

Halesowen Area Committee – 14th September 2005

Report of the Director of The Urban Environment

A458 Halesowen to Stourbridge Bus Showcase Route No. 9

Purpose of Report

- 1 To report the results of public consultation and to seek the Committee's views on a number of proposals along the A458 Bus Showcase route.

Background

- 2 At its meeting of 17th November 2004 the Area Committee supported a report of the Director of the Urban Environment designating the A458 Halesowen to Stourbridge Corridor as an active Bus Showcase route and to receive future reports as and when schemes along the route were developed.

Proposed Richmond Street Junction Improvement

- 3 The existing Richmond Street/A458 junction causes delay to eastbound, and to a lesser extent, westbound traffic due to traffic turning right into Richmond Street and Bloomfield Street West.
- 4 The proposed improvement will provide right turning lanes into both Richmond Street and Bloomfield Street West by widening of the carriageway. (Appendix A Map).
- 5 A consultation has been undertaken and the results of the consultation are shown in Appendix A attached. A total of 50 questionnaires out of a distribution of 200 have been received which represents a return of 25%. Of these 39 (78% of those returned) were in favour of the scheme, 9 (18%) were against and 2 (4%) expressed no opinion.
- 6 No adverse comments have been received from the emergency services, Travel West Midlands and Centro.

Proposed Pedestrian Refuge Stourbridge Road near Foxhollies Drive

- 7 A pedestrian refuge near Foxhollies Drive is proposed to improve pedestrian access to bus stops. (Appendix B Map).
- 8 There are no pedestrian crossing facilities between the eastbound bus stop in Belle Vale and the eastbound bus stop near Witley Avenue.

- 9 Members were consulted on the 31st May informing them of the proposed refuge. No residents would be directly affected by the proposed refuge as there are no direct frontages onto the A458 in this location.
- 10 A safety audit was carried out on the proposed refuge which found no problems with the proposal.
- 11 No adverse comments have been received from the emergency services, Travel West Midlands and Centro.

Zebra Crossing at Windmill Hill, Cradley

- 12 A zebra crossing from just to the east of the footpath leading from the Providence Methodist Church to 64 Windmill Hill was proposed to improve pedestrian access to bus stops. (Appendix C Map).
- 13 Despite 67% (6 in number) of respondents to the consultation being in favour one objection is considered to be particularly valid in connection with access for funeral vehicles to the Providence Methodist Church and this allied to the need to move the crossing away from the originally identified main desire line for safety reasons has resulted in the proposal being abandoned.
- 14 No adverse comments have been received from the emergency services Travel West Midlands and Centro.

Finance

- 15 The schemes will be wholly financed from the Highways Capital settlement - Bus Showcase Joint Metropolitan Initiatives as coordinated by the Passenger Transport Executive "Centro".

Law

- 16 The Council is empowered to improve Highways under section 62 of the Highways Act 1980.
- 17 Section III of the Local Government Act 1972 empowers the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive to or incidental to the discharge of its functions.

Equality Impact

- 18 Improved quality of public transport will improve equality of access and support the Council's policy on equal opportunities.

Recommendation

- 19 It is recommended that:-
- The Area Committee note the findings of the public consultation and support the implementation of the Richmond Street junction Improvement as shown in Drawing No. T20r1 attached. (Appendix A Map).

- The Area Committee support the implementation of the pedestrian refuge in Stourbridge Road near Foxhollies Drive as shown on Drawing No. T10 attached. (Appendix B Map).
- In an effort to avoid delay to the implementation of the above proposals the Area Committee agree that final decisions on any unmet concerns be made by the Cabinet Member for Transportation in consultation with the Director of the Urban Environment.
- Given the problems and concerns identified through the consultation exercise, and the difficulties of siting the crossing close to the actual desire line for pedestrians, the provision of a zebra crossing in Windmill Hill as shown in Drawing No. T11r1 attached, be abandoned. (Appendix C Map).

Bernard Meade

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List of Background Papers:-

- i) Report to Halesowen Area Committee dated 17th November, 2004.

Appendices:**Appendix A - Proposed Richmond Street Junction Improvement – Consultation Feedback.**

The main points raised by the objectors were:-

	<i>Objector's Comment</i>	<i>Response</i>
1	There is a delay when traffic turns right into these roads but never lasts very long. This proposed scheme would cause more problems while the necessary work was carried out than the present delays.	Traffic counts and modelling have indicated that eastbound traffic is delayed by right turning traffic into Richmond Street.
2	All the hold ups on the A458 at this junction are caused by the traffic light at the Sampson & Lion junction.	This would only delay westbound traffic and not eastbound which the right turn lane into Richmond Street is designed to reduce.
3	Our drive leads directly onto the A458. Fast moving traffic will make it difficult to get access to this road by car for me & nearby neighbours. And crossing by foot is already difficult (school children close by).	The scheme is designed to remove congestion eastbound and will therefore not affect westbound traffic which passes directly in front of these properties. Any improvement to eastbound traffic in the peak hours may have an effect on right turning out of these properties.
4	This plan is a waste of money. Traffic will not improve because the pedestrian lights, the new Tesco store, and the next set of lights. The real issue is volume of traffic on said road.	The scheme is primarily designed to speed up eastbound traffic which is not affected by any delays at Alexandra Road unless there is a tailback across Richmond Street.
5	The proposed scheme would make exiting my drive and that of my neighbours extremely dangerous. The manoeuvre is very interesting at the best of times!	The respondent has not explained which manoeuvre is hazardous. Presumably reversing out of their drive. This would not be affected by the proposal as the westbound vehicle speeds should remain the same.
6	Completely unnecessary expenditure! The hold up is caused by the traffic lights at the old Samson and Lion pub - take them away and things would improve.	Right turn into Richmond Street should not be affected by any congestion at Alexandra Road.
7	Crossing needed. This plan will be more useful to BP and Tesco than local residents.	The scheme will not be beneficial to either. An additional crossing point nearer to the Halesowen Town football ground is under consideration.

Appendix B - MAP



