

Name of meeting: Cabinet Committee - Local Issues
Date: 27 February 2023

Title of report: Proposed Casualty Reduction Scheme, A649 Halifax Road / A643 Walton Lane / B6120 Scholes Lane, Hartshead Moor staggered crossroads junction.

Kirklees Council Traffic Regulation Order 16 Order 2022 – Proposed introduction of No U-turn bans to support the introduction of traffic and pedestrian signals to safely control traffic movements at the A649 Halifax Road / A643 Walton Lane / B6120 Scholes Lane staggered crossroads junction.

Purpose of report: To consider objections received to the proposals

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	No
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Colin Parr – 17.01.2023
Is it also signed off by the Service Director Finance?	Eamonn Croston – 17.01.2023
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Julie Muscroft – 05.01.2023
Cabinet member portfolio	Councillor Naheed Mather

Electoral wards affected: Cleckheaton

Ward councillors consulted: Yes

Public or private: Public

Has GDPR been considered: Yes

1 Summary

- 1.1 Studies and analysis of traffic collisions throughout Kirklees, have identified that Halifax Road, at its junctions with Scholes Lane and Walton Lane, is a location that has recorded a relatively high number of vehicle crashes where personal injuries have been sustained.
- 1.2 It is evident from the subsequent detailed investigation that all the injury collisions recorded here during the previous five-year period have involved right turning traffic at these junctions colliding with vehicles travelling along Halifax Road.
- 1.3 To resolve these issues the following scheme as shown on plan: Appendix A has been developed, in addition, the scheme will provide added road safety benefits and future resilience for all vulnerable road users, which include pedestrians, cyclists and motorcycle riders, These proposals include:
- The installation of a set of integrated traffic signals along the A649 Halifax Road at its junctions with the A643 Walton Lane and the B6120 Scholes Lane to actively control vehicles turning and pedestrian crossing movements.
 - The introduction of a 30mph Speed Limit to replace the existing 40mph order that currently extends along Halifax Road, throughout the junction and the approaches to it to slow traffic travelling along Halifax Road.
 - The introduction of a one-way, segregated Service Road, between Sunnybank Close and Scholes Lane to provide safe access to the residential properties here, and the installation of traffic calming along this service road to ensure traffic travels along it at an appropriate speed.
 - The introduction of U Turns ban along Halifax Road in both directions between the junctions of Walton Lane and Scholes Lane as shown on Plan 1, and aims to remove the risk of further conflict here. U-turns will still be permitted for drivers travelling east to west along Halifax Road via the existing gap in the central reservation on Halifax Road (adjacent to the Hartshead Manor Nursing Home) 55 metres south-east of the junction with Scholes Lane, and at the Sunnybank Close junction for drivers travelling west to east (shown on Plan 2).
- 1.4 Prior to the current preferred option being developed, a previous concept was considered by engineers that involved the introduction of a “Double Roundabout” system to address the right turning road safety issues. However, whilst this option was initially welcomed by some residents, officers felt it would offer little, if any, tangible road safety benefits for vulnerable road users. Consequently, further development of this proposal was discontinued.

2 Information required to take a decision

- 2.1 The traffic regulation order to introduce the moving traffic restrictions required to support the traffic signal proposals, and all associated junction improvement measures as shown on Appendix A, was publicly advertised between 17 November 2022 and 15 December 2022, alongside the proposed 30mph speed limit proposal, advertised 24

Nov and 22 December 2022. During those advertising periods 2 objections were received to the proposed U-turn bans, which form an integral part of the safe operation of these proposals.

- 2.2 The principal issue that has generated the two objections arose from the decision to favour the traffic signals option, ahead of the double roundabout layout, as the latter arrangement would not impose any, what both objectors believe to be, inconvenient U-turn restrictions.
- 2.3 Both Objectors are effectively rejecting the Traffic signals scheme on the grounds that the subsequent U-Turn ban will introduce unacceptable inconvenience to their access and egress arrangements.
- 2.4 U-turns will have to be banned along Halifax Road, between Walton Lane and Scholes Lane to ensure the safe operation of the traffic signals and minimise congestion by allowing phases to be run together. If U-turns were to be permitted, phases would need to be separated, to ensure unsafe conflicts were not created. This would then create unacceptable levels of queuing traffic. Viable, nearby alternatives will still be available, on completion of the scheme, with little inconvenience for drivers, as described previously.
- 2.5 There have been no objections to the element of this Traffic Regulation Order relating to the one-way restriction on the new service road. This element will be implemented, as advertised.

Objection 1:

The first objector, a local business owner, believes that the introduction of the U-turn bans along Halifax Road will affect daily and regular access and egress for tractors and 7.5 tonne trucks to and from his premises. He is concerned that as most of the traffic collisions here involved speeding traffic travelling up from Bailiff Bridge and undertaking a U-turn at the junction of Sunnybank Close is not suitable. In addition, he alleges that it is unlikely that anything larger than a small van will be able to undertake a U-turn at this location and the advertised proposals will severely impede access to and from his premises. He also states he has no objections to the introduction of roundabouts instead.

In response:

The swept path of a 7.5 tonne rigid lorry has been undertaken and the enclosed illustration (Plan 2 attached) demonstrates that this size vehicle can safely perform a U-turn at the junction of Sunnybank Close within the confines of the new junction alignment.

- Although the previously proposed double roundabouts would help reduce the risk of further collisions here, it is anticipated that the proposed traffic signals will provide additional road safety benefits for all road users including: Allowing vehicles to turn into and out of Walton Lane and Scholes Lane in a safe and controlled manner, in all weather and lighting conditions and, at peak periods when flows are high on Halifax Road and drivers are attempting to find gaps in traffic.

- Utilising sophisticated vehicle detection and traffic control systems to maximise throughput and minimise overall junction delays, particularly for drivers approaching along Scholes Lane and Walton Lane at busy times.
- Improving road safety for vulnerable road users including pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians crossing Halifax Road, Scholes Lane and Walton Lane.
- Providing future resilience for the demands of ongoing sustainable transport initiatives for people walking and cycling, etc.
- Allowing segregated access / egress for residents and businesses along Halifax Road to promote a safer local highway environment.

Objection 2:

The second objector feels that a lengthy and complicated traffic light system is not the answer to the reported issues. They believe that with proposed planning developments in the area, traffic signals will only slow traffic and create gridlock as far back as Scholes village. They are also concerned that residents in this area will inconvenience residents wishing to travel to Brighouse and would prefer the double roundabouts instead.

In response:

The decision to promote the traffic signals option, rather than a double roundabout alternative, provides far more benefits to all types of road user including all the benefits mentioned previously in the response to the first objector. and include:

- Establishing a form of junction control that can be adapted to react to the traffic demands of potential local developments in the area whilst providing continued resilience to the demands of ongoing sustainable transport initiatives (walking, cycling etc)

3 Implications for the Council

- 3.1 **Working with people** - The proposed schemes have been approved to help improve road safety and sustainable travel routes for all road users.
- 3.2 **Working with Partners** – Not applicable
- 3.3 **Place based Working** – The implementation of the schemes here are intended to improve road safety in this vicinity for all road users and are considered essential to reduce road traffic injury accidents.
- 3.4 **Climate Change and Air Quality** – These proposals are unlikely to have a detrimental effect on air quality as the traffic control signals being introduced have been designed to minimise traffic delays and reduce excessive queuing. The associated improvements for cyclists and pedestrians will support local sustainable travel initiatives which would in turn help contribute towards the Council's climate change targets.

- 3.5 **Improving outcomes for children-** These proposals are aimed at safely managing vehicle turning manoeuvres and assist pedestrians and cyclists when crossing the road. These actions will make the junction a safer place to cycle and walk for all users, including children.
- 3.6 **Other implications –** There will be an ongoing maintenance cost to the Council which will be funded through our capital maintenance and lining allocations as necessary.

4 **Consultees and their opinions**

Statutory consultees and Local Ward Councillors were consulted on these proposals. Whilst Cllr Pinnock is in favour of the scheme, he did have concerns about traffic accessing Hartshead Manor from Scholes Lane. Subsequently further explanation was provided to him about how this manoeuvre could be completed by using the schemes official U-turn provisions, reproduced in detail in this Report on Plan 2. No other comments were received from the other statutory consultees.

5. **Next steps and timelines**

Cabinet Committee - Local Issues to consider the objections raised during the formal advertising period and reach a decision on whether the schemes are to be implemented as advertised.

If Cabinet Committee Local Issues chooses to overrule the objections received the scheme will be implemented, and moving traffic restrictions introduced, as advertised, from 23/24 capital budgets.

If Cabinet Committee choose to uphold the objections, then the scheme will be implemented from 23/24 capital budgets, however the U turn bans, as advertised, will not be implemented. This will lead to additional congestion and wait times for all road users at this location, as signal stages will need to be run concurrently, rather than consecutively, it is then likely that some of the proposed benefits from the scheme would not be realised

6. **Officer recommendations and reasons**

The Officer recommends is that the objections are overruled to enable the schemes to be implemented and operated, as designed and as advertised.

This is because the proposed scheme has been designed to ensure that road traffic injury collisions involving turning vehicles are kept to a minimum as far as practicable. The restrictions on U turns will allow the full potential benefits of the scheme to be realised, whilst keeping traffic flowing at its maximum capacity through this junction.

7. **Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations**

The Cabinet portfolio holder supports the officer recommendations.

8. **Contact officer**

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9. **Service Director responsible**

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