

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE – 15 JANUARY 2003**

### **KILMARNOCK TOWN CENTRE TRAFFIC CIRCULATION**

#### **Report By Director of Development Services**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

**1.1** The purpose of the report is to: -

- (a) update the Committee about the preliminary design of the pedestrian safety and access measures and bus rail interchange measures which form integral parts of the Kilmarnock Town Centre Action Plan; and
- (b) seek the approval of the Committee for the preferred traffic circulation options.

#### **2. BACKGROUND**

**2.1** East Ayrshire Council was awarded an increased capital allocation from the Scottish Executive's Public Transport Fund in 2001 for the implementation of the Kilmarnock Town Centre Action Plan. The Action Plan includes: -

- (i) Improvements to the traffic circulation around the town;
- (ii) The introduction of a modern, computer controlled traffic signal system incorporating priority for buses;
- (iii) Bus quality corridors between the town centre and 3 residential areas in Kilmarnock

**2.2** The assessment undertaken prior to submitting the Public Transport Fund bid showed that the existing one-way system is potentially the most efficient traffic circulation option, which can yield the greatest benefits in terms of journey times and vehicle operating costs for buses and other traffic. In the bid, it was therefore proposed to modify the one-way system with traffic management and safety improvements to: -

- (i) Improve the traffic circulation around the town centre to attract development opportunities;
- (ii) Improve the bus circulation to make journey times more reliable;
- (iii) Enhance pedestrian safety, the environment and address excessive delays for pedestrians at crossings;
- (iv) Facilitate essential access for service vehicles and provide the short-term parking required to maintain the vitality of the town centre.

#### **3. FURTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

**3.1** Following the PTF settlement, initial consultations were undertaken with the Kilmarnock Central Local Committee and the Kilmarnock Town Centre Management Initiative. Both groups supported the retention of the one-way system, with appropriate improvements. Four further options were identified for consideration: -

- (i) Reversal of the direction of flow in Union Street to allow the one-way system to be extended via Portland Street, Union Street and High Street;
- (ii) A with-flow bus lane in John Finnie Street;
- (iii) A contra-flow bus lane in Sturrock Street;
- (iv) A contra-flow bus lane in John Finnie Street, St Marnock Street, King Street, Fowlds Street and Sturrock Street.

**3.2** A specialist transportation consultant, Faber Maunsell, was commissioned to assess each of these options. The conclusions are set out below and are summarised in Table 1.

### **3.3 Option 1 – Reversal of flow on Union Street**

This option increases the distance travelled by buses and all other traffic and would require major works at two junctions to accommodate the revised traffic pattern. Whilst this option could provide benefits for the future Top Of The Town Study, it provides no benefits for buses. It is proposed that this option should be considered for future implementation as part of a comprehensive redevelopment of the top of the town.

### **3.4 Option 2 – With flow bus lane on John Finnie Street**

This option is the simplest to implement requiring no major roadworks. It would provide operational improvements for buses on John Finnie Street (over 100 per hour in the peak period) without significant adverse effects on other traffic. The length of the bus lane that is necessary is to be determined and further consultation is required with the frontagers and Kilmarnock Central Local Committee. The variants to be considered include: -

- a short length of bus lane over the northern section of John Finnie Street in conjunction with pre-signals to allow the bus stops to be moved nearer the railway station and enable buses to manoeuvre easily into the right turn lanes before travelling around the one-way system to the bus station. There are no frontages over this section. The bus lane would not therefore impede service access but would provide a significant benefit to bus operation and enhance integration of bus and rail services.
- a longer bus lane over most of the length of John Finnie Street to allow buses to avoid general traffic delays and make services more reliable. In this option consultation with frontagers would be required on the appropriate arrangements to ensure servicing of premises which do not have rear access.

### **3.5 Option 3 – Contra flow bus lane on Sturrock Street**

This option would introduce a bus lane between the Old Mill Road/Fowlds Street junction and entrance to the bus station at London Road. It would provide operational benefits to bus operators by allowing more direct access to the bus station from the south east of the town (Queens Drive), however, the number of services which would use the bus lane is likely to be limited. The bus lane would require to be physically segregated from the traffic lanes and signal control would be required at the entrances to the car parks to allow safe access and egress for shoppers and service vehicles. Further consultation on this option is required bus operators and SPT to determine to what extent the bus lane would be used. Because of the significant costs involved in providing this option the expenditure would not be worthwhile unless the facility would be well used.

### **3.6 Option 4 – Contra flow bus lane on John Finnie Street/St Marnock Street/King Street/Fowlds Street and Sturrock Street**

This option is an extension of Option 3 and would allow buses to travel in a contra flow direction from the top of John Finnie Street around the town centre to the bus station at Sturrock Street. It would allow buses to pick up and set down passengers on the town centre side of the road. However, this option has a substantial number of drawbacks. It would involve the redesign of 6 major junctions, would present problems for servicing premises on John Finnie Street, St Marnock Street and King Street many of which do not have rear access, would result in the loss of parking spaces on John Finnie Street and St Marnock Street, and would give rise to problems for pedestrians. This option would provide no benefits for buses and would adversely affect other traffic. Because of this and the high costs involved it is recommended that this option is taken no further.

## **4. SCOOT SYSTEM**

- 4.1** The specialist consultant WS Atkins was commissioned to undertake the design and implementation of the SCOOT system. An early decision is needed on the preferred traffic circulation option to allow this project to be completed by August 2003 in accordance with the works programme.

## **5. QUALITY BUS CORRIDORS**

- 5.1** The consultant Scott Wilson Scotland was commissioned to undertake the preliminary design and consultations for this aspect of the Action Plan. The implementation of the QBC's has now commenced and is due for completion within the current financial year.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1** The cost of the town centre Action Plan measures is being met from the additional capital allocation from the Scottish Executive's Public Transport Fund award in 2001.

## **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1** Nil

## **8 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1** It is recommended that the Committee agrees: -

- (i) to note the contents of the report;
- (ii) Option 1 will not be pursued further at this time, but may form part of a future comprehensive redevelopment at the top of the town;
- (iii) to approve Option 2 subject to further consultation on the variants outlined in paragraph 3.4 above;
- (iv) Option 3 will be the subject of further consultation; and
- (v) Option 4 will not be pursued any further

**Stephen Chorley**  
**Director of Development Services**

SC/JR  
8 January 2003

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 1. Public Transport Fund Bid, Development Services Committee – 18 December 2001**

For further information contact Keith Orton or Kerr Chalmers on 01563 555755

**Implementation Officer: Keith Orton**

**TABLE 1**

OPTIONS	TRAFFIC MODELLING	TRAFFIC ENGINEERING		
	Ranking	Engineering Works	Parking & Servicing	Pedestrians
A Reversal of flow on Union Street	<u>All Vehicles</u> 3 <sup>rd</sup> <u>Buses</u> 4th	Major Works (2 junctions to be upgraded)	Minor Impact (Portland Street)	Minor improvements
B With-flow bus lane on John Finnie Street	<u>All Vehicles</u> 1 <sup>st</sup> Equal with C <u>Buses</u> 1st	Minimal change	Some Impact (John Finnie St)	No effect
C Contra-flow bus lane on Sturrock Street	<u>All Vehicles</u> 1 <sup>st</sup> Equal with B <u>Buses</u> 2nd	Major works (2 junctions to be upgraded & controls provided at car park entrances)	Some Impact (Sturrock Street)	Minor Improvements
D Contra-flow bus lane on John Finnie St, St Marnock St, Fowlds St & Sturrock St	<u>All Vehicles</u> 4th <u>Buses</u> 3rd	Major Works (6 junctions to be upgraded)	Major Impact (John Finnie St, St Marnock St, King St, Sturrock St)	Major Changes (increased potential for pedestrian conflicts)

