

Regulatory and Other Committee

**Open Report on behalf of Richard Willis, Executive Director for
Environment & Economy**

Report to:	Planning and Regulation Committee
Date:	04 July 2016
Subject:	Brayford Wharf East, Lincoln - Proposed One Way and Traffic Regulation Orders and High Street (between St Mark Street and Wigford Way), Lincoln - Proposed Pedestrian Zone and One Way Order

Summary:

This report considers objections received to proposed traffic regulation orders to restrict traffic flow on Brayford Wharf East and High Street, between St Mark Street and Wigford Way, Lincoln.

Recommendation(s):

The Committee agrees that the objections be overruled and the orders be confirmed as proposed at consultation.

1. Background

1.1 The simultaneous barrier downtime at the level crossings on Brayford Wharf East and High Street results in considerable delay on these streets and beyond, and is set to increase in frequency. This is particularly disruptive for bus companies in their efforts to maintain accurate timetables. To improve traffic flow through the city centre the A57 is to be re-routed via new highway infrastructure, the East/West Link, which utilises the two existing bridges over the railway and therefore eliminates this delay. The proposed changes to traffic flows outlined in this report will reduce congestion relating to the level crossings and encourage traffic to use the new link.

1.2 Brayford Wharf East carries two way traffic with frontage development comprising apartments and offices on the eastern side and Brayford Pool and Lincoln University to the west. Two pedestrian crossing facilities cater for the high pedestrian footfall generated by the university campus. Commercial car parking facilities are situated at two sites on Brayford Street, a cul de sac off Brayford Wharf East and these combined provide 270 spaces.

1.3 High Street between St Mark Street and Wigford Way also carries two way traffic through a shopping area subject to very high pedestrian footfall. It links the

existing pedestrianised area of High Street to the north and St Marks Retail Park to the south.

1.4 Traffic flow on both these routes is frequently subject to lengthy delays caused by barrier downtime at the level crossings, which quickly translates into congestion on the surrounding road network.

2. Proposals

2.1 A one way traffic order is proposed on Brayford Wharf East between St Mark Street and Brayford Street restricting traffic to a northbound flow only. Two way flow will remain to the north of Brayford Street. A 'with flow' mandatory cycle lane is proposed on the east side of this upper section, which varies to a contra flow cycle lane southwards to the junction with St Mark Street.

2.2 Pedestrianisation is proposed on High Street, similar to that in place to the north. Access for loading and unloading will be permitted before 10am and after 4pm and access to off street parking facilities will be allowed at all times. This limited flow of traffic will be subject to a northbound one way traffic order.

3. Consultation

3.1 A consultation process for these proposals took place earlier this year. Consultees included: the local County Councillor and District Councillors; City of Lincoln Council; police, EMAS and Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue; Road Haulage Association and Freight Transport Association; local bus companies and taxi operators; Sustrans and Cyclists Touring Club; Environment Agency; Network Rail; University of Lincoln; various organisations representing local businesses; various organisations representing the disabled and visually impaired; all businesses, residences and premises fronting and potentially affected by the proposals.

3.2 The local Members for the areas affected are in support of the proposals. Confirmation of support was received from the police and Lincolnshire Fire and Rescue.

3.3 The proposals were publicly advertised on site and in the local press during May.

4. Objections

4.1 Objections have been received from two members of the public who have concerns that the loss of traffic routes via Brayford Wharf East and High Street within the city centre will result on further congestion. The operator of the car parks on Brayford Street has objected in the belief that the proposals will be detrimental to their business. As a cul de sac Brayford Street is only accessible by vehicle via Brayford Wharf East and although access in will be maintained from both directions outbound traffic will be restricted to a northbound exit route only. The operator is concerned that customers will be deterred from using their car parks as options to leave the site will be limited with no direct link to the re-routed A57. They argue that the central location of their premises is vital in supporting local businesses and

therefore access to and from them should not be compromised. They object also to the closure of High Street to through traffic in the belief that this will also frustrate direct access to and from their car parks. In the light of these comments they request that the proposals are reconsidered.

5. Comments

5.1 Evaluation of the objections received to these proposals should be viewed in the context of an ongoing strategy to improve the highway network within Lincoln city centre, which aims to reduce congestion, promote improved infrastructure for all highway users and provide opportunities for redevelopment.

The East/West Link will provide an alternative, high capacity route across the city, avoiding the level crossings and the delay these impose on the network. It will divert traffic away from the existing route of the A57 and as a result there will be an opportunity to realign and change Wigford Way to a single carriageway. This will reduce the severance and potential safety issues it imposes on pedestrian movements. Removal of the subway and redevelopment in the area between the University and the city centre will also be facilitated as part of these works. However these benefits will be difficult to realise whilst traffic remains dominant on this link. The proposals to restrict traffic flows on Brayford Wharf East and on High Street, thereby removing links to the new A57 route, aim to discourage traffic from being drawn into the area via Newland and the A15.

5.2 Further benefits on Brayford Wharf East include the removal of the traffic signal installation at its junction with St Mark Street which removes an element of delay at this point on the improved link, widened footways and new cycle lanes. Continuity between existing cycle routes alongside the River Witham to the south and anticipated new routes linking to the transport hub on St Mary's Street will therefore be provided. Additionally should Network Rail decide to pursue a footbridge over the level crossing then the reduced one way carriageway width will provide the necessary space for this to be constructed in the highway.

5.3 The closure of High Street to through traffic eliminates the delay associated with the rail crossing. It will result in a much safer and attractive environment for pedestrians navigating both the High Street and the proposed link footway from Brayford Wharf East, which will connect at a point just south of the new pedestrian footbridge.

5.4 With the above points in mind concerns raised by objectors with regard to increased congestion following the introduction of the proposed traffic orders are difficult to substantiate. Furthermore, speculation as to the detrimental effect on patronage of the car parks on Brayford Street may not justify a reconsideration of the proposals, taking into account the rationale behind them and the benefits they will bring. Indeed the improved environment and pedestrian links between these premises and the High Street resulting from Wigford becoming a lesser used route are likely to render these car parks a more desirable location in which to park.

6. Conclusion

6.1 The traffic regulation orders proposed are essential in promoting the use of the new East/West Link whilst reducing traffic flow on Wigford Way and St Mary's Street. As described above many additional benefits will be drawn from the introduction of the proposals which will enhance this area of the city centre upon implementation and in the future.

Consultation

a) Policy Proofing Actions Required

n/a

Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Overview of area affected
Appendix B	Plan of proposals at Brayford Wharf East
Appendix C	Plan of proposals at High Street
Appendix D	Plan illustrating overall strategy relating to the proposals

Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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