STATEMENT OF REASONS
for
City of Coventry (Whittle Arch) (Bus Gate) Experimental Order 2018

In 2002, as part of the Phoenix Initiative Regeneration Project, the junction of Trinity Street and Fairfax Street was closed off to all traffic and pedestrianised. Following the closure, bus usage of the Pool Meadow Bus Station was significantly reduced making the bus station facility unsustainable in the long-term.

To address these concerns, in 2005, the City Council opened up the Trinity Street/Fairfax Street junction (Whittle Arch) to buses and cycles only to enable improved bus access to the bus station. In 2006 further changes were made and taxis and private hire vehicles were also allowed to use the link road between 10.30pm and 5.00am. This time period was later extended to 6.00pm to 8.00am, in the hope that the extension would assist with access requirements and improve the evening economy.

The Whittle Arch bus gate has now been in operation for a number of years and it is proposed to make further changes, monitoring has been undertaken which has shown that between 6.00pm to 8.00am very few private hire vehicles travel through Whittle Arch, but a high number of taxis (hackney carriages) do.

It is therefore proposed to simplify the restriction allowing taxis to travel through the bus gate 24 hours a day, but no longer permit private hire vehicles to travel through the bus gate. This is to improve access during the day, which will hopefully impact positively on the daytime economy, whilst removing the potential of motorists travelling though the bus gate following private hire vehicles (although the number of private hire vehicles is currently low).

To be able to monitor the impact of this change the traffic regulation order (TRO) is being implemented as an Experimental TRO. Traffic surveys have been undertaken prior to any changes being made and will be undertaken again once the proposed scheme is in operation.

The Director, Transportation & Highways has delegated powers to approve the publishing of Traffic Regulation Orders.

EFFECT

1. This Statement of Reasons relates to the making of the following Road Traffic Regulation Order:-

City of Coventry (Whittle Arch) (Bus Gate) Experimental Order 2018

   i. The general effect of these proposals will be to permit buses, taxis and cycles to travel though the existing bus gate at Whittle Arch 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

2. The Assistant Director Transportation & Highways, has delegated powers to approve the publishing of all proposed Road Traffic Regulation Orders.
REASONS

3. When considering whether to make a traffic order the Council is under a duty pursuant to S.122 Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended), to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians) and the provision of suitable and adequate parking facilities on and off the highway having regard to the matters specified in S.122 (2). It is considered that the proposals will assist to prevent vehicles, other than buses, taxis and pedal cycles travelling through the bus gate at Whittle Arch. Permitting the aforementioned vehicles to travel through Whittle Arch should assist to further improve access and hopefully impact positively on the daytime economy whilst reducing the possibility of motorists travelling though the bus gate following private hire vehicles.

Furthermore; it is considered that the proposals will affect the matters specified in S.122 (2) as follows:

(a) the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises;

Reasonable access to premises will be maintained as the proposal allows greater access for taxis and other routes are available to traffic

(b) the effect on the amenities of any locality affected and the importance of regulating and restricting the use of roads by heavy commercial vehicles, so as to improve the amenities of the areas through which the roads run;

The order does not increase accessibility for heavy goods vehicles.

(c) the importance of facilitating the passage of public service vehicles and of securing the safety and convenience of persons using or desiring to use such vehicles;

The bus gate order will continue to assist the passage of public service vehicles.

4. The proposed traffic order is to be implemented in accordance with Section 1(1), Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended) as it appears to the Authority that it is expedient to make them –

(a) for avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising

(d) for preventing the use of the road by vehicular traffic of a kind which, or its use by vehicular traffic in a manner which, is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the road or adjoining property

(f) for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs
5. The proposed changes and the authority's reasons are as follows:-

**Whittle Arch – Bus gate**

The experimental order will allow taxis to use the bus gate at all times, but prevent its use by private hire vehicles. This should further improve access requirements and hopefully impact positively on the daytime economy whilst reducing the possibility of motorists travelling though the bus gate following private hire vehicles. The use of an experimental order will enable the effect of these changes to be monitored for a period of up to 18 months, before a decision is made whether to make the proposal