

## **Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS) Implementation Plan (Transport for Norwich) including Norwich Northern Distributor Route (NDR) and Postwick Hub Update**

Report by the Director of Environment, Transport and Development

### **Summary**

This report updates Cabinet on further progress with the NATS Implementation Plan ('Transport for Norwich'). Cabinet received the last update in April 2012, when it approved proposals to take the NDR to the A1067, and for this to be dual carriageway.

Since that last report considerable progress has been made, including projects linked with Bus Rapid Transit on Dereham Road, the launch of the Norwich Cycle Network, and improvements to bus shelters, travel information and ticketing.

The Better Bus Area bid was successful and the £2.583m funding from the DfT is being used to take forward 17 projects, including two key projects at Grapes Hill (bus lane) and St Stephens Street and Surrey Street (removal of general traffic). A further scheme, providing an in-bound bus lane on Chapelfield North, is being progressed at the same time because of the value it adds to these Better Bus Area schemes.

The opportunity to make further major travel, transport and environmental improvements in Norwich will increasingly depend upon delivery of the Norwich Northern Distributor Road (NDR), a key project in the Council's Economic Growth Strategy.

This report considers the planning options for the NDR, and in particular whether the new Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) planning route would offer any advantages. It concludes that the streamlined process under NSIP offers best value for money as it would improve the chances of NDR construction beginning as planned in 2015, reducing the risk of inflationary cost increases, and delivering the full range of economic, business, transport and environmental benefits as soon as possible.

Cabinet is also asked to consider modifications to the NDR following consultation with local communities in the summer of 2012. Details of the changes are set out in Appendix A. While they would cost around £5m, they would further improve the effectiveness of the scheme and resolve some of the most significant issues raised by local people.

Due to an extended public inquiry timescale, the start of the Postwick Hub junction works has been delayed and the separate planning consent for extending the Park & Ride site will lapse in May 2013. It is therefore proposed to commence works on site prior to the planning consent expiry date.

### **Recommendation**

Cabinet is recommended to:

- i) Adopt the NSIP route for the NDR planning process.
- ii) Accept the enhancements to the NDR following public consultation and confirm that the associated costs of £5m will be underwritten by NCC, subject to other funding options continuing to be pursued.
- iii) Commence works on the Postwick P&R site prior to the existing May 2013 planning consent expiry date.

## 1. **Background**

- 1.1. A report to Cabinet in April 2012 confirmed the work completed on the NATS Implementation Plan (now being referred to as 'Transport for Norwich') and detailed the emerging funding opportunities for further projects in the City Centre in particular.
- 1.2. The report also provided details of the DfT Development Pool process and the funding confirmation ('Programme Entry'), for the NDR, of £86.5m towards the cost of the project. This funding included a provision of £19m towards the cost of the delivery of Postwick Hub, which already has planning permission. The details in that report set out the timescales for the Postwick Hub public inquiry process, however these timescales have changed since then.
- 1.3. Cabinet agreed in April 2012 to commence delivery of the NATS Implementation Plan, to take forward the NDR as a single scheme as far as the A1067 and for this to be dual carriageway. It also agreed to continue to underwrite the NDR, but taking note of the GNDP, in principle, funding of up to £40m towards the NDR and its related measures.

## 2. **Update**

### 2.1. NATS Implementation Plan – 'Transport for Norwich'

Good progress has been made since April 2012 on delivery of projects that build towards the overall NATS Implementation Plan 'Transport for Norwich'. These have included:

- Completion of the Inner Ring Road/Grapes Hill/Dereham Road junction improvement and bus lane approach on Dereham Road. This has also provided improved pedestrian and cycle facilities.
- Development of the details for the improvement to the Old Palace Road/ Dereham Road junction, following significant local consultation. These works are planned to start construction on site in January 2013 and are planned to be completed before Easter 2013.
- Implementation and launch in July 2012 of the new Norwich City Cycle Network and its associated innovative user map.
- Replacement of existing bus shelters and provision of improved bus and travel information across the city, with improved bus ticketing.
- Completion of preliminary feasibility work into improvements to the existing Thickthorn (A11/A47) junction.

### 2.2. Better Bus Area (BBA) and Local Sustainable Transport Fund (LSTF) Bids

The BBA bid was successful and has resulted in a series of projects that contribute to the wider Transport for Norwich proposals. The full funding of £2.583m requested was awarded by DfT (£1.981m capital and £0.682m revenue), with a total overall investment budget of £2.855m, which includes £272k from NCC LTP and Revenue budgets, bus operator and business sector contributions.

A series of workstreams have been developed and are in progress. More details on these and the BBA generally can be seen at Appendix B, which provides an extract from the BBA online newsletter and website.

The St Stephens Street/Surrey Street ('BBA1') and Grapes Hill Bus Lane ('BBA2') are significant infrastructure projects with funding of £330k and £900k respectively. These two projects are in progress, with the St Stephens Street and Surrey Street proposals currently being consulted. The Grapes Hill Bus Lane consultation has closed and is planned to begin construction from April 2013, following completion of the Old Palace Road/Dereham Road junction works. The proposals for Grapes Hill also include a significant improvement to the cycle network by providing a separate cycle facility from Dereham Road to Chapelfield Gardens.

All of these measures contribute to significant savings in bus journey times, to provide major improvements in bus journey time reliability and attractiveness as an alternative to using the car to access the city centre.

- 2.3. The Chapelfield North scheme, which formed part of the LSTF bid, has continued to be progressed having received additional funding from the City and County Councils, recognising the importance of this project to the delivery of the city centre improvements set out in the wider Transport for Norwich proposals. The consultation for this project has been merged with the St Stephens Street consultation discussed in 2.2 above. The findings of this are to be reported back to the Norwich Joint Highways Agency Committee in January, with the potential to start construction later in 2013.

2.4. NDR and Postwick Hub

Good progress has also been made to resolve local issues in advance of commencement of the formal NDR planning application process. Particular issues, and the proposed resolutions, are identified in Appendix A. An updated plan showing the proposals for the NDR is provided at Appendix C. The cost of these proposals totals approximately £5m. Different options for funding will continue to be pursued, however Members are being asked to consider underwriting the funding of this, possibly through prudential borrowing, whilst alternative funding options are being considered.

Particular points to note from Appendix A are:

- A proposal to change the provision of an access bridge at Low Road, Gt Plumstead, to a new all user bridge at Middle Road. This is in response to specific concerns raised through discussions with the Parish Council.
- In response to concerns raised, it is proposed to relocate the originally proposed NDR roundabout at Fir Covert Road (near the A1067) to the junction of the existing A1067 Fakenham Road. This was raised as a particular issue to resolve traffic projection concerns through Hellesdon on the Reepham Road corridor and would also reduce the volume of traffic using the existing Fir Covert Road, a particular concern for the local community. Following analysis of this proposal an added benefit is a reduction of the volumes of traffic using the Ringland Hills/Costessey routes when compared with the original Fir Covert Road proposals.

- 2.5. Recent events have resulted in a delay to the Postwick Hub Public Inquiry. This has occurred following a realisation of an inconsistency within the traffic modelling that was updated. This has resulted in a postponement, to be fair to all parties involved and to allow time to review the modelling. This work is progressing well and, whilst a new date for the inquiry is still to be published, it is anticipated in the Spring of 2013. This allows sufficient time to provide for the lead-in periods for the inquiry and to take account of Easter holiday period.

### 3. **NDR Planning Process**

There are two options for the NDR planning application process.

#### 3.1. Option 1

This option is to take an application through the Town and Country Planning Act route, which would require an application to be submitted to the County Council's planning committee. This application would cover the NDR from the (assumed to be completed) Postwick Hub junction to the A1067 Fakenham Road. There is a risk with this option that if, following the Postwick Hub public inquiry, the necessary Orders are not confirmed, the NDR as applied for would not be able to connect to the A47 and the planning process would need to be re-started at a later date. This would create a significant delay and incur additional costs.

Awaiting the outcome of the Postwick inquiry process would also result in a significant delay in the commencement of, and hence completion of, the NDR planning process. It is important that we keep to the programme as proposed (i.e. the NDR construction starting in 2015). To avoid a delay, a planning application could be submitted ahead of the conclusion of the Postwick Hub inquiry, however that could give the impression the county council is pre-judging the outcome of the inquiry. Any delay to the delivery of the NDR would also incur additional inflation costs to the project, which for a project of this scale could be significant.

#### 3.2. Option 2

This is to take an alternative planning route to seek permission for the NDR, including Postwick Hub, following more recent government legislation – the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP) legislation. This approach is for projects which are of national significance due to their impacts on the national trunk road network. The NDR, including Postwick Hub, falls within this criteria.

Following the NSIP route for the NDR would mitigate the risk of a failure of the Postwick Hub inquiry process (as set out in option 1 above) by including Postwick Hub within the application. This approach respects the independence of the Postwick Hub inquiry process but keeps open the opportunity to pursue the Postwick scheme as an early opportunity to boost the local economy – which was always the objective.

The main benefit is that it enables the formal planning process for the NDR to begin early in 2013 and should see the planning process completed in time for a 2015 start of construction, and 2017 opening of the new road, which is in line with the programme set out in the DfT funding bid.

- 3.3. The NSIP process deals with the planning, land acquisition (Compulsory Purchase Order) and Side Road/Slip Road Orders in a single examination process. The application and all written representations are considered by the Examining Authority (independent Inspector(s) appointed by the Planning Inspectorate) and a recommendation is then made by them to the Secretary of State whether to confirm, or not, the Planning, Land and Orders under a Development Consent Order. This provides more certainty to the timescales, which are set out as part of this process.

If option 1 were followed, the planning process and the resolution of the necessary Orders would ultimately be likely to be called in for a public inquiry that would be heard by an Inspector(s) appointed by the Planning Inspectorate. Option 2 therefore provides for this independent inspection in any case.

#### 4. **Postwick Park and Ride (P&R) Extension**

- 4.1. The P&R site has planning consent, separate to the Postwick Hub junction, and the necessary land for the site has been secured. It is therefore a “ready to start” project, subject to funding.

The planning consent was only provided for 3 years and therefore effectively expires in May 2013. There are two options that can be considered to preserve this consent, which can be achieved by either applying for an extension to the current consent period, or by commencement of works before the expiry date.

The option to seek an extension to the planning consent would require a further (new) application that needs to be consulted and considered again by the planning committee. This would involve additional cost to no purpose.

- 4.2. The preferred option therefore is to commence works on site prior to the expiry of the current planning consent. The planning consent for the P&R includes a condition that it cannot be opened until the Postwick Hub junction improvement is completed. This does not prevent the commencement of the works and the delivery of some early works is in line with the Development Pool funding bid to DfT, which set out that the parking spaces would follow the access road construction at a later date. If the Postwick Hub Orders are not confirmed there is a risk that a further application to amend the existing condition will still be necessary, however there will be less overall risk to scheme delivery.

#### 5. **Conclusion**

- 5.1. Very good progress has been made in delivering some of the Transport for Norwich projects, particularly in the city centre and on the Dereham Road BRT corridor. This is already providing benefits for walkers, cyclist and in particular public transport and with the continued delivery of further projects in 2013 these benefits are expected to continue.

The completion of the NDR exhibitions has also enabled specific details raised by the local communities to be considered further and a range of enhancements have been set out which are considered to provide wider benefits to the project.

- 5.2. The option to adopt the NSIP planning route for the NDR will provide the ability to maintain the planned programme of commencing construction in 2015, as set out in the DfT funding bid document. This ensures that the overall costs of the project remain at the levels set out in the DfT bid. It also means that the benefits delivered by the NDR, which directly support £1.3bn of additional investment in the Norfolk economy, are delivered as quickly as possible. The delivery of the NDR also provides the ability to continue to deliver the wide range of Transport for Norwich projects.
- 5.3. The early delivery of the Postwick Park and Ride ensures that the planning consent already in place does not lapse. Whilst there is some risk to the opening of the site due to planning conditions, these do not prevent the commencement of the works to enable the site to open after completion of the Postwick Hub. Within the DfT funding bid it was set out that the opening of the P&R site would not be anticipated until 2015 and the commencement of these early works ensures the ability to deliver the P&R extension to meet this timescale.

## 6. Resource Implications

- 6.1. **Finance:** If the NDR project follows the NSIP planning application process, the programme for this means that it can be delivered within the timescales set out in the DfT funding bid. Therefore the costs of the scheme will remain in line with those set out in the bid. However, following the 2012 consultation process, there is a cost of £5m to take account of the enhancements brought about by responding to suggestions from the local communities. This requires a commitment from the County Council to underwrite this, if the measures are agreed, whilst continuing to pursue other funding options. It should be noted that this cost will not be realised until the NDR is being constructed (i.e. from 2015/16 financial year).

The early completion of the Postwick Hub orders, assuming they are confirmed following the public inquiry in 2013, will mean that the DfT funding of £19m towards this junction can be drawn down to enable the start of the works. This would include, as set out in the DfT funding bid, the delivery of the P&R extension site access roundabout and access road.

In advance of that, it is proposed to commence works on the P&R extension prior to the existing planning consent lapsing in May 2013. This cost can be contained within the current allocation of funding for the Postwick Hub junction.

- 6.2. **Staff:** Following confirmation of funding from DfT in December 2011 a team capable of delivering the NDR has been developed with the necessary support provided by partners Mott MacDonald.
- 6.3. **Property:** The land required for Postwick Hub has already been agreed with the landowner/developer. An agreement for the land required for the P&R site is also in place.
- 6.4. **IT :** None

## 7. Other Implications

- 7.1. **Legal Implications:** NP Law have been engaged as part of the project team to support and manage the specialist legal advisors also appointed.
- 7.2. **Human Rights:** None
- 7.3. **Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA):** An EqIA has been completed for the NATS Implementation Plan and includes the NDR and Postwick Hub.
- 7.4. **Communications:** A communications plan has been developed that includes Member briefings, briefings with affected Parish Councils and an ongoing series of Exhibitions. The plan identifies key stakeholders and mechanisms for making/maintaining communication and will continue to evolve and adapt as the projects progress.
- 7.5. **Environmental implications:** Environment implications will be fully considered as part of the planning process.
- 7.6. **Any other implications:** Officers have considered all the implications which members should be aware of. Apart from those listed in the report (above), there are no other implications to take into account.

## 8. **Section 17 – Crime and Disorder Act**

- 8.1. Requirements of the Act as it relates to the design and operation of the NDR and other NATS schemes will continue to be taken into account in the development of the project.

## 9. **Risk Implications/Assessment**

- 9.1. In the context of the NATS implementation plan, key risks associated with the NDR and other NATS schemes are around funding (for NATS IP projects) and planning and other statutory processes for the NDR and Postwick Hub. The scale and complexity of the project means that there are significant risks around cost and timescale, which are being closely managed through active project management and ongoing engagement with the GNDP, government bodies and specialist advisors. The NSIP approach, combined with pursuing the Postwick Hub Inquiry is considered the best way of managing these risks.

## 10. **Alternative Options**

- 10.1. Alternatives to the NDR have been examined through the Major Scheme Business Case process and further examination by DfT as part of the Development Pool bidding process. The Postwick Hub has been developed following examination of numerous alternatives and the current proposal is the only one that enables significant additional development (which already has planning consent), meets Highways Agency design standards, has planning approval and resolves the significant site constraints.

## 11. Reasons for Decision

- 11.1. The NDR is an essential element of the NATS Implementation Plan (Transport for Norwich) and forms a key part of the Joint Core Strategy for the Norwich Policy Area. The decision to continue the planning application for the project is essential to be able to realise the full benefits of the Implementation Plan, to provide the transport infrastructure for Norwich to enable its prosperity into the future, taking account of existing transport problems and accommodating future growth in housing and employment, which are essential to economic growth in Norfolk and vital to achieving LTP targets.

## Recommendation

Cabinet is recommended to:

- i) Adopt the NSIP route for the NDR planning process.
- ii) Accept the enhancements to the NDR following public consultation and confirm that the associated costs of £5m will be underwritten by NCC, subject to other funding options continuing to be pursued.
- iii) Commence works on the Postwick P&R site prior to the existing May 2013 planning consent expiry date.

## Background Papers

County Council Cabinet report dated [6 April 2010](#) and [2 April 2012](#).

## Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper please get in touch with:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>	<b>Email address</b>
David Allfrey	01603 223292	david.allfrey@norfolk.gov.uk



If you need this report in large print, audio, Braille, alternative format or in a different language please contact 0344 800 8020 and ask for David Allfrey or textphone 0344 800 8011 and we will do our best to help.

**Spring/Summer 2012 NDR Public Exhibitions Feedback Analysis****1.0 Summary Of Responses**

- 1.1 A total of 530 responses were returned. 88 were entered using the online survey form, 319 were completed using a hardcopy feedback form and 123 were received as separate enquiries (telephone calls, e-emails and letters).

**2.0 Key Design Issues**

- 2.1 The largest number of comments received (150 responses) expressed concern that the NDR stopped at the A1067 and did not link to the A47. Concerns were expressed that the volume of rat-running on the unsuitable routes between these villages would increase as a result of the proposals. Some suggestions were provided for alternative route options between the A47 and A1067 and for measures to mitigate the effects of the traffic.
- 2.2 With regard to specific design comments on the proposals shown, the table below shows the actual number of responses received in relation to the key design issues. The top 12 comments are expanded further in the text following the table.

<b>Top 12 Comments</b>			<b>Remaining Comments</b>		
<b>No</b>	<b>Key Design Issues</b>	<b>No of Responses</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Key Design Issues</b>	<b>No of Responses</b>
1.	Walking & cycling facilities	52	13.	Wroxham Road/Green Lane West junction improvements	6
2.	Closure of A1067 Fakenham Road	48	14.	Green Lane West traffic calming	6
3.	Reepham Road (traffic calming)	24	15.	Airport (route to go in a straight line across the airport)	6
4.	Low Road/Middle Road (closure of open to general traffic)	21	16.	Middletons Lane	6
5.	Church Street (closure)	18	17.	Equestrian crossings	4
6.	Beech Avenue/Fir Covert Road/Fakenham Road junction improvements	13	18.	B1149 Holt Road (traffic calming)	4
7.	Closure of Fir Covert Road	12	19.	Agricultural access	3
8.	Bullock Hill (Petans training facility)	12	20.	Marriotts Way (under the NDR rather than over)	3
9.	Crostick Lane/North Walsham Road	10	21.	Drayton Lane/Reepham Road junction	3
10.	Closure of Green Lane East/Broad Lane	9	22.	Church Lane/A140 junction	2

11.	A47 slip road	9	23.	Contractors Compound	2
12.	Plumstead Road junction removal	8	24.	Beech Avenue (traffic impacts, calming proposals)	1
			25.	Brands Lane closure	1

### 2.3 Walking & Cycling Facilities – 52 comments

52 responses were received regarding walking & cycling improvements, with particular detailed comments from the Cyclist Touring Club and the Norwich Cycle Campaign. The main comments included:

- various requests for improved facilities on routes,
- would like to establish a surfaced walking and cycling route adjacent to the NDR along its whole length,
- concern about cyclists being able to safely cross the NDR, particularly using the junctions of the NDR with radial routes,
- requests for more bridges/underpasses crossing the NDR.

### 2.4 Closure of A1067 Fakenham Road – 48 comments

The majority of these comments raised concern about the impact on Reepham Road, Hellesdon. The main comment received was that an 'A' road is being closed to put more pressure on a 'C' road?

### 2.5 Reepham Road traffic calming – 24 comments

The third most popular design comment was related to Reepham Road traffic management. 24 responses in total were received on suggestions of how to prevent vehicles from using this road as a rat run.

### 2.6 Low Road / Middle Road – 21 comments

There was a mixed response to the closure of Middle Road or Low Road. 9 respondents were in favour of the closure of Middle Road and 10 respondents were against the closure of Middle Road. 5 were in favour of the closure of Low Road and 3 respondents were against the closure of Low Road.

### 2.7 Church Street (closure) – 18 comments

The majority of responses regarding the closure of Church Street were against closing the road (2 for, 16 against). Respondents were concerned about cutting off the villages of Horsford & Horsham St Faith and did not feel that there was an existing issue with a large number of cars using the road as a rat run.

### 2.8 Beech Avenue/Fir Covert Road/Fakenham Road junction improvements – 13 comments

There was concern that the proposals would increase traffic on Fir Covert Road, Beech Avenue and the route to the A47 through Ringland Hills. Comments were made that improvements to the Fir Covert Road/Beech Avenue/Fakenham Road junction would be required as well as additional traffic calming measures on Beech Avenue.

### 2.9 Closure of Fir Covert Road – 12 comments

There were 2 comments in favour of the closure of Fir Covert Road at its junction with Reepham Road, and 10 comments in against this closure. There was concern about the affects of the closure on businesses located on Fir Covert Road.

- 2.10 Bullock Hill (Petans training facility) – 12 comments  
Comments included concerns about screening of Petans from the NDR to reduce noise, but also to prevent smoke from Petans travelling over the NDR. There were also requests for a footbridge over the NDR as visitors tend to stay in Horsham St Faith and walk to Petans via Bullock Hill.
- 2.11 Crostick Lane/North Walsham Road – 10 comments  
Concern about the safety of the Crostick Lane/North Walsham Road junction particularly as modelled traffic flows show an increase on North Walsham Road. Comments that residents of Spixworth would find it very difficult to turn out of Crostick Lane onto North Walsham Road.
- 2.12 Closure of Green Lane East/Broad Lane - 9 comments  
There were 6 comments in favour of closure of Green Lane East/Broad Lane and 2 comments against closure. There was concern that the road would be used for access to the Rackheath Industrial Estate. There was comment that a closure located at the railway line would sever some properties from the main village area of Rackheath and suggestions for the closure to be relocated to the junction with Plumstead Road.
- 2.13 A47 Slip Roads – 9 comments  
Comments that the Postwick Hub junction was complicated and resulted in increased journey distances.
- 2.14 Plumstead Road Junction Removal – 8 comments  
There were 2 comments in favour of the removal of the Plumstead Road junction with the NDR, and 4 comments against the removal. There was concern about the increase in traffic along Plumstead Road through Thorpe End.

### **3.0 Main Changes from Design Presented at the Exhibitions**

- 3.1 Below are outlined the main changes suggested to the NDR as result of comments received during the exhibitions and meetings held earlier this year.
- 3.2 Relocation of Fir Covert Roundabout to end of NDR – close to A1067

Reasons:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggested a number of times at exhibitions.</li> <li>• Response to concerns regarding increased vehicle flow on Reepham Road.</li> </ul>
Positives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Removes need for closure at northern end of Fir Covert Road (near Reepham Road).</li> <li>• Allows access to Deighton Hills from roundabout.</li> <li>• Reduces traffic flows through the junction at Fir Covert Road/Beech Avenue/Fakenham Road.</li> </ul>
Negatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns about knock effects to School Road/Hall Lane Drayton and on route through Thorpe Marriott.</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Additional length of dual carriageway between Fir Covert Road and A1067

Reasons:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relocation of Fir Covert Road roundabout .</li> </ul>
Positives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole length of new road would be dual carriageway.</li> </ul>
Negatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional cost.</li> </ul>

### 3.4 Removal of Church Street closure and monitor situation

Reasons:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses from public exhibitions showed a majority against the closure of Church Street (2 for, 16 against). Aware that some residents of Church Street do want closure.</li> </ul>
Positives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains local traffic linkage between Horsford and Horsham.</li> <li>• Reflects opinion of majority of consultees.</li> </ul>
Negatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concern about the visibility from this road into Holt Road and Cromer Road if closure not provided. Would have to monitor this junction.</li> <li>• Some residents of road support the closure.</li> </ul>

### 3.5 Closure of Green Lane East/Broad Lane moved from railway crossing to junction with Plumstead Road (Reeves Corner)

Reasons:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General requests to improve junction at 'Reeves Corner' raised by several attendees at Rackheath Exhibition.</li> <li>• Results of public exhibition responses showed a majority in favour of Green Lane East/Broad Lane closure (6 for, 2 against). There were also requests for traffic calming on Green Lane West.</li> </ul>
Positives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not sever village of Rackheath.</li> <li>• Will help prevent rat-running on Green Lane East/Broad Lane</li> <li>• Removes one of the arms of a junction where visibility from the side road is poor.</li> </ul>
Negatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional land required for turning head.</li> <li>• Increased distances for some local journeys.</li> </ul>

### 3.6 Removal of pedestrian/cycle/agricultural vehicle bridge at Low Road, Gt Plumstead and provide all vehicle bridge at Middle Road instead.

Reasons:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides better access to Gt Plumstead from the main road network.</li> </ul>
Positives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responses from public exhibitions showed a slight majority against closure of Middle Road (9 for, 10 against) and there was a slight majority in favour of the closure of Low Road (5 for, 3 against).</li> <li>• Local council has expressed an opinion in favour of keeping Middle Road open rather than Low Road.</li> </ul>
Negatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Middle Road is a bat corridor.</li> <li>• Removal of bridge at Low Bridge reduces directness of cycle links in this area.</li> <li>• Requires additional bridleway adjacent to NDR to maintain cycle links.</li> </ul>

## 4.0 Pedestrian/Cycle Links

- 4.1 Comments received during the exhibitions and specific meeting with representative cycle organisations have been considered with the aim of understanding the links between outlying local communities/business areas and the Norwich Cycle Network and how these cross the NDR.
- 4.2 The improvements are being proposed to improve the walking/cycling links, which include.
- New bridleway sections adjacent to some parts of the NDR,
  - New sections of bridleway away from the NDR,
  - Improvements to the surfaces of existing restricted byways.

## 5.0 Off-Line Improvements

- 5.1 A number of requests were also received for highway improvements at locations away from the NDR corridor, to resolve perceived local issues arising from the delivery of the NDR. These have been assessed to determine priority, which has included the effects of the NDR on modelled future traffic flows of these roads.
- 5.2 The main priorities for off-line schemes are:

- A1151/Green Lane West Junction – investigate improvements to this junction as it is the designated HGV Access Route to the Rackheath industrial Estate.
- Review of Costessey West End traffic calming.
- Investigate Plumstead Road, Thorpe End traffic management.
- Improved signing for and enforcement of HGV restrictions between Costessey and Taverham/Drayton. Investigate ways to enforce weight restrictions on river bridges.
- Improvements to Crostwick Lane/North Walsham Road junction.

## 6.0 Cost Summary

- 6.1 If all the above works were included into the NDR proposals the additional outline cost would be:

On-line changes	+£2.5m
Walking/Cycling Links	+£0.4m
Off-Line Schemes	+£2.1m
Total	+£5.0m

# Better Bus Area



Welcome to the first edition of the Better Bus Area (BBA) newsletter - a project accelerating elements of the Norwich Area Transport Strategy.

The project aims to undertake a partnership approach to delivering bus services in congested urban areas where increasing bus occupancy and achieving modal shift to sustainable modes, including walking and cycling, can free up valuable road space and reduce carbon emissions.

### Background

Norfolk County Council was successful in securing £2.5m from the Department for Transport in March 2012.

The project is focusing on six main areas with the joint aims of achieving greater confidence in the bus network and improved customer satisfaction. The areas we are focusing on are:

1. [Bus priority measures](#)
2. [Bus rapid transit corridor delivery](#)
3. [Development of transport hubs](#)
  
4. [Enhancement to bus operations](#)
5. [Delivery of new ticketing schemes](#)
6. [Smarter choice initiatives](#)

To find out more about each area, simply click on the headers.



### Ticketing Schemes Early Success

BBA's first success was to make bus travel affordable to young people by ensuring a reduced fare is available across all major bus operators. To read the press release [click here](#).

### Bus Priority Measures - Consultation

Consultation on the new Grapes Hill bus lane has now ended, and responses will be presented to the Norwich Highways Agency Committee (NHAC) on 29 November, where a decision on how to proceed will be made.

Public consultation is to start on the 5 November regarding the removal of general traffic from St Stephens Street and Surrey Street alongside making Chapelfield North two way. To find out more and to have your say on the proposals visit [www.norwich.gov.uk/transportfor Norwich](http://www.norwich.gov.uk/transportfor Norwich)

### Other Areas - Consultation

We will be consulting on other elements of BBA. If you are interested in finding out more and being part of a consultation group then please email [betterbusarea@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:betterbusarea@norfolk.gov.uk) with the subject 'consultation'.

### Keeping you up-to-date with BBA

This newsletter will be sent monthly, and bulletins will be sent when there are important additions to the website. If you do not wish to continue to receive these updates then please click 'update subscriptions' below.

## Better Bus Area (BBA) fact sheet

### **Overall aim of the project:**

- To increase occupancy of buses
- Reduce the number of people commuting by car
- Reduce carbon emissions



### **How will we do this?**

- Improve bus services – including reduced journey times and improved journey time reliability
- Improve printed and electronic travel information
- Increase awareness of the benefits of travelling by bus
- Introduce new ticketing – improved flexibility and competitive pricing

### **Background to BBA:**

- Department for Transport initiative applicable to large urban areas only
- Norfolk was one of 24 areas awarded funding in April 2012
- Project delivery to take place within two years (ends March 2014)
- Norfolk was awarded £2.583m

### **Background to Norwich BBA:**

- Project taking place in the Norwich Policy Area – Norwich urban area along with first ring of villages
- There are 17 separate work packages:

#### BBA1 - St Stephens Street and Surrey Street

Removal of general traffic from congested city centre streets

#### BBA2 - Grapes Hill bus lane

Creation of new uphill bus lane

#### BBA3 - Strategic traffic light priority

Giving late running buses priority at traffic lights

#### BBA4 - Electronic signage

Provision of 'live' travel information at key transport hubs

#### BBA5 - Printed and electronic information

Improved printed and electronic travel information at bus stops

#### BBA6 - Rail Station interchange

Improved links between bus and rail travel at Norwich rail station

#### BBA7 - Highway signage

Improved highway signage to selected Park and Ride sites

#### BBA8 - Voluntary quality partnership

Setting minimum standards for bus services along key transport corridors

#### BBA9 - Bus infrastructure enhancements

Improved bus shelters and bus stops along transport corridors

#### BBA10 - Smarter choice campaign along BRT corridors

Promotion of sustainable transport options along Dereham Road and Newmarket Road

#### BBA11 - Bus layover and coach facilities

Improved facilities for buses, coaches and demand responsive transport to pick-up and drop-off passengers and park for short periods

#### BBA12 - Review waiting restrictions

Helping to keep buses moving on congested streets

#### BBA13 - CCTV access

Improved customer service through enhanced monitoring of bus services

#### BBA14 - Fusion, PlusBus and 16-19 ticketing

Promotion of and improvements to the variety of bus tickets available

#### BBA15 - Smart ticketing for Park and Ride

Introduction of 'smart' electronic ticketing to enhance the Park and Ride experience

#### BBA16 - Travel pack for businesses

Helping businesses and their staff travel more sustainably

#### BBA17 - Mobile applications

Improved travel information for when you are out and about

Monitoring and evaluation will be taking place within each work package

### **How to keep up to date with progress:**

- External newsletter will be produced, If you would like to be on the distribution list then email [betterbusarea@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:betterbusarea@norfolk.gov.uk)
- Updates will be available on the website. [Click here for the Better Bus Area homepage](#)

### **What is the Norwich Better Bus Area initiative?**

Our Better Bus Area initiative is a two-year project aimed at increasing bus occupancy in the Norwich area.

To achieve this, the County Council is working in partnership with bus operators to bring the whole bus travel experience into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We are doing this in the following ways:

- Introducing bus priority measures, to speed buses through bottlenecks
- Developing bus rapid transit (BRT) corridors, improving frequency and quality of service
- The development of transport hubs for easier transfer and onward travel
- Enhancements to bus operations, with improvements to coach facilities and demand responsive transport
- Introducing new ticketing schemes and promotion of existing ticket options
- Helping businesses and their staff travel more sustainably

[Click here to find the successful BBA submission document](#)

## **How is the project funded?**

Better Bus Area is a Department for Transport (DfT) initiative, and Norfolk County Council was awarded £2.583m for the Norwich area. This has been topped up by the County Council and other stakeholders - altogether, just over £2.8m is available over two years.

## **Why is it only taking place in Norwich?**

The Better Bus Area project and funding was restricted to cities with 100,000 people or more, which means that in Norfolk only Norwich was eligible for funding.

## **How long will it take for the Grapes Hill bus lane to be finished?**

Consultation for Grapes Hill bus lane is to take place from 15 September – 17 October 2012. [Click here to find out more information and to respond to the consultation](#). Construction is then planned to start in the summer of 2013 and is likely to take at least three months. As the project progresses, more accurate dates will be available.

## **Why will St Stephens Street and Surrey Street be closed to general traffic?**

Consultation with bus operators and evidence from our bus tracking system highlighted that buses using St Stephens Street and Surrey Street are frequently delayed by general traffic. Removing all traffic except buses, taxis and cyclists will reduce congestion, improve journey times and enhance the city centre environment. A public consultation on the scheme and the traffic regulation orders is to take place from 5 November to 3 December 2012. An exhibition, which provides full information on the scheme, will be held at the Forum from Monday 5 to Saturday 10 November and then in City Hall from Monday 12 to Friday 30 November (except weekends). More information about the proposals, the exhibition (including when there will be staff to speak to) and the online survey are available on our [Transport for Norwich homepage](#).

All representations must reach us by **10am on Monday 3 December** and can be submitted using the online survey or by writing to Transport for Norwich, Norwich City Council, City Hall, St Peters Street, Norwich, NR2 1NH

## **How can I get bus times on my mobile?**

At present we are improving the Norfolk County Council travel website pages to be more mobile friendly. As the project progresses, more information will become available on the [Better Bus Area homepage](#).

## **I'm a business interested in reducing my workforce commuting by car, how can I get a business travel pack?**

At present the business travel pack referred to in the scheme submission is still in development. As the project progresses, more information will become available. However, if you wish to express your interest in this scheme then please email [betterbusarea@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:betterbusarea@norfolk.gov.uk) with subject 'business travel pack.'

## **I live down/near Dereham Road/Newmarket Road – what improvements are happening and how can I find out more?**

These two roads have been highlighted through the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy as routes that are suitable to become bus rapid transit (BRT) corridors. This is because they currently have a high bus frequency, some existing bus priority measures and the surrounding areas are experiencing significant population growth. Improvements down these roads could include:

- New high quality bus shelters
- Enhanced facilities at remaining stops
- Live bus departure information
- Bus operators signing up to a voluntary quality partnership with agreed standards including bus frequency and maximum fares

Further work to inform residents of these improvements and encourage bus usage will also be taking place.

## **How do the current works along Dereham Road relate to BBA?**

Engineering works have been taking place along Dereham Road to enable the route to become a bus rapid transit (BRT) corridor. Improvements include traffic light priority for buses, 24 hour bus lane (previously general traffic could use the lanes in the evenings and through the night) and a new inbound bus lane on Dereham Road between Orchard Street and the Barn Road junction. BBA is building upon this work to provide further benefits through improving bus stop facilities and introducing a voluntary quality partnership with bus operators for minimum standards along the route.

## **Will there be any benefits to cyclists?**

Cycling and those who walk will benefit directly and indirectly from many of the measures being introduced as part of BBA. For example, cyclists will be able to use Wellington Lane which runs parallel to Grapes Hill, away from inner ring road traffic, and with a new shared use pedestrian and cycle path making the final link between Upper St Giles Street and the Grapes Hill roundabout. With the planned removal of general traffic from St Stephens Street and Surrey Street, the city centre will be a more pleasant environment for cyclists and pedestrians.

## **Where are new electronic bus departure displays being located, and why were these locations chosen?**

Electronic displays allow bus users to see what time the next bus will arrive, which can be different to the timetable as it works in real time and takes in to account if it will arrive early or is running late, perhaps because of traffic.

Locations for the new signs were chosen in consultation with bus operators and relate to some of the busiest stops in the city. Proposed locations for new signage include:

- All Park and Ride sites
- Dereham Road
- Newmarket Road
- Norfolk and Norwich Hospital
- Norwich bus and rail stations
- Theatre Street
- Tombland
- University of East Anglia

## **Where can I find more information on PlusBus and buy tickets from?**

PlusBus is a good option if you are intending to travel by rail then bus in either Norwich (or King's Lynn). This ticket will add unlimited bus travel onto your rail ticket. More information can be found on the [PlusBus website](#). Tickets can only be bought at the rail station and online.

## **Where can I find more information on Fusion and buy tickets from?**

Fusion is a multi-operator ticket that can be used within the Norwich area that enables you to travel on more than one bus operator. It's handy because you can use it as many times as you like during the day you buy it, and you can even pass it on to a friend or relative when you're done.

Tickets can be bought on the bus services participating in the scheme. [Click here for full information on the Fusion scheme](#).

## **Where can I find more information on 16-19 tickets and buy them from?**

Discounts of up to 30% are now available for all 16-19 year olds travelling by bus in Norfolk after all the major bus operators agreed to offer a reduced fare. Tickets can be bought from the driver. [Click here for more information about the 16-19 discount scheme](#)

If you are looking for discounted transport to post-16 education, [click here for information on post-16 transport](#).

## **Where can I buy Park and Ride smart tickets from?**

At present the smart tickets referred to in the submission are still in development. As the project progresses more information will become available. In the meantime day tickets and discounted season tickets can be bought directly from the driver, Norwich Bus Station, by post and online. [Click here to buy Park and Ride tickets online](#)

## **How does Better Bus Area fit in with the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy and the Joint Core Strategy?**

Improving the quality of public transport, especially bus services, is a key element in the Norwich Area Transportation Strategy (NATS), which is guiding the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century travel and transport systems for the Norwich area.

Schemes already introduced through NATS include the Park and Ride system, redevelopment of Norwich Bus Station, and a range of bus priority measures.

NATS also underpins the Joint Core Strategy, produced by the Greater Norwich Development Partnership, which aims to manage and deliver the predicted growth in homes and jobs in the area.

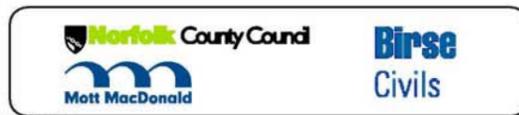
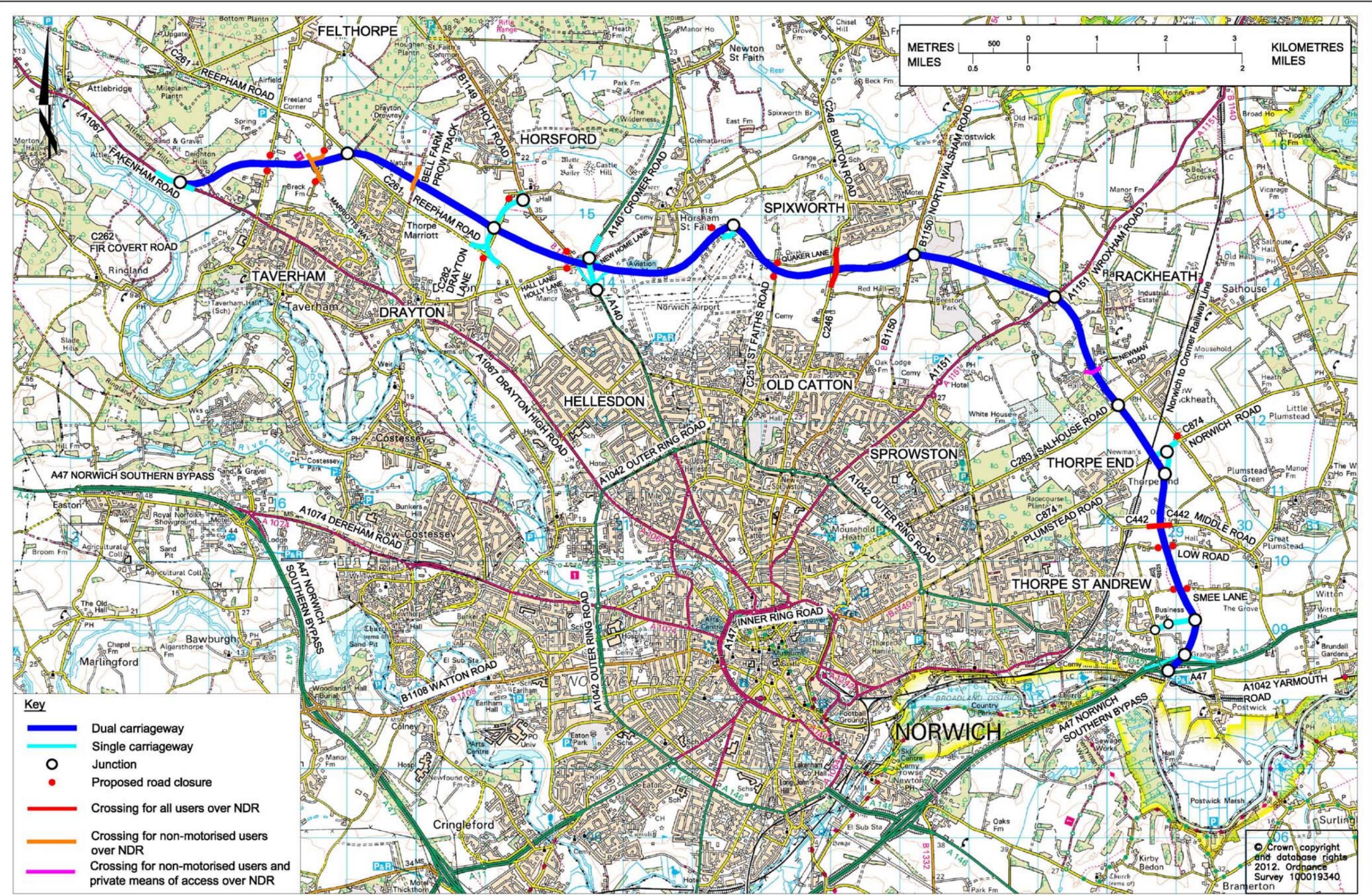
The Better Bus Area project complements and accelerates the aims of these two strategies while helping Norwich remain one of the country's top shopping destinations by:

- Improving bus journey times, reliability and accessibility
- Reducing congestion and allowing environmental improvements in the city centre
- Enhancing bus routes in high growth areas
- Encouraging investment and growth in Norwich's economy

## **Who do I contact for further information?**

Frances Downey, Project Coordinator for Better Bus Area on [betterbusarea@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:betterbusarea@norfolk.gov.uk)

**Funded through the Department for Transport Better Bus Area initiative**



**Mike Jackson**  
 Director of Environment,  
 Transport and Development  
 Norfolk County Council  
 County Hall, Martineau Lane  
 Norwich NR1 2SG

**DRAWING TITLE**  
 NORWICH NORTHERN DISTRIBUTOR ROAD  
 PREFERRED ROUTE AND  
 PROPOSED ROAD CLOSURES

REV.	DESCRIPTION	CHECKED	DATE
A	Fakenham RAB, Middle Rd Bridge, Closures Updated	MKu	11/12

SURVEYED BY	INITIALS	DATE	DRAWING No.
OS	OS	10/12	R1C093-R1-4000A
DESIGNED BY	JT	10/12	PROJECT TITLE
DRAWN BY	JT	10/12	Norwich Northern Distributor Road
CHECKED BY	MKu	11/12	SCALE
			1:50000
			FILE No.
			R1C093

© Crown copyright and database rights 2012. Ordnance Survey 100019340