**The Norfolk County Council (Central Pedestrianised Areas)**

 **Experimental Amendment Traffic Regulation Order 2022**

**STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR THE MAKING OF THE ORDER**

The provisions of the above Order are intended to rationalise loading times across the city centre (to after 4pm and before 10am instead of the current restriction of after 5pm and before 10am). This will make it easier for businesses both delivering and receiving goods to comply with the restrictions in the area by standardising times for the different areas and potentially to carry out multiple deliveries in one visit in the same time window.

Measures have been included within the Orders to support businesses in response to feedback received during consultation. These include an ‘extra’ hour of loading time at the end of the day (i.e. from 4pm instead of from 5pm) and loading for goods vehicles only on Gaol Hill with an increase from 15 minutes to 20 minutes loading time. Implementation of an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order prior to making the Order permanent will enable the effectiveness of the new measures to be monitored and any changes made if required prior to making permanent. These changes will help to preserve and improve the amenities of the area, (e.g. Norwich market and local retail outlets).

Exchange Street and St Benedict’s Street have been closed to through traffic since July 2020 as part of a Temporary Traffic Restriction Order implemented during the pandemic to aid social distancing. Some hospitality businesses have successfully applied for licences for outdoor seating within the highway. Reduced through traffic has enabled people to walk and cycle using the full width of the highway, preserving the amenities of the area by making the area more pleasant for those travelling on foot or by cycle, encouraging footfall to local businesses. The reduction in motorised traffic in the city centre also helps to preserve the character of these narrow city centre streets suitable for shopping, eating and drinking rather than their previous unsuitable use as a through route for general traffic, with Exchange Street in particular being used as a cut-through to the north and east of the city. The reduction in motorised traffic using the streets has also helped avoid danger occurring to people walking and cycling along the road.

The proposal to make the Orders is therefore made because it appears to the County Council that it is expedient to do so in accordance with Sub-Sections 1(a), (d), (e) and (f) of Section 1 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act, 1984:-

**“**(a) for avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road or any other road or for preventing the likelihood of any such danger arising;

(d) for preventing the use of the road by vehicular traffic of a kind which, or its use by vehicular traffic in a manner which, is unsuitable having regard to the existing character of the road or adjoining property;

(e) (without prejudice to the generality of paragraph (d) above) for preserving the character of the road in a case where it is specially suitable for use by persons on horseback or on foot, or

(f) for preserving or improving the amenities of the area through which the road runs;**”**

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