A469 (Caerphilly Road) Transport and Accessibility Improvements

Scheme Update (Detailed Design)

December 2015
Introduction

The Government is committed to addressing the important issues of traffic congestion and environmental pollution, both of which are serious and growing problems. A key part of addressing these issues will be measures to encourage provision of more sustainable, environmentally friendly, forms of transport, including the development of more attractive public transport services. Buses already play an essential role in the transport systems of our urban areas.

The option of providing new major roads in urban areas is limited. Other measures are required. Improvements to public transport services, coupled with measures to discourage unnecessary use of private vehicles, are an important part of a coherent and environmentally sustainable strategy.

Bus services, can be more easily adapted to changing demands than fixed-track systems and, with their large carrying capacity, buses can make effective use of limited road space. Buses provide transport for people who for one reason or another are prevented from driving themselves - young, elderly and disabled people, those who are not able to drive a car, and those who do not wish to, either generally or for particular journeys. Buses often provide these people with their only means of access to work, shops, education and social and leisure activities.

This proposal sits alongside the proposals for the electrification of the Valleys lines, including improvements to the A470 and other strategic routes. The improvements along this bus route will result in improved bus journey times and reliability. It is proposed to provide 130 metres of bus lane northbound and over a length of 400 metres in the southbound direction. This will be an alternative, sustainable transport option if the railway option is not convenient or suitable.

The funding source for this scheme falls under the Welsh Government's ‘Metro’ budget (Cardiff Capital Regional Metro). Some further information can be found on the Welsh Governments website: http://gov.wales/topics/transport/public/metro/

The current bus services operating south of Maes y Coed Rd junction are as follows:

- A Graig y Rhacca –Cardiff
- B Senghenydd-Cardiff
- X Senghenydd-Cardiff
- 27 Thornhill-City Centre
Consultations

The main A469 (Caerphilly Road) Transport and Accessibility Improvements scheme has been split into phases. This is because there are distinct differences between each area. To make the scheme’s consultation relevant and easier to interpret, these were consulted upon separately as follows:

- Phase 1 – Caerphilly Road From St Georges Road to Tair Erw Road
- Phase 2 – Caerphilly Road From Tair Erw Road to Maes-y-Coed Road

Phase 1
The consultation was held for Phase 1 between 29th September and 12th October 2014. Nineteen responses were received which included three disagreements with the proposals and sixteen offered comments or sought clarification to the proposals.

Phase 2
The consultation was held on Phase 2 between 2nd December and 16th December 2014. Twenty one responses were received, of which ten sought clarification/made requests, two offered comments/made suggestions, five disagreed/objected and four offered agreement/support with added comments.

The concerns and comments were summarised, along with the Council’s response and presented in the ‘Consultation Reports’. The consultation information, including the consultation reports are available on the Council’s website under www.cardiff.gov.uk/transportprojects

Two separate consultations have also taken place in respect of the Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) along the corridor. These legal Orders have been sealed and will be implemented as part of the schemes implementation.

Scheme Development

The original scheme’s concept design was based on topographical information and data available at the time. Since then, further investigation work has been undertaken. This included trial holes (making small excavation to identify utility services), radar services (electronic survey above the ground to identify underground utility services and tree roots) and liaison with various parties such as statutory undertakers (utility companies), South Wales Police, Cardiff Bus and the Council’s Parks department etc. Using all this information we have developed the concept design, taking into consideration the feedback from the consultation process.
We have stated that there may be occasions where we may have to make decisions due to unforeseen site conditions, but we would endeavour to retain the features of the original design. Unfortunately, there have been occasions during the development of the design where we have had to make some difficult decisions and make amendments to our original proposal. We would like to assure you that we have made every effort to attempt to retain all the features of the original proposal, however some changes have transpired. To easily identify these, we have listed the changes below and the reasons for the decisions we have had to make.

An annotated version of the detailed design is attached for your information. It may be necessary to amend this drawing as time progresses. We will of course highlight any further amendments made. A copy of the drawings associated with the regeneration work in the vicinity of the Birchgrove shopping area is also attached for your information.

Scheme Changes

Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs): Changes have been made to the existing parking restrictions along Caerphilly Road. The TROs have been through the necessary consultation and legal process and have been sealed. A copy of the TRO plan is attached for your information. Some minor changes will be necessary to tie in with the changes made to the original proposal during the detailed design.

The main changes to the existing TROs include the provision of additional ‘Limited Waiting’ parking bays, ‘Resident Only’ parking bays and ‘Goods Vehicle Only’ parking bays. Other restrictions apply to the bus lanes, existing double/single yellow lines and protection of junctions.

Some of the information relating to the TRO proposals has been added to the detailed design layout attached, along with and indicative representation of parked vehicles. Note the numbers of available spaces may vary, depending upon the size of vehicles and how well they have been parked.

Enforcement of Parking: It is normally an offence to park vehicles on footways and also to park on a grass verge, where there are parking restrictions adjacent to, or associated with the verge. It was agreed in 2011 that the existing restrictions on Caerphilly Road would not be enforced until a parking solution was developed. This scheme satisfies the Councils commitment to providing a solution to the parking problem on Caerphilly Road. On this basis, the 2011 agreement concerning parking enforcement is revoked. Therefore, when the scheme has been implemented, the enforcement of footway parking and verge parking will commence. Any reference to the agreement made in 2011 will not be considered as part of any appeal for justifying illegal or obstructive parking.
Funding: As part of the bidding process to secure funding for the scheme, we were hoping that the scheme would be funded in full, meaning that both phases would be implemented. However, funding has only been granted for north of the Heathwood Road junction to Maes-y-Coed Road.

We will however be upgrading the crossing facility to a push button controlled crossing on the southern side of the Birchgrove Road junction and removing the traffic island. This will help pedestrians as well as help traffic flow through the junction. The bus stop will also be relocated as originally proposed to compliment the changes, although it may be necessary to relocate the existing sign to the where the bus stop is located. Also, the guardrail will be removed around the junction where it is located directly adjacent to the carriageway to remove the trapping hazard to cyclists and pedestrians.

Improvements will proceed in the vicinity of the shops as part of the Neighbourhood Regeneration work. It is hoped that these works can be coordinated with the corridor works. Additional footway resurfacing will be undertaken within the junction area.

H-Bar Markings: H-Bar markings are a variation of a ‘Keep Clear’ road marking. They are normally used adjacent to dropped kerbs to assist with enforcement. As part of the consultation, we proposed to use these where there are existing vehicle crossovers. However, it has been confirmed that these can only be used in Cardiff where vehicle crossovers are used for disabled access. The H-Bar markings have therefore been removed from the design proposal, unless it can be demonstrated that disabled access is required for specific properties.

Trees: As part of the original scheme proposal, we proposed to retain many of the existing trees as possible and remove those which were diseased or where there was opportunity to maximise parking with alternative planting in the immediate vicinity.

Following the investigation work undertaken by the Council’s Design team who are developing the project and liaison with our Parks department and external landscaping consultants, it was identified that the majority of the original trees have been planted too shallow. Under the original scheme proposal, it would have been necessary to have trimmed back many of the tree roots to accommodate the kerbing for the parking bays etc. This would have destabilised the trees and would have probably killed the trees over a few seasons. Additionally, our investigation work of the utility services along Caerphilly Road, identified there is limited space due to the number of services in the verge, which is probably why the trees have been planted so shallow in the past.

The Council has therefore made the difficult decision to remove the existing trees along Caerphilly Road between the Tair Eru Road and Maes-y-Coed Road. It is
likely that over time, issues would have occurred such as the tree roots affecting utility services, the trees becoming unstable due to the depth of planting, or from the spread of the existing disease present on trees in the vicinity.

Due to the number of utility services along Caerphilly Road and requirement to plant healthy trees that will survive, it is necessary provide large tree planting pits known as ‘4-tier GeoCell filling systems’. These are approximately 2m in width, 2m in depth and 20m long. As a result of this and the limited space available due to utility services (identified via radar surveys), we regret to advise you that the final number of trees has reduced from what we originally anticipated. The following species of trees are likely to be provided:

- Acer Platanoides "Crimson King"
- Alnus incana Laciniata "Cut Leaf Grey Alder"
- Corylus Colurna
- Gingko Bilobo "Autumn Gold"
- Sorbus aria Lutescens
- Liriodendron Tulipifera
- Tilia Tomentosa "Brabant"

The final locations of the trees are shown on the attached plans, along with information relating to the TRO proposals, an indicative representation of parked vehicles is also shown.

**Heathwood Road:** As part of the provision of additional parking bays on Caerphilly Road and to alter the alignment of the carriageway, it is necessary to relocate the Vodafone mast. After liaising with the telecoms company that are responsible for the mast, the only suitable location identified was on Heathwood Road adjacent to Wok2Go. On this basis, it has been necessary to remove the proposed parking bay on Heathwood Road where the mast will be located. The relocation of the mast is subject to Planning permission which has been granted.

**Near Property 138:** The proposed build-out has been removed at this location as it is no longer possible to provide a tree due to limited underground space (and the need to provide a large root cell system).

**Near Properties 142-146:** The buildout arrangement has been changed. This is due to the BT chambers and it is no longer possible to provide a tree due to limited underground space (and the need to provide a large root cell system).

**Near Property 228:** There is sufficient underground space here to plant a tree with a large root cell system, note however that the buildout adjacent to 222 has been reduced in size.

**Near Property 286:** It was not possible to provide a tree in the verge at this location due to limited underground space (and the need to provide a large root cell system).
cell system). There is however sufficient space to provide a tree within a build-out. Note that the buildout adjacent to 292 has been removed.

**Near Property 292:** A build-out has been removed at this location as there is sufficient underground space here to plant a tree with a large root cell system.

**Near Property 298:** It was not possible to provide a tree in the verge at this location due to limited underground space (and the need to provide a large root cell system). There is however sufficient space to provide a tree within a build-out. The buildout adjacent to 292 has also been removed.

**Near Property 314:** It was not possible to provide a tree in the verge near this location due to limited underground space (and the need to provide a large root cell system), however there is sufficient space to provide a tree in a build-out.

**Near Property 319:** There is sufficient space to provide a tree in a build-out at this location.

**Near Property 338 – 344:** There are BT fibre chambers located in the verge resulting in the proposed parking bay being removed from between 350 – 346. To mitigate this loss of parking, the nearby bus stop will be removed to provide additional parking spaces. The bus stop located on the northern side of Maes-y-Coed Road can be utilised in place of the removed bus stop as buses will be able to travel across the junction into the bus lane.

**Near Property 346-350:** The parking bays have been removed here as regular access is required by BT to the chambers. Additional bays have been provided in place of the bus stop.

**Construction Information:**

The scheme is due to commence on site around 11th January 2016. We were hoping to start a lot sooner than this; however there has been a delay in obtaining the necessary funding to implement the scheme. The works will take around 26 weeks to complete.

The contractor who is undertaking the construction work is ERH Communications Ltd. Contact details will be made available on the web-site shortly.

As works will be undertaken simultaneously on the A470, it is recommended that any journeys in the vicinity of these works are planned ahead and that you allow sufficient time, as some disruption is likely.