

# Jedburgh Traffic Management

## Scrutiny 8 June 2022

### Brief History of Jedburgh Scaffold:

In 2015 emergency works to make a dangerous building safe resulted in a scaffold being erected around the corner of Exchange Street and High Street in Jedburgh. Initially the scaffold did not extend onto the road, however over time (as it became apparent how structurally unsafe this building was) the scaffold structure was reconfigured and extended onto the road. This resulted in the need to switch from the two way flow of vehicles to one way flow on both the High Street and Exchange Street.

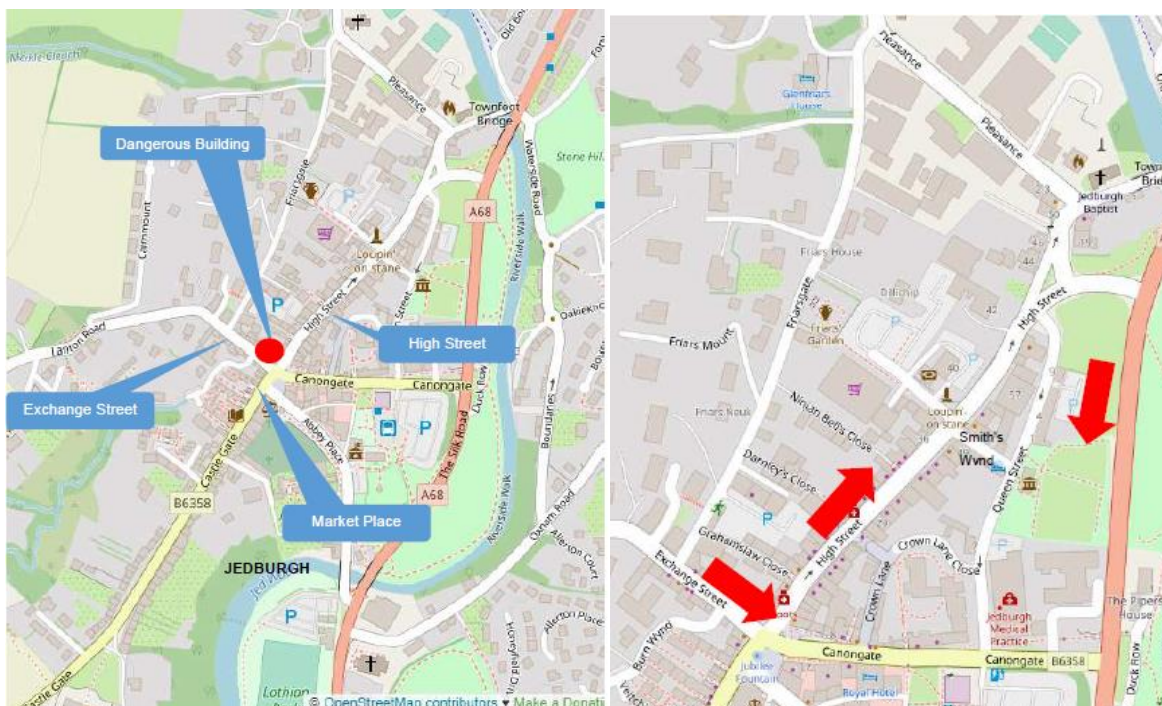
As a result of the more extensive safety scaffold a traffic management scheme was implemented to allow as safe a flow of pedestrians and vehicles as possible with the limited road space available.

Up until fairly recently the scaffold was set up as a support type with a pedestrian walkway incorporated underneath. Unfortunately this arrangement was no longer possible for the demolition stage of the project and the scaffold set up had to be reconfigured. **The scaffold company's chartered structural engineers and the scaffold company's insurance company are both in agreement that it is not safe to retain a pedestrian walkway as part of this scaffold at this time.** The scaffold company has however committed to reviewing this position on a regular basis as the demolition progresses and have assured the Council that once it is safe to re-open the walkway then this will happen.

At this time it is anticipated that a scaffold and associated traffic management will need to stay in place until the building is demolished and to accommodate construction of a new build replacement

### Traffic Management Plan

Due to the road width being restricted to one lane on the High Street and Exchange Street a one way system is in operation, as illustrated below, with traffic being diverted to accommodate the scaffold. This diversion route means that residents/drivers from the Burn Wynd, north end of The Friarsgate and those at The Pleasance side of the town need to drive an additional 600m or at most 1km to access some properties, the Co-op or A68. Whilst the walkway is closed pedestrians are required to cross Castlegate, Canongate and High Street.





The nature of a one way/no entry restriction means that, at a safe decision making point, a sufficient turning head/escape route must be available as an alternative to a driver who does not want to make use of the one way. Without this option vehicles would have no alternative route to avoid the restriction and may end up reversing from the no entry point. On the north-east approach the junction of High Street/Queen Street is the decision making point and a vehicle can make its 'escape' along Queen Street.

It has been suggested locally that the Co-op car park would be a suitable turning head, however the Council, for safety reasons, does not agree with using a private car park as a turning head. The Council has contacted the Estates section of the Co-op for their view on allowing their car park to be used as a turning head, and are awaiting a response.

#### **Petitioner Concerns:**

- *Consider traffic lights, give way priority system or another system to allow vehicles to access The Friars via Market Place*
- *Re-opening of Exchange Street and lower High Street to two way.*

#### **Response from Scottish Borders Council Traffic Management and Road Safety Department:**

Scottish Borders Council recognises the inconvenience that has resulted from the neglect of this privately owned building and the delays resulting from an opposed Compulsory Purchase Order process to legally procure the building to allow remedial works. It is also acutely aware of how patient residents, businesses and visitors have been with the associated disruption and Council officers have responded to previous requests to review the traffic management set up associated with the scaffolds and where appropriate rationalised signing and removed a temporary light controlled crossing point on the High Street.

Due to genuine safety concerns and the associated need to adhere to specific road safety regulations the Council does not support the suggestion to allow Exchange Street to revert to two way nor can the Council support two way vehicular access to/from the Co-op from the lower High Street.

Setting up temporary traffic signals was considered at the outset, and subsequently, but ultimately discounted for a number of reasons. In particular the overall disruption and delays associated with the 3 way temporary traffic lights that would be necessary.

The traffic and road safety team have, on a number of occasions been asked by the community to reconsider some of the temporary traffic management that is in place and where it has been possible to rationalise some of the signing this has been done. It would appear that the petitioners are not accepting of the professional advice that has been provided so far.

The traffic and road safety team are a group of professionally and academically qualified staff with considerable road safety and traffic management experience. Like other professions the team is required to adhere to legislation, guidance, codes of practice as well as design and safety manuals. Where possible the team take a pragmatic approach to devise safe solutions to problems that arise.

As a result of the expressed lack of confidence the Council commissioned an independent road safety audit. The independent safety auditors who also have considerable professional experience are in agreement with the professional opinions of Council officers. A copy of their report is appended as Annex A and summarised as Appendix B. The £874+VAT cost of this independent road safety audit was funded from the Council's limited revenue budget.

### **Independent Road Safety Audit Recommendations and Response to Road Safety Audit**

Council officers have replied to historic concerns raised by the Jedburgh community and commissioned an independent road safety audit on the existing temporary traffic management and the suggestions of the local community. The independent road safety auditors are of the opinion that the existing set up is the most appropriate. The full set of recommendations from the report, plus the SBC response to them, are noted below:

*6.1. Pedestrian drop kerbs are provided on both sides of Exchange Street at the termination of the east footway.*

SBC response: these drops will be provided

*6.2. Pedestrian drop kerbs are provided on both sides of Market Place near to its junction with Exchange Street.*

SBC response: these drops will be provided

*6.3. The remnants of the Zebra crossing on High Street are removed.*

SBC response: this will be considered

*6.4. A new controlled pedestrians crossing is provided on High Street near to No. 11.*

SBC response: The Council does not agree with this recommendation based on experience of a previous temporary light controlled crossing on Jedburgh High Street.

*6.5. The one-way operation on Exchange Street remains.*

SBC response: agreed, due to safety concerns

*6.6. The Co-Op car park is not used as a turning point for public road traffic therefore the No Entry signs on High Street at the junction with Jewellers Wynd should remain.*

SBC response: agreed, due to safety concerns

*6.7. Where practical, temporary signs in standalone sign frames and on temporary sign pole bases should be mounted on permanent poles or fixtures. The use of more permanent street furniture is expected to improve compliance to the restrictions*

SBC response: this will be considered

## **Conclusions:**

Based on the opinions of experienced and qualified professionals from within the Council and external road safety auditors and taking into account legislation, guidance and codes of practice the Council will retain the existing traffic management set up for safety reasons. The Council commits to continue to work with the scaffold company to re-open a pedestrian walkway within the scaffold as soon as it is safe and practical to do so. In time, as the scaffold is reconfigured, then the traffic management set up on Exchange Street will be reviewed and when safe to do so will revert to two way. The one way restriction on the High Street will also be reviewed again, when safe to do so.

Dropped kerbs will be installed to aid pedestrians as recommended.

Philippa Gilhooly, Team Leader Traffic and Road Safety 31 May 2022

## Appendix A

Independent Road Safety Audit, Jedburgh High Street full report

## Appendix B

Summary of independent road safety audit of Jedburgh High Street

*5.3.1. Both temporary traffic lights and a priority give way system require a two lane wide carriageway on both approaches to accommodate queuing and flowing traffic to pass. Road space is also required to allow for weaving manoeuvres between the two lane and one-lane sections of carriageway. On Market Place and Exchange Street the need to maintain access to nearby junctions and the servicing requirements of the shops and residencies is very likely to result in the blockage of the two lane carriageway required for the effective operation of traffic lights or a priority give way system.*

*5.3.2. The carriageway space is also required to accommodate loading and unloading of vehicles connected with the demolition or construction of the Corner Building. This will extend the length of road covered by the traffic lights or priority give way to include the Burns Wynd junction.*

*5.3.3. The use of traffic lights to manage traffic flows along Exchange Street will require a 3-way set of signals to control traffic in both directions on Exchange Street as well as on Burns Wynd. The code of practice requires traffic signal lights to be located at a minimum of 10m in advance of the working zone (scaffolding) and the minimum sighting distances of 60m to the first sign to be kept clear. The time delay caused by a set of 3-way temporary traffic signals will generate vehicle congestion and driver frustration, and the lack of intervisibility between waiting traffic queues, particularly from Burns Wynd, is very likely to result in some drivers not complying with the red light signal which will increase the potential for a collision. Temporary traffic lights will generate queuing and congestion in Market Place and Canongate which in turn will block access to High Street.*

*5.3.4. A priority give way system would be less disruptive to traffic flows on Market Place if it gave priority to vehicle entering Exchange Street from Market Place and Canongate. However this system of traffic control requires drivers approaching from either direction to have 60m forward visibility before and after the works. On-street parking along the east side of Exchange Street would need to be prohibited and enforced in order to provide carriageway space for queuing traffic at the give way. Westbound drivers on Exchange Street would not have sufficiently safe forward sightline of left turning vehicles entering Exchange Street from Market Place. This will generate conflict and*

*congestion resulting in an increase in reversing manoeuvres. Reversing manoeuvres are particularly hazardous in areas where there is high pedestrian activity.*

*5.3.5. The existing one-way traffic flow is the simplest and safest method of traffic management in this situation. A priority give way system is likely to be less disruptive to traffic flows than temporary traffic lights, however both of these systems require extensive parking and loading restrictions, will generate considerable congestion, and are unlikely to be fully compliant to the code of practice*

*5.4. The request for the one-way on High Street to be shortened to allow two-way traffic between Queen Street and Jewellers Wynd has been considered. This request suggests using the Co-Op shop car park as a turning area. However this presents liability issues for both the Road Authority (Scottish Borders Council) and the car park owners and/or operators. Additionally the swept paths for large vehicles is unlikely to be achievable. There will be no effective enforcement of a one-way within the car park. Accelerated wear and damage to the surfacing could be caused by the tight turning forces of large vehicles using the car park. Shop customers walking to and from their cars in the centre of the car park would be exposed to a greater risk of being knocked down due to the increased volume of traffic. Where drivers on a public road are faced with a No Entry they must have a safe and suitable alternative route, whether that be a side road or a turning area, where they can turn their vehicle without reversing. There is insufficient room at the junction of High Street and Jewellers Wynd to provide a safe turning area.*

