

# Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Tuesday, 13 January 2015

## Young Street Experimental Traffic Regulation Order

<b>Item number</b>	8.2
<b>Report number</b>	
<b>Executive/routine</b>	
<b>Wards</b>	11 – City Centre

### Executive summary

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On 26 August 2014, the Transport and Environment Committee approved a year-long trial to change the direction of the one way traffic management system on Young Street.

An Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) was advertised on 18 August 2014 in support of the approved changes to road layout on Young Street. This report advises the Committee of the representations made to the Council during the statutory consultation period and makes recommendations to address objections received.

### Links

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<b>Coalition pledges</b>	<a href="#">P18</a> , <a href="#">P47</a>
<b>Council outcomes</b>	<a href="#">CO7</a> , <a href="#">CO8</a> , <a href="#">CO22</a>
<b>Single Outcome Agreement</b>	<a href="#">SO1</a> , <a href="#">SO4</a>

## Young Street Experimental Traffic Regulation Order

### Recommendations

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- 1.1 It is recommended that the Transport and Environment Committee:
  - 1.1.1 agrees that the necessary works to change signage and the direction of the one way system on Young Street will commence on 30 December 2014, with the trial commencing in late December 2014 and to December 2015;
  - 1.1.2 notes the responses to the objections and the steps that have been taken to address those objections;
  - 1.1.3 agrees to set aside the objections, on the basis that, by implementing changes using an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order, objections will be further considered should Committee decide to make the Order permanent;
  - 1.1.4 notes that the Council has procured a year-long monitoring and research package to analyse the impact of a similar Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) trial on George Street, on the surrounding city centre neighbourhood (including Young Street), and on businesses, pedestrians, cyclists, and different modes of transport which currently use George Street and surrounding streets; and
  - 1.1.5 notes that a report will be brought to Committee in December 2015 analysing the trial's impact and making further recommendations based on the research outcomes.

### Background

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- 2.1 Young Street has been subject to a one way traffic restriction for a number of years. Traffic is currently only permitted in an eastbound direction, accessing Young Street from North Charlotte Street and exiting at Castle Street. Westbound traffic is currently prohibited.
- 2.2 On 29 April 2014, the Transport and Environment Committee approved an ETRO for George Street. This introduced a one way traffic management system, a dedicated two way cycle lane and additional pedestrian space. Committee agreed to a comprehensive year-long piece of independent research being commissioned to report on the impacts of the George Street trial.

- 2.3 The one way system on George Street began being installed on 23 June 2014. On 3 July 2014, a complaint was received from residents of Young Street outlining a significant and unexpected increase in traffic using their street. Specifically, this cited the number of tour buses, taxis and delivery vans, and mentioned concerns about the speed of the traffic. This was raised by the community as an issue potentially arising from the George Street ETRO trial, the matter was to be investigated as a matter of urgency.
- 2.4 The proposal to change the direction of the one way traffic flow on Young Street was approved by the Transport and Environment Committee on 26 August 2014 as follows:

*Committee agrees to implement a change in the priority of Young Street from the eastbound to westbound direction as an amendment to the George Street Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO). This would mean that no access to Young Street would be available from North Charlotte Street.*

## Main report

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- 3.1 In response to complaints received from the local community in Young Street, the Council installed electronic traffic counters on a temporary basis during July 2014 to track the number and speeds of vehicles. At the same time two researchers were asked to station themselves on the street to track more qualitative data, such as the types of vehicle using the street (numbers of taxis, vans, lorries, private light vehicles, cycles, motor cycles, buses and tour buses). They were also asked to report the exit patterns, the direction that vehicles travelled in as they left Young Street. Finally the researchers were asked (without the benefit of any electronic equipment) to give their opinions on how many vehicles they considered to be going too fast.
- 3.2 All reports of alleged speeding traffic received by the Council from residents were passed onto Police Scotland for investigation.
- 3.3 The combined results from the electronic counters and the on-street researchers drew out the following conclusions:
- Traffic patterns showed that there is an issue with the number of vehicles and the pattern of travel in Young Street.
  - The issue relates to the banned left turn into the Moray Feu from North Charlotte Street, and does not relate to any impact of the George Street trial (particularly as the West end of George Street had been closed to most vehicles for a number of years previously).

- The most common pattern of travel noted on Young Street was traffic turning right into Young Street from North Charlotte Street, then exiting Young Street left onto Castle Street (northbound), before turning left again onto Queen Street (westbound) and ultimately accessing Queensferry Street via the Moray Feu.
  - The proposal to re-open access to Queensferry Street via Charlotte Square and Hope Street, at the same time as changing the direction of one-way travel on Young Street, ought to improve matters for west and northbound traffic.
- 3.4 Regarding complaints of speeding, the on-street researchers counted a total of 1,403 vehicles on Young Street during their research shifts. Without the benefit of any electronic equipment (just armed with their own perceptions) one researcher reported they perceived that 1 in 4 vehicles was going too fast, and the other reported 1 in 10. The electronic data revealed that, of the 1,403 vehicles they had seen, only one was going more than 30mph and that vehicle was travelling at a speed of 31.2mph. That suggested a narrow cobbled street may be more suited to a 20mph speed limit (in the perception of both researchers and the local community). The local community were encouraged to participate in the Council's 20mph speed limit consultation during the Autumn of 2014.
- 3.5 The chief purpose of a trial, such as the current George Street ETRO and the proposed Young Street ETRO, is to track the impact of any changes made and to allow the Council to react accordingly, to keep traffic moving, as well as to improve the quality of life for people who live, work, study, visit and shop in Edinburgh city centre. In this case, the complaints about the volume and patterns of traffic, and the speed of traffic, accessing Young Street, were able to be properly researched and analysed within a three week period.
- 3.6 The proposal to address this traffic management issue is that north and westbound traffic should be allowed to access to Queensferry Street via Hope Street and Charlotte Square, instead of having to use Young Street, Queen Street and the Moray Feu. Young Street will have its one way direction of travel changed, to allow only westbound traffic for the duration of one year, as an experiment. These proposals were contained in the 26 August 2014 report to Transport and Environment Committee "Post Tram City Centre Review – West End". The research undertaken in July 2014 supports the outcome that these measures should now be implemented.

### **Public Consultation and Objections**

- 3.7 On 18 August 2014, the proposed Experimental Traffic Regulation Order number TRO/14/35 was advertised. This would amend the current one way traffic flow on Young Street, from eastbound to westbound-only.

- 3.8 This was part of an initial consultation period involving the emergency services, business groups such as the Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce and Essential Edinburgh, transport groups and public transport operators.
- 3.9 During this initial consultation phase, from 18 August to 8 September 2014, there were several letters of support, including all letters received from Young Street residents (all of whom wrote in favour of the proposed changes) and there was one letter of objection at this stage, from Spokes.
- 3.10 Spokes did not object to the one way system being proposed, but commented that *“cyclists should be exempt from the one-way and be allowed to travel in either direction on this street, in accordance with the Council’s Policy C3”*.
- 3.11 A response was provided to Spokes, on 9 September 2014, outlining that Policy C3 would have more clearly applied for any new one-way street, but in this case the Council is proposing a time limited trial revision of an existing one-way street, and wanted to keep the arrangements as straightforward as possible. Spokes wrote back on 2 October 2014 to say that, on reflection, Spokes had decided to withdraw its objection to the proposed TRO on Young Street.
- 3.12 The ETRO was advertised publicly, and 12 representations were received in favour of the changes. There were two objections and two further representations that were comments neither wholly in favour or objecting.
- 3.13 The two comments were received from the Great King Street Association and from an office worker based on Young Street. Both comments noted that the key problem was the consequences of the banned left turn into the Moray Feu from North Charlotte Street. The Council’s own research had found this to be the case too. The comments expressed concern that if Young Street had its one-way system changed in isolation (without providing an alternative access onto Queensferry Street) then such a measure could create more problems than it solved. However, both comments acknowledged that, as part of a wider package of measures, it would reduce the amount of traffic on Young Street (which was described as “unacceptable”) and “the proposal to change Young Street traffic could go ahead for the benefit of Young Street residents without adversely affecting other streets”. The Council is re-opening access to Queensferry Street via Hope Street as part of the same package of measures, and the comments raised by these two contributors have been addressed.

- 3.14 The two objections came from two residents of a property in a street located 0.75 miles from Young Street. These identical objections noted that the key traffic management problem needing to be addressed was providing better access to Queensferry Street from Charlotte Square. The re-opening of access to Queensferry Street from Hope Street access will address this matter. The other principal suggestion offered by these objectors included banning all bus, coach, tour bus and heavy goods vehicles from Young Street, instead of altering the direction of the one-way system. Such a measure could be considered in the future. However, it is less straightforward to implement and enforce than altering the direction of the one-way system. It would not address the matter that vehicles have been perceived to speed on Young Street as they seek to cut through the adjacent lanes to Frederick Street. This report recommends a layout that would ensure Young Street, Hill Street and Thistle Street all run in contrary directions. Given the patterns of movement that the Council's research identified in tests during July 2014, it is likely that changing the direction of the one-way traffic flow on Young Street will both discourage speeding, and discourage through traffic from using these narrow lanes. For these reasons, the objections are recommended to be set aside.
- 3.15 The majority of correspondence though was heavily in favour of the proposed changes, with 12 letters of support all from local residents.

## Measures of success

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- 4.1 Reduced through traffic on Young Street and surrounding narrow, cobbled residential streets

## Financial impact

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- 5.1 The cost for implementing the proposal relates purely to the ETRO process and will be contained within the Services for Communities City Centre Programme budget.

## Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

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- 6.1 The recommendation for authorisation to promote a TRO amendment on 26 August 2014 initiated a formal statutory process.
- 6.2 The objections to the TRO amendment received have been considered and addressed. However, the objections will be required to be considered again should Committee decide to make the changes permanent.

## Equalities impact

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- 7.1 An Equalities and Rights Impact Assessment has been prepared and is available as background reference. There are no direct negative equalities or human rights impacts anticipated and the proposals are expected to enhance accessibility to the west end and the more residential streets of the New Town for all.

## Sustainability impact

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- 8.1 The impacts of this report have been considered in relation to the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. Relevant Council sustainable development policies and the Local Transport Strategy 2014-2019 have been taken into account and are noted under Background Reading reference.
- 8.2 The proposals outlined in this report will promote a reduction in carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions by reducing travel time and distance around the city centre. In so doing, it will increase the city's resilience to climate change impacts and promote a sustainable Edinburgh. The reassignment of motorised traffic to appropriate signed routes, will reduce the interaction of these vehicles with pedestrians and cyclists in other parts of the city centre, thus promoting personal wellbeing.

## Consultation and engagement

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- 9.1 The findings of this report have been referred to consultation with the West End Association, the West End Community Council, the Broughton & New Town Community Council, Lord Moray's Feuars, the City Centre Neighbourhood Partnership, Police Scotland and Transport for Edinburgh. Councillors Hinds, Mowat, Rankin and Doran have also been consulted on the report findings.
- 9.2 The outcome of these separate consultations has been broad support for the recommendations presented within the report.

## Background reading/external references

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[City of Edinburgh Council – Local Transport Strategy 2014 - 2019](#)

[Building a Vision for the City Centre, Transport and Environment Committee, 19 March 2013](#)

[Building a Vision for the City Centre- Consultation Outcome, Transport and Environment Committee, 29 October 2013](#)

[Post Tram City Centre Review – West End, Transport and Environment Committee 26 August 2014](#)

### John Bury

Acting Director of Services for Communities

Contact: Iain MacPhail, City Centre Programme Manager

E-mail: [iain.macphail@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:iain.macphail@edinburgh.gov.uk) | Tel: 0131 529 7804

## Links

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<b>Coalition pledges</b>	<b>P18</b> – Complete the tram project in accordance with current plans <b>P47</b> – Set up a city-wide Transport Forum of experts and citizens to consider our modern transport needs
<b>Council outcomes</b>	<b>CO7</b> – Edinburgh draws new investment in developing regeneration <b>CO8</b> – Edinburgh’s economy creates and sustains job opportunities <b>CO22</b> – Moving efficiently – Edinburgh has a transport system that improves connectivity and is green, healthy and accessible.
<b>Single Outcome Agreement</b>	<b>SO1</b> – Edinburgh’s economy delivers increased investment, jobs and opportunities for all. <b>SO4</b> – Edinburgh’s communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric.
<b>Appendices</b>	None