

4 July 2013

Agenda Item:

REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR, HIGHWAYS

NETWORK MANAGEMENT – COORDINATION OF MAJOR WORKS

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update for Members on major projects affecting the highway network and the actions being taken to coordinate and reduce their impact.

Information and Advice

2. There are a number of very significant projects underway or due to commence shortly, each of which will have a significant impact on the highway network and which will take place at the same time.
3. The projects include:
 - a. NET phase 2 – Beeston and Clifton lines
 - b. A453 dualling / widening – M1 to Silverdale
 - c. Nottingham Station re-signalling
 - d. Nottingham Ring Road Major Improvements
4. Whilst it might be preferable to undertake only one project at any time, programme constraints (which are predominantly driven by long term planning and timing of financial allocations) demand that they are undertaken simultaneously. Officers are therefore working closely with colleagues from Nottingham City Council, the Highways Agency, NET, Network Rail and East Midlands Trains to ensure that operations are coordinated as far as possible and measures taken to minimise disruption.

NET Phase 2

5. Highway works associated with the delivery of the Nottingham Express Transit extensions to Clifton and Toton continue within the County. The principal construction contractor for the works is Taylor Woodrow Alstom operating on behalf of the concessionaire Tram Link. A defined process has been established for design approvals and permissions to access the County highway to carry out works. Considerable effort is being made to balance the conflicting demands of a major construction project and the need to minimise the disruption to the travelling public and residents.

6. The new NET lines are programmed to be open to the public by December 2014 following a period of testing.
7. The key area of significant work currently taking place within the County is the closure of Chilwell High Road, Beeston which has been the subject of much discussion and strong local opinion. Following a detailed analysis of the construction requirements, including safety requirements for the public and road workers, the Contractor proposed that a full closure of the road is the only safe way to carry out the works in this area. Consultation with interested parties has been carried out and is continuing during the construction period. This liaison has included local traders and organisations as well as the County and Borough Councils. The first phase closure was implemented on 25 March with the total closure period expected to last for 1 year carried out in two 6 month phases. At present work is taking place to install and relocate utilities equipment. A logistics centre has been set up to assist local traders in receiving deliveries, on street waiting restrictions have been amended and additional off street parking has been provided to assist local business and shoppers. There continues to be close coordination with Browtove Borough Council on day to day tram construction matters.
8. Elsewhere in Beeston at Lower Road /Fletcher Road (piling), Middle Street, Styring Street, Humber Road and Regent Street are all subject to significant excavations which are causing some traffic disruption and temporary traffic management arrangements are required.
9. Works to improve junctions along Queens Road adjacent to the NET extension were completed at the Station Road and Meadow Lane junctions to provide additional capacity for traffic diverted as a result of both construction and tram operation.
10. Crossings at Inham Road, Bramcote Lane and Cator Lane all involve significant works for which Bramcote Lane is currently closed and Cator Lane will be closed subsequently.
11. It will also be necessary to close Wilford Lane in West Bridgford for some aspects of the crossing at this point; the timing and duration of this is currently being considered in recognition of the strategic importance of this route.

A453 Dualling / Widening

12. Works on the A453 are now under way. Some site clearance began in July 2012 in readiness for the main construction which started early January. It is expected that the improved A453 between the M1 and the Crusader Roundabout will be fully open from May 2015 and the urban section in Clifton will be open from March 2015.
13. As with all major projects there will be a degree of traffic disruption and discussions with Tramlink are ongoing about the possibility of opening the NET Park and Ride site at Clifton in October this year and operating a bus based park and ride service. As the works progress there will be increasing use of temporary traffic management with a maintained minimum of one lane of traffic in each

direction during peak hours. Closures, with appropriate diversions in place, will be kept to an absolute minimum and will usually be overnight starting on Saturday 28th September and then every Saturday night until December 7th to enable the 100 beams for the new bridges along the route to be lifted into place. The Average Speed Cameras are now operational and will monitor journey time reliability whilst enforcing the temporary 40mph in the rural section and 30mph in the urban section. Established regular Traffic Management Clinics will monitor the traffic throughout the works.

14. Wider coordination with other significant planned works and events will continue to be a key focus in order to minimise disruption to the travelling public with the aim of ensuring that good communications and widespread publicity emphasise that “the County and City are open for business as usual”.
15. Business groups and key businesses are being kept informed of developments via regular Reference Group meetings and positive recruitment opportunities have already come from the A453 scheme in the form of twelve posts and two apprenticeships that will be involved on the project.

Nottingham Station Re-signalling

16. Between 20 July and 26 August works are to be undertaken at Nottingham station to increase capacity by renewal and alteration of life expired signals and track. A new track layout costing £11.6m will give much more flexibility in operation and give the opportunity to reduce delays and run more services to and from Nottingham. This requires the complete closure of the station for part of this period and substantial disruption to train services.
17. Trains which normally travel to and from Nottingham cannot simply operate from the nearest adjacent station and rail replacement services will connect Nottingham to more distant places with East Midlands Parkway being the main station for high volume services such as those to and from London. Buses will operate between Nottingham and East Midlands Parkway, Derby, Beeston, Alfreton, Mansfield, Worksop, Newark and Grantham with additional direct services connecting East Midlands Parkway with Grantham and Newark. Services will be a mixture of express services between these points and those calling at intermediate stations to correspond with existing rail services.
18. Whilst there has been a focus on the high number of buses that will arrive at and depart from Nottingham attention has also been given to the outer locations and routes in between to minimise disruption to replacement services during this time.
19. The Robin Hood line will be affected with passengers needing to use rail replacement services during the whole of the 5 weeks closure. There will be a bus every 15mins throughout the day in each direction between Nottingham and Mansfield with an hourly bus between Mansfield and Worksop. The Council has requested that trains should continue to run between Worksop and Hucknall connecting into the NET service, but East Midlands Trains has stated that would not be possible. The removal/replacement of tracks through Nottingham station means that the Eastcroft train depot will be inaccessible, so trains will have to be

serviced elsewhere, including maintenance & repairs, refilling with diesel fuel and water (in the toilet tanks), and cleaning (internally, externally and windows). The nearest alternative facility is at Derby, but that is over an hour from Worksop or Mansfield and has insufficient capacity to accommodate the trains from the Robin Hood Line. A suggestion has been made that trains could be fuelled at Worksop, but unfortunately there are no facilities there to maintain them, or to service the toilets, or to clean them.

20. Services to Newark and Grantham will only be affected during parts of the project.

21. Additional car parking will be provided at East Midlands Parkway and at Beeston.

Nottingham Ring Road Improvements

22. Major improvements will be undertaken to increase the capacity of Nottingham Ring Road with the first phase being that at the junction with Aspley Lane, commencing on 22 July. Aspley Lane will be temporarily closed to traffic other than buses until early November in order to provide two traffic lanes in each direction during the works.

Highways Agency Maintenance

23. The Highways Agency also have a number of significant maintenance schemes to be undertaken during this period including several on the A52 between the M1 J25 and Saxondale. The vast majority will be undertaken at night when diversion routes will be lightly trafficked.

24. It should be noted that capacity improvements were carried out on the A52 between Bardills and QMC in advance of all the above projects in order to provide additional capacity prior to use as an alternative route.

A617 Kelham Bridge

25. The A617 will be closed at Kelham from Wed July 24th until Friday August 23rd to enable repairs to be undertaken to the bridge following collision by a vehicle. This is just one example of other major works taking place within the County that will have a significant impact on road users. These impacts are even greater when there are incidents on major trunk roads like the A1 or M1 when traffic diverts onto County roads.

Coordination and mitigation measures

26. Many of the more disruptive aspects of these projects have been programmed to take place during the school summer holiday period when traffic flows are substantially lower than at other times. The re-signalling project falls wholly within this period and the first phase of the Ring Road improvements are programmed

to capitalise on these lower flows as well as taking into account the close proximity of schools.

27. In addition to considering the implications of each individual project, the interaction between them is also being taken into account as well as day to day activities of other work promoters, such as utility companies and events of various kinds. However, whilst effort has been made to prevent works on the replacement services routes this is not possible in all cases.
28. Publicity and communication play an important part in mitigating the impact by ensuring that journeys can be planned and adjustments made to compensate for disruption.
29. Contingency arrangements have also been considered in collaboration with emergency services.

Other Options Considered

30. The potential for rescheduling of works has been considered but there is a high risk that such action would jeopardise the projects and delay the benefits.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

31. To raise awareness of the major projects and impact on the highway network.

Statutory and Policy Implications

32. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

It is anticipated that there will be inevitably be some disruption to travel.

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted.

Andrew Warrington
Service Director (Highways)

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (SHB 18/6/13)

33. The report is for information only

Financial Comments (TMR 16/6/13)

34. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

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.

Report to County Council 30th June 2011.

Report to finance and Property committee 17th September 2012.

Report to Transport and Highways Committee 22nd November 2012

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All