

Audit, Standards and Risk Committee Update on Bernard Road

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Background

Board members will recall a serious collision occurred at the Bernard Road junction with Cricket Inn Road (adjacent to the Hyde Park tram stop) on 23 July 2021.



Since this incident, SYMCA/SYPTE have encouraged Sheffield City Council (SCC) to look at further mitigations to the junction to prevent vehicles from (intentionally or otherwise) jumping the red-light signals on Bernard Road.

Initial mitigations included the removal of vegetation removed the tram tracks and Cricket Inn Road to allow both vehicle and tram drivers a better light of sight of each other as trams approach Hyde Park tram stop travelling outbound from the city centre towards Meadowhall.

SYMCA have also convened numerous calls between SYMCA, SYSL, SYP and SCC on the subject, both to look at better enforcement and signal improvements at the junction by SCC. It has taken some time for SCC to take this work forward, and this resulted in a traffic survey count taking place in September 2022.

Latest Position

We are pleased to confirm that SCC have now made progress with their review of the operation of the Bernard Street/Bernard Road/Cricket Inn Road junction. Having considered a number of options they believe there is the potential to further mitigate the risk of vehicle and tram collisions by reconfiguring the signal phasing of the junction.

Currently north-east bound traffic on Bernard Street (B6071 on the site image below) can either use the nearside lane to turn left into Cricket Inn Road or go 'straight ahead' (crossing the tram tracks), or alternatively use the offside lane to turn right onto Cricket Inn Road. The traffic signals work so that the two traffic lanes can receive a green signal independently of one another or both lanes can receive a green signal at the same time.



The reported concern is that traffic coming from Bernard Street to Bernard Road (the straight-ahead movement) is either ignoring or is for other reasons proceeding when the nearside lane is on a red signal phase. It has been identified that in order to reduce the potential for confusion, or misreading of the signals, for traffic headed straight ahead that the offside lane should not run a green phase independently of the nearside lane. This will potentially reduce occasions where drivers not paying full attention may see traffic setting off from the offside lane and proceed even though the nearside lane is on a red light.

This is particularly important in reducing potential tram conflict given that the offside lane 'right turning' traffic from Bernard Street is only given a green light independently of the nearside lane when the tram is crossing Bernard Road. So, should someone heading from Bernard Street to Bernard Road misread the signals they are more likely to come into potential conflict with a tram. However, it should be noted that in order to do this they would also have to proceed through a further red light and stop line in advance of the tram tracks as people enter Bernard Road (this can be seen right centre on the site image above).

This change means that neither lane on Bernard Street progressing north-east will be given a green light when the tram is crossing Bernard Road.

This change has been tested and works within the capacity of the junction.

SCC Road Safety Auditor has reviewed the proposed amendments and is fully supportive of the changes. This is in the process of being arranged. We will now start to programme

the changes to the controller with Amey. Given that there are no civil engineering changes required, SCC do not anticipate that the lead in time will be significant.

SYMCA officers will continue to seek progress updates from SCC on when the signalling changes are to be implemented and will ensure a suitable period of monitoring before and after the change takes place with SYSL on near misses to fully understand the impact of the change on the risk presented.