

Share your views on latest city transport plans

Consultations on proposals to improve sustainable transport connections in two busy areas of the Norwich network are underway.

The Transport for Norwich (TfN) projects at Norwich Train Station and Grapes Hill roundabout are both part of the Transforming Cities funded-programme and are designed to significantly improve bus journey times and reliability, while also providing better facilities for those travelling on foot or by bike.

Proposed changes at the station include a section of Thorpe Road becoming buses, cycles and taxis-only as well as changes to bus stop arrangements that mean services would no longer have to use the station forecourt, helping to save valuable journey time. New traffic signal technology to optimise the efficiency of other junctions in the area is proposed to benefit general traffic using other routes.

Improvements to walking and cycling facilities also form part of the plans, as well as a new Beryl Bike hire hub and Car Club spaces to widen transport options for people using the station and the surrounding area.

The proposals for the Grapes Hill area involve removing traffic signals from the roundabout to reduce bus journey times by up to seven minutes in peak periods and improve service reliability. Traffic modelling also shows that general traffic will make journey time savings of up to four minutes in the morning peak.

Several improvements for those walking and cycling through the area are also being put forward, including better crossings, a wider footpath and a new section of shared-use pedestrian/cycle path.

Councillor Martin Wilby, Norfolk County Council's cabinet member for highways, infrastructure and transport, and chair of the transforming cities joint committee said: "Both these projects are designed to bring big benefits to our sustainable transport network. They offer significant improvements to journey times and reliability for Norwich bus services while also building on improvements to our walking and cycling facilities and helping the flow of general traffic.

"We'd like to hear the views of anyone who travels through, visits or lives in these areas to help shape the final details of the schemes we put forward for construction."

Steve Wickers, Managing Director for First Eastern Counties Buses, said: "First Eastern Counties fully support the proposed schemes, at both Grapes Hill roundabout and the Rail Station. The principle of providing measures that make it easier for people to choose more sustainable ways to access the city, such as cycling, walking and public transport, are very much welcomed. The individual schemes that are being consulted on have been developed in partnership with a range of stakeholders, including local business leaders, cycling groups and local bus operators.

"The changes at the Grapes Hill roundabout, will see significant reductions in journey times for bus passengers each week, that suffer delays from congestion throughout the day, but especially at peak times.

"The changes at the Rail Station will also see major time savings delivered for bus passengers from the east of the city and improved facilities for people transferring between train and bus.

"This is a huge opportunity for us to all to help reshape how people access our fine city, so we urge bus passengers to take part in the consultations."

Jeremy Cooper, Managing Director of Go-East Anglia, who run the Konecibus services, said: "Punctual bus arrivals and departures at the station are vital to integrated transport and we think this is an excellent proposal to give greater priority to people wanting to interchange at the station".

Residents in both of the immediate project areas have been written to with details of the proposals and information on how to share their views.

The deadline for comments on both projects is Sunday 28 March 2021. Responses will be carefully considered and the outcomes reported back to the Transforming Cities Fund Joint Committee later in the year.

The committee, which is chaired by Norfolk County Council and made up of councillors from TfN partners Norwich City, Broadland District and South Norfolk councils, will then decide how to proceed with the project.

You can find out more about the proposals and take part in the consultations through the following links. The webpages will be kept up to date with the latest progress and information.

www.norfolk.gov.uk/norwichtrainstation

www.norfolk.gov.uk/grapeshill