

Transport and Environment Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 20 June 2024

Review of Parking and Loading within Elm Row and the Surrounding Area

Executive/routine
Wards

Executive
11 – City Centre; 12 – Leith Walk; 13 - Leith

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- 1.1.1 Approves changes to Elm Row and Brunswick Street using the current Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) in the short term to improve walking, wheeling and active travel provision while supporting businesses in the area with increased loading provision and access;
 - 1.1.2 Notes that the implementation of a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) is fundamental to both the design of the tram scheme and its operation;
 - 1.1.3 Approves the commencement of the statutory procedures for the TRO necessary to introduce permanent changes to Elm Row and Brunswick Street; and
 - 1.1.4 Approves the commencement of the statutory procedures for the TRO necessary to introduce additional parking and loading on Leith Walk and necessary changes to the operation of junctions.

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2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report seeks approval to implement proposed changes designed to improve safety, walking, wheeling and active travel provision while supporting businesses in the area with increased loading provision and access within the Elm Row area using Trams to Newhaven Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO).
- 2.2 Additionally, the report seeks approval to commence the necessary legal processes to implement these changes permanently through a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).

3. Background

- 3.1 On 14 March 2019, the Council approved the terms of the [Final Business Case](#) for the Trams to Newhaven Project. The project completes the tram line to Newhaven from the temporary terminus at York Place.
- 3.2 During construction, the possibility of design changes to Elm Row along with additional loading in the surrounding area including Brunswick Street was requested by residents and businesses who were concerned at the lack of access to the east of Leith Walk along with lack of loading for businesses on Leith Walk.
- 3.3 This report sets out the proposed steps which will help ease the pressure on surrounding side streets as well as providing additional loading on Leith Walk and creating a more pedestrian friendly area on Elm Row along with improvements to Brunswick Street junction with Leith Walk.
- 3.4 Therefore, approval is sought to make such an order and to commence the associated statutory process. This report sets out the order required, the statutory process associated with that and seeks approval to commence the statutory consultation process associated with the order as well as associated works to implement changes on the ground.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Following the completion and opening of the new Trams to Newhaven line, the project team has continued to monitor a number of issues that have been raised along the route, including concerns on permeability at the south end of Leith Walk from Albert Street to Picardy Place and illegal parking/loading within this area having an impact on tram operations.
- 4.2 As part of the final design Brunswick Street would have become a continuous footway with vehicle movements in and out allowed.
- 4.3 However, it became clear when the project's traffic management was removed, that Brunswick Street became a rat run for cars and a safety issue for pedestrians. Therefore, it was stopped up temporarily.
- 4.4 Montgomery Street was stopped up in line with the final design, and a loading area created.
- 4.5 Elm Row has also been installed as per the final design, however during construction the project team made a commitment to review the design and propose a slight change to the cycleway to create more space for public transport users and pedestrians whilst retaining parking and loading.
- 4.6 The Council also requested that illegal parking/loading along the route be monitored, particularly where incidents were having an impact on Tram operations. This has notably reduced since operations commenced on 7 June 2023 and the with the additional resources deployed along the route (which again has reduced the frequency of any incidents with compliance increasing monthly). However, officers will continue to monitor this and to work closely with all parties.
- 4.7 Considering representations from residents and businesses, from locally elected members and community councils, the following next steps are proposed to improve permeability and loading provision while considering safety for all road users:
 - 4.7.1 Re-introduce the left turn from Leith Walk onto London Road (this was approved by Committee in May 2024);
 - 4.7.2 Further loading to be provided on Leith Walk between Brunswick Street and Elm Row;
 - 4.7.3 Brunswick Street to be redesigned to allow for vehicles exiting to turn left however no access permitted from Leith Walk. This will include a larger pedestrian "plaza" area and reduced width junction to prevent illegal manoeuvres;
 - 4.7.4 Bollards to be installed between Elm Row and Montgomery Street with further lining works carried out and surfacing of Montgomery Street; and
 - 4.7.5 Elm Row cycleway changes to be implemented which include a bi-directional cycleway and widening of Elm Row Bus stops.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 Should Committee approve the recommendations in this report, work will commence on the installation of associated works under Trams to Newhaven Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO). The statutory process will also commence for the required Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) required to deliver permanent changes as set out within the Main Report section.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The cost of the changes to Elm Row and Brunswick Street are expected to be £0.550m. The loans charges associated with this expenditure amount to a principal repayment of £0.550m and interest of £0.306m. This would be an average annual repayment of £0.043m over 20 years, based on an assumed loans fund interest rate of 5%.

7. Equality and Poverty Impact

- 7.1 Transport was highlighted by the Edinburgh Poverty Commission as a key issue in combatting poverty in the city. Improving access to public transport and journey times therefore benefits all users of public transport, and particularly those experiencing poverty, improving access between housing, leisure and economic opportunities. This includes access to housing developments in response to the declared housing emergency.

8. Climate and Nature Emergency Implications

- 8.1 The changes proposed for Elm Row will improve access for public transport users, encouraging use of the bus network and promoting a mode of travel that is efficient in terms of road space and fuel, and is an essential part of the city's sustainable travel network.
- 8.2 The changes proposed for Montgomery Street, to install bollards and undertake road resurfacing, will improve pedestrian safety at Elm Row by removing the possibility of vehicular access over the pavement, thereby encouraging pedestrian access.
- 8.3 Changes at Brunswick Street will create a larger pedestrian plaza area encouraging pedestrian access and travel on foot while enabling loading provision for businesses.

9. Risk, policy, compliance, governance and community impact

- 9.1 There are no significant compliance, governance or regulatory implications expected as a result of approving the recommendations in this report.

10. Background reading/external references

- 10.1 [Trams to Newhaven TRO Report August 2021.](#)

11. Appendices

None.