Response by North West Leeds Transport Forum[1] to Leeds City Council's Outline Proposals for the A660 Corridor (published on the Connecting Leeds website by in July 2018)

1. NWLTF welcomes the recent publication of Leeds City Council's outline proposals for improvements affecting buses using the A660 corridor. It is particularly pleased to see the proposals to create a northbound bus lane from the Elinor Lupton Building to St Michael's church, to give bus priority on the northbound approach to Hyde Park Corner and, by banning some turning movements, to reduce delays at that junction. It does, however, have serious reservations about some aspects of the proposals and regrets that more is not being proposed to address the problem of northbound congestion affecting buses on Headingley Lane in the pm peak and that there is no statement of intent to introduce park and ride at Bodington Fields.

We will now comment on the proposals in the order that they appear on the Website (starting at Holt Lane and working in towards the city centre).

2. We welcome the proposal to install signals at Holt Lane but note that full signalisation might cause unnecessary delays to all movements - particularly at times of low flow. We therefore suggest that this be set up to function as a signal-assisted priority junction[2], perhaps with a dedicated right turn lane.

3. We welcome the proposal to install a cycle lane between Holt Lane and St Helens Lane provided that it is created in the verge and does not involve removal of central cross hatchings (removal of the hatchings would result in right turning traffic causing a traffic hazard and delay to buses and emergency vehicles and would mean that buses at stops would hold up all traffic behind them). Loss of the pedestrian refuges, currently sited in the central hatchings would also be detrimental.

4. We welcome the proposal to install pedestrian crossings and signals at the south end of Otley Old Road but question the need to ban the left turn out of Otley Old Road (we suggest that the southbound inner lane could simply be designated for buses, cycles and left turning traffic only). We assume that the signals will be set to minimise unnecessary delay to buses.

5. We note the proposal to signalise the Lawnswood roundabout and welcome its contributions to improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists. However, we are concerned that it gives no particular benefit to northbound buses and, if orbital (A6120) traffic is prioritised, may actually result in additional delay to northbound buses on the A660. The potential adverse impact on buses is particularly regrettable since it would reduce the attractiveness of any future Park and Ride facility at Bodington Fields. We appreciate that there may be insufficient room at Lawnswood for a

[1] NWLTF exists to promote practical, sustainable, community-friendly solutions to transport issues in NorthWest Leeds. The forum includes representatives of its affiliated residents' associations (West Park R.A., Weetwood R.A., Church Wood and Drummonds R.A., Far Headingley Village Society, Beckett Park R.A. and North Hyde Park R.A.) together with co-opted professionals with expertise in transport planning, town planning and road safety.

[2] We define a signal-assisted priority junction as one at which normal major-minor priority rules normally apply but with the addition of outward-facing signals on the main road to prevent main-road traffic from entering the junction when traffic is detected as having been waiting for more than a short time to emerge from, or to complete a right turn into, the minor road. Where appropriate, a signal-controlled pedestrian crossing can be placed across the main road on one side of the junction and, when it is called, the outward-facing signals on the other side of the junction would also be set to red – thereby giving a further opportunity for traffic to emerge from the minor road.

complex signalised junction like that at the A65/A6120 intersection but are concerned that efficiency of the simple design shown in the plans may be compromised by the need to have long "all-red" phases to allow any right turning cyclists to complete their manoeuvres (although toucan crossings are envisaged, unless it is feasible to prohibit right-turning cyclists, it cannot be assumed that no cyclists will attempt a right turn along with general traffic). We wonder whether this has been allowed for in the modelling of the junction and whether, if it were allowed for, the most efficient design might then be a roundabout with left turn slips, toucan crossings at some distance on the western and southern arms and signals to hold up traffic entering the roundabout from any given arm whenever queues build up on the next (clockwise) approach. Retention of a roundabout design would also avoid inconvenience to those local movements which currently use it to complete a U-turn (e.g. from the South into Weetwood Hall, from the North into Woodlands Court, from the Police Station to the North, and from Weetwood Sports Ground to the East).

6. We note the proposal to create "floating" bus stops to serve Lawnswood School but have concerns about the safety of this design given that large numbers of pupils will arrive/congregate at the bus stops at once and may not be fully attentive to the possibility of cyclists passing between the footway and the bus stop. We also have concerns about the safety implications of proposals which would require pedestrians to share space with (mounted) cyclists.

7. We note the proposal to designate the nearside northbound lane at West Park "roundabout" as cycle-only. We are concerned that this may not yield the hoped-for improvement in safety because of the substantial volume of left turning traffic. Also, we are concerned that the creation of a pinch point (two lanes reducing to one) may result in a longer queue on the northbound approach to West Park – which would delay buses and result in increased emissions. We wonder whether it might be preferable to designate the inside lane as being only for buses, cycles and left turning traffic.

8. We note the proposal to widen the southbound bus/cycle lane between West Park and Headingley. We understand that this would create a more pleasant route for southbound cyclists and might allow southbound buses to travel at higher speeds. However, we are opposed to the loss of the central hatchings on this stretch of road because, without them, emergency vehicles would find it more difficult to force a passage through congested traffic and right turning traffic would present a safety hazard[3], cause delay to traffic – including northbound buses and, because it would interrupt an otherwise fairly smooth flow of traffic, would result in increased emissions. We do not suggest that central hatchings should always be preserved but that, in this instance, the benefit to southbound cycles and buses is not sufficient to warrant their removal. We would also regard any narrowing of the footways as detrimental – particularly south of Glen Road.

9. Respecting the suggestion that the southbound bus/cycle lane from Lawnswood to Headingley should become operative for 24hrs, we are not convinced that it is necessary (and suggest that it would have a negative impact if the central hatchings were removed). However, we would support an all-day ban on parking in the lane - except between Hollin Rd and Burton Crescent (where loss of off-peak parking space would be extremely detrimental to the commercial viability of the cinema,

[3] The safety hazard is not only to traffic, but also to pedestrians crossing the side-road or entrance into which the traffic intends to turn – because the right-turning traffic, conscious of the queue building up behind it, will focussing on finding a gap in the opposing stream rather than on the possibility that pedestrians may be about to cross the side-road or entrance.

restaurants and shops in Far Headingley, and in which context we suggest that on-street parking around Far Headingley, including that on Weetwood Lane, should be time-limited so as to ensure its availability for customers).

10. We note the proposal to install signals at the junction of the A660 with Church Wood Avenue and Glen Rd but believe that full signalisation would create unnecessary delays particularly at times of low flow. In addition to the obvious consequential delay to buses and frustration to drivers, this would also lead to increased emissions in the vicinity of a nursery and a preparatory school and, probably, to increased use of Drummond Avenue – a narrow road on which the nursery is located. We therefore suggest that a signal-assisted priority design (as defined in a footnote above) be used instead. The design should incorporate a signalised pedestrian crossing just south of the junction – although the central refuge, if retained, should be moved so as not to obscure pedestrians crossing the southbound carriageway from vehicles turning right out of Church Wood Avenue.

11. We note the proposal to create a northbound bus lane between Hollin Rd and Drummond Rd but question whether, at this location - where delays to buses are minimal and there is a significant volume of traffic into and out of the service station, the benefit to buses would be sufficient to warrant the loss of central hatchings (see arguments in para 8 above) or narrowing of the footway.

12. We note the proposal to close off the southern end of Weetwood Lane and re-route traffic via St Chads Rd. We can see a number of positive features in the proposal but do not believe that it would warrant widening of the main road, loss of trees, or reduction in the amount of short-term parking space available for customers of the local shops. If the plan is to proceed, we are concerned that full signalisation would result in unnecessary delays to all road users, including pedestrians, particularly at times of low flow and that this would in turn cause increased use of Hollin Road (on which Weetwood Primary School is located). We therefore suggest use of a signal-assisted priority design incorporating a pedestrian crossing somewhat further north than the current one. We would also recommend installation of a zebra crossing with kerb-build-out partway along St Chads Rd.

13. We welcome the intention to address the delays to southbound buses caused by traffic turning right into St Anne's Rd but believe that the proposed solution - simply banning the turn - will contribute to increased traffic through the Beckett Park estate and that an alternative solution (see para 30 below) would be very much better in many respects.

14. We welcome the proposal to improve bus stops at Headingley Arndale Centre and hope that these improvements can include provision for off-bus purchase of bus tickets at the southbound bus stop in order to facilitate phasing out of on-bus cash transactions and thereby speed up boarding times. We note that the provision of real-time displays at the northbound bus stop is long overdue. We assume that new bus shelters, here and elsewhere in the corridor, will be designed and sited so as not to obstruct pedestrians (this is currently a problem at several bus stops along Otley Rd and Headingley Lane – particularly where closed-ended shelters are placed in the middle of the footway).

15. We welcome the proposal to introduce a northbound bus lane from the Elinor Lupton Building to St Michael's church. We look forward to seeing the detailed plans and trust that they will keep carriageway widening and tree loss to a minimum, will allow for pedestrians crossing to the southbound bus stop and will include optimisation of the siting of the bus stops and crossing facilities at St Michael's church.

16. We welcome the proposal to designate the cycle lanes on Headingley Lane as mandatory and suggest that the same designation be made for the northbound cycle lane on Otley Rd.

17. We welcome the proposal to improve safety at the junction of Victoria Rd with Headingley Lane and to introduce a pedestrian crossing just north of this junction.

18. We welcome the proposal to improve safety and reduce delays to buses at Hyde Park Corner but suggest that it would be advantageous to also ban the left turn into Hyde Park Rd and to provide priority for southbound buses from the junction with Victoria Rd to the bus stop south of Hyde Park Corner (the nearside lane could be reserved for buses, cycles and left turning traffic). Further, we see advantage in siting a northbound bus and cycle lane in the outside northbound lane between Hyde Park Corner and Victoria Rd to give priority to buses and avoid conflict with traffic heading into Victoria Rd. We suggest that, in view of the increased traffic on Cliff Rd, it might be appropriate to form a signal-assisted priority junction where Cliff Rd joins Woodhouse Lane – most particularly to facilitate traffic needing to turn right out of Cliff Rd.

19. We welcome the proposal to improve the bus stops at Hyde Park Corner and suggest that the southbound stop be moved closer to the shops. This would obviate the need to remove trees and, together with provision of a zebra crossing on Woodhouse Street and increased green time for pedestrians crossing Woodhouse Lane, would improve safety for pupils of the nearby City of Leeds Academy (removing the temptation to cross Cliff Rd or to cross Woodhouse Lane at the mouth of Cliff Rd).

20. We welcome the proposal to make off-carriageway provision for cyclists between Hyde Park Corner and Clarendon Rd.

21. We welcome the proposal to reduce delays to southbound buses by re-designing the junction of Woodhouse Lane and Clarendon Rd.

22. We note the proposal to re-route northbound traffic via Blenheim Walk and agree that it would make the stretch of Woodhouse Lane south of Parkinson Steps more pleasant and safer for cyclists and pedestrians. We are concerned, however that the scheme may result in additional delays to southbound buses due to them having to cross the stream of northbound traffic twice (once at the St Marks Rd junction and once near the top of Portland Way where, because of limited storage space for northbound traffic, there will be a limit to the extent to which priority can be given to buses). We are also concerned that the longer queues at these two locations will result in increased emissions. We suggest that an alternative plan might leave northbound traffic on Woodhouse Lane but allow southbound buses to continue directly down Woodhouse Lane instead of turning left into Blackman Lane (space for this being created by routing the traffic heading from the City Centre onto the eastbound inner ring road past the multi-storey carpark instead of via Woodhouse Lane and Blackman Lane). This, combined with a requirement that traffic emerging from St Marks Rd should turn left, could reduce delays to southbound buses without introducing delays to northbound traffic.

23. We welcome the proposal to reduce clutter on Woodhouse lane where it passes the Merrion Centre and trust that the revised layout can allow buses to cross the Loop without excessive delay.

The above comments have related to proposals which were included on the website in July 2018. The following comments relate to proposals which would benefit buses in the A660 corridor but which were not included in the Website material. Further detail on most of these points is included in the document produced by NWLTF in Spring 2018 after a series of public meetings and consultations.

24. Outbound buses are currently held up by congestion on Headingley Lane. Introduction of an outbound bus lane north of the Elinor Lupton Building will reduce this problem but will not be sufficient to avoid it. We understand that the potential requirement for CPO and Listing Consent make it difficult, given the time limit on current funding, to extend the bus lane further south at this stage but hope that immediate consideration is being given to some extension of the lane where this is achievable by voluntary agreement with landowners and without impact on Listed structures (In particular we note the possibility of an extension from the Elinor Lupton Building back to Buckingham Rd and of short stretches past the old WIRA offices and north of the Book Club.

25. Outbound buses (nos 56, 19 and 19A) are currently delayed by congestion on Cardigan Rd. We believe that there is scope to reduce this by re-phasing the signals at South Parade Baptist Church and by replacing the signals at the junction of Cardigan Rd with St Michael's Lane by a signal-assisted priority junction arrangement. Further reductions in delay might be achieved by a redesign of the South Parade junction such that the North Lane pedestrian crossing is further from the junction (closer to the shops) and the left turning lane on Cardigan Rd is lengthened slightly. Reduced delay on Cardigan Rd would benefit the buses and general traffic already using it and might also help reduce the length of the outbound queue on Headingley Lane.

26. In the longer term, and after appropriate consultation, we believe that consideration should be given to more radical means of reducing the amount of traffic on Headingley Lane so that it does not delay outbound buses during the pm peak. The introduction of a bus gate or a toll just north of Victoria Rd and the possibility of designating part of Cardigan Rd as one-way outbound fall into this category and might also contribute to the much needed net reduction in emissions.

27. Traffic entering and leaving Bennett Rd at its junction with Otley Rd interrupts the traffic flow (resulting in delay to buses and increased emissions) and creates a particular hazard to pedestrians. Closure of the East end of Bennett Rd would solve these problems and provide a welcome addition to public realm space (premises on Granby Street and Cross Granby Terrace could be serviced via the West end of Bennett Rd if the existing bollards were removed).

28. We believe that there is scope to provide additional priority for southbound buses between Shaw Lane and North Lane. Firstly by designating the inside lane between Shaw lane and Alma Rd as being for buses, cycles and left turning traffic only. Secondly by installing a stretch of southbound bus/cycle lane from the bus stops through to the North Lane junction (achievable by a modest narrowing of the footway alongside the carriageway in exchange for increased public realm space made possible by closing off the stub end of Wood Lane – in turn made possible by provision of a service lane behind the Arndale Centre).

29. A cycle way along the off-road alignment which was envisaged for NGT would be of obvious benefit to cyclists.

30. Redesign of the St Anne's Rd/Shaw Lane/Otley Rd junction to provide easier entry and egress from St Anne's Rd, together with minor changes to facilitate the turn between St Anne's Rd and

Headingley Mount and the turn into and out of Headingley Mount at Kirkstall Lane, could bring substantial benefit to bus users and pedestrians and could help improve the ambience of two of Headingley's three shopping streets. Taken together, these three proposals should result in a reduction in the volume of traffic on North Lane and on Otley Rd past the Arndale Centre. This would benefit bus users (on routes 1, 6, 28, 97, x84, x85, 38 and 91), cyclists and the many pedestrians using the shops along these streets. Some of the benefit would come directly simply from reduced traffic volumes and some from the opportunity to reduce the amount of road space required for traffic turning right into North Lane and to reduce the green time needed to accommodate traffic turning between North Lane and Otley Rd. Further benefits of the design described in our Spring 2018 document include reduced traffic through the main Beckett Park estate, improved provision for parking at St Anne's Parade and safer means of crossing Shaw Lane and St Anne's Rd. The performance of the re-modelled junction is, of course, key to the success of this scheme and clearly needs to be modelled.

31. Outbound buses, as part of the general traffic stream, are significantly delayed by the signals at Thornbury Avenue. We believe that this junction, as currently operated, creates unnecessary delays to all traffic movements (and to pedestrians crossing the Avenue). We suggest that it would be better to remove the signals which restrict traffic emerging from Thornbury Avenue (and pedestrians crossing it) and allow the junction to function under signal-assisted priority rules.

32. Vehicles parked on Wetwood Lane obstruct buses on route 28 and, at some points (e.g. around the junction with Hollin Lane), create a traffic hazard. We therefore suggest that there should be some further restriction on parking along Weetwood Lane.

33. We believe that, by relocating some bus stops, there is scope to improve bus journey times (because there could be a net reduction in the number of stops) while better serving most bus users. For example, with reference to the northbound stops between St Anne's Rd and West Park, average passenger walking distances might be reduced if the Ancaster Rd stop were moved just south of that road, if the Church Wood Avenue stop were moved south to Drummond Avenue, if the St Chads Rd stop were moved south to be opposite Park Terrace and if the St Chads Drive stop were moved to a point just south of that road – allowing the St Anne's Rd stop to be deleted and thereby reducing associated delays. Similar benefits might be achieved on Headingley Lane if a rationalisation in the number of stops resulted in them being concentrated near pedestrian crossing facilities. The impact of any such changes on sight-lines and turning movements would, of course need to be very carefully considered.

34. We strongly believe that a statement of intent should be made allowing for the future construction of a Park and Ride facility at Bodington Fields and that steps should immediately be taken to protect the site from alternative development. We do not suggest that bus provision on the A660 is <u>currently</u> attractive enough to attract people to use a bus-based Park and Ride at that site but that, if serious steps are taken to reduce bus boarding times and the delays on Headingley Lane and/or to restrict the passage of private cars into the Clean Air Zone, a Park and Ride facility at Bodington could help bring about a major shift in mode use away from the private car.