

Appendix 2

Draft North Tyneside Council response to consultation: A19-A1058 Coast Road junction

January 2014

Introduction

This is the response of North Tyneside Council (“the Authority”) to the consultation ‘A19/A1058 Coast Road detailed scheme proposals’, which is being undertaken by the Highways Agency (HA), who maintain the national strategic road network. North Tyneside Council is the highway authority for the borough and maintains local roads including the A1058 Coast Road.

Strategic context

The Authority welcomes the opportunity to comment on the scheme proposals.

The A19-A1058 Coast Road junction has a vital strategic position in the national road network serving the North East, both linking the A19 with the major east-west route, the A1058 Coast Road, and providing access to economically significant employment destinations in the A19 corridor. The scheme will help to support further jobs growth at sites in the corridor such as Cobalt Business Park, which already provides around 10,000 jobs with occupiers including Procter & Gamble, Santander, HP and Newcastle Building Society.

The importance of the interchange to the wider regional economy was emphasised by the North East Independent Economic Review led by Lord Adonis, whose report states that “unblocking the bottleneck at this junction should remain in the HA’s post-2015 delivery programme”.

The reconfiguration of the junction is also identified as a desired outcome in the ‘Investing in our networks’ section of the Tyne and Wear Local Transport Plan (LTP) Strategy, in the context of Policy 39 ‘We will pursue major scheme investment to improve our transport networks’. Its importance to the transport network within the borough is such that the interchange is ranked number 1 in the hierarchy of junctions set out in the North Tyneside Network Management Plan 2012-17.

The A19 and A1 are the two strategic north-south routes serving Tyne and Wear and any serious disruption on one north-south route can lead to the diversion of high volumes of traffic along the other. Improving flows at recognised bottlenecks on the A19 would therefore have benefits for the wider area by helping to keep traffic moving on the strategic road network in the region.

The consultation document states that the Highways Agency estimates that “works could commence in spring 2016 and the road could be opened in summer 2018”.

North Tyneside Council is supportive of the proposed scheme, which would bring substantial economic benefits to North Tyneside and the North East Local Economic Partnership area, and asks that the Highways Agency seek to ensure that the scheme is delivered in line with the estimated timescale set out in the consultation document. There are a number of points of detail, set out below, which we would ask the Highways Agency to consider as scheme design proceeds.

Detail – highway design

The basic form of the proposed design involves the A19 running in a cutting underneath a reconfigured roundabout, with the A1058 on an overhead bridge as at present. Locating the A19 in a cutting may have advantages such as minimising traffic noise.

The design does not currently show details such as the number of lanes on each slip road. We would expect that the slip roads linking from and to the Coast Road would have at least equivalent capacity to the present arrangements.

We would invite the Highways Agency to engage with the Authority at an early stage with regard to traffic management arrangements for construction of the scheme.

Detail – non-motorised users and public transport

The design of pedestrian and cycle routes and crossing points is not shown on the diagrams in the consultation document. It should be noted that the east-west route along the north side of the Coast Road (via the A1058 bridge) is a well-used cycling route and it is important that this should remain a direct and accessible route for cycling.

Pedestrian and cyclist crossing facilities on the roundabout were improved in 2011 as part of an earlier project and now provide for numerous local journeys to destinations on all sides of the junction. We would expect the scheme to include crossing facilities of an equal or higher standard for people walking and cycling via the junction and we would ask the Highways Agency to engage with cycling and walking user groups as scheme design proceeds.

The Coast Road is served by frequent local buses and the Authority is promoting improvements at other points on the route which would benefit bus flows. The bus stops on the eastbound on-slip and westbound off-slip of the Coast Road are well used for access to local destinations including Silverlink and Tyne Tunnel Trading Estate and the design should retain these bus stops and provide for user-friendly pedestrian access to these stops.

Detail – Area 2

With regard to “Area 2” of the consultation (the bridge carrying the A19 over a walking and cycling route to the south of Middle Engine Lane), the design should be one which allows people to feel safe while using the route and hence both well lit by natural light wherever possible, and with good quality street lighting fitted. Of the two design options shown in the consultation document, Option 1 would be preferable as it would appear to feel less enclosed and allow more light onto the route.