

REGULATION 28: REPORT TO PREVENT FUTURE DEATHS (1) Hull City Council Response

Summary

Based on the identified risks from the coroner's report relating to "Regulation 28: Report to prevent future deaths (1)" order to take action to prevent future deaths from occurring.

On review the Highway Authority has identified the following preventative measures to be considered. These measures are listed below as Preventative numbers as categorised in the Coroner's report and are in response to the coroner's concerns to determine mitigation factors to all risks identified.

Preventative actions HCC proposed to take:

Action ref	Action description
P1	Relocation of the existing taxi ranks to Alfred Gelder Street.
P2	Design of an increased width, all direction signalised crossing facility at Silver Street/Scale Lane
P3	Relocation of the existing crossing facility on Lowgate closer to Market Place
P4	Proposal to consider the viability of widening the footpaths on Lowgate between Silver Street and Alfred Gelder St
P5	Wider old town area, to be agreed, would become a 20mph zone and additional VMS signs would be installed at either end of the zone.

Timescales

Action ref	Timescale
P1	Consultation already commenced, HCC is moving into design stage and will commence with legal orders, Summer 2023.
P2	This proposal is in feasibility stage, on receipt of traffic/pedestrian count data, a new design will be formally produced for consultation. Autumn 2023
P3	Item included as part of P2 and will commence in coordination.
P4	Completion of feasibility Autumn 2023
P5	20mph order and consultation Autumn 2023

All preventative measures denoted above will firstly undertake a full design review and feasibility study, the measures will then be carefully considered as options to mitigate concerns

Additionally, to note, none of the measures are set out within the current Highway Capital programme and authorisation to proceed will need to be sought from the Portfolio Holder for Transportation, Highways and Roads. Funding is available to support the design and

development of P1, P2 and P3. Additional funding for the remaining interventions would need to found or other schemes would need to be reprioritised.

From the Regulation 28 Report there were 6no Coroners concerns identified that should be further addressed by the highways authority denoted below.

(1) On a Friday and Saturday night the Lowgate area of Hull city is exceptionally busy with people enjoying the night time economy. As such many are in drink. The area of Lowgate is open to traffic, it is also the location of a taxi rank. There is only one crossing facility (aside from at either end of the road), the road narrows significantly at one end.

RESPONSE 01 – Mitigation identified in P1/P2/P3

HCC has further engaged with the Hackney Association with the request to relocate the taxi rank on a permanent basis removing stationary vehicles from Lowgate during the peak night-time economy hours, and during the day.

HCC originally proposed a relocation of the rank to Scale Lane, but a response from the Hackney Association made recommendation to relocate the rank to Alfred Gelder St. HCC are promoting the suggested relocation to Alfred Gelder St and will take action to implement on completion of consultation, design, and any accompanying legal orders.

In the last month the highway authority has procured and carried out investigatory works for counts of vehicle movements, pedestrian counts, and taxi link count surveys.

On receipt of this new data HCC traffic engineers will work towards a feasibility study for a proposed road safety improvement scheme, with a strategic view of providing a new wide crossing facility to the junction of Silver Street and Scale Lane. This option will create a new dedicated crossing at this junction to improve pedestrian safety. Additionally, by relocating the existing crossing to Market Place will improve the pedestrian desire lines further south on Lowgate.

(2) Police raised concerns as follows:

- *The road remaining open during a Friday and Saturday night.*
- *The number of pedestrians using the area.*
- *Many people in drink in the area having to cross the road.*
- *The road is a 30 mph.*
- *Lights of vehicles are distracting*
- *The location of the taxi rank, pedestrians having to navigate around the parked taxis, some with lights on, to enter the road. Taxis do 3 point turns in the road and any vehicle doing this is a danger to pedestrians.*

RESPONSE 02 – Mitigation identified in P1/P2/P3/P5

The closure of the Lowgate has been considered but is not being proposed as mitigation due to the network connectivity to the A63, the proposals to improve pedestrian safety

in the preventative measures as listed above would negate any requirement for a full road closure and the relocated taxi stand would remove taxis from Lowgate further mitigating 3 point turns in carriageway. Additionally, 3-point turns has been raised with the Hackney Association and it was agreed this would be cascaded to all drivers to cease this manoeuvre on Lowgate.

HCC are progressing the option of reducing the speed limit in the old town wider area to 20mph, with additional VMS signs at either end of the zone as response to improve safety.

(3) Evidence was heard one doorman working in the area who stated "Having worked at the same location for some time, the area where the bars are on Lowgate is an accident waiting to happen. Members of the public are leaving the bars in a drunken state and they just wander into the road to cross, many of them not even looking for traffic on the road. Some vehicles travel down Lowgate far too fast given the evening activity" and another doorman stated "the road and both the footpaths at the location of the collision occurred on Lowgate are both very narrow. There is also a taxi rank outside O'Leary's which doesn't help as taxis were parked there at the time of the collision. I have seen numerous near misses over the years I have worked in the area. It is no exaggeration to say that there are between six to twelve incidents each night between cars and pedestrians, one thing which does not help and is also dangerous are taxis which do U turns in the road once they have collected their fare".

RESPONSE 03 – Mitigation identified in P1/P2/P3/P4

A feasibility study has commenced with a view to widening the footway which will ameliorate pedestrian safety. The feasibility study will also include consideration of a slight realignment of the carriageway to provide additional physical traffic calming measures to motorists, The decreased road widths will create an additional preventative measure with the purpose of preventing vehicles stopping on Lowgate.

Consultations with the Hackney Association to relocate the taxi rank away from Lowgate will reduce vehicle movement, the feasibility study includes a dedicated crossing facility and reduced speed limits as identified in response 01/02.

(4) The police had previously made recommendations and further felt that closing Lowgate to all through traffic on a Friday and Saturday evening, making Lowgate a total no stopping zone on an evening between certain hours, moving the location of a taxi rank onto nearby Alfred Gelder Street.

RESPONSE 04 – Mitigation identified in P1/P2/P3/P4

The closure of the Lowgate has been considered but is not being proposed as mitigation due to the network connectivity of Lowgate to the A63, additionally the

proposals to improve pedestrian safety in the preventative measures denoted above would negate any requirement for a road closure.

(5) I note the statement from the local authority listed

- *They have erected 2 speed signs since the incident. Bearing in mind that this incident occurred with a vehicle travelling well within the limits, traffic is the concern not limited to the speed of vehicles.*
- *The council was looking at developing a document that reviewed speed limits for the whole of the city centre. Lowgate has a special reason for being an area of concern and should be looked at as a priority and not in conjunction with all other city centre streets.*
- *That engagement with the councils public transport department has commenced with the intention to relocate the taxi rank to Alfred Gelder street “but this requires consultation with the Hackney Carriage Association”. No indication was given regarding what was being done to facilitate this.*
- *The council say that there are no resources to manage the road closure, despite acknowledging it is their responsibility. The fact the road is open at this time is a danger and I am concerned given the comments of the doormen that the danger is being underestimated.*
- *Crossing facilities had been looked at but could not be positioned within a suitable distance.*

RESPONSE 05 – Mitigation identified in P1/P2/P3/P4

The Highways Authority will be progressing a review of the speed limits within the city centre. Ahead of any wider review Lowgate has been identified as a priority and further consultation will be carried out and meeting minutes taken to identify the key decisions as evidence.

Consultation with Hackney association is ongoing, and agreements will be evidenced.

The road closure will not be pursued given the preventative measures itemised in this response are deemed as satisfactory mitigating factors.

The crossing facilities have been reviewed and are now identified as a project under feasibility study, the item above can now be satisfied after further review of relocation existing crossing as identified in P4

(6) I am concerned that inappropriate weight has been given to the danger arising in this area and that without appropriate action further incidents will occur.

RESPONSE 06 – Mitigation identified in P1/P2/P3/P4

The Highway Authority has reviewed the coroners concerns and has identified suitable mitigation measures to address the concerns raised and risks identified and reduce the likelihood of future incidents and severity of outcome.