
Report to
Cabinet Member (City Development)

2 April 2009

Report of
Director of City Development

Title
Impact of the Red Route on the A4600

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To outline the impact of the introduction of the first Red Route in Coventry.
- 1.2 To seek the approval of the Cabinet Member to make the existing experimental traffic regulation order permanent.
- 1.3 To further consider the petition presented to the previous Cabinet Member on the 10 January 2008 seeking the removal of one part of the Red Route between Dane Road and Clifford Bridge Road.

2 Recommendations

The Cabinet Member is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the success of the Red Route in improving bus operations and general traffic flow, and reducing accidents.
- 2.2 Agree that the existing experimental traffic order should be made permanent.
- 2.3 Not accede to the request of the petitioners to remove one part of the existing Red Route from the permanent order.
- 2.4 Instruct the Director of Finance and Legal Services to make the entire Red Route permanent.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 In March 2003 Council endorsed the West Midlands Local Transport Plan. In doing so a bid to the Department for Transport for funding to deliver the Coventry Quality Bus Network was supported. This proposal is part of a wider approach to making the most effective and safe use of our transport network which includes supporting high quality bus services.

- 3.2 The important highway corridor that links Junction 2 of the M6 to the City Centre and also serves the University Hospital is one of the routes included in the proposal (Figure 1).
- 3.3 Following significant consultation with residents and users, initial proposals to provide bus lanes were not considered appropriate. An alternative approach, which whilst assisting bus operations, did not reduce overall highway capacity for all vehicles was sought.
- 3.4 The Red Routes approach is essentially a 'no stopping' traffic management regime which ensures that the efficiency of the route is not reduced by stopped or parked vehicles. Recognising that although this is an important strategic route, on street parking was allowed in off peak periods, additional parking bays were also provided where possible.
- 3.5 The Red Route has now been operational for long enough to draw some initial conclusions from the monitoring undertaken.

4 **Monitoring**

Between 2007 and 2008 the route has been monitored to assess the impact of introducing the Red Route. The key findings are outlined below.

4.1 Traffic Volume and Speed

- There has been an overall increase of 9% in traffic volume. It is thought that a major contributor to this has been the University Hospital.
- AM Peak flows inbound have decreased, but outbound have increased slightly.
- PM Peak flows have increased in both inbound and outbound directions by an average of 10%.
- Traffic speeds have reduced on all sections except Hinckley Road outbound which saw a slight increase.
- All 85th percentile speeds have fallen, showing more traffic is travelling within the speed limit.

4.2 Accidents

There has been an overall fall in reported accidents of 7% and no individual black spots have been identified. There is however, a perception of some residents that accidents have increased in the Clifford Bridge Road area

4.3 Bus Patronage, Journey Times and Punctuality

- Bus Stop usage has increased by 24%, along the corridor.
- City Centre cordon counts shows inbound patronage to have increased by 16% and outbound by 3%.
- Inbound journey times have improved by 9%, but outbound journey times have increased by 15%. This is believed to be attributable to the overall increase in the outbound traffic and the extra patronage.

- The reliability of services along this inbound section of route has improved and now meets the target of 85% of all buses being within 5 minutes of timetable.
- Bus passenger satisfaction overall has increased.

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 The scheme as delivered has met the objectives of providing a safer and more efficient transport system for Coventry on an important strategic corridor, while traffic volumes are increasing.

6 Petition

- 6.1 On the 10 January a petition submitted by Councillor Dixon was considered by the Cabinet Member. This sought the removal of the inbound part of the Red Route between Clifford Bridge Road and Dane Road (Figure 2). The reasons for this request are summarised below.
- Danger*; has been created to the design of the parking bays to the point where a major accident is inevitable.
 - Lack of adequate parking*; Parking bay capacity is insufficient and impacting on adjoining roads. Neighbourhood disputes and bad feeling are increasing.
 - Illegal Obstruction & Parking*; has reached epidemic proportion even preventing people going to work.
 - Speeding*; There is a significant increase in vehicles travelling far in excess of the speed limit. 60mph is now commonplace and instances of 80mph are rising.
 - Inadequate resources*; The enforcement departments have insufficient manpower to monitor and control the problems listed above to an acceptable level.
 - Red Route has no real advantages inbound*; The Red Route is inconsistent and is dangerous in several places where it bottle necks into one lane. It shows no real benefit to off set the Danger and Chaos it has inflicted on the residents.
- 6.2 At that time it was decided that it was too early to reach a view on the issues raised and that any decision should be deferred until after a period of monitoring.
- 6.3 As set out above, the monitoring shows that accidents have dropped, speeds have generally reduced and that inbound bus operations are now more efficient.
- 6.4 In terms of enforcing the Red Route traffic regulations, during the course of the experimental order different regimes have been applied. From our ongoing liaison with transport operators businesses and residents some refinements have been made.
- 6.5 The improved inbound operational efficiency of the bus service does not indicate that these illegal problems are an issue. However, as this is an important strategic route it will receive priority for future enforcement.
- 6.6 Prior to the introduction of the Red Route, on street parking was allowed outside the morning peak period. This is no longer possible. However, the additional parking bays provided now enable parking to take place during the morning peak as well as the rest of

the day. Prior to the introduction of the bays verges were damaged by illegal parking.

- 6.7 On balance therefore, as properties generally have either frontage or rear off street parking it is recommended that parking should not be re-introduced along this section of the Red Route as it is an important part of the strategic radial route serving the North East of the city.
- 6.8 Thus in the light of the matters outlined in paragraphs 6.3 – 6.7 it is not considered appropriate to remove this section of the corridor from the Red Route management regime.

7 Proposal and Other Option(s) to be Considered

- 7.1 The Red Route has been implemented through an experimental traffic order, which will allow changes to be made to the Red Route without the need to re-advertise. It can only be experimental for up to 18 months after which the Council must either; make it permanent, make it permanent with changes or drop it altogether. The experimental period comes to an end on the 18th April 2009 and cannot be extended further.
- 7.2 The options are:
- to remove the whole Red Route and replace with a yellow line scheme or,
 - to make the red route permanent with amendments or,
 - to make the existing scheme permanent.

8 Other specific implications

8.1

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Best Value	✓	
Children and Young People		
Climate Change & Sustainable Development	✓	
Comparable Benchmark Data		
Corporate Parenting		
Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy	✓	
Crime and Disorder		✓
Equal Opportunities		✓
Finance	✓	
Health and Safety		✓
Human Resources		✓
Human Rights Act		✓
Impact on Partner Organisations	✓	
Information and Communications Technology		✓
Legal Implications	✓	
Neighbourhood Management		✓
Property Implications		✓

	Implications (See below)	No Implications
Race Equality Scheme		✓
Risk Management		✓
Trade Union Consultation		✓
Voluntary Sector – The Coventry Compact		✓

8.2 Best Value

In preparing the bid for the PrimeLines Scheme 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 scheme would also be programmed to integrate with a number of Corridor Enhancement programmes.

8.3 Climate Change & Sustainable Development

The introduction of the Red Route seeks to improve the bus journey by improving reliability to key destinations in a manner, which reduces congestion and provides better accessibility for all people. In addition the Red Route has also made better use of the existing network by allowing the free flow of traffic into the City along this key corridor.

8.4 Finance

The Cabinet report of 28 November 2006 (PrimeLines Progress Report) identified a number of funding streams for the whole of the PrimeLines Projects. In this case the cost of implementation of the Red Route was funded from the £28.4m Department for Transport (DFT) allocation.

There is no funding stream in place to provide for the removal of the Red Route. Additional funding will have to be found to meet the costs if this decision is taken. The costs of removal, re-instatement and introduction of revised Traffic Orders and signage would be significant.

8.5 Impact on Partner Organisations

The introduction of the Red Route has provided a positive benefit on punctuality for the Bus Operators. The removal of the Red Route would undermine the delivery of Highway improvements to improve the bus journey and to make better use of the existing Highway.

8.6 Legal Implications

The Council regulates how traffic may use roads by means of Traffic Regulation Orders made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. These can be made on an experimental basis without the usual prior notice/ objection process for a maximum period of 18 months after which time the Order must be made permanent or abandoned. The objection period for the experimental order is the first 6 months of operation.

The Cabinet Member must give due consideration to any objections made during the operation of the order and in doing so may decide at the end of the experimental period to:

- (a) confirm the proposed order
- (b) confirm the proposed order with modifications
- (c) refuse to confirm the proposed order

Once confirmed an Order comes into legal effect following a "Notice of Making" being publicly advertised.

The Council is under a duty when making any traffic order to have regard to securing "the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic" and the need to provide "suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway" (S.122 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984). The Cabinet Member is required to take both of these matters into account and to strike a balance between them.

9 Monitoring

9.1 The scheme will continue to be monitored as part of our ongoing monitor and review programme.

10 Timescale and expected outcomes

10.1 None

	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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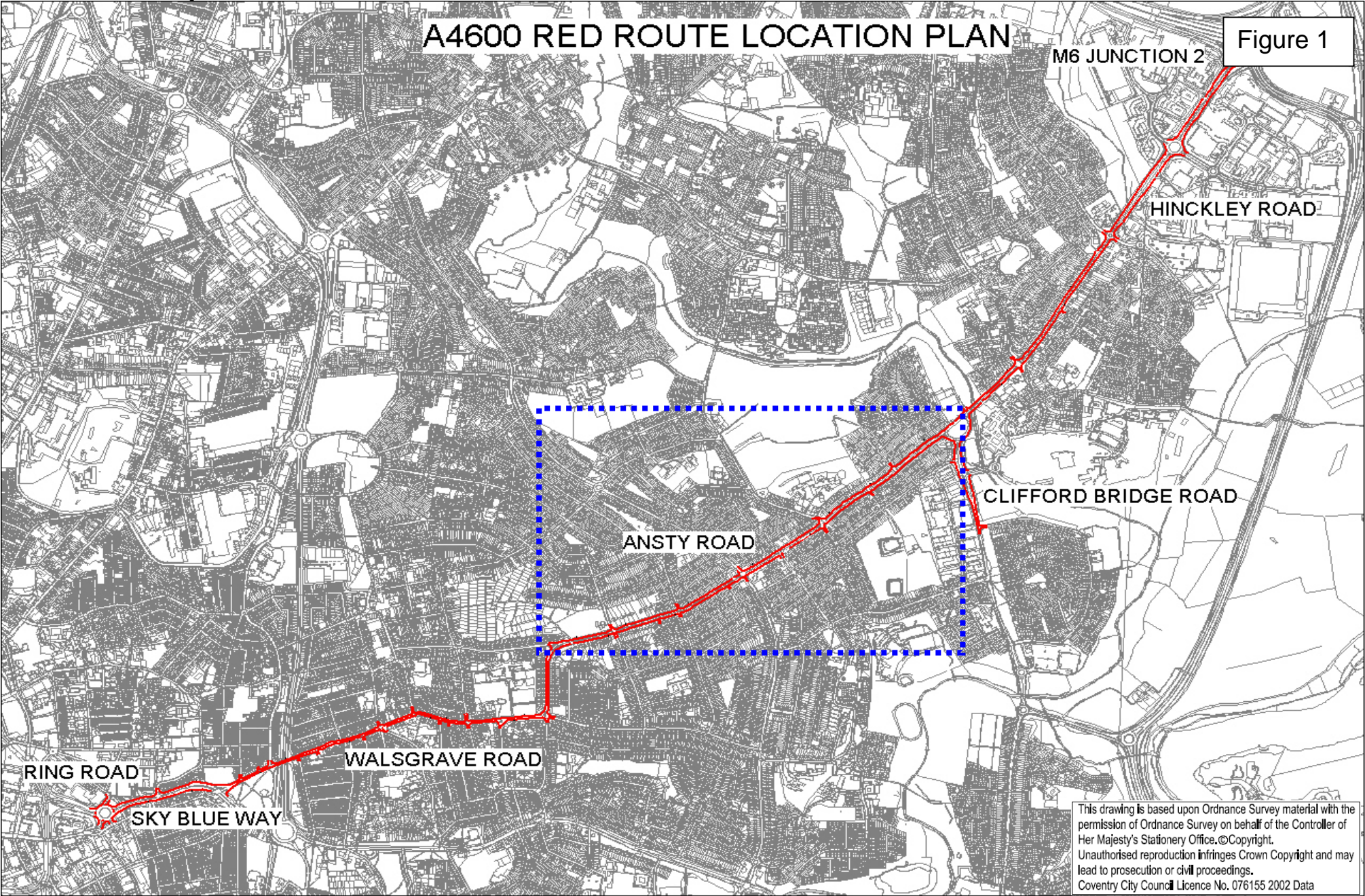
Description of paper

Location

None

A4600 RED ROUTE LOCATION PLAN

Figure 1



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Figure 2

