

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

---

COMMITTEE	Communities, Housing and Infrastructure
DATE	17 May 2016
DIRECTOR	Pete Leonard
TITLE OF REPORT	<b>Broad Street / Queen Street – Traffic Management (Stage 3 – Public Advert)</b>
REPORT NUMBER	CHI/16/249
CHECKLIST COMPLETED	Yes/ <del>No</del>

---

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report deals with the proposed traffic order “The Aberdeen City Council (Broad Street / Queen Street, Aberdeen) (Traffic Management) Order 201(X)”; the principle effect of which is to specify the length of Broad Street, between its junctions with the Gallowgate/Upperkirkgate and Queen Street, as a route exclusively for use by local buses and pedal cycles. The main statutory advertisement period is now over in respect of this order. The public/press notice is attached (Appendix 1), from which members will be able to see the exact content of the proposal. It is also the case this proposal was subject to a single objection.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended this Committee overrule the objection received and approve this order be made as originally envisaged.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The detailed design of the Broad Street public realm intervention will be accommodated from the £1.12M set aside within the contract with Muse for public realm works. The TRO and detailed design costs will be absorbed within this budget.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There is a risk that any approved traffic regulation orders may have to re-enter the legislative process if they are unable to be implemented within the statutory implementation time of 2 years from the start of public consultation.

## BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES

- 4.1 At its meeting on 29 June 2016, the Council agreed, in the context of the 'Aberdeen City Centre Masterplan', the preferred option for a public realm intervention on Broad Street would be the closure of the carriageway, between its junctions with the Gallowgate/Upperkirkgate and Queen Street, with an exception the route would still serve local buses and pedal cycles.
- 4.2 Officers were therefore instructed to commence the necessary legal procedures of consultation and advertisement for the necessary Traffic Regulation Order; subsequently reporting the outcome of these consultations to this Committee.
- 4.3 Beyond the establishment of a route for the exclusive use by local buses and pedal cycles, the order contained additional traffic management proposals; namely, to introduce certain lengths of prohibition of loading at any time on Broad Street and Queen Street, install a bay for loading on Queen Street and relocation of an existing disabled parking bay. The order also restates some lengths of prohibition of waiting at any time already existing on these two roads.
- 4.4 During the public advertisement, which was open for a period of 28 days, the proposal was subject to a single statutory objection from Mr Brian Strachan, 338 Hardgate, Aberdeen; the full text of Mr Strachan's grounds for objection follows.

"I object to the restrictions in this order inasmuch that a private bus company is being allowed exclusive use whereas private hire cars/taxis are prohibited. I imagine taxi companies are not overly upset because they will just use a longer route and charge more for the privilege. There are no twenty-four hour buses to my knowledge and therefore no choice in transport when the buses are not running. You are penalising the travelling public again (Bedford Road) to the benefit of a private bus company."

- 4.5 As highlighted in the report considered by the Council in June 2016, the informal public consultation prior to promoting the Traffic Order sought feedback on three options for Broad Street ("Do nothing", "Local Buses, Pedal Cycles and Pedestrians only" and "Pedestrians and pedal cycles only"). The outcome of the consultation was a high level of support for some sort of pedestrian priority, in terms of making Broad Street a better and safer place, with improved air quality, as well as through the creation of a civic space that could be used for new and interesting activities and events that would improve the overall attractiveness and vibrancy of the city.

4.6 The option of “Local Buses, Pedal Cycles and Pedestrians only” that was chosen to progress offers the following benefits: -

- Improved environment from reduced traffic and an attractive route for cyclists;
- Access to public transport is enhanced;
- Opportunity to close Broad Street for larger temporary events;
- Opportunity for innovative and entertaining landscape features, such as art, lighting and water;
- Significantly improves the setting of Marischal College;
- Setting and entrance to the City centre masterplan Queen Square area;
- Can control how long buses wait in the area;
- Supports aim to reduce cross city centre journeys;
- Makes cycling and walking more attractive;
- Likely to contribute to localised air quality improvements; and
- Helps deliver the agreed vision of the masterplan.

4.7 In response to Mr Strachan’s objection, when considering private hire cars/taxis will be prohibited from using Broad Street, it’s the case the alternative routes, via King Street or Union Terrace, will present little in the way of detour (less than a few hundred metres) and would have a negligible effect on taxi fares. In turn, the improvements highlighted in the previous paragraph far outweigh this minor effect of taxis being re-routed. By limiting Broad Street as only a through route for local buses and pedal cycles, it ensures the benefits are maximised and intrusion by motor vehicles is limited as far as possible.

4.8 In conclusion it is recommended this committee overrule Mr Strachan’s objection and instructs Officers to make the Traffic Regulation Order as originally envisaged.

## 5. IMPACT

### **Improving Customer Experience**

The contents of this report and the recommendations relate to the delivery of the CCMP, which is aimed at improving the City Centre for all those who live in, work in and visit it. This would include the following benefits: Quality of life – Residents, workers and visitors increasingly demand a high standard for the places they are in. Under the proposals, they could feel more content in a more attractive and vibrant environment; as reported in other competing cities with similar projects. Health – with more people walking in the area there could be a reduction in inactivity-related illness. Environmental - positive impact on air quality due to a reduction of emissions from vehicles in the area. Noise levels would be lower too.

The proposals will also have a positive impact on the Council's business customers – city centre employers themselves, and also those operating in the retail, tourism and leisure sector. For Aberdeen to be globally competitive, the quality of the 'place', the commercial space and the public realm around it all have a role. Developers and subsequent occupants / employers base their location decisions on being able to attract the best talent and skills to work in their businesses, and they recognise the positive correlation between their business competitiveness and the quality of the public realm.

**Improving Staff Experience – Not applicable.**

### **Improving our use of Resources**

Internal resources and partnership working with developers have already been identified to continue to deliver the instructions of Council in December 2015 and March 2016. Further resources will continue to be required for the wider delivery of the transport network plan to support the successful delivery of the CCMP, which has identified a range of benefits for citizens and business across the City. Internal resources have been used to undertake the Traffic Regulation Order for Broad Street and to inform and support the design process and implementation.

### **Corporate**

Positive decision making informing the progressive implementation of the CCMP directly supports a range of policies and strategies including:

### Aberdeen – the Smarter City vision:

- We will encourage and support citizens to participate in the development, design and decision making of services to promote civic pride, active citizenship and resilience.
- We will improve access to and increase participation in arts and culture by providing opportunities for citizens and visitors to experience a broad range of high quality arts and cultural activities.
- We will provide a clean, safe and attractive streetscape and promote bio-diversity and nature conservation. We will encourage wider access to green space in our streets, parks and countryside.
- We will invest in the city where that investment demonstrates financial sustainability based on a clear return on investment.
- We will encourage cycling and walking.
- We will provide and promote a sustainable transport system, including cycling, which reduces our carbon emissions.

### Regional Economic Strategy

“Securing the Future of the North East Economy – A 20 Year Vision for the Well-being of the Place & Our People” was approved by the Council in December 2015. A key objective of the Investment in Infrastructure Programme is to enable the city to realise the development opportunities in the City Centre Masterplan. These proposals and development of a 21st Century public realm are a vital component of the ‘development mix’. High value jobs and skills are globally mobile, and competing for these high value ‘clusters’ of activity is a key part of the Strategy, and the Council’s inward investment plans. In doing so, it becomes easier for Aberdeen to maintain and attract world class talent and business, which in turn delivers positive indirect and induced impacts across the city economy as spend supports jobs in retail, tourism, leisure and other services.

### Strategic Infrastructure Plan:

Stakeholder engagement which informed this Plan revealed that the ‘poor state’ of the City Centre is one of a number of issues identified as a common theme ‘In terms of the attractiveness and marketing of the city to attract workers, visitors and investment...’. This Plan also states that ‘A high quality of life is integral to attracting and retaining the talent and investment needed to grow the economy. This sense of place, with a key emphasis on the city centre, is crucial in underpinning economic growth and essential in underpinning the necessary infrastructure requirements.’ One of the key goals of this Plan is City Centre Regeneration and the delivery of the CCMP will contribute significantly to achieving this. Specific wider benefits would include:

- Improved safety as a result of less road traffic;
- Improved access - as a result of easier access and parking for cyclists, bus passengers, pedestrians and the vehicles that remain on the roads in the area, the cumulative reduction in journey times would be used more productively elsewhere.
- Economic growth - The project could provide a more pleasant environment which would increase the footfall in the area increasing retail sales, spending, employment and the number of businesses operating in the city centre, and, in due course, increasing residential opportunities in the city centre.

This Plan also recognises that a range of traffic management and transport network improvements in and around the City Centre would aid the delivery of improved air quality, road safety and economic benefits and also support the key strategic priority around City Centre Regeneration. The development and delivery of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) for the City Centre, as part of the wider Masterplan, are also recognised as key to improving accessibility to all, increasing walking and cycling opportunities and improving public transport.

### Local Transport Strategy

The vision of the agreed Aberdeen City Local Transport Strategy (LTS) is to develop 'A sustainable transport system that is fit for the 21st Century, accessible to all, supports a vibrant economy, facilitates healthy living and minimises the impact on our environment.'

The aims of the LTS are:

- A transport system that enables the efficient movement of people and goods;
- A safe and more secure transport system; A cleaner, greener transport system;
- An integrated, accessible and socially inclusive transport system; and
- A transport system that facilitates healthy and sustainable living.

### **Public**

The contents of this report are likely to be of public and media interest as it relates to the City Centre, a significant economic asset for the City and Region.

## 6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK

The risks inherent in not addressing the regeneration of the city centre are set out in the Strategic Infrastructure Plan. In view of the fact that the regeneration of the city centre is widely supported, there is a reputational risk to the Council if no improvements are made.

Traffic modelling identified Broad Street as a natural starting point for the City Centre masterplan's four major transport proposals. There is a risk that the Optimum Delivery programme, which identified this start point, would have to be reviewed.

Officers have been made aware that the contractors need a 52 week lead in time to deliver the public realm works for the scheduled completion of the Marischal Square development in July 2017. If a decision is not made to pursue one of the three Broad Street options by July 2016 then there are the following risks:

- Reputational risk – the public/ stakeholders could perceive that the Council is unable to deliver improvements to the city centre on time or deliver the projects within the Masterplan;
- Cost of delivery – although the £1.12M is safeguarded for works on Broad Street it would cost more and take longer to work through an agreement with another contractor at a later date;
- Reduced tenancy levels – the lack of a decision on Broad Street and how this will tie in with the Marischal Square development could lead to a risk of spaces not being let, and so undermine the Council's investment in Marischal Square;
- Traffic disruption – traffic disruption in the city centre, during later works, is likely to be worse because Marischal Square will be in use; and
- Aesthetics – when Marischal Square is opened, Broad Street will look as it does at the moment as there will have been no improvements to the public realm.

## 7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

[Report No. CHI/16/114 "City Centre Masterplan Project EN01:Broad Street", Committee: Council, 29 June 2016](#)

## 8. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

Graeme McKenzie  
Technical Officer  
Email: [gmckenzie@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:gmckenzie@aberdeencity.gov.uk)  
Tel. 01224 (52)2308

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL**

#### **ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984**

##### **THE ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL (BROAD STREET / QUEEN STREET, ABERDEEN) (TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT) ORDER 201(X)**

Aberdeen City Council proposes to make the above-named order in terms of its powers under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. The principle effect of the order will be to specify the length of Broad Street, Aberdeen, between its junctions with the Gallowgate/Upperkirkgate and Queen Street, as a route exclusively for use by local buses and pedal cycles. That is to say any vehicle, other than those aforementioned classes of vehicle, will be prohibited from using this length of Broad Street; albeit there will be an exception for those vehicles in the service of Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue and the Scottish Ambulance Service that will be exempt when responding to an emergency. Also exempt would be vehicles in the service of the local roads authority in pursuance of statutory powers or duties relevant to this specified length of road.

Additionally the proposed order would also establish a prohibition of loading at any time on both sides of the length of Broad Street between its junctions with Queen Street and Union Street, and on the lengths of Queen Street, from its junction with Broad Street, for a distance of 34 metres north-eastwards on its south side and respectively 23 metres on its north side. A bay (9 metres in length) for the exclusive use by vehicles that are loading would also be established on the north side of Queen Street, at a point 23 metres north-east of its junction with Broad Street. The aforementioned loading bay would replace an existing parking bay for disabled badge holders, however a new disabled parking bay would be established in the very near proximity, to the north-east, where a length of 'pay & display' parking is currently in place. Existing lengths of prohibition of waiting at any time (Broad Street/Queen Street) and 'pay & display' (Queen Street) would also be restated within this new order.

**Full details of the above proposal are to be found in the draft order, which, together with a map showing the intended measures and an accompanying statement of the Council's reasons for promoting them, may be examined during normal office hours on weekdays between Monday 15 August and Monday 12 September 2016, in the offices of the roads officials in the Communities Housing and Infrastructure department, at Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen. It is recommended that anyone wishing to visit Marischal College to view any of the documents should make an appointment to do so, in order that a member of staff can be present to offer an explanation if necessary. Alternatively, anyone unable to visit Marischal College can telephone 01224 522308 or 01224 522704 to discuss the proposals with one of the roads officials.**

Anyone wishing to object to the proposed order should send details of the grounds for objection, including their name and address, in writing to the address below or to [trafficmanagement@aberdeencity.gov.uk](mailto:trafficmanagement@aberdeencity.gov.uk) during the statutory objection period which also runs from Monday 15 August to Monday 12 September 2016, inclusively.

Any person who submits an objection to a road traffic order should be aware that any objection made will be available to members of the Committee, available for inspection by members of the public, distributed to the press, and will form part of the agenda pack which is available on the Council's website. To that extent, however, they are redacted, with e-mail addresses, telephone numbers and signatures removed from this correspondence.

**Traffic Management, Business Hub 11, Second Floor West, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1AB**