

**5 January 2022****Agenda Item:9****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, PLACE****ACTIVE TRAVEL FUND – TRANCHE 2 INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMME****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval to implement the Dovecote Lane, Beeston point closure scheme funded through the Active Travel Fund (ATF) Tranche 2 infrastructure programme.

**Information**

2. At its meeting on 13 October 2021, it was reported, as part of the 'Active Travel Fund – Tranche 2 Infrastructure Programme' report, that the location and potential impacts of the Dovecote Lane road closure proposal were being reviewed following concerns raised during the first round of consultation and that an update report would be brought to a future Committee once this work had been finalised.
3. A point closure on Dovecote Lane to through traffic was proposed as part of the ATF bid to provide a quiet route for cyclists and pedestrians. The road has formed a well-used rat run for many years and carries around 1,800 vehicles a day. The carriageway is very narrow at the northern end and has no footway on the western side for 160m. The footway on the opposite side is narrow in places, barely meeting the minimum standards. The road is used for on-street parking which further restricts space available for cyclists and can make it intimidating to cycle on.
4. Dovecote Lane forms a key part of the strategic cycle network: it forms part of the designated route between the town centre and railway station, as well as connecting the town centre to the National Cycle Network Route 6. Despite the poor cycling environment, around 80 cycle trips take place a day.
5. The route has also recently been identified as a potential section of the strategic Nottingham to Derby cycle network that is being funded by the City Council through the Transforming Cities Fund. This project aims to provide a high-quality route between the two cities which would also offer significant benefits to local cyclists.
6. Removing through traffic would offer significant benefits to residents of Dovecote Lane (80% of those who responded to the consultation were in favour) as well as to pedestrians and cyclists. Lower traffic levels would reduce the adverse impacts of noise and air pollution and would create a much more resident-centric streetscape. There is a children's playground at the southern end of this section of the road, and the removal of a significant proportion of traffic from the park entrance will greatly improve the perception of safety in the area.

7. However, outside of the Dovecote Lane residents, the initial proposal did not command such high levels of support. Concerns were raised by residents living on nearby streets about
  - The transfer of traffic onto other residential streets
  - The transfer of traffic onto nearby signalled junctions and Station Road
  - Having to leave and return to properties via Queens Road.
8. It was agreed that alternative proposals would be considered to determine if there was a way to improve the cycling environment while also addressing the concerns of those who objected.
9. A study has been undertaken to consider a range of alternatives and a preferred option has been identified. The proposed option would involve the introduction of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) to close Dovecote Lane to through traffic at a point immediately north of West End in Beeston (see Appendix 1). The revised proposal would address the concern about transfer of traffic onto other residential streets.
10. Traffic surveys have been carried out to consider the likely impact of the transfer of traffic to nearby signalled junctions. However, the complex nature of traffic manoeuvres in the area and the on-going uncertainty around future traffic levels post-Covid means that it has not been possible within the delivery timescales to carry out a definitive study of the possible impact of the road closure on congestion and delays on the neighbouring road network. The proposed experimental Order will allow the impact to be assessed in real time, and monitoring work will be on-going.
11. An experimental Order can only stay in force for a maximum of 18 months while the effects are monitored and assessed. Part of this monitoring and assessment is to seek views on the impacts of the measures following their introduction. Changes to the proposals can, however, be made during the first six months of the experimental period, if necessary, to help overcome any issues identified with the scheme before Committee decides whether or not to make the changes brought in by the experimental order permanent.
12. Officers met the local Member on-site to discuss the proposals and have provided a summary of the investigation. Due to the potentially contentious nature of the proposals, the local Member has suggested that further informal consultation is undertaken with local residents prior to the introduction of the scheme. Whilst ideally we would prefer to undertake this consultation prior to implementing the Order, it would adversely impact on the delivery of the project within the necessary funding timescales (that is, before 31 March 2022). It is proposed that the further consultation requested by the local Member is undertaken with residents following the introduction of the experimental order so that their views can be sought based on actual experiences and the impacts of the measures.
13. It is therefore proposed that the County Council progresses the implementation of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) to close Dovecote Lane to through traffic at a point immediately north of West End in Beeston (see Appendix 1). It is also proposed that, as part of the ETRO, detailed consultation is undertaken with the local Member and residents at least one month after the introduction of the ETRO and before a decision is made on whether to make the ETRO permanent.

## **Further Scheme/Programme Development, Design and Consultation**

### **Other Options Considered**

14. The options currently being considered are set out within this report.

## **Reasons for Recommendation**

15. The project detailed within this report has been developed to help ensure delivery of County Council priorities, national priorities and local transport goals and objectives. The measures detailed in the report have been developed to reflect a balance of delivery of the County Council's strategic and transport objectives, member, public and stakeholder requests and priorities, evidence of need (including technical analysis), and value for money.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

16. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **Financial Implications**

17. The financial implications, including budget allocations, are set out within the report and are in line with allocations determined at the 25 February 2021 County Council meeting. The allocations are made up of a combination of capital grant, borrowing and successful external funding bids.

## **Public Sector Equality Duty implications**

18. The programme detailed within this report complies with the Public Sector Equality Duty. An equality impact assessment was undertaken on the Nottinghamshire Local Transport Plan 2011/12-2025/26 in March 2011 to ensure that the strategy and its capital programmes to deliver it met the duty.

19. Equality impact assessments of each of the individual elements of the ATF Tranche 2 infrastructure programme have also been undertaken by project managers as part of the scheme development to ensure that they comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty, based on advice from the policy and equality officers.

## **Implications for Sustainability and the Environment**

20. Surveys undertaken with the public and local businesses identified reducing traffic congestion as the highest transport priority for both groups. The County Council also has a statutory obligation to address air quality issues resulting from road traffic on its managed roads. The ATF Tranche 2 infrastructure programme and specific scheme contained within this report has been developed to help address congestion, its knock-on effects on air quality and its impacts on local communities. The recycling of materials and aggregates is also considered when delivering highways schemes whenever possible.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

- 1) It is recommended that Committee approves the delivery of the Dovecote Lane, Beeston experimental road closure.

**Adrian Smith**  
Corporate Director, Place

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Paul Hillier – Local Transport Plan Officer, Local Transport Plans & Programme Development

**Constitutional Comments (LPW 23/11/2021)**

21. The recommendations fall within the remit of the Transport & Environment Committee by virtue of its terms of reference.

**Financial Comments (RWK 22/11/2021)**

22. There are no additional financial implications arising from the report. The revenue and capital costs required to deliver the scheme detailed in the report will be funded from existing revenue budget and capital programme allocations.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Nottinghamshire Local Transport Plan Strategy 2011/12-2025/26
- D2N2 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan – 3 September 2020 Communities & Place Committee report
- Annual Budget 2021/22 – 25 February 2021 County Council meeting
- Provisional Highways Capital & Revenue Programmes 2021/22 – 7 January 2021 Communities & Place Committee report
- Highways Capital & Revenue Programmes 2021/22 – 15 June 2021 Transport & Environment Committee report
- Active Travel Fund – Tranche 2 Infrastructure Programme – 13 October 2021 Transport & Environment Committee report

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

- Beeston Central & Rylands            Kate Foale