

North Yorkshire County Council

County Area Committee for the Harrogate District

15 March 2018

Harrogate Congestion Study – Update Report

Report of the Corporate Director - Business and Environmental Services

1.0 Purpose Of Report

- 1.1 To provide details of the approach to, and timescales for, the latest phase of the Harrogate Congestion Study.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Members will be aware that previous reports to this committee set out the process of, and progress on, a review of the need for and potential alignment of a Harrogate Relief Road and the potential for other measures to provide congestion relief in Harrogate and Knaresborough.
- 2.2 Minutes of the last meeting of this committee, have been circulated, and set out the details of the last meeting and the resolution taken and recommended to the Business and Environmental Services (BES) Executive Members meeting held on 15 December 2017.
- 2.3 On the basis of the resolution of the Area Committee the subsequent meeting of the BES Executive Members meeting considered three options that were available to progress with the Harrogate Relief Road Review. These were:
1. To consult as originally proposed on both package B and package E whilst noting the views and recommendations of the Area Committee.
 2. To agree in principle with the recommendations of the Area Committee and request that officers investigate the costs and timescales of any necessary further work to develop package B. To also assess the potential implications of discounting package E on the future transport business case and the potential for it to attract the necessary funding, in view of the early stage of scheme development.
 3. To undertake further development work on the sustainable transport elements of both package B and package E with a view to a future decision on consultation based on a greater level of assessment of the options.
- 2.4 The decision record for the meeting states that the decision taken by the Corporate Director for BES, in consultation with the BES Executive Members was:
1. to further develop the sustainable transport elements of both packages B and E to identify the potential locations and impacts of the different measures;
 2. to further develop the alignments of the inner relief road to help identify the potential benefits and impacts (including on the Nidd Gorge and Nidderdale Greenway);
 3. to prepare an initial economic analysis benefit cost ratio (BCR) for the inner relief road;
 4. to undertake pre-consultation engagement with local businesses and representative groups through a Harrogate Congestion Engagement Group; and

5. to take a further report to the Area Committee prior to deciding on the future consultation options.

3.0 Recent Progress - Additional Analysis

- 3.1 In order to more accurately reflect the scope of works of the project, it is intended that from now on it will be known as the Harrogate Congestion Study, which is a title that more accurately reflects the broad range of analysis that is being undertaken.
- 3.2 Following the BES Executive Members meeting in December 2017, officers have been working with the County Council's framework consultants, WSP, to determine an approach to delivery of this additional phase of works.
- 3.3 An outline programme of work is currently being finalised, which will give sufficient consideration and analysis of each package to allow a greater level of understanding of their ability to effect congestion reduction.
- 3.4 In order to facilitate this analysis, and the further, more detailed development of the sustainable transport measures, small technical 'task and finish' groups of County Council officers and WSP staff will work up a series of possible specific interventions, consistent with packages B and E. These will be costed and wherever possible, assessed quantitatively, to provide an understanding of the traffic relief that might be delivered.
- 3.5 Alongside to the additional work on sustainable transport measures, WSP have been asked to undertake further assessment work on potential alignments of inner relief road options.
- 3.6 This element of the commission will consider in greater detail the possible alignments for the inner relief road. It will allow a more detailed estimate of costs to be developed, and consequently, alongside more detailed traffic modelling, it will permit the calculation of a benefit to cost ratio (BCR), in accordance with point 3 of the Corporate Director - BES, decision contained in section 2.4 of this report.
- 3.7 BCR's are one of the key metrics employed by the Department for Transport (DfT) in determining whether to award funding for major schemes. Due to the potentially high cost of a relief road option, there would be a requirement to submit a detailed major schemes business case to the DfT for funding consideration.
- 3.8 Should the BCR for the inner relief road be under 2.0, the generally accepted ratio for successful applications for funding of capital projects, a report will be brought to the County Council Executive on whether to proceed with any further development of the scheme. Otherwise further development work on both options B and E will continue as per the decision of the Corporate Director - BES in December 2017 and a report will be brought to the meeting of the County Area Committee for the Harrogate District scheduled for November 2018.

4.0 Programme

- 4.1 As a consequence of the additional work being undertaken on option development at this stage, the programme as previously circulated, has changed. The detail of the revised programme is set out below.

Project		17/18 Q4	18/19 Q1	18/19 Q2	18/19 Q3
Project management					
Option development	Further option development				
	Development of cost estimates and quantitative risk assessment				
	Initial indicative BCR (relief roads)				
	PROJECT PAUSE/GATEWAY				
	Interpeak model construction (required for more robust testing of options)				
	Testing				
Stakeholder engagement	Congestion Study Engagement Group				
Deliverables	Updated options assessment report				
Reporting	Area Committee				
Decision point	Corporate Director BES and Executive Members				

- 4.2 The project steering group, which includes Elected Member representatives from this Area Committee, will continue to meet at appropriate intervals, to consider the progress and outputs from the study.
- 4.3 In addition, a Congestion Study Engagement testing Group is in the process of being established, and will meet three times within this phase of the study. The aim of the group will be to perform an advisory function, and to check and challenge the development approach proposed by the project working group (NYCC/HBC officers and WSP), and to make suggestions and bring business views and local insight to the process.
- 4.4 At the completion of this phase of the study, a report will be brought to this Committee in November 2018, setting out the results of the analysis, and the potential next steps.
- 4.5 The detailed work being undertaken as part of this phase of the study goes beyond what the DfT would normally require at this stage of scheme development. However, several elements of the scheme development would have been required at a later stage, as part of the production of a major schemes business case for the DfT. Therefore, whilst this element of the programme has extended beyond the originally envisaged timescale, the overall programme remains broadly in line with expectations.

5.0 Finance Implications

- 5.1 The scheme development work is being funded from existing approved budgets. At present there are no identified additional funding requirements. However should a

preferred option(s) be taken forward to the Strategic Outline Business Case development stage and then be provisionally approved for funding from DfT or another funding body, then an appropriate local contribution will need to be identified.

- 5.2 Additional upfront costs will be incurred a consequence of this additional level of detailed analysis that is now being developed. However, some of this would normally be required at a later stage in the development of the scheme business case, and therefore, a significant proportion of the costs can be considered to be a 'pulling-forward', or re-profiling of expenditure that would come at a later stage.

6.0 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any adverse equalities impacts arising from the recommendations of this report. It is the view of officers that the recommendations included in this report do not have an adverse impact on any of the protected characteristics identified in the Equalities Act 2010 (Appendix A). However, it is worth noting that any preferred option(s) would require a full Equalities Impact Assessment to be carried out.

7.0 Legal Implications

- 7.1 At present no legal implications have been identified. As the Congestion Study continues, detailed discussions will take place with the County Council's legal department in respect of the legal implications of ensuring that the public consultation exercise and subsequent implementation of any identified options is properly carried out.

8.0 Recommendations

- 8.1 It is recommended that Members of the County Area Committee for the Harrogate District:
- i) note the contents of the report.

DAVID BOWE
Corporate Director – Business and Environmental Services

Authors of Report: Rebecca Gibson

Background Documents: None.

Initial equality impact assessment screening form (As of October 2015 this form replaces 'Record of decision not to carry out an EIA')			
This form records an equality screening process to determine the relevance of equality to a proposal, and a decision whether or not a full EIA would be appropriate or proportionate.			
Directorate	Business and Environmental Services		
Service area	Highways and Transportation		
Proposal being screened	Harrogate Congestion Study		
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Rebecca Gibson		
What are you proposing to do?	To further develop options for relieving traffic congestion in Harrogate and Knaresborough.		
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	To give further detail of possible options to relieve congestion and allow improved information to be developed prior to seeking authorisation to undertake public consultation.		
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	No.		
Is there likely to be an adverse impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYCC's additional agreed characteristics? As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent is this service used by particular groups of people with protected characteristics? • Does the proposal relate to functions that previous consultation has identified as important? • Do different groups have different needs or experiences in the area the proposal relates to? If for any characteristic it is considered that there is likely to be a significant adverse impact or you have ticked 'Don't know/no info available', then a full EIA should be carried out where this is proportionate. You are advised to speak to your Equality rep for advice if you are in any doubt.			
Protected characteristic	Yes	No	Don't know/No info available
Age		✓	
Disability		✓	
Sex (Gender)		✓	
Race		✓	
Sexual orientation		✓	
Gender reassignment		✓	
Religion or belief		✓	
Pregnancy or maternity		✓	
Marriage or civil partnership		✓	
NYCC additional characteristic			
People in rural areas		✓	
People on a low income		✓	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		✓	

Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts (e.g. disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	No		
Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (e.g. partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics? Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.	None		
Decision (Please tick one option)	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Continue to full EIA:
Reason for decision	The work being proposed is primarily to further develop two possible options - there is no reason for the work programme to cause any negative impact on anybody from within the protected characteristic groups.		
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	<i>Barrie Mason</i>		
Date	02.03.18		