

Cabinet Member for City Services

28th February 2024

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for City Services – Councillor P Hetherton

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Director of Transportation, Highways and Sustainability

Ward(s) affected:

City-wide

Title: City Centre Traffic Management Phase 1 and 2 and City Centre Cycle Route

Is this a key decision?

No - although the proposals affect more than two electoral wards, the impact on businesses and residents is not expected to be significant.

Executive Summary:

The City Centre Traffic Management Plan (CCTMP) is a series of interventions designed to manage traffic in the city centre with an aim to update on-street parking management to reduce the amount of traffic circulating within the centre, thereby improving bus service reliability, improve air quality through reducing queuing traffic, promote active travel, and facilitate the Coventry Very Light Rail (CVLR) City Centre Demonstrator track which will run from the railway station to the former Ikea building. CCTMP will be delivered in several phases as set out below:

Phase	Comment
1A	High St Pedestrian Zone (in delivery)
1B	Hales St Bus Gate (delivered – a separate objections report is now live for this scheme)
2A	Red route (this report)
2B	City Centre cycle route (this report)
3	Bus gates and traffic “zoning” (proposed)

The CCTMP covers the core city centre area generally within the ring road, with a spur out to the railway station. The area is currently covered by a 20 mph zone and a Restricted Parking Zone (RPZ). The CCTMP proposals retain the 20 mph zone but will involve the replacement of the blanket city centre with alternative parking arrangements. This change is required to facilitate the introduction of the “red route” on core public transport routes within the city centre, as legislation does not allow a red route approach to be applied within a RPZ area.

This report covers Phase 2A of the CCTMP, which will see the removal of the existing RPZ, the introduction of new RPZs covering smaller areas of the core city centre, and the introduction of red route restrictions allowing mobile enforcement of parking restrictions to be introduced. On some other streets, traditional parking restrictions (using yellow lines) will be introduced.

Later stages of CCTMP (Phase 3) will aim to make more permanent measures to create traffic management cells within the city centre whereby individual areas of the city are accessed directly from specific ring road junctions (for example, traffic accessing the University would use Junction 3 to enter and leave the area).

The existing RPZ is currently delineated on site with signage to distinguish start and end points, with on-street parking only permitted in designated, marked bays. No road markings are used to indicate where parking is not permitted. This proposed phase of CCTMP (2A) will remove portions of the existing Restricted Parking Zone and replace them with red and yellow lining to denote the parking restrictions.

Phase 2B of CCTMP will deliver a segregated cycleway in the city centre, funded through the Department for Transport's Active Travel Fund tranche 4. It will connect Greyfriars Green to Pool Meadow Bus Station, via Queen Victoria Road, Corporation Street, Hales Street and Fairfax Street.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for City Services:

- 1) Consider the feedback to the City Centre proposals consultation – Located in Appendix D to this report.
- 2) Subject to recommendation 1) above, approve the works to proceed the delivery of the CCTMP Phase 2A Red Route and Phase 2B Cycle Route.

List of Appendices included:

Appendix A – City Centre Traffic Management Plan Phase 2A: Red Route & RPZ Changes

Appendix B – Phase 2B City Centre Cycle Route

Appendix C – Cycleway designation plan

Appendix D – City Centre Changes Consultation Report

Appendix E – CASM Report (2021)

Appendix F – Equality Impact Assessment report

Other useful background papers:

None

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: City Centre Traffic Management Phase 1 and 2 and City Centre Cycle Route

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1. The City of Coventry features a ring road surrounding the city centre, which itself features a network of access roads for residents, visitors, and businesses to operate the city's economy. The core city centre is currently covered by a Restricted Parking Zone, within which on-street parking is only permitted in designated marked bays.
- 1.2. A significant amount of traffic circulates within the core city centre using the local network such as Queen Victoria Road and Corporation Street rather than the ring road. This can cause congestion at peak times, resulting in a detrimental impact upon bus services, pedestrians and cyclists. Traffic counts and modelling have been undertaken to identify the extent of the issue, and data from bus services shows the impact upon service reliability.
- 1.3. The modelling has also indicated that there is sufficient capacity on the ring road to accommodate circulating traffic displaced from the core city centre. Therefore, the CCTMP seeks to maximise the use of the ring road for access to different areas of the city centre through a mixture of bus gates, such as the one introduced at Hales Street during 2023. Access to car parks and for residents and service vehicles will be maintained, but traffic entering each area will enter and exit using the same ring road junction rather than be able to circulate around the inner core of the city centre.
- 1.4. The CCTM also provides the over-capacity central roads are also burdened by cars stopping for pick-up/drop-off, loading/unloading and for mis-use of laybys, bus stops and EV bays. This is difficult for the city's CEOs to enforce during peak times and causes long delays when traffic queues are substantial.
- 1.5. The over-capacity central roads are also burdened by cars stopping for pick-up/drop-off, loading/unloading and for mis-use of laybys, bus stops and EV bays. This is difficult for the city's CEOs to enforce during peak times and causes long delays when traffic queues are substantial.
- 1.6. The area is currently covered by a 20 mph zone and a Restricted Parking Zone. The CCTMP Phase 2A proposals will retain the 20 mph zone but will involve the replacement of the RPZ with alternative parking arrangements (Appendix A).
- 1.7. This change is required to facilitate the introduction of the "red route" on core public transport routes within the city centre, as legislation does not allow a red route approach to be applied within a RPZ area.
- 1.8. The existing RPZ is currently delineated on site with signage to distinguish start and end points, with on-street parking only permitted in designated, marked bays. No road markings are used to indicate where parking is not permitted.
- 1.9. Phase 2A of the CCTMP will see the removal of the existing RPZ and the introduction of new RPZs covering smaller areas of the core city centre.
- 1.10. This will follow the introduction of red route restrictions along the bus routes allowing mobile enforcement of parking restrictions to be introduced.

- 1.11. On the other streets, which are not bus routes, traditional parking restrictions (double yellow lines) will be introduced.
- 1.12. The principal extents of where RPZ has been retained is the area around the Cathedral and University, which is for the most part a Conservation area. The RPZ is similarly being retained in the Spon Street and Chantry Place areas as again these are conservation areas. The remaining parts of the city centre would be subject to either traditional yellow lines (with parking bays) or red route (with parking bays).
- 1.13. Phase 3 will introduce more permanent measures to create traffic management cells within the city centre whereby individual areas of the city are accessed directly from specific ring road junctions, reinforcing the use of the ring road, in the form of bus gates to prevent unauthorised through-traffic from using central routes.
- 1.14. As one of the key aims of the overall CCTMP package is to improve conditions for cycling, introduction of Phase 2A will also include the introduction of “cycle contraflow” measures on a number of one-way streets. This will make it easier to access and cross the city centre on a bike, reducing distances compared to cycling around one-way systems.
- 1.15. As part of the introduction of the cycle contraflows, short sections of shared use cycleway will need to be designated. See section 3.
- 1.16. A city centre cycle route was also consulted on at the same time, which would be introduced as a Phase 2B of the project. The city centre cycle route is not subject to this report.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 2.1. In response to the survey report findings, the following options have been considered:
 - i) do nothing – leave the existing RPZ in place
 - ii) deliver the Phase 2A scheme as proposed
 - iii) Implement a revised scheme
- 2.2 The recommendation is to deliver Phase 2A as proposed.

3 Results of consultation undertaken

- 3.1 Online surveys were produced on the Council’s ‘Let’s Talk’ portal to allow the general public to review the plans for the CCTMP Phase 2A proposals.
- 3.2 Online surveys ran from 27 November 2023 – 17 December 2023 (see Appendix D for consultation report).
- 3.3 104 responses were recorded in total online, and 4 responses were received in person at the Engagement Sessions held on 7/12/23 and 13/12/23.

- 3.4 Total attendance across these latter sessions totalled 20 maximum (including a mix of residents, general public and business owners).
- 3.5 A table can be found at Figure 1 summarising the main opinions from the Survey. In general, the majority of respondents were in favour of the measures proposed for CCTMP Ph2A:

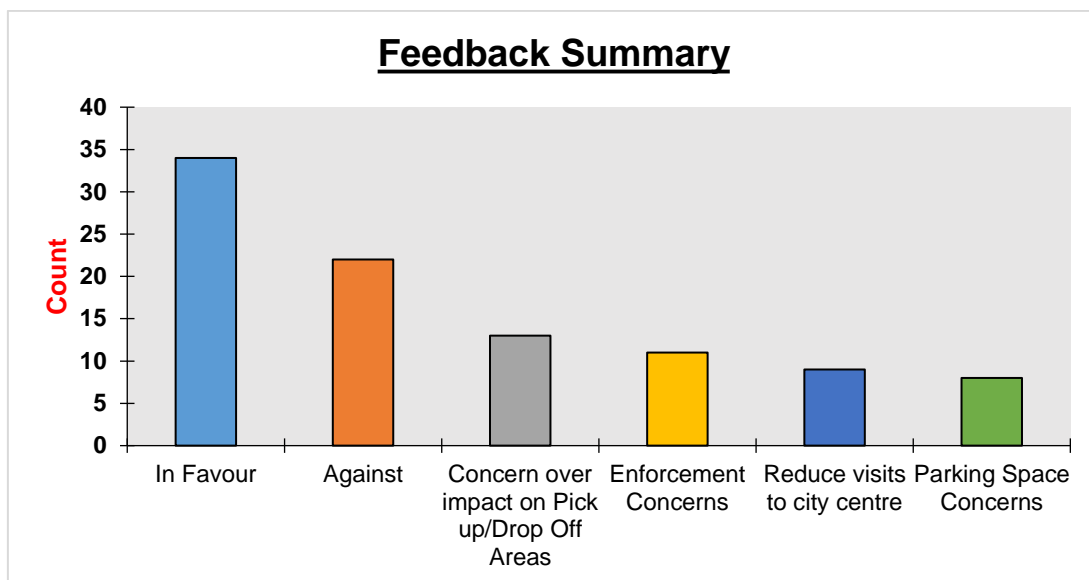


Figure 1: Summary of results from Engagement Survey

- 3.6 Specific concerns reported during the survey revolved around impact on accessibility in the city centre around parking, loading, and dropping off/picking up. There were also issues raised over a potential reduction in parking spaces as side roads that are currently not lined (but covered by RPZ) are being used for unauthorised free parking. The overall theme from these concerns was that there would be a net reduction in spaces where people could stop their vehicles to conduct their business. In reality, there should be a net increase in legitimate spaces where vehicles can stop.
- 3.7 Several concerns were also raised around the method of enforcement of the red route and whether this would be robust enough to prevent abuse of the system once delivered. This links in with the previous point, and it is hoped that the visible lining measures will give CEOs greater transparency in proving unauthorised behaviours.
- 3.8 Some objections also revolved around the concern these measures were more suited to larger cities like Birmingham, and that the more elaborate and robust measures may impact small business operation by affecting deliveries and customers coming by motor vehicle.
- 3.9 Other objections reported confusion over how not to get a fine when entering the city without explicit awareness of the changes. It is however expected that the change from the RPZ to an approach whereby restrictions are clearly marked through lining and signing will make the restrictions more obvious, and along with more visible enforcement of the measures, this should increase understanding and coherence of the restrictions on parking in the city centre.

- 3.10 A common theme was that people both in support and against the measures asked for some way of providing free parking for a short, limited time (i.e. 10 mins max) in the available city council parking garages and car parks – to enable for off-street pick-up/drop off of people and goods. This will be considered under a separate scheme.
- 3.11 Designation of cycleway
- 3.11.1 Cycle tracks and shared use footways will be designated as part of both Phase 2A and Phase 2B works. The Phase 2A cycleway designations are required to create short sections of shared use footway that provide a connection to or from lengths of cycle contraflows on one-way streets. The Phase 2B cycleway designations are required to convert part of existing footway to dedicated cycle track for the city centre cycleway scheme, with short sections of shared use footways at transition points.
- 3.11.2 The designations for each phase are labelled accordingly. The extents of designations show the entire area of footway affected, although the eventual path of the cycleway will not necessarily be the full extent of the areas shown. The extents shown for designation exceed the eventual extents that will be constructed to allow for variation during detailed design.
- 3.11.3 Some sections of the Phase 2A designation would re-designate areas already signed as shared use cycleway, however subsequent changes to highway layout have resulted in signage and transitions becoming unclear, hence re-designation is being sought in order to ensure the final constructed scheme is fully covered by a cycle track designation decision (see Appendix C).

4 Timetable for implementing this decision

- 4.1 Subject to Cabinet Member for City Services approval, the TROs will be advertised in March/April 2024.
- 4.2 Subject to consideration of any objections to the TROs, the scheme will be implemented during Spring 2024.

5 Comments from the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) and the Director of Law and Governance

5.1 Financial implications

- 5.1.1 On 11th December 2023, a governance and assurance process for the Very Light Rail Regional Programme (VLRRP) was tabled, together with evidence of CVLR Stage Gate 1 outputs, at DfT's Investment Portfolio Delivery Committee (IPDC).
- 5.1.2 IPDC approved the stage gate process and approved the release of Stage Gate 2 funding of £6.1m.
- 5.1.3 The cost of advertising the TRO and delivering the lining works is a key output of stage gate 2 and is fully funded to be delivered within the approved £6.1m funding envelope.

5.1.4 Future maintenance costs related to the signing and lining required for the scheme will be met from the Highway Maintenance budget, in the same way that existing costs associated with the maintenance of the RPZ are met. There is not anticipated to be a significant change in the budget required for such maintenance needs.

5.2 Legal implications

5.2.1 The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 allows the Council to make a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), including an experimental traffic regulation 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.

5.2.2 In accordance with Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, when considering whether it would be expedient to make a TRO 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.

5.2.3 In the event of objections being received to a Traffic Regulation Order those objections are reported back to the Cabinet Member for a decision to be made on how to proceed.

5.2.4 The 1984 Act provides that once a Traffic Regulation 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).

5.2.5 The Council has powers pursuant to Sections 64 and 65 of the Highways Act 1980 to designate parts of the existing footway and/or verge as cycle track.

6 Other implications

6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council Plan?

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/strategies-plans-policies/one-coventry-plan>

It is considered that the proposals support the Council Plan objective to create an attractive, greener city by making it easier for people to travel around the city on foot, on cycle or using public transport, thereby reducing vehicle emissions, improving the environment, and tackling climate change, and supporting the delivery of the Local Air Quality Action Plan for Coventry. This plan will also act as a key enabler for CVLR and make Coventry a pioneering city in green, mass transit, rail-based transport. The proposal will also help the city achieve its economic objectives by making the city centre more attractive.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

Risk is being managed through the project governance.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

None

6.4 Equalities / EIA

A full EIA has been produced for Phase 1A/1B of the project (see Appendix F) and Phase 2A/B is currently in draft.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) climate change and the environment

6.5.1 It is anticipated these measures will reduce the numbers of idling engines, therefore reducing the number of point source emitters of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Nitrous Oxides (NO_x) and Carbon Monoxide (CO), plus Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}). These emissions have a global impact on atmosphere by contributing to the greenhouse gas layer but also have a local impact on pedestrian's human health including detriment to cardio-respiratory systems and central nervous operation when exposed to elevated levels over extended durations. Reducing these emissions will therefore have local health benefits for the Coventry people and global benefits for the future of the planet.

6.5.2 The changes will also support modal shift from car to bus and active travel modes for local journeys by helping to improve bus service reliability, and by reducing the amount of circulating traffic in the city centre, thereby making a more attractive environment for people walking and cycling within the city centre.

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

6.6.1 Improved bus journey times, leading to potential reduction in TfWM revenue support.

6.6.2 Better conditions for cycling, leading to potential increased use of TfWM cycle hire scheme.

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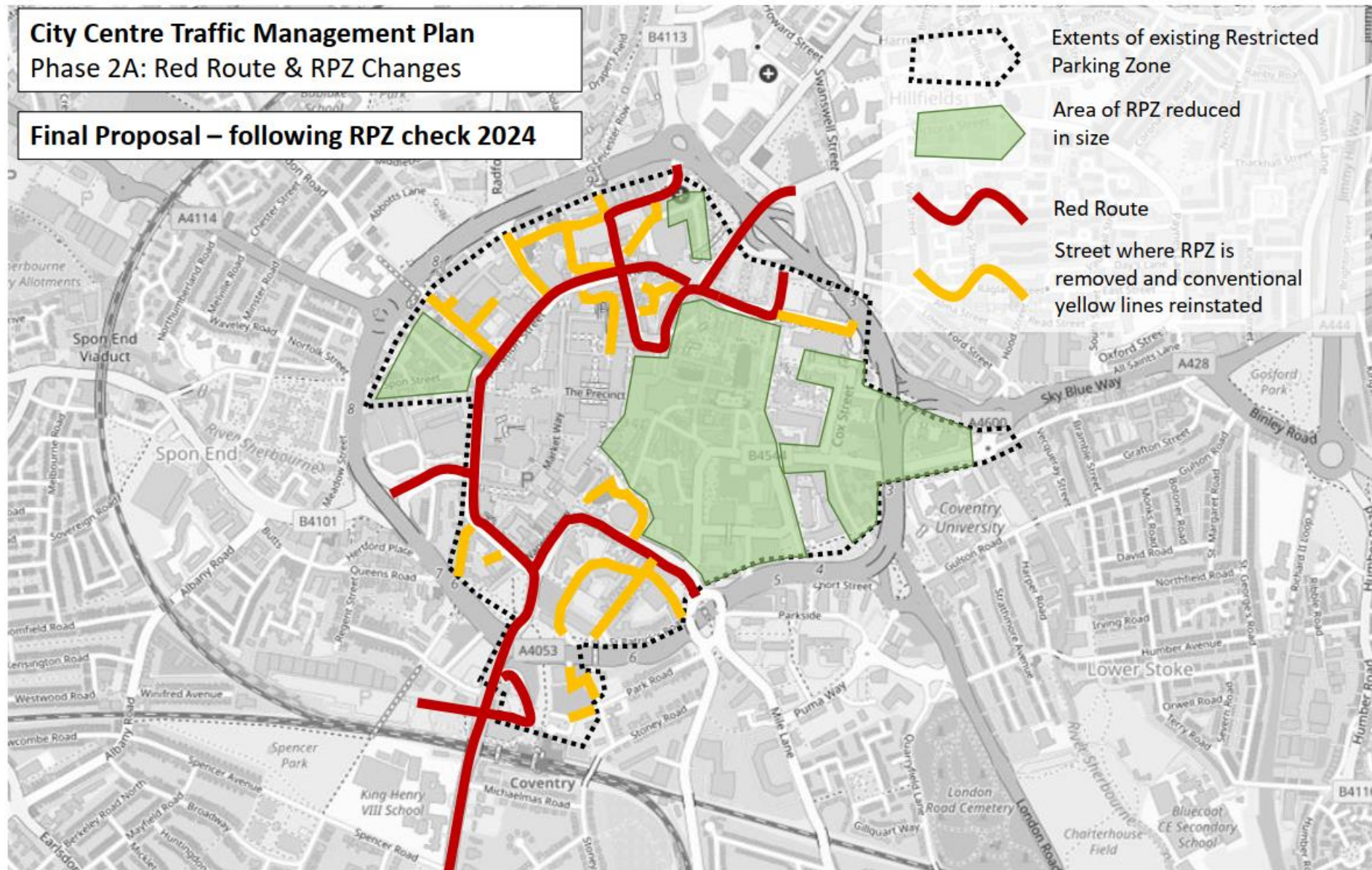
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Appendix A: City Centre Traffic Management Plan Phase 2A: Red Route & RPZ Changes



Appendix B – City Centre Cycle Route

