pavement - Sheet 2 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-0703-A	Road Pavement - Sheet 3 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-1101-A	Drainage, Kerbs, Footways & Paved Areas - Sheet 1 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-1102-A	Drainage, Kerbs, Footways & Paved Areas - Sheet 2 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-1103-A	Drainage, Kerbs, Footways & Paved Areas - Sheet 3 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-1201-A	Road Markings - Sheet 1 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-1202-A	Road Markings - Sheet 2 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-1203-A	Road Markings - Sheet 3 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-1211-A	Proposed sign Schedule
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-1301-D	Road Lighting & Electrical - Sheet 1 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-1302-D	Road Lighting & Electrical - Sheet 2 of 3
SBCC10889-100-SBC-QW-C-1303-D	Road Lighting & Electrical - Sheet 3 of 3