
Report to
Cabinet Member (Urban Regeneration and Regional Planning)

24 June 2005

Report of
Director of City Development

Title
PrimeLines - Far Gosford Street/Sky Blue Way Bus Priority Scheme

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to feed back on the consultations regarding this scheme and to seek approval to proceed with the necessary Traffic Regulation Orders which support the regeneration proposals for Far Gosford Street.
- 1.2 The scheme is in St Michael's Ward.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Cabinet Member is recommended to;
- a. Approve the principle of the proposed PrimeLines scheme for both Far Gosford Street and Sky Blue Way.
 - b. Instruct the Director of Legal & Democratic Services to advertise the proposed Traffic Regulation Order in relation to the proposed the bus lanes, as detailed in Appendix 1, on:
 - Binley Road, between its junction with St Georges Road and Sky Blue Way,
 - Sky Blue Way between its junction with Binley Road/ Walsgrave Road junction and its junction with the Ring Road slip roads,
 - Walsgrave Road at the Binley Road/ Sky Blue Way/ Walsgrave Road junction,
 - c. Instruct the Director of Legal & Democratic Services to advertise the proposed Traffic Regulation Order in relation to the proposal to make Far Gosford Street one-way in a north-easterly direction from Bramble Street to Sky Blue Way;
 - d. Instruct the Director of Legal & Democratic Services to advertise the proposed Traffic Regulation Order for the prohibition of driving at the Binley Road/ Gulson Road junction, to all traffic except for cycles.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 On the 30th March 2004 Cabinet gave approval to implement the PrimeLines project, which consists of a series of five bus showcase routes.

- Foleshill Road
 - City Centre to Walsgrave Triangle
 - Tanyard Farm\ Walsgrave Hospital via the City Centre (the east – west route)
 - City Centre to Willenhall
 - City Centre to University
- 3.2 Far Gosford Street is an important bus route within the network as it is the convergence of the two bus corridors, City Centre -Walsgrave and East-West. As part of the City Council's Corridor Regeneration Project to which Far Gosford Street is a part, PrimeLines has been working closely with the team to support the regeneration package by carrying out traffic management measures to reduce through traffic and thereby freeing up carriageway space to reallocate to pedestrians and shoppers in cars as part of the wider corridor regeneration project.
- 3.3 Far Gosford Street is an important feature of the city, being one of the oldest approaches but it has become run down for a wide variety of reasons. The demands being placed upon it by the motorcar with the demands for parking, servicing and access has left little opportunity to refurbish the area. However recent awards by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the allocation of funds from both the Corridor Regeneration Project and PrimeLines provides the opportunity to generate a more holistic approach to the street. A study was undertaken of the whole of the street scene by Colin Buchanans and Partners, which have been reported to a Members Forum. One of the key recommendations of that report was to seek a scheme by which the traffic was made one way.
- 3.4 The overall projects for Far Gosford Street are about regeneration of the area, to restore the vitality and viability of the street. As part of the feasibility work some key interventions were identified some of which involved changes to the traffic management in and around the area. The proposed traffic management scheme is being driven by and supports the regeneration scheme. In developing the ideas/ proposals for the traffic management scheme, the changes have been measured against the comments and issues raised at previous community consultations/ events such as community street audits.
- 3.5 As part of the further study work PrimeLines commissioned traffic surveys in the area in the early part of the 2005. The key findings of the traffic and related survey work identified that:
- Although 6,800 vehicles passed through the street on a typical day 85% did not stop in the area
 - Of those people interviewed in Far Gosford Street over half had walked there and only a quarter had come by car
 - Of the local residents who used the street, 95% walked to the street
 - Lower Ford Street car park was generally full all day (possibly with visitors to the City Centre)
 - The main car park generally had space available and most trips were short term (less than 2 hours)
 - There was heavy parking on street throughout the day with much of it being illegal.
- 3.6 The development of the proposal has been guided by the Far Gosford Street Partnership, which has been meeting on a regular basis for the last 18 months. The partnership is made up of representatives of the Traders, adjacent Residents Groups, and Ward Councillors operating under the Chairmanship of Cllr Nellist. The Partnership has considered all of the

traffic issues and endorsed the proposal for consultation with the wider community. A Street News was distributed around the area including the traders on Far Gosford Street inviting them to an consultation event held in the Heart & Hands Public House on 19, 20 & 21 May 2005.

4 Proposal and Other Options that have been Considered

4.1 Three traffic proposals were presented to the public, as part of the overall concept for regeneration and conservation, namely:-

Option A: Do Nothing, leaving the street as it is and deciding not to take up the Heritage Lottery fund grants

Option B: Do Minimum within the existing kerb alignments with some works to frontages but little opportunity to improve the street scene

Option C: Make the street one-way and improves the space provision for pedestrians and enhancement of the street scene

4.2 The proposal recommended by the Far Gosford Street partnership was the third option which incorporated proposals for the following elements:

- Provision of a bus lane on Binley Road, inbound starting at Gulson Road down to the Sky Blue Way/ Ring Road roundabout. This would be achieved by reducing the central medium strip and some edge widening such that no traffic capacity is lost for general traffic
- Provision of a short length of bus lane on Walsgrave Road to assist buses to get to the bus lane on Sky Blue Way.
- Introducing a one-way system in Far Gosford Street outbound between Bramble Street and Sky Blue Way and allowing an 'all movements' turn at the junction with Sky Blue Way. Hence buses would travel outbound on Far Gosford Street but would run inbound on Sky Blue Way.
- Preventing access to Binley Road at the Gulson Road junction, which leads to Far Gosford Street with the exception of access for cycles.
- Introduction of CCTV camera(s) to enable the bus lane to be enforced, the traffic flows and the operation of the traffic signals to be monitored and the security of passengers waiting at the bus stops can be safeguarded at the Sky Blue Way/ Binley Road junction and in the vicinity of the Sky Blue Way/ Oxford Street junction.
- Improvements to the bus stops on Sky Blue Way and in Far Gosford Street
- Reduction of the carriageway width on Far Gosford Street to accommodate one-way traffic, parking/servicing and the utilisation of the residual space for improved pedestrian facilities.
- The provision of 'angled parking' in Binley Road (at the top end of the street) to accommodate additional on-street spaces.

4.3 The proposed one-way system on Far Gosford Street and associated bus lane on Sky Blue Way must be seen in the wider context of supporting the package of regeneration measures to be carried out on Far Gosford Street. Some of the fundamentals are or will soon be in place, such as Supplementary Planning Guidance and the Far Gosford Street Conservation Character Appraisal and Policy Framework, to assist in turning the area around. The regeneration measures on Far Gosford Street be covered in future reports and will cover issues around footway design, off-street car parking provision and charges, the

layout of the 'square' area at the eastern end of the street, as well as issues surrounding frontage design and heritage issues.

- 4.4 Around 200 people visited the consultation event and the feeling was that there was general support for Option C, which was the scheme that had been endorsed by the Partnership. Some 38 response forms have been returned of which 34 have supported Option C. However there were concerns expressed by residents and traders regarding various aspects of the proposals although there was no consistency in the concerns that were being expressed- some wanted to ban all parking from the street whilst others believed that parking on both sides of the road should be allowed. There was some concern regarding the distance of the bus stops on Sky Blue Way from the street but others liked the idea of linking the route through the new cemetery gateway. One of the key concerns was the ability for traders to service their properties.
- 4.5 The bus operators have confirmed that they approve of the proposals and believe that they will make a major contribution to the reduction of delays in the corridor.
- 4.6 Taking on-board the consensus of the views expressed it is considered that the fundamental changes that are to be proposed to the traffic circulation system should be advertised through a formal series of Bus Lane and One Way Traffic Order to ensure any objections can be dealt with early to avoid delaying progress on the wider regeneration scheme. Once these issues have been resolved a more detailed Traffic Regulation Order will be prepared which will establish the exact arrangements for on-street parking and servicing arrangements. Any unresolved objections to the traffic orders would be presented to a future Cabinet Member's meeting for a final decision.
- 4.7 It should be noted that the introduction of the bus lane on Sky Blue Way would not happen if the one-way scheme on Far Gosford Street does not proceed.
- 4.8 The plan attached Figure 1 shows the proposed one-way on Far Gosford Street and the associated bus lane (green line) on Sky Blue Way. A fuller scaled plan will be available to the Cabinet Members meeting.
- 4.9 The proposed highway works on Sky Blue Way are abutting the Far Gosford Street Conservation Area. With this in mind, the design, street furniture and the materials used will be sympathetic to the adjacent conservation area. It is suggested that the new south-east kerbline of Sky Blue Way becomes the de-facto north-western boundary of the Conservation Area.

5 Other specific implications

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Area Co-ordination	✓	
Best Value	✓	
Children and Young People		✓
Comparable Benchmark Data		✓
Corporate Parenting		✓
Coventry Community Plan	✓	

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Crime and Disorder		✓
Equal Opportunities		✓
Finance	✓	
Health and Safety	✓	
Human Resources		✓
Human Rights Act		✓
Impact on Partner Organisations	✓	
Information and Communications Technology	✓	
Legal Implications	✓	
Property Implications		✓
Race Equality Scheme		✓
Risk Management		✓
Sustainable Development	✓	
Trade Union Consultation		✓
Voluntary Sector – The Coventry Compact		✓

5.1 **Area Coordination**

The proposals will provide improved bus services into some of the priority Neighbourhoods in the city. There are no direct implications to the Area Co-ordination Service. They will however be kept informed of the proposal affecting their areas.

5.2 **Best Value**

In preparing the bid to Government a detailed economic, financial and environmental assessment of the scheme had to be undertaken. Government subjected these assessments to detailed audit before the funding was released.

The assessments identified a general improvement in environmental conditions as increased bus usage reduced vehicle emissions. Accident savings amounted to a reduction of 120 accidents over the 30-year period of the assessment.

The assessments predicted:

- Bus usage would increase by 25% on each corridor
- Bus usage across the network would increase by 10% by 2011
- Public transport modal split to the City Centre would increase to 30% across the day
- There would be a significant increase in satisfaction levels of bus passenger users.

The scheme would also be programmed to integrate with a number of Corridor Enhancement programmes.

5.3 **Coventry Community Plan**

The PrimeLines project impacts on:-

Key Theme

Priorities

First Steps

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| 1 Jobs & Our
Local Economy | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve physical access to jobs |
| 8 Transport | We will work with providers to achieve easier, safer, sustainable and more accessible transport for everyone | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the frequency and availability of bus services • Encourage more adults and children to walk cycle or use public transport to get to work and school • Increase opportunities for safer cycling and walking • Begin by making improvements in our priority neighbourhoods |

5.4 Finance

The resources for the construction of the bus lanes on Sky Blue Way and the creation of the one way street and associated works was included within the Cabinet Report approval of 30th March 2004 and subsequently updated in the Cabinet Report of 10th May 2005.

The Cabinet report of 10th May 2005 (PrimeLines Progress Report) identified a number of funding streams for the whole of the PrimeLines Projects. In this case the costs of implementation of the bus lanes on Sky Blue Way will be funded from the £8.5m allocation from the DfT for 2005/06. At the present time this proposal is being assessed in terms of cost. Progress will be reported as part of the six monthly progress report to Cabinet.

Funds for the enhancement of some of the street scene enhancements are contained within budgets of the Corridor Enhancement project and the Heritage Lottery Fund and these will be the subject of a further report.

5.5 Health & Safety

As part of the normal design process this scheme will be 'Safety Audited' to ensure that any foreseeable hazards are eliminated or adequately mitigated. As a result the designed scheme may differ in some respects from that consulted upon so far.

5.6 Impact on Partner Organisations

The project is being delivered through close collaboration with the main bus operators, Centro and Coventry City Council. This has been facilitated by a voluntary partnership, The Coventry Public Transport Concordat. Further work is being undertaken to within the partnership to introduce a Statutory Quality Partnership. This would then ensure that all buses operating in the city would adhere to a defined standard and this would be matched with improved infrastructure on all of the bus routes. Hence every bus operating in the city would be to a common standard of low floor access, trained drivers, and GPS equipment.

5.7 Information and Communications Technology

The proposal includes the provision of CCTV camera to be used to carryout enforcement of the bus lanes, and monitor the traffic signal junction and the personal safety of passengers waiting at the bus stops.

5.8 Legal Implications

Except for the provision of bus stop signs, which are provided by the bus operators, the implementation of this project will largely involve the use of the Council's highway and traffic management powers.

The Council regulates how traffic may use roads by means of Traffic Regulation Orders made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. This lays down a statutory consultation and public notice/objection process. All implementation decisions relating to the use of the Council's powers will need to be taken by the Cabinet Member (Urban Regeneration & Regional Planning), including taking final decisions on objections to traffic orders.

5.9 Sustainable Development

The PrimeLines Bus project seeks to improve public transport to key destinations in a manner, which reduces congestion and provides better accessibility for all people. The proposal will improve the quality and reliability of the existing bus routes, thereby helping to make public transport more attractive.

6 Monitoring

The PrimeLines project includes the monitoring of bus patronage and traffic flows through the current programme of bi-annual traffic counts that are undertaken around the Core of the City Centre. Monitoring of overall vehicle speeds will now be possible through a programme of monitoring that has recently been established by the Department for Transport.

7 Timescale & Expected Outcomes

7.1 It is proposed that the Traffic Orders would be published shortly after the Cabinet Members meeting. Subject to these being approved it is proposed that works on widening Sky Blue Way will commence late summer. Care will be taken to ensure that no temporary traffic restrictions are in place in the run up to Christmas.

7.2 The works on Far Gosford Street will not commence before the completion of the Sky Blue Way works which will then enable the one-way scheme to be implemented. Further consultation and design will be carried out on the final improvements to the street, including a one day Street Scene workshop involving the stakeholders. Real time traffic information will be provided at the key shelters once the system becomes fully operational – likely to be some time in 2007.

7.3 Subject to further design modifications/ refinements, the overall programme of works would contribute to overall PrimeLines targets by the provision of: -

Bus Lanes - 410 m of bus lane

Bus Stops: - Improve waiting environment (shelters) – 4 stops
Information provision - 4 stops
Number of bus stops on routes - 4

Traffic Signals: - 2 modified junctions including pedestrian including Selective Vehicle Detection system

CCTV: - 2 cameras for traffic monitoring/bus lane enforcement/personal safety

	Yes	No
Key Decision		✓
Scrutiny Consideration (if yes, which Scrutiny meeting and date)		✓
Council Consideration (if yes, date of Council meeting)		✓

List of background papers

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Papers open to Public Inspection

Description of paper	Location
Results of Consultation held on 19, 20 & 21 May 2005.	CC4 FI 5

Proposed Traffic Orders

CITY OF COVENTRY (SKY BLUE WAY) (BUS LANE) ORDER 2005

1. Save as provided in Article 2 of this Order no person shall cause or permit any vehicle to proceed in a north westerly and westerly direction in the near-side lane of the southern carriageway of Sky Blue Way, hereby designated a Bus Lane from its junction with Binley Road/ Walsgrave Road to its termination at the roundabout junction with Gosford Street and Ring Road slip roads. (A distance of 410 metres).
2. Nothing in Article 1 of this Order shall apply to:-
 - a buses
 - b pedal cycles
 - c any vehicle being used for police, fire or ambulance service purposes in circumstances of an emergency
 - d any vehicle being used for:-
 - i the removal of any obstruction to traffic
 - ii the maintenance, improvement or reconstruction of the length of road
 - iii the laying, erection, alteration or repair of any sewer, main, pipe or apparatus for supply of gas, water, electricity or of any telecommunication apparatus
 - iv the repair, replacement, maintenance or cleaning of any bus stop shelter
 - e any local authority, water or sewage undertaker in pursuance of statutory powers or duties
 - f Licensed Hackney Carriages and Licensed Private Hire Vehicles

CITY OF COVENTRY (BINLEY ROAD) (BUS LANE) ORDER 2005

1. Save as provided in Article 2 of this Order no person shall cause or permit any vehicle to proceed in an north westerly direction in the near-side lane of the south western carriageway of Binley Road, hereby designated a Bus Lane from its junction with St Georges Road to its junction with Sky Blue Way. (A distance of 140 metres).
2. Nothing in Article 1 of this Order shall apply to:-
 - a buses
 - b pedal cycles
 - c any vehicle being used for police, fire or ambulance service purposes in circumstances of an emergency
 - d any vehicle being used for:-
 - i the removal of any obstruction to traffic
 - ii the maintenance, improvement or reconstruction of the length of road
 - iii the laying, erection, alteration or repair of any sewer, main, pipe or apparatus for supply of gas, water, electricity or of any telecommunication apparatus
 - iv the repair, replacement, maintenance or cleaning of any bus stop shelter
 - e any local authority, water or sewage undertaker in pursuance of statutory powers or duties
 - f Licensed Hackney Carriages and Licensed Private Hire Vehicles

CITY OF COVENTRY (WALSgrave ROAD) (BUS LANE) ORDER 2005

3. Save as provided in Article 2 of this Order no person shall cause or permit any vehicle to proceed in an south westerly direction in the near-side lane of the south eastern carriageway of Walsgrave Road, hereby designated a Bus Lane from its junction with Sky Blue Way to a point 30 metres north east of that junction. (A distance of 30 metres).
4. Nothing in Article 1 of this Order shall apply to:-
 - a buses
 - b pedal cycles
 - c any vehicle being used for police, fire or ambulance service purposes in circumstances of an emergency
 - d any vehicle being used for:-
 - i the removal of any obstruction to traffic
 - ii the maintenance, improvement or reconstruction of the length of road
 - iii the laying, erection, alteration or repair of any sewer, main, pipe or apparatus for supply of gas, water, electricity or of any telecommunication apparatus
 - iv the repair, replacement, maintenance or cleaning of any bus stop shelter
 - e any local authority, water or sewage undertaker in pursuance of statutory powers or duties
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