

# EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

## KILMARNOCK CENTRAL LOCAL COMMITTEE – 18 MARCH 2003

### KILMARNOCK TOWN CENTRE TRAFFIC CIRCULATION

#### Report by the 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) to advise the Committee of upcoming consultations on the traffic circulation proposals.

## 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; and
- (iii) Bus quality corridors between the town centre and three 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; and
- (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 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 on 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** The Council's specialist transportation consultant, Faber Maunsell, was commissioned to assess each of these options.

**3.3** Following the work undertaken by Faber Maunsell the Development Services Committee, at its meeting on 15 January 2003, agreed the following: -

- (i) The option to reverse the direction of flow on Union Street would not be pursued further at this time, but may form part of a future comprehensive redevelopment at the top of the town;
- (ii) The principle of providing a with-flow bus lane on John Finnie Street was agreed. The extent of the bus lane was to be the subject of further consultations;
- (iii) The option for a contra-flow bus lane on Sturrock Street would be the subject of further consultation;
- (iv) The option for a contra-flow bus lane on John Finnie Street, St Marnock Street, King Street & Fowlds Street would not be pursued any further because of the adverse impact on servicing premises, loss of parking, access difficulties, safety for pedestrians and traffic flows.

**3.4** Faber Maunsell has now carried out further consultation regarding (ii) and (iii) above with bus operators, SPT, Strathclyde Police and major Sturrock Street retailers. The comments are summarised in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Consultation Summary**

<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Sturrock Street Contra-Flow Bus Lane</b>	<b>John Finnie Street With-Flow Bus Lane</b>
First Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ no benefit for existing bus services</li> <li>▪ Titchfield St/John Finnie St provides better access for bus users</li> <li>▪ controls needed at car park entrances</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ would benefit bus services</li> <li>▪ all day bus lane over full length of John Finnie Street is favoured</li> <li>▪ pre-signals for buses approaching West George St would be beneficial</li> </ul>
Stagecoach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ operates only two services per hour which would benefit from contra flow lane</li> <li>▪ not enough bus flow to justify facility</li> <li>▪ would take buses away from Titchfield St which is the desired line</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ an all day bus lane from John Dickie St to the junction with West George St would be most appropriate</li> </ul>
SPT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ not enough public transport demand to justify contra-flow lane</li> <li>▪ could detract businesses from the town centre</li> <li>▪ hopper buses would not benefit to the extent of justifying a contra-flow lane</li> <li>▪ careful attention to safety measures would be required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ favoured a shorter all-day bus lane between John Dickie Street and the West George Street junction</li> </ul>
Strathclyde Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ serious concerns about the impact on pedestrian safety (one-way system has been in place so long, pedestrians may forget to look in both directions)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ would favour bus lane from John Dickie St to West George St junction</li> <li>▪ servicing accesses must be maintained for commercial premises</li> <li>▪ pedestrians require adequate protection</li> </ul>
British Home Stores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ not affected; premises serviced from loading area above Burns Mall</li> </ul>	not affected
Marks & Spencer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 3 deliveries per day (morning peak, between peaks and evening peak) all by articulated lorries via Sturrock St</li> <li>▪ better control of car park access required to prevent rat-running through M&amp;S loading bay</li> </ul>	not affected

**3.5** A report on this further work is to be considered by the Development Services Committee at its meeting on 12 March 2003. The decision of the Development Services Committee on the options for a with-flow bus lane on John Finnie Street and a contra-flow bus lane on Sturrock Street will be reported verbally to the Local Committee.

#### **4. CONSULTATION AND TIMESCALE**

- 4.1 Faber Maunsell will carry out further consultations on the detailed aspects of the town centre proposals. This will take the form of a public exhibition and a workshop. A leaflet and questionnaire will be prepared and distributed in the course of the evaluation process. The views of the business community, public representative groups, transport operators and Council Members will be taken into account in finalising the preliminary design of the town centre proposal.
- 4.2 The consultation process and preparation of preliminary design is programmed to be completed by the end of April. Thereafter the final design of the town centre traffic circulation measures and SCOOT system will be carried out. The implementation of the £1.8m project is programmed to commence in the summer.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The cost of the town centre improvement measures is being met from the additional capital allocation from the Scottish Executive's Public Transport Fund award in 2001. The agreed budget provides an expenditure of £1.3m in 2003-04 and £0.490 in 2004-05.

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Nil

## **7 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 It is recommended that the Committee notes: -
- (i) The progress of the Kilmarnock Town Centre traffic circulation study;
  - (ii) The Development Services Committee's decision regarding bus lane proposals; and
  - (iii) The proposals for further public consultation on the proposals.

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

KO/KC  
5 March 2003

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 1. Public Transport Fund Bid, Development Services Committee – 18 December 2001**
- 2. Kilmarnock Town Centre Traffic Circulation, Development Services Committee – 15 January 2003**

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

**Implementation Officer: Keith Orton**