

Portfolio Holder Decision

Proposed Traffic Signal Junction, Heath End Road / Greenmoor Road, Nuneaton

Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning
Date of decision	27 October 2023
	Signed 

1. Decision taken

Recommendation:

That the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning approves progression of the “Proposed Traffic Signal Junction, Heath End Road/Greenmoor Road, Nuneaton” scheme as shown at Appendix A to include the introduction of traffic signals with pedestrian and cycling crossing facilities on the Heath End Road/Greenmoor Road junction in Nuneaton.

2. Reasons for decisions

2.1 Where objections have been received to an advertised traffic order it is necessary for the Portfolio Holder to consider the reasons for the objections and make a decision.

3. Background information

3.1 A series of Strategic Transport Assessments (STA) were undertaken by Transport Planning in 2015 to review the impacts of development site allocation options for the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Plan. The STA revealed that large increases in traffic demand on the A444 and surrounding highway network would result in significant congestion over sustained periods. To mitigate these impacts, transport schemes were identified along the A444 corridor and surrounding network, including the A444 Corridor Phases 1 & 2.

3.2 The A444 Corridor Improvements scheme aims to transform the strategic gateway to Nuneaton, by addressing congestion issues on the A444 growth corridor, managing the flow of traffic where several key routes converge, improving highway capacity, network resilience,

journey time reliability, pedestrian/cyclist infrastructure to stimulate business activity, and realise planned employment and housing growth over a 15-20 year horizon.

- 3.3 The main objective of the scheme is to help facilitate significant future employment and housing growth as set out in Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council's Draft Local Plan 2011-2031.
- 3.4 The corridor scheme will be delivered in two phases. Phase 1, the A444 Coton Arches Roundabout Signalisation, was delivered in 2018. This document is in respect to Phase 2, which consists of improvements starting from the A444/College Street roundabout, College Street, and in regard to this decision, the Heath End Road/Greenmoor Road junction.
- 3.5 It is proposed to signalise the existing Heath End Road/Greenmoor Road mini roundabout junction to improve flows and reduce queuing on College Street and back onto the A444. By signalising the junction, pedestrian crossings & cycle facilities will be provided.
- 3.6 All junction approaches have existing waiting restrictions. In July 2023, a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was granted, without objections, for the extension of waiting restrictions on Greenmoor Road.

Consultation

- 3.7 A statutory consultation was undertaken from 9th December 2021 to the 7th January 2022 when the scheme was formally advertised in the local newspaper, on street notices were erected, letter drops to affected residents were carried out and stakeholders informed. 14 objections were received from the consultation which are detailed in full at Appendix B and summarised in this report.

Objections from the consultation

1. Objection - Increased traffic compared to the existing mini roundabout.

There were 9 objections received on this basis whereby people felt that signalising the existing mini roundabout would lead to increased traffic.

Response: Improvements to the junction efficiency are necessary as 'Do Nothing' would be detrimental to the traffic network and does not address the safety performance of the junction, therefore it is not an option. Traffic modelling has been carried out with results showing there will be less queuing back onto the A444.

The performance of mini roundabouts are subject to overall traffic volume, and the proportion of traffic per arm of the roundabout. There is a disproportionate high volume of traffic from the A444 and this congests the other arms.

With the proposed traffic signals, the phasing sequence can be co-ordinated and optimised. Traffic would be unlikely to increase, as the amount of traffic on the College Street corridor from the A444 would remain consistent. This is because as there are limited opportunities for traffic to re-route from other routes in this area of Nuneaton. The provision of crossings and supporting wider sustainable infrastructure enabled by the project will help to encourage the use of alternative modes and thus reduce traffic volumes.

2. Objection – Objections to additional controlled crossings.

There were 7 objections to the project on this basis whereby people felt the existing controlled crossing opposite George Eliot Hospital caused excess queuing, and additional controlled crossings would worsen this.

Response: The hospital crossing is some distance away, and pedestrians would be unlikely to walk that far and instead, chose to cross unsafely. Therefore, the 'Do Nothing' option would not address the safety performance of the junction, and therefore it is not an option. The proposed traffic signals allow for pedestrian (toucan) crossing facilities. This is a benefit given the proximity of the schools in the area. Controlled crossings also assist the blind and partially sighted, and other users to cross the road safely. It will also encourage sustainable local travel by making walking and cycling more attractive. Encouraging the switch to sustainable modes of transport will help manage the anticipated growth in vehicular traffic and thus the associated traffic congestion.

3. Objection – Noise disturbance from the signalised crossings.

There were 2 objections whereby residents felt the proposed signalised crossings would creating unacceptable noise levels, causing a disturbance.

Response: The proposed traffic signal junction will be fitted with audible devices in order to assist the blind and partially sighted pedestrians to cross the road safely. The audible devices will be adjusted to an appropriate level for the surrounding area, and we will ensure to minimise the sound, so it does not disturb the nearby residents.

The audio facility will be switched off between the hours of 9:00 pm to 7:00 am on all days. These timings can be reviewed and adjusted at any time after initial commissioning of the traffic signal junction subject to consultation with various stakeholders.

4. Objection – Will increase waiting times for ambulances.

There were 3 objections received on this basis where it is believed the proposed signalised junction would affect ambulances and other emergency vehicles accessing and egressing George Eliot Hospital.

Response: Travel times for emergency services will be improved due to traffic flow efficiencies achieved as a result of implementing the project. In addition, emergency services are exempt from certain traffic regulations such as crossing a red traffic light. All emergency services have been consulted as part of the consultation process and are aware of the scheme.

5. Objection – Objections to lack of cycling facilities.

There were 4 objections to the project on this basis, whereby objectors believed cycling facilities should be improved.

Response: Specific to the Greenmoor/Heath End Road junction, the proposed signals allow for pedestrian and cycling (toucan) crossing facilities, which address safety at the junction.

There is insufficient road space to provide on-carriageway cycle lanes. Advance stop lines (ASL) are only provided when there is a cycling lane in the carriageway. The existing footway will be widened as part of the project to provide a shared footway cycleway. This will encourage people who don't feel comfortable in cycling on the carriageway to change their mode of transport as cyclists will be kept separate from vehicles.

6. Objection – Objections to no additional parking facilities being provided.
 There were 3 objections to the project on this basis. Residents on Heath End Road, adjacent to the proposed signalised junction, felt that parking spaces should be provided to them.

Response: As part of this project, there are no changes to the existing parking restrictions in this area which would affect the objectors. The existing parking restrictions on this length of Heath End Road have been in place for approximately 42 years.

There is not the available road space to provide parking facilities at this location.

7. Objection – Resulting issues to the adjacent Bull Ring junction.
 There were 2 objections to the project on this basis. Local residents felt that the signalisation of the Heath End Road/Greenmoor Road, would have detrimental effects to the functioning of the adjacent Bull Ring junction.

Response: Alterations to the adjacent Bull Ring junction are still in development as part of a wider scheme to improve the College Street corridor. It is expected that the proposed signals should provide gaps for traffic travelling from Greenmoor Road. A yellow box is currently part of the proposal for Bull Ring junction. Signage is proposed along College Street and on approach to the Bull Ring junction.

4. Financial implications

4.1 The project is part of a wider scheme to improve College Street from the A444 College Street Roundabout, College Street, Bull Ring junction, and Heath End/Greenmoor Road junction. The scheme will be fully funded from the Capital Investment Fund (CIF) budget. The funding available from this funding stream is £4.270 million.

4.2 The budget for the Heath End Road/Greenmoor Road junction project is £500k and will be funded from the wider scheme budget.

5. Environmental implications

5.1 This has been assessed as part of the Capital Investment Fund bid and details are provided within the report in Appendix C1.

Report Author	Chet Patel/Felix Kwateng Engineering Project Manager, Engineering Design Services chetanpatel@warwickshire.gov.uk felixkwateng@warwickshire.gov.uk
Director	Scott Tompkins Director for Environment, Planning, and Transport scotttompkins@warwickshire.gov.uk
Executive Director	Mark Ryder Executive Director for Communities markryder@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Jan Matecki Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning janmatecki@warwickshire.gov.uk

Urgent matter?	No
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Confidential or exempt?	<i>No</i>
Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?	<i>No</i>

List of background papers	
Appendix A – Project Plan Appendix B – Objections register. Appendix C1 – Environmental Implications extract from CIF Bid Appendix C2 – Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)	

Members and officers consulted and informed	
Portfolio Holder – Councillor Jan Matecki Executive Director - Mark Ryder Director - Scott Tompkins Head of Engineering Design Services (EDS) – Nicola van der Hoven Legal – Caroline Gutteridge and Nichola Vine Finance – Andrew Felton Equality – Joanna Kemp Democratic Services – Helen Barnsley Councillors – Jack Kennaugh and Clare Golby	