

CITY CENTRE TO MOSBOROUGH KEY BUS ROUTE: CITY ROAD BUS LANE

RESPONSES

A) Issues raised by 3 Residents on City Road

Bus Lane Issues

- Traffic is already bad here, back from the Spring Lane junction, and will be made worse by a bus lane;
- The bus lane will cause more accidents on the approach to the junction, especially as buses and traffic merge at the end of the bus lane;
- It will be more difficult for outbound traffic to pass vehicles waiting to turn into the petrol station;
- Other Councils are getting rid bus lanes.

Officer Response

- The signal timings at the Park Grange Road/Spring Lane junction have been assessed and they operate as efficiently as possible. The traffic situation will not be made worse by this additional lane which will help to ensure that the impact of the junction on public transport using City Road is kept to a minimum;
- The bus lane will run in the nearside lane to a point 35m short of the traffic signals. At that point, traffic in the outside lane will merge with traffic in the bus lane. In the evening peak, it is expected that such manoeuvres will take place at low speed and, when traffic is held at the traffic lights, at very low speed. At other times, when the bus lane is not operational, the lane may be used for parking. The proposed scheme will be assessed using the standard road safety audit process. This occurs at various stages – Stage 1 has already led to design changes (see paragraph 4.5);
- It is accepted that outbound vehicles turning into the petrol station could cause some delays compared to the current situation. However, these are likely to be of a short duration due to the frequent gaps in inbound traffic during the evening peak. Furthermore, at this time, traffic approaching Park Grange Road is often in a queue or very slow moving (hence the purpose of the bus lane) and so any delays are likely to be minimal;
- The use of bus lanes to give some priority to buses in certain locations is a policy matter. In Sheffield, additional and existing bus lanes are considered on their merits.

Parking Issues

- The changes will impact on parking, which is already difficult. In particular, why are parking restrictions needed in the morning on the outbound side;
- Parked vehicles often block driveways on the inbound side. When the parking bays go in, could 'keep clear' markings be installed to protect drives?.

Officer Response

- In response to the consultation, it is now proposed to change the parking restrictions in the morning on the outbound side. The outbound SYL is proposed to operate in the evening peak only, starting from 1600 rather than the 1630 currently. In other words, it will operate in the same hours as the bus lane;
- The current situation of parked vehicles blocking driveways has been acknowledged and the resident advised about the 'H' marking process. However, in this case, the initial marking can be installed without charge.

Other Issues

- The shared use pavement will be unsafe;
- The footpath on the into-city side is already narrow: there is no room to reduce it;
- Impact on house prices.

Officer Response

- The purpose of the shared use facility is to ensure that cyclists can cycle safely along this uphill section of City Road. Due to the width of the road at this point, and the need to retain parking for residents, it is not possible to provide a bus lane of the necessary width to ensure that a bus can pass a cyclist within the lane itself. On this basis, cyclists will have a more attractive option of coming off the main carriageway to utilise a new shared use pavement. Pedestrian usage of this length of pavement is not considered to be high and the potential for conflict with cyclists is therefore low;
- The current width of the pavement outside the terraced houses (into-city side) is 3m: the proposals will reduce this to 2.5m. This enables parking to be retained along this stretch. This width is more than adequate for the pedestrian usage and is above the required minimum standards;
- Any possible impact on house prices is not a consideration.

B) Issues raised by Local Councillors

Bus Lane Issues

- Traffic is already bad here: queuing here leads to motorists cutting through other roads (such as Manor Lane and Dovern Road). The scheme could lead to more traffic doing this. Also to more traffic using Spring Lane/Park Grange Road;

- Conflict between buses and queuing general traffic at the end of the bus lane;
- How will the bus lane be monitored and policed?

Officer Response (in addition to the above)

- Queuing traffic on this section of City Road does lead to some traffic choosing to bypass the queue and use adjacent roads. However, it is unlikely that the scheme will make this worse. The scheme uses existing road space, maintaining the capacity of the main running lane, the only difference being that buses will be able to reach the front of the queue. Whilst it is acknowledged that this gives buses priority over other traffic, this is the purpose of the scheme and aims to meet the objectives of the Key Bus Route by providing greater reliability and improved journey times over this section;
- The brief for the scheme includes the necessary on-site infrastructure (signs and poles) to enable the bus lane to be monitored by the City Council's mobile camera enforcement team.

Cemetery

- Reducing the pavement width on the into-city side is a safety issue, especially around the entrance to and from the Cemetery where footfall is high.

Officer Response

- The pavement around the entrance to the Cemetery is not affected on either side of the road. The appearance of the entrance will be impacted on to a degree by bus lane signing. It is also necessary to put yellow kerb markings along the kerb stones so that the Single Yellow Line is enforceable.

Other Issues

- What modelling has been done to show that the proposals are value for money?
- These bus services are across the city so when they reach the terminus by the time they come back inbound the rush hour will be over. What benefit will the residents see?
- What will the increase in air pollution be in the area?

Officer Response (in addition to the above)

- No value for money (VfM) assessment has been done for this intervention in isolation. However, when the Better Bus Area Fund bid was submitted for approval to the Department for Transport (DfT), SYPTTE carried out a VfM assessment for the whole City Centre to Mosborough Key Bus Route project. That identified a Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) of 7.33. DfT considers anything with a BCR of 2+ to represent good value for money;
- Any resident using these buses (28 per hour along this stretch of City Road) will benefit;

- There should be a slight reduction in bus-based emissions as a result of less queuing time. There should be no impact on car-based emissions because car delay is not altered.