

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Title** | **York Outer Ring Road (YORR)** **Meeting with Julian Sturdy MP and representatives from Earswick Parish Council** |
| **Date / Time** | Friday 9th March 2018, 10:30 am |
| **Location** | Cerialis Room, City of York Council, West Offices, York |
| **Attendees** | Julian Sturdy (JS)Helen Douglas (HD)Paul Doughty (PD)Derek Jones (DJ)Sian Wiseman (SW)Gill Offler (GO)Paul Middleton (PM)Phil Batty (PB)Tony Clarke (TC)Gary Frost (GF)Melanie Farnham (MF) | MP for York OuterWard Councillor for StrensallWard Councillor for StrensallChair of Earswick Parish CouncilDeputy Chair of Earswick Parish CouncilEarswick Parish CouncilTechnical Director – Pell FrischmannEngineer, Pell FrischmannHead of Transport – City of York Council (CYC)Major Projects Manager - City of York Council (CYC)Senior Project Manager - Major Transport Projects (CYC) |

Gary Frost (GF), City of York Council (CYC) Major Projects Manager introduced the scheme. The proposal to upgrade 7 of the existing roundabouts on the York Outer Ring Road between the Wetherby Road and Monks Cross junction has been a long held aspiration for the City of York Council and is endorsed into policy mainly through the Local Transport Plan 2011.

The scheme objectives are to :

* help improve journey time reliability and travel times for all users and therefore increase economic productivity for the City of York,
* improve air quality in the City centre by encouraging traffic to use the Outer Ring Road
* reduce congestion and thus make more sustainable travel options, such as pedestrian and cycle facilities, more attractive, thereby reducing north-south severance
* improve accessibility to development land and therefore help to boost regional economic growth by unlocking jobs and supporting vital new housing development, and it will also
* improve road safety and accident reduction through the improved flow of traffic.

Pell Frischmann have been commissioned by CYC to carry out the highway design for the improvements on the first four roundabouts, with the other three (Clifton, Great North Way and Wiggington) going out to tender in summer 2018.

The first roundabout CYC are proposing to improve will be the Wetherby Road roundabout, with construction on site currently planned for early summer, with the current plan for construction of Monks Cross to follow immediately after that.

These two roundabouts are being improved first as they are, technically, straight forward junction designs and, location wise, have a lesser impact than some of the other roundabouts, this makes them easier to get to the construction stage first, which is important as the improved roundabouts need to be completed before the funding runs out in 2022.

Preliminary concept designs for the A1237 Haxby and Strensall roundabouts have been prepared. A full topographical survey has now been carried out and the outline design of these roundabouts is about to commence. These are more complex than the Wetherby Road and Monks Cross roundabouts.and it will be in the region of 18 months before construction commences on site.

The Strensall Road roundabout was discussed in further detail. At present there are uncontrolled at-grade crossings on the roundabout facilitating north / south movement.

A number of options were presented by Paul Middleton from Pell Frischmann

**Option 1 – Current proposal for a single underpass on the eastern side of the roundabout with enhanced crossings**

**Pros :**

* New controlled crossing on Strensall Road northern arm
* Upgraded crossing facilities at the southern end of Connaught Way
* Encourages use of Connaught Way which is a quieter residential street
* Minimal overall landtake minimised
* Maximises the re-use of the existing pavement
* All existing earth bunds can be maintained with modification
* Tree removal minimised
* Unintrusive layout
* No specific security concerns due to the straight alignment of the proposed underpass

**Cons :**

* Pedestrian and cyclists have to cross Strensall Road where they approach the junction on the east side, albeit through enhanced facilities
* Crossing on the north side may cause blocking back of vehicles
* Underpass will be 4.5m wide and unsegregated
* Minor landtake from property to north of fire station

PB clarified that the design standards indicated that there is a middle ground “red zone” where pedestrian crossings close to roundabouts are considered to be less safe, this was discussed further.

Concerns were raised by DJ regarding the close proximity of the proposed controlled crossing to the roundabout and the speed with which traffic exits the roundabout. SW mentioned that a cycle route had been proposed on Strensall Road and TC confirmed that an off roadcycle route is an aspiration for Strensall Road as part of the proposals for an upgrade of the wider cycle route network.

Cllr Doughty mentioned that there is a latent demand for a north/south route as currently 6 double decker buses travel to Huntington school. SW mentioned that as a result of the developments included in the Local Plan, there will be an increase in pedestrians with Wigginton, Haxby and Strensall roundabouts generally recognised as being the most congested.

Cllr Douglas mentioned that returning to the main carriageway from a shared cycleway can be very scary.

The proximity of the proposed underpass on the east side was discussed and the impact on neighbouring properties due to having to achieve a gradient which conforms with the requisite design standards.

**Option 2 – 2 proposed underpasses, one on either side of the roundabout**

**Pros :**

* Pedestrians and cyclists do not have to cross Strensall Road on either approach
* Less potential for blocking back of vehicles
* Underpasses will be 4.5m wide and segregated
* Maximises existing pavement re-use

**Cons :**

* £1m estimated additional cost (i.e £800k underpass, £30k wing walls and £100k earthworks)
* Additional landtake – approx 3000m2
* Significant land take from property to the north of the fire station, requiring demolition of an existing residential property
* North eastern earth bund will need to be replaced with environmental fencing
* Slightly more intrusive layout
* Slightly more removal of trees
* Slight security concerns due to alignment of eastern underpass

SW asked why is there a proposal for a bund in front of the fire station. PM stated that the proposal was to replicate the existing situation, as the fire station is also entitled to noise protection.

**Option 3 – 2 proposed underpasses, one on either side of the roundabout , with roundabout moved to the west**

**Pros :**

* Pedestrians and cyclists do not have to cross Strensall Road on either approach
* Less potential for blocking back of vehicles
* Underpasses will be 4.5m wide and segregated
* Less land take from the Fire Station and other landowners

**Cons :**

* £1.1m estimated additional cost (i.e £800k underpass, £30k wing walls, £100k retaining walls and £100k earthworks)
* Additional landtake – approx 1500m2
* Significant land take from property to the north of the fire station, possibly requiring demolition of an existing residential property
* North eastern earth bund will need to be replaced with environmental bunds in south west and north west quadrants
* Re-use of existing pavement reduced
* Slightly more intrusive layout
* Slightly more removal of trees
* Slight security concerns due to re-alignment of western underpass

**Option 4 – Current proposal for a single underpass on the eastern side of the roundabout with additional footbridge**

**Pros :**

* Pedestrians and cyclists do not have to cross Strensall Road on either approach
* Less potential for blocking back of vehicles
* Underpasses will be 4.5m wide and segregated
* Maximises existing pavement re-use
* No land take required from property to the north of the fire station

**Cons :**

* £1.3m estimated additional works cost (i.e £1.2m footbridge – 30m span - and £50k earthworks)
* Additional landtake – approx 1500m2
* North eastern earth bund will need to be replaced with environmental fencing
* Footbridge ramps 4m wide and unsegregated
* Significantly more visually intrusive layout
* Slightly more removal of trees
* Security concerns due to general footbridge layouts

PM explained that the bridge would be visually intrusive as it would need to be high enough to cater for abnormal load routes and the length and height of the ramps could deter usage.

DJ asked why can’t the existing roundabout be moved southwards. PM explained that the current options utilise as much of the existing carriageway as possible which equates to a large cost already in the existing asset. To relocate it would be at significant cost to rebuild the requisite road layers. In addition moving the roundabout southwards would impact on the existing road layout meaning that the right turn access into Abbots Gait may no longer be possible.

DJ asked about the cost of the roundabout. GF explained that the cost of the upgrades to all 7 roundabouts is £38m, with Strensall being the most costly out of all the roundabouts at £7m.

SW stated that school children are wanting to cycle to school. PD requested that cycle routes should be shown how they fit into the overall picture. TC also confirmed that the proposed options cater for any potential future dualling.

JS informed the meeting that as part of the wider Local Plan that a full cycle route is proposed to be delivered as part of the Barracks development. There is also an aspiration to have a continuous cycle route to Strensall and at some point along this there will be a need for all cycle route users in both directions, to cross the road.

JS also suggested that where zebra crossings are proposed, could these be made into signalised crossings.

PD informed the meeting that a petition requesting a reduction in the speed on Strensall Road had been submitted. TC indicated that a report will be submitted for a decision to the 12 April Executive Member Decision Session.

SW suggested that maybe the roundabout could be an oval shape. PM explained the impact of higher circulatory speeds and detrimental impact on more minor arms with oval layouts.

The suggestion of potentially signalising the roundabout was raised. TC said that a report had been prepared by Halcrow about 10 years ago which explored the potential for signalisation and the findings concluded that traffic signals at this location would be very disruptive to traffic with the dominant flow being Ring Road traffic and vehicles trying to exit Strensall would be subject to longer delays. PM confirmed that there would likely be noticeable time loss through the cyclic operation of signals between different traffic streams, and lead to an increase in the number of unnecessary stops. Traffic signals would work less efficiently than the existing or proposed roundabout arrangements.

GF confirmed that the land being allocated for dualling was never retained by NYCC or CYC therefore the Project Team are having to source the landowners and progress localised agreements, all along the North York Outer Ring Road.

SW stated that she is raising questions on behalf of Earswick Parish Council. GF thanked the Parish Council for raising some good points as part of this initial consultation. The representatives of the Parish Council indicated that following the presentation they understood why a 2nd subway was not considered to be viable.

**Diamond Wood (Northern Forest)**

PM gave an overview of the existing bund and it’s proximity to Jubilee (Diamond) Wood, informing that the existing trees are in a semi-mature state.

PM informed that the road build construction process would require the temporary removal of the existing acoustic bunds and any excavation would result in 2 different stockpiles – topsoil and engineering fill. This material will be used to reform new acoustic barriers however needs to be stored during construction. Transporting the material away from the site to a storage facility is expensive and will result in lots of HGV movements. The current projected construction period would result in being on site for 12-18 months. Clearance of the acoustic bund will also provide space to locate any cranes to facilitate the widening of the River Foss road bridge. SW asked whether the Foss Internal Drainage Board had been contacted as she is on the board. SW suggested that there is a flower meadow nearby which could be explored to deposit the excavation fill temporarily during the works. GF thanked SW for the suggestion as part of the pre-discussion and will explore this further as the scheme is developed.

SW stated that to relocate the trees, generally 20-25% is lost. They are also tightly knitted together.

There was a useful discussion about the impact of the scheme on Diamond Wood and the noise bund and the options available for them. Some of these options are going to be developed as part of the detailed design and the outcomes will be discussed during the formal consultation, which is expected to start in 2019

The potential for a noise barrier on the bridge was raised by the Parish Council. This would be investigated further.

TC indicated that consultation on the outline designs would include alternative options for specific items eg. Noise fence or bund where viable.

.