Traffic Scheme Options at the Canal Bridge &

Progressing the Liveable Neighbourhood Scheme, in Bathampton

**Main consultation responses at the Public Meeting & Display, 16 November 2022**

Cllr Sarah Warren and Highways Engineers Gary Peacock and Neil Terry were present to represent B&NES and provide advice.

**Liveable Neighbourhood Scheme**

It is essential Schemes are community based and owned.

Current work in B&NES is a learning journey with 15 schemes and £5m budget. More resources become available from the Government from time to time, so it pays to have well-prepared schemes ready to go. (Cllr Warren)

Scale of schemes vary depending on their complexity: whilst it is important to work with a whole village perspective it is essential to prioritise within schemes.(Highways Officer)

Identify issues and outcomes required - and possible solutions - but the LNS Team specialists will work with you to firm-up how best to proceed.(Highways Officer)

Some of the best ways to stand out from the crowd are to: ensure effective community involvement in developing the bid; and, clearly specifying the issues to be resolved and the outcomes they will deliver.(Highways Officer)

Bids are scored against criteria which were reported to the July 2021 Council meeting.(Cllr Warren)

**Traffic Scheme Options**

Essential to use any learning from the experience of the temporary, albeit less sophisticated, traffic signals installed during the closure of Cleveland Bridge.

The existing free for all over the bridge threatens safety and, despite the difficulties, with proper design most things are achievable. Kerb height has to be carefully considered both to increase safety, and to allow vehicles to mount them cautiously in an emergency.(Highways Officer)

The carriageway widths through the junctions and bridge are adequate for abnormal loads so will deal with occasional Network Rail, coach and delivery traffic.(Highways Officer)

There is no separate funding stream for a canal bridge scheme: LNS capital would be used. (Highways Officer)

Schemes have to be concise in the B&NES form but well-expressed supporting information can be attached.(Highways Officer)

AECOM were commissioned to: secure safety improvements by gaining control of what happens on the bridge and balancing this with maintaining the traffic flow; deal with congestion and awkward circumstances that develop on the bridge at present; and, minimise the work to be done out of respect for the village setting. (Highways Officer)

There is confidence in the capacity of sensors and signals (with the processor) to manage traffic flows and deter higher speeds. The systems are cutting edge with various features to manage flows and circumstances sensitively. The source of blockages can be the operation of the toll bridge.(Highways Officer)

There will be spare capacity in the signals system. This will accommodate rising traffic levels with no gridlock, except in exceptional circumstances. Pressed on this point, and given the system serves just two directions, there is confidence they would not allow gridlock. This view was supported by some residents present at the meeting.(Highways Officer)

What’s the Council’s position on the Village when set against statements like ‘get as many cars through as possible’ and ‘the ability of traffic systems to deal with expanded traffic volumes’? (Highways Officer): A balance has to be achieved; signals are used in many circumstances to curb car speeds and influence driver behaviour.

Some cars are unfamiliar with the circumstances of the Village and a more disciplined approach here would encourage cars to find alternative routes.

The priority issue for this work is to increase pedestrian safety, not to encourage additional through traffic. The wider LNS being developed can introduce deterrents and encouragement to motorists to use other routes and moderate their speed and behaviour, before they arrive in the High St or at the bridge.(Highways Officer)

More highly visible signage, approaching and within the Village, is essential. This should discourage through-traffic and/or remind motorists of what’s ahead and to moderate their speed and driving accordingly.

Similarly clear signage to dissuade motorists from queuing on the toll bridge should be introduced to lessen its blockages at peak times.

Car parking on the High St should be retained for residents who have few other options. Its value in slowing traffic should also be recognised. A Residents Permit Scheme should be considered.

Other means of slowing traffic that can be more effective, if positioned well, include speed platforms and build-outs and constrictions.(Highways Officer)

We must avoid idling engines in queues emitting fumes into kerbside homes.

Signals software can be programmed to prioritise vehicles travelling along the High St from the A36, over those coming from the toll bridge.(HIghways Officer)

Further steps should be taken to encourage parents to use the George CP rather than turning into Tyning Rd: where walking and/or cycling cannot be adopted

Further improved cycling routes should be considered.

The yellow hatching over the bridge shown in Option 1 may not be welcome from an aesthetic and/or heritage perspective. Other changes should, if possible, use materials appropriate to the location.

Cars won’t normally go faster on a Green because of the: conditions on the narrow, horseshoe, hump-backed bridge; the poor forward visibility; and, kerbs on either side over the bridge.

If a motorist is speeding as they approach the signals the software can be programmed not to give a Green light until it has stopped or reduced its speed. It is true that the performance of cars improves all the time and illegal speeds may occur exceptionally.(Highways Officer)

The risk of encroaching/parking on the hatching in the constriction could be reduced by narrowing the carriageway/widening the footway through the section. A decision on a louvre on the signal lens, so that drivers arriving/waiting at the entrance to the yellow box cannot see the traffic signal lights is a detail at this stage. A camera to enforce no encroachment could be feasible but would be relatively expensive. (Highways Officer)

Traffic signals experience elsewhere is considered and is gained professionally and the use of national consultants assists.(Highways Officer)

The private ownership of the toll bridge has limited any collaboration with its operation, or the parent company itself.

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