

Cabinet Member for City Services

14th November 2016

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for City Services – Councillor J Innes

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Executive Director of Place

Ward(s) affected:

Cheylesmore

Title:

Report – Objection to Traffic Regulation Order - Proposed revocation of right turn only (Whitley /A444).

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

Planning Permission was granted on 7th February 2014 for the construction of highways infrastructure, comprising of a new bridge over the A444. The scheme became known as the Whitley Junction improvement scheme and provided slip roads, retaining walls, extension of the existing bridge over the River Sherbourne, highway remodelling works, provision of routes for pedestrian and cyclists including stopping up/diversion of existing footpaths/cycleways and associated landscaping works. The changes to the road layout required Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) to assist with traffic management.

One of the proposed TROs was the creation of a right turn only TRO which resulted in traffic only being able to turn right from the A444 northbound off slip on to the over bridge to the JLR/Hotel complex. This TRO was implemented, however a significant proportion of road users are now turning left at the top of the slip road access. Therefore, it was proposed to revoke the right turn only order, which would enable traffic to turn both left and right at this junction, as it was considered necessary to formalise the current situation and improve capacity and safety for users of this junction arrangement.

The proposed revocation TRO was advertised on 6th October 2016. This commenced a 21 day objection period. 6 objections were received.

In accordance with the City Council's procedure for dealing with objections to TROs they are reported to the Cabinet Member for City Services for a decision as to how to proceed.

The cost of introducing the proposed revocation TROs, if approved, will be funded from the Transportation and Highways capital programme.

Recommendations:

Cabinet Member for City Services is recommended to:

1. Consider the objections to the proposed revocation of the right turn only TRO;
2. Subject to recommendation 1, approve the implementation of the revocation TRO as advertised.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix A – Location plan

Appendix B – Summary of proposed objection and response

Background Papers

None

Other useful documents:

Planning Committee Report 6th February 2014, Land at and adjacent to the Junctions of the A444 (Stivichall and Cheylesmore Bypass) with the A4114 FUL/2013/2599

Cabinet Report 13th August 2013 – Whitley Junction Road Improvements

Copies of reports available at modern.gov.coventry.gov.uk

Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?

No

Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?

No

Will this report go to Council?

No

Report title:

Report – Objection to Traffic Regulation Order - Proposed revocation of right turn only (Whitley /A444).

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 As part of the original Whitley Junction improvement scheme proposals a TRO was implemented which only permitted traffic to be able to turn right from the A444 northbound off slip on to the over bridge to JLR/Hotel complex.

However, a significant proportion of road users are now turning left at the top of the slip road access. The existing junction layout and alignment would not allow for a change in layout to prevent vehicles turning left. Traffic turning left also has the benefit of no oncoming traffic flow which allows vehicles to utilise both lanes when turning left. The introduction of additional signage has not assisted with limiting the left turning vehicles. A location plan is provided in Appendix A

- 1.2 Site observations have been undertaken and identify that a large proportion of drivers are undertaking this left turn manoeuvre and in some instances they are turning left from the outside right turn lane. The traffic either uses the access road to travel towards the city centre or Daventry Road. Formalising permitting both the left and right turns with signing and road markings will assist in controlling movements at this junction and improving safety.
- 1.3 As part of the statutory procedure the Traffic Regulation Order to revoke the right turn only was advertised in the local press and notices were posted on lamp columns in the area of the proposed restrictions on 6th October 2016, advising that any formal objections should be made in writing by 27th October 2016.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1 6 objections were received. The objections and responses to the objections are summarised in Appendix B.
- 2.2 In considering the objections received, the options are to:
- i) make the order for the proposal as advertised;
 - ii) not to make the order relating to the proposal.
- 2.3 The recommended proposal is to make the order as advertised, which will result in the revocation of the right turn only allowing vehicles to turn either right over the over bridge or left on to the A444 northbound on slip.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 The proposed TROs for the waiting restrictions were advertised in the Coventry Telegraph on 6th October 2016, notices were also placed on street in the vicinity of the proposals. The responses received were 6 objections. In addition 2 responses were received in support of the proposal, one advising that the proposal 'made sense' and one that 'having witnessed several near misses resulting from such actions [the left turn being made] it is probably reasonable to make the change.'
- 3.2 Appendix B details a summary of each of the objections received.

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 It is proposed to make the TRO and allow the left turn manoeuvre by December 2016.

5. Comments from Executive Director of Resources

5.1 Financial implications

The cost of introducing the proposed TROs, if approved, will be funded from the Transportation and Highways capital programme

5.2 Legal implications

The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 allows the Council to make a Traffic Order on various grounds e.g. improving safety, improving traffic flow and preserving or improving the amenities of an area provided it has given due consideration to the effect of such an order.

In accordance with Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, when considering whether it would be expedient to make a traffic order the Council is under a duty to have regard to and balance various potentially conflicting factors e.g. the convenient and safe movement of traffic (including pedestrians), adequate parking, improving or preserving local amenity, air quality and/or public transport provision.

There is an obligation under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 to advertise our intention to make Traffic Orders and to inform various stakeholders, including the Police and the public. The Authority is obliged to consider any representations received. If representations are received these are considered by the Cabinet Member for City Services. Regulations allow for an advertised order to be modified (in response to objections or otherwise) before a final version of the order is made.

The 1984 Act provides that once a Traffic Order has been made it may only be challenged further via the High Court on a point of law (i.e. that the Order does not comply with the Act for some reason).

6. Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?

The proposed changes to the permitted manoeuvres at the junction, as recommended, will contribute to the City Council's objectives of providing a safer and more confident Coventry.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

None

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

None

6.4 Equalities / EIA

The revocation of the right turn only TRO will ensure that all users of the highway can manoeuvre around the junction and access slip road sufficiently without any undue effect.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

None

Report author(s)

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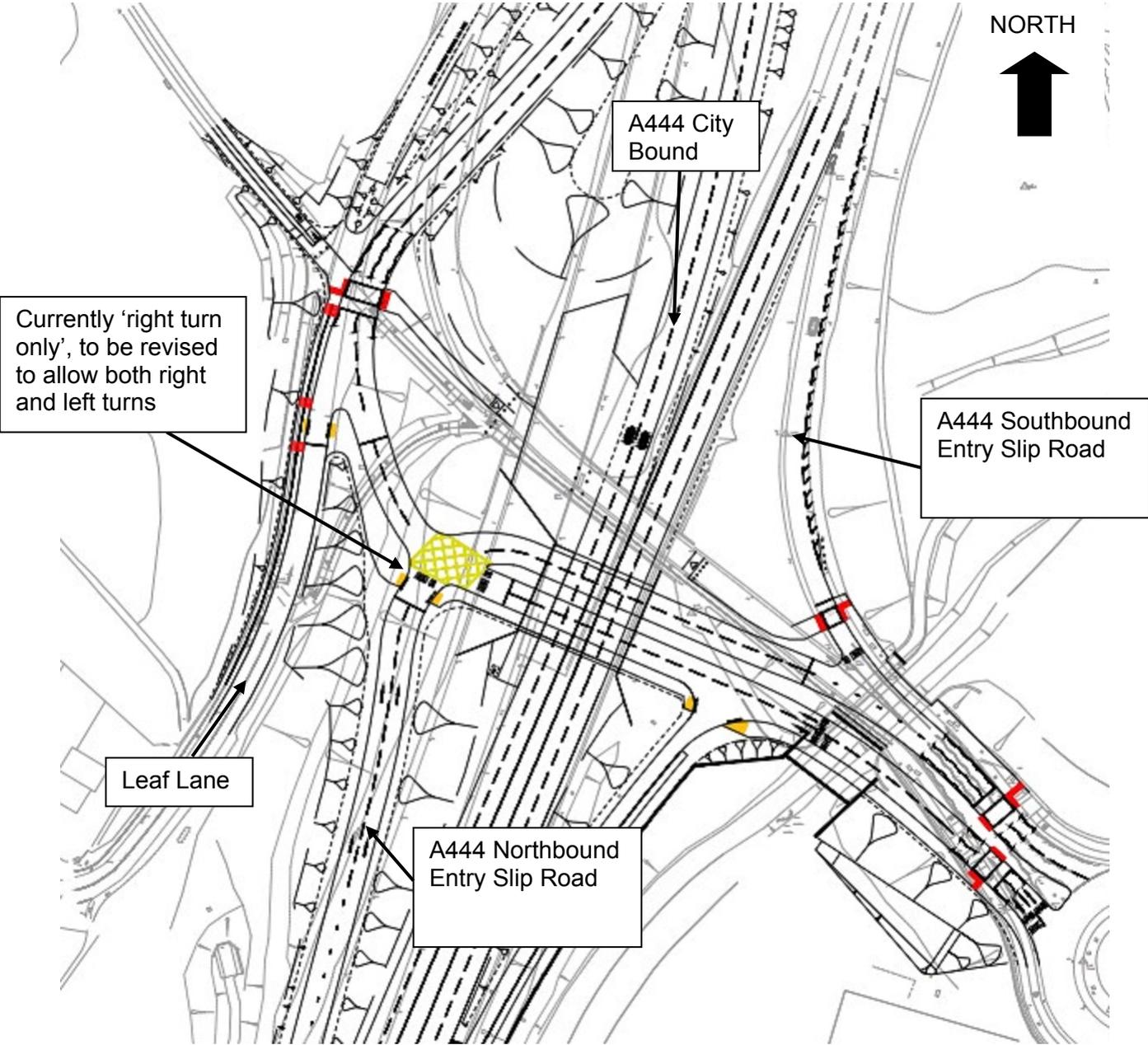
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Sam McGinty	Place Team Leader, Legal Services	Resources	02.11.2016	02.11.2016
Councillor J Innes	Cabinet Member for City Services	-	25.10.2016	27.10.2016

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Appendix A – Location plan



Appendix B - Summary of objections and response to objections

Objection Ref	Objection Summary	Response to Objection
1	<p>When this road layout was designed by traffic management consultants they put the no left turn there for a purpose, it was passed by the planners and that's how it should remain.</p> <p>Just because a lot of people decide to break the law and you can't seem to police it does not mean the original design concept should be changed.</p>	<p>The design was for a no left turn, however as with all new designs the scheme is reviewed to take into account the driving habits and routes that are being taken and where necessary amend and revise the situation.</p> <p>Enforcement of the junction cannot be provided continuously.</p> <p>The revisions will formalise a situation that is occurring at present and is likely to continue. By formalising the junction arrangement the traffic signals can be adjusted to assist with traffic flow and capacity. Traffic will also be discouraged from undertaking the left turn lane from the outside lane of the A444 entry slip road.</p>
2	<p>The JLR Whitley slip road needs to be maintained as a; JLR, Hotel, Business park access road, with no left turn back on to the Whitley island.</p> <p>At peak times exiting the JLR site has become a long and tiresome wait, due to the number of cars using the slip road to either do an illegal left turn (the camera signs and notices don't worry anyone as they know there are no cameras there) or to do a right turn go round the roundabout and then join the exiting JLR queues, most nights last week it was taking about 20-25 mins to travel from the JLR car parks to the Whitley island.</p>	<p>Vehicles leaving the JLR site now have an additional means of exit, whereby it only had provision for one exit slip road previously. Traffic is controlled via the traffic signal junction to assist during peak flow traffic movements. Queuing does occur in short intervals to allow for gaps in the traffic for those wanting to enter JLR or the hotel. If the left turn ban is revoked then further works will be undertaken to adjust the timings of the signals to assist further with the efficiency.</p>

	<p>One of the biggest issues is the complete lack of regard for the yellow hatched box, this is always blocked by illegal left turns or right turners looking to loop back round the JLR island. This box needs to be more rigorously enforced and is the turn is made both left and right, this needs to be a lot better policed to stop this infringement, which stops the flow of traffic.</p> <p>Once people have used this method to jump the queue, you regularly see them cutting back in to the main traffic flow to get round the Whitley island, often nearly colliding with those exiting correctly who have queued to get to exit.</p>	<p>The yellow box marking is only blocked by left turning traffic as this currently is not allowed for in the stages of the traffic signals. Right turning traffic does not block the traffic. Adjustments to the traffic signals can be made to reduce the blocking of the junction if the restriction is lifted.</p> <p>Site observations do show that traffic joins the main carriageway, however the majority of traffic moves off towards the city centre or Daventry Road.</p>
3	<p>Regarding the "no left turn" situation it appears to me that the council is taking the line of least resistance and not fully appreciating the dangers present.</p> <p>If it requires legal powers to alter the present road order then it is apparent to me the law is being broken by motorists. Surely the provision of a camera and subsequent fines for this illegal turn would stop the situation arising and show that the council has a desire to see road rules are obeyed.</p> <p>It has worked with bus gate cameras.</p>	<p>The revocation of the order is to formalise a situation that is occurring at present. The provision of CCTV would not provide enforcement and would require additional legal orders to invoke which only the Police have powers to enforce and which could be objected to as part of the process.</p> <p>By formalising the junction arrangement the traffic signals can be adjusted to assist with traffic flow and capacity. Traffic will also be discouraged from undertaking the left turn lane from the outside lane of the A444 entry slip road.</p>
4	<p>I do not think the left turn should be allowed as it will have detrimental effect on the safe movement of persons and traffic and will make some existing manoeuvres to the left of the roundabout even more dangerous as additional traffic will be entering this location from a different point than was planned for when the Whitley Bridge changes were implemented.</p>	<p>The revision of the junction movements will be controlled using the existing traffic signal equipment and phased with the entry and exit times of the JLR employees which in addition will be better phased to control tidal flows of vehicles towards the roundabout</p>
5	<p>The junction is designed purely for traffic turning right into the Business Park, and the slip road starts to turn to the right before the traffic lights are reached. The inner kerb of the left turn is not compatible with a smooth turn, and when two lanes of traffic try to turn left this leads to near misses at best (which I have witnessed as pedestrian) and collisions judging by debris left on the road.</p>	<p>The junction is designed as an all movements junction, however a traffic regulation order was provided to prevent left turning vehicles. The entry radius acts as a deflection measure to prevent vehicles accessing the junction in a straight ahead motion. The proposal would only see the inside lane being made available for left turning vehicles.</p>

	<p>The use of the left turn involves two sets of traffic lights and a pelican crossing. The only occasion on which this can be more efficient than continuing along the main A444 carriageway is when queuing traffic tails back beyond the slip road - the exact situation in which the revocation will make matters worse for traffic leaving the expanding Business Park, the original purpose of the new road layout.</p> <p>The justification for the revocation is that people are currently ignoring the existing order, either through blatant disregard or inattention to road signs. It was not felt appropriate as part of the larger scheme when the plans were drawn up and traffic flows at and approaching the London Road roundabout were considerably worse.</p>	<p>The traffic signals and timings will be adjusted ensuring that exit from the business park area will not be unduly affected by vehicles that have turned left from the slip road.</p> <p>As with any highways infrastructure project the design and installed works are reviewed post completion and if necessary adjustments are made to suit the traffic conditions and environment. This element has been reviewed and will be monitored for a period of 12 months</p>
6	<p>We believe it will have a detrimental impact to access and egress to our site and adjoining businesses located off the Sherbourne Roundabout when additional vehicles and traffic start using the slip roads to bypass traffic on the A444 creating unnecessary congestion at the Whitley Interchange and back on to the A444.</p> <p>There are road safety concerns at the junction is used by pedestrians and cyclists and was specifically engineered to prohibit left turns.</p> <p>The reasons for designing this junction to only allow vehicles to use the A444 off slip road to access the Whitley Business Park still remain.</p>	<p>Currently the traffic signals do not take into account any vehicles turning left as this is a prohibited movement. Should the order be revoked then the traffic signals phasing and timings would be revised to suit the layout and reduce any impact on the road network.</p> <p>Pedestrian and cyclists will still have both controlled and uncontrolled crossing points that will not conflict with the vehicle movements across the bridge or exit slip road.</p>