



Media Release

Lynne Mee

Direct line 01423 556022

Communications and Media Manager Direct fax 01423 561154 not 24 hrs

24 hour fax “ 556010

Mobile 07884 226409

Email lynne.mee@harrogate.gov.uk

www.harrogate.gov.uk

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MEASURES TO MOVE TRAFFIC ALONG SKIPTON ROAD

FOLLOWING a review and investigation of the traffic signals and pelican crossings on Skipton Road, modifications have been agreed to improve traffic flow on what is the busiest road in Harrogate.

In agreeing the new measures, which will include the introduction of some new technology and minor amendments to the road layout, Councillor Julian Sturdy, Cabinet Member for Public Works, said: “Skipton Road is operating at capacity during peak periods, and over 27,000 vehicles use the route each day. The modifications which have been identified are aimed at reducing congestion at peak times. This is a proactive approach and is the first stage of an on-going review of traffic signals across Harrogate and Knaresborough. We will be continually looking at the road network and at ways of making improvements.”

Although the technology introduced to allow the ‘demand responsive control of traffic signals’ via road sensors at various signals and pelicans works well during off peak periods, this method of control can be less efficient at peak periods when the road is over saturated with traffic.

“ We believe there may be advantages in reverting to a ‘fixed time’ method of signal control during peak times”, added Councillor Sturdy. “This will still allow the vital co-ordination of signal installations but the lights will not respond so readily to queues on the side roads. Our aim is to maximise the green time to improve the traffic flow. It is hoped that drivers will quickly see the benefits and that pedestrians will appreciate they are still being catered for.”

The measures will, initially, be introduced on a trial basis so their effectiveness can be tested and the council would welcome feed back from all classes of road user on the changes.

Two CCTV cameras have already been provided on Skipton Road, which help staff to monitor traffic conditions and adjust signal timings to reduce congestion. Other measures to be introduced include:

- **Skipton Road/Bilton Lane traffic signals** - introduction of kerbside detection equipment which will cancel demands if pedestrians cross through gaps in traffic
- **Skipton Road/King Edwards Drive/Kings Road** - central traffic lane between King Edwards Drive and Kings Road will be dedicated to the traffic turning right into Kings Road (not to traffic turning right into King Edwards Drive as at present). This will reduce queuing on Skipton Road. These new arrangements will necessitate the prohibition of the right turn into Church Avenue, to ensure that vehicles waiting to make this manoeuvre do not obstruct through traffic.
- **Skipton Road/Kings Road/Woodfield Road junction** - introduction of kerbside detectors to cancel demand if pedestrians cross during gaps in traffic. Additional secondary signal to be provided on the Grove Road side of the junction to inform drivers on Skipton Road whether they have 'right of way' or not once they have passed the 'stop' line.
- **Grove Road School Crossing Patrol** - Traffic Engineers will be working with the school's patrol warden to help him to co-ordinate his activities with the adjacent pelican crossing at Dragon Road to reduce the impact on traffic flow whilst still ensuring the safety of children.
- **Skipton Road/Dragon Road** - The junction will be modified to maximise capacity on the main road. (Courteous drivers currently allow vehicles turning left from Dragon Road to 'filter' into the main road traffic flow. Although commendable, one vehicle enters from the side road for every two or three vehicles that move ahead on Skipton Road. This is significantly out of all proportion to the traffic flows on the main road and side roads and is responsible for much of the congestion experienced by northbound traffic on Skipton Road).
- **Skipton Road/Westmoreland Street** – left turn onto Skipton Road from Westmoreland Street to be prohibited to allow one stage to be removed from the traffic signal sequence. The 'green time' saved will be distributed between the other stages of the lights. Vehicles will still be able to turn left into Regent Parade and gain access to Skipton Road via Dragon Parade.
- **Skipton Road/Granby Road pelican** - introduction of kerbside detectors to reduce lost time to traffic.

ENDS

FURTHER INFORMATION: Councillor Julian Sturdy is available for comment on 07836 692010. Further technical information is available from Mr John Burton, Chief Engineer (Highways & Transportation) on 01423 556606.