

NANTWICH ACCESS AND TRAFFIC STRATEGY WORKING PARTY

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SUBMISSION TO THE COUNTY ENGINEER BY NANTWICH ACCESS AND TRAFFIC STRATEGY WORKING PARTY CONCERNING DIRECTION SIGNING, ROAD CLASSIFICATION AND DESIGNATION AND SPEED LIMITS IN AND AROUND NANTWICH, SEPTEMBER 2004

INTRODUCTION

The situation of Nantwich is such that it lies on many through routes carrying traffic which has no need and no desire to use town centre roads. Main road traffic approaches Nantwich from no less than eight separate directions and has seven separate destinations apart from the town itself. In spite of the recently completed southern extension to the bypass, a large proportion of this traffic continues to use roads within the bypass loop. This is partly due to habit and partly to due to the fact that from many directions traffic is still signed via the town centre. A review of all the signs on all the road junctions in the area has revealed an extremely inconsistent and confusing picture.

The comprehensive review of direction signing and the classification and designation of roads around Nantwich which is currently being undertaken is desperately needed. There is very little logic or consistency in the existing situation which appears to have developed as a result of numerous ad hoc unrelated and uncoordinated initiatives over many years. Many of the existing signs are out of date, redundant or misleading and there are many omissions and gaps in the coverage. An overall strategy for vehicle movements within and around Nantwich needs to be developed and agreed and a complete resigning exercise carried out as a matter of urgency to put it into effect.

The County Council is currently undertaking a comprehensive strategic review of Direction Signing and Road Classification and Designation in and around Nantwich. Hospital Street Association made a preliminary detailed submission to the County Council in connection with this Review in May 2003. The principal strategic recommendations of the Association's submission are set out below (see also attached plan).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strategy

The opening of the new southern extension of the bypass in the autumn of 2002 now means that there is no longer any need for through traffic to enter the centre of the town at all and the first basic principle of the resigning strategy must be that all through traffic should use the bypass and no through traffic should penetrate within the bypass loop.

Within the bypass loop, Wellington Road, Water Lode, the new Kingsley Fields Link Road and Chester Road, Acton, on the west side and London Road, Crewe Road, Millstone Lane, Barony Road and Middlewich Road on the east side should be seen as forming two local distributor networks to access the town centre.

Road Designations

The A500 should end at the Cheerbrook Roundabout at the west end of the new dual carriageway Shavington bypass where it should join the A51. The old and new bypasses from London Road, Stapeley, to the Reaseheath Roundabout should be redesignated as the A51, so that the A51 is continuous from Stone to Chester, via London Road, Stapeley, the north end of the new bypass, a short length of Newcastle Road, the old bypass from the Cheerbrook Roundabout to the Reaseheath Roundabout, Chester Road and the Burford Crossroads.

The A534 from Wrexham (Cuckoo Lane) should merge with the A51 at Burford Crossroads and follow the A51 to the Crewe Road Roundabout on the bypass where it should leave the A51 and continue up Crewe Road, Willaston, towards Crewe.

The A530 from Middlewich should merge with the A51 at the Middlewich Road Roundabout on the bypass and follow the A51 to the new bypass/London Road, Stapeley, junction. From the new bypass/London Road, Stapeley, junction, the A530 should leave the A51 and continue via the new bypass and the north end of Audlem Road to Park Road and thence, via the south end of Shrewbridge Road and Baddington Lane, to join the A525 at Burleydam.

The A5301 designation for the new bypass should cease to be used (the north end should become the A51 and the south end should become the A530).

The A529 from Audlem should end at the junction of Audlem Road and the new bypass where it should join the A530.

The Nantwich bypass should therefore be redesignated as the A530 at the south end and the A534 at the north west end and as the A51 for the remainder of its length. The A500 and the A529 should terminate completely where they join the bypass. The A534 should merge with the A51 at the Crewe Road Roundabout and leave the A51 at Burford Crossroads and the A530 should merge with the A51 at the London Road, Stapeley, junction and leave the A51 at the Middlewich Road Roundabout.

Road Classifications

No A roads should extend within the bypass loop.

The classification of all the following roads should be downgraded to C road status (coloured yellow on the OS maps): -

Chester Road from Burford Crossroads through Acton and Dorfold to the Kingsley Fields Link Road/Welsh Row junction

Barony Road and Millstone Lane from the Reaseheath Roundabout to the London Road Roundabout.

The south end of Middlewich Road from the Bypass Roundabout to the junction with Barony Road

The west end of Crewe Road from the Bypass Roundabout to Crewe Road End.

The west ends of London Road and Newcastle Road from the new bypass junction to the London Road Roundabout

Wellington Road and Water Lode from the Audlem Road/Park Road junction to the High Street

Beam Street, Swine Market/Oat Market and the west end of High Street,

The new Kingsley Fields Link Road.

Welsh Row.

The following roads should be completely declassified so that they become nothing more than unclassified local access roads: -

The east end of Hospital Street, Pratchitt's Row and Station Road from the London Road Roundabout to the Water Lode Roundabout

The cul-de-sac at the west end of London Road, Stapeley, to the west of the new bypass junction.

The north end of the Shrewbridge Road from Park Road to Water Lode.

The following roads should be part of the primary route network (coloured green on the OS maps): -

- A51 - London Road, Stapeley
- North end of new bypass from London Road to Newcastle Road
- Newcastle Road from north end of new bypass to Cheerbrook Roundabout
- Bypass from Cheerbrook Roundabout via Crewe Road Roundabout and Middlewich Road Roundabout to Reaseheath Roundabout
- Chester Road from Reaseheath Roundabout to Burford Crossroads
- Chester Road, Hurleston

- A530 - Middlewich Road from Middlewich Road Bypass Roundabout northwards towards Marshfield Bank

- A534 - Crewe Road, Willaston from Crewe Road Bypass Roundabout eastwards towards Crewe
- Cuckoo Lane and Wrexham Road, Burland from Burford Crossroads (A51)

- A500 - New Shavington Bypass eastward from Cheerbrook Roundabout

No part of the primary route network should extend on to the town centre side of the line of the A51 bypass and the lengths of Crewe Road, Newcastle Road and London Road to the west of the bypass should cease to be part of the primary route network.

Speed Limits

Except in the case of Audlem Road and Park Road where speed limits already extend beyond the line of the bypass loop, existing speed limits should be extended outwards so that they commence immediately on the town centre side of the relevant bypass roundabout or junction, or, failing this, commence nearby and there is an advance warning speed limit sign visible immediately at the roundabout or junction, so that through traffic is made aware that if they go towards the town centre they will be subject to a speed limit and so that drivers who have had to slow down to negotiate the junction or roundabout do not accelerate again as they leave it. In the interests of the safety and amenity of residents, pedestrians and cyclists, the appropriate speed will be 30mph in all cases except possibly Chester Road, between the Burford Crossroads and the canal aqueduct, where a 40mph limit may be more appropriate for at least some of its length. The locations where the 30mph speed limit should be extended include Middlewich Road, Newcastle Road, Crewe Road and Barony Road: -

Burford Crossroads

To discourage through traffic and in the interests of the safety and amenity of residents, cyclists and pedestrians, a 40 mph speed limit should be introduced to cover the whole length of the Chester Road from the Burford Crossroads through Acton and on to Nantwich, starting immediately on the Acton side of the Burford Crossroads. However, it will probably be considered desirable to introduce an additional 30mph speed limit through Acton village itself.

Reaseheath Bypass Roundabout

The 30 mph limit should be extended outwards so that it commences immediately at the Barony Road exit from the roundabout to discourage through traffic and so that, having slowed for the roundabout, vehicles do not accelerate above 30mph again.

Middlewich Road Bypass Roundabout

The 30mph limit should be extended outwards so that it commences immediately at the Nantwich exit from the roundabout (where the 40mph signs are at present) to discourage through traffic and so that, having slowed for the roundabout, vehicles do not accelerate above 30mph again.

Crewe Road Bypass Roundabout

To discourage through traffic and so that, having slowed for the roundabout, vehicles do not accelerate to above 30mph again, the 30mph limit should be extended so that either it commences immediately at the Nantwich exit from the roundabout or it commences somewhere between the roundabout and the Peacock Stores shop, in which case conspicuous advance warning signs should be positioned at the roundabout.

Newcastle Road/New Bypass Junction

As a disincentive for through traffic approaching Nantwich to go straight on, either the 30 mph limit should be extended so that it commences immediately on the town centre side of the junction, or conspicuous advanced warning 30 mph signs should be positioned at the junction and the derestricted sign after the junction should be removed.

CONCLUSION

The Nantwich Access and Traffic Strategy Working Party fully endorses the strategic recommendations of the Hospital Street Association's submission as set out above, which it considers will be for the benefit of the town as a whole, and commends them to the County Engineer.

