

North Yorkshire County Council
Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee – 08 January 2021
Update on the Harrogate Transport Improvement (HTIP) Programme

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To update members on the outcomes of the Harrogate Transport Improvement Programme study.
- 1.2 To advise members on recommended next steps in the HTIP development work streams.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Executive, on 15 October 2019, recommendations were approved with regards to next steps of scheme development on the Harrogate Congestion Study. It was agreed that following extensive public engagement during the summer of 2019, and a conclusive rejection of the proposal for an inner northern relief road for Harrogate, further option development work would be undertaken on a number of thematic areas, with a view to reducing congestion in Harrogate and Knaresborough.
- 2.2 Further to this, our framework consultants, WSP, were commissioned to develop further possible interventions that had proved most popular through the public consultation as part of the Harrogate Congestion Study. This commission, known as the Harrogate Transport Improvement Programme (HTIP) sought to further assess the feasibility of options for potential implementation. Work has taken place throughout 2020 to develop proposals, and to consider potential costs and timescales for delivery.

3.0 HTIP thematic areas

- 3.1 In 2019 we undertook extensive consultation to gather views on how we might seek to reduce congestion in Harrogate and Knaresborough – the headline results of this were as follows:
- 15.5k responses were received to the consultation
 - 77% said that cycling and walking facilities should be improved
 - 71% said park and ride should be developed
 - 75% said smarter choices and travel behaviour change should be encouraged
 - 59% said bus priority should be improved
 - 80% rejected the further development of a northern relief road option.
- 3.2 In addition to this, analysis of the comments received as part of the consultation highlighted a number of issues of concern for residents and businesses, including repeated mentions of specific junctions that experience delay and operational constraints.
- 3.3 Having sought approval from Executive in October 2019, officers commissioned WSP to undertake further development of possible options for intervention under the following work streams; cycling and walking, bus priority, park and ride, junctions, behaviour change and highways (Killinghall bypass and western area link road).

4.0 Progress to date

- 4.1 All work streams were completed in autumn 2020 and a comprehensive report produced covering each theme. Further to that, the HTIP steering group, comprised of members and officers from NYCC and Harrogate Borough Council, met virtually in December 2020, to discuss the outcomes and potential next steps recommended in the HTIP. Those next steps are set out below.
- 4.2 The final report for each work stream sets out what the key priorities for intervention should be, based on; the response from the congestion study consultation in 2019, data gathered both as part of the earlier studies, and also more recent data collection, transport modelling and forecasting, economic appraisal and reviews of best practice and local comparator areas.
- 4.3 WSP undertook desktop studies and where possible site visits, and used data already gathered as part of the earlier congestion study, to build an evidence base for further scheme development. In all cases, discussions were held with officers to assess suitability of proposals. Colleagues at Harrogate Borough Council also had the opportunity to input to the work streams and to review the study documents.
- 4.4 In view of the Covid 19 pandemic, it should be noted that some site visits could not take place, because of the first period of 'lockdown'. In addition to this, only traffic and transport data collected in advance of March 2020 has been used, as the lasting effects of Covid 19 on travel habits are, as yet, uncertain.
- 4.5 The Department for Transport (DfT) is monitoring the impact of Covid 19 on travel behaviour and has not yet set out any revised approaches to transport modelling and forecasting as a result of the pandemic. Therefore existing modelling and appraisal approaches, whilst potentially not entirely fit for purpose, are the best tools we currently have available to us.

5.0 Findings

- 5.1 The headline results of the thematic studies are set out below. In each case, there is a detailed study report available on request for each thematic area. The headline results and suggested next steps are as follows:
- 5.2 Cycling - A review of the four existing Local Cycling Infrastructure Plan (LCIP) priority corridors was undertaken to ensure that they are still fit for purpose when considered in the context of no additional highway capacity being delivered through a relief road.
- 5.3 The corridors considered were:
- Bilton to Starbeck
 - Bilton to Hornbeam Park (via town centre)
 - Starbeck to Hornbeam Park
 - Jennyfield to Harrogate town centre
- 5.4 Outcome - The assessment found that the LCIP corridors remain appropriate, but because a relief road will not redistribute traffic and reduce volumes on some key routes, cycling may be less attractive without further intervention in terms of segregated facilities. Improved infrastructure would be needed on all of the Harrogate LCIP corridors to facilitate increased cycling levels.
- 5.5 High levels of support for cycling and walking identified in the congestion study consultation, and propensity for cycling identified through the LCIP, suggest that

Bilton may be a potential area for implementation of a 'low traffic neighbourhood'. This approach recommends that some residential streets may be closed to through-traffic, to encourage those making shorter journeys to walk or cycle, and to encourage greater emphasis on 'place' within local communities. This approach was suggested through the 2019 consultation.

- 5.6 Bus - The study focused on two bus corridors; the A61 and A59. Options for improvement were developed in line with the DfT's guidance on scheme development and also with reference to information provided by bus operators and their data on current bus performance, and barriers to efficient operation.
- 5.7 Outcome - The study found that both corridors offer the potential to attract more passengers and improve reliability if bus priority was improved.
- 5.8 There is scope to incorporate bus priority, using a number of different approaches, both infrastructure and technology based, at key locations. Whole route improvement plans (WRIP) were developed for each corridor. The WRIPs set out a range of changes that could be made to the corridor to improve bus operation and reliability and reduce bus journey times. The WRIPs also take into account some of the junctions, which have been studied as part of the junctions work stream. Further detail on this is set out below.
- 5.9 Town centre bus routing, including the operation of Station Parade, was studied. This took into account both the investment being delivered through the Transforming Cities Fund, but also the operational issues raised by bus operators relating to the current layout of the highway in that area.
- 5.10 Park & Ride - Review of existing literature and previous Harrogate P&R studies was undertaken. In addition, an appraisal of existing park and ride sites in locations with similar characteristics to Harrogate and Knaresborough was carried out. A multi criteria appraisal, demand forecasting and financial viability assessment helped to determine which sites might offer the best potential for success.
- 5.11 Outcome - 102 potential sites were identified. After sifting, assessment showed that the area to the south of Harrogate, in the vicinity of the A61, has the greatest potential for success, and two sites in that area were added to a final shortlist. Following further discussion at the HTIP Steering Group meeting officers are also considering whether any other sites close to the A61 may also offer potential.
- 5.12 Proximity to existing bus services provided the greatest determinant of financial viability and sustainability, meaning that an adaptive bus service would be the proposed model for a park and ride operation in Harrogate and Knaresborough. Therefore, it is suggested that if park and ride is developed further, officers will engage the relevant bus operators in further discussions on this, at the earliest appropriate opportunity.
- 5.13 The study notes that for park and ride to be operationally sustainable, and attractive to users, experience from successful sites elsewhere illustrates that there would need to be introduction of a complementary parking management regime to dissuade drivers from parking in the town centre. As parking management is a duty split between both the county and borough councils, it would be essential to ensure a coordinated approach on this.
- 5.14 Highways - Modelling and high-level economic appraisal was undertaken for a standalone Killinghall bypass and a western relief road/link road.

- 5.15 Outcome - The outcome was that the Killinghall bypass options offered high value for money using the DfT's classifications. The western area link road offered poor value for money due to the very high costs of construction.
- 5.16 On this basis, it is suggested that the Killinghall bypass is added to the county council's major schemes portfolio. It is recommended that no further work is undertaken on a potential western area link road.
- 5.17 Smarter Choices & Behaviour Change - A best practice review was undertaken, and considered both existing county council initiatives, and those being implemented successfully elsewhere. The review suggested that six area wide packages could be developed, as follows:
- Business Engagement
 - Incentivisation & Gamification (using game elements in a non-game setting, e.g. competitions, reward schemes, challenges)
 - Travel Planning & Information Provision
 - Marketing & Promotion
 - Active Travel
 - Travel Demand Management / Parking Restrictions
- 5.18 Outcome - The study notes that whilst this work stream does not require investment in infrastructure, or capital funding, some of the measures suggested are revenue and resource intensive. In order for these interventions to be successful and effective, they will require commitment to be made to provision of ongoing revenue funds.
- 5.19 Junctions - Assessments identified the most problematic junctions in the study area, using quantifiable evidence and also the responses collated as part of the 2019 engagement. This resulted in a longlist of junctions ranked using a multi criteria analysis tool.
- 5.20 Outcome - Nineteen junctions were added to the longlist, with level of delay afforded the highest priority in the rankings, but with a variety of other criteria used to sift and prioritise the junctions for investment.
- 5.21 From this, the top five junctions were identified as follows:
- Parliament Street / Kings Street / Ripon Road
 - Empress Roundabout
 - Gracious St / York St / Park Row
 - Wetherby Rd / Hookstone Corner (Woodlands Corner)
 - Leeds Rd M&S Junction
- 5.22 It is recognised that in most cases, work has been undertaken on these junctions in recent years, but there are limits to the capacity that can be delivered in the face of rising traffic volumes. On that basis, it is suggested that a coordinated, multi modal, approach is taken to junction operation, alongside a focus on reducing traffic volumes.

6.0 Recommended next steps.

- 6.1 The assessment work undertaken as part of this study has provided further details of what steps can be taken to reduce congestion in Harrogate and Knaresborough. The evidence suggests that in all cases, in order to deliver quantifiable and long lasting benefits, projects should be delivered in a consistent and coordinated way, rather than on a piecemeal, project-by-project basis. This will also ensure that the benefit of the schemes are fully realised due to the complementary nature of the elements within the package.
- 6.2 The cost of implementation of these projects is significant, with major investment in all of the proposed work streams exceeding the capital funding that the county council has available within existing budgets.
- 6.3 For this reason, it is recommended that a major schemes business case for funding by the DfT be developed. This will seek investment on a multi-modal, corridor basis. In addition, officers will continue to consider all funding opportunities that arise, which may help to accelerate the development of these proposals.
- 6.4 Officers will consider both the A61 and A59, to improve facilities for all road users, but would particularly seek to improve provision for pedestrians and cyclists, provide bus priority to enhance the experience of using passenger transport, and also seek to tackle some of the most problematic junctions in the study area.
- 6.5 This approach is predicted to reduce congestion by encouraging a modal shift, where appropriate, to active travel modes, and would ensure that the maximum capacity be delivered from the existing highway network without the need for additional highway construction.
- 6.6 Consideration of how a low traffic neighbourhood in Bilton could be implemented will be further explored.
- 6.7 It is recommended that the standalone Killinghall bypass be added to the county council's existing major schemes development list. This list is reviewed at regular intervals to determine which scheme should next be taken forward into development of a full DfT compliant major schemes business case.

7.0 Equalities implications

- 7.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any adverse equalities impacts arising from the recommendations of this report. As this report is for information only, it is the view of officers that the recommendations included in this report do not have any adverse impacts on any of the protected characteristics identified in the Equalities Act 2010 and an equalities impact screening can be found in Appendix A.

8.0 Finance implications

- 8.1 It is suggested that further development work be funded through the transport planning scheme development budget. A major scheme business case is considered likely to be the best approach to securing funding for this programme, however we will seek funding through any other opportunities including the LEP pipeline. A further report will be brought to the Executive Member for Access and the Corporate Director, Business and Environmental Services on the implications of this in the Spring 2021.

9.0 Legal implications

9.1 As this report is for information only, it is the view of officers that the recommendations included in this report do not have any legal implications. Should any legal implications arise as a consequence of further scheme development, reports will be developed as appropriate.

10.0 Climate Change Impact Assessment

10.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any adverse impacts on climate change arising from the recommendations of this report. The completed Climate Change Impact Assessment can be found in Appendix B and it is the view of officers that approval of this report will not have a direct climate change impact.

11.0 Recommendations

11.1 It is recommended that Members note the content of the report and provide comments as appropriate.

Rebecca Gibson
Senior Transport Planning Officer
Business and Environmental Services
North Yorkshire County Council
15 December 2020

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	Report to Area Constituency Committee updating on the findings of the Harrogate Transport Improvements Programme (HTIP).		
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Rebecca Gibson		
What are you proposing to do?	To update members of the findings of the HTIP study.		
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	To ensure members are aware of the latest findings of the study on approaches to tackle congestion in Harrogate and Knaresborough.		
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	No. Any further development work at this stage will be funded through existing budgets.		
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	This report is advising on the outcome of a study and the further steps associated with that.		
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	<i>Barrie Mason</i>		
Date	16 December 2020		



Climate change impact assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to help us understand the likely impacts of our decisions on the environment of North Yorkshire and on our aspiration to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030, or as close to that date as possible. The intention is to mitigate negative effects and identify projects which will have positive effects.

This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. The final document will be published as part of the decision making process and should be written in Plain English.

If you have any additional queries which are not covered by the guidance please email climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk

Please note: You may not need to undertake this assessment if your proposal will be subject to any of the following:

Planning Permission
Environmental Impact Assessment
Strategic Environmental Assessment

However, you will still need to summarise your findings in in the summary section of the form below.

Please contact climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk for advice.

Title of proposal	Report to Area Constituency Committees on study Findings on Harrogate Transport Improvements Programme.
Brief description of proposal	Report to Area Constituency Committee updating on the findings of the Harrogate Transport Improvements Programme (HTIP).
Directorate	BES
Service area	Network Strategy
Lead officer	Louise Neale
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	Rebecca Gibson
Date impact assessment started	14/12/2020

Options appraisal

Were any other options considered in trying to achieve the aim of this project? If so, please give brief details and explain why alternative options were not progressed.

This report is for information only.

What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

Please explain briefly why this will be the result, detailing estimated savings or costs where this is possible.

This report is for information only.

APPENDIX B

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes over and above business as usual Evidence or measurement of effect Figures for CO₂e Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>	
<p>Minimise greenhouse gas emissions e.g. reducing emissions from travel, increasing energy efficiencies etc.</p>	Emissions from travel		X		This report is for information only.		
	Emissions from construction		X		This report is for information only.		
	Emissions from running of buildings		X		This report is for information only.		
	Other		X		This report is for information only.		
Minimise waste : Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic		X		This report is for information only.			
Reduce water consumption		X		This report is for information only.			
Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise)		X		This report is for information only.			

APPENDIX B

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes over and above business as usual Evidence or measurement of effect Figures for CO₂e Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
<p>Ensure resilience to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers</p>		X		<p>This report is for information only.</p>		
<p>Enhance conservation and wildlife</p>		X		<p>This report is for information only.</p>		
<p>Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of North Yorkshire's landscape</p>		X		<p>This report is for information only.</p>		
<p>Other (please state below)</p>						

Are there any recognised good practice environmental standards in relation to this proposal? If so, please detail how this proposal meets those standards.

Summary Summarise the findings of your impact assessment, including impacts, the recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

Sign off section

This climate change impact assessment was completed by:

Name	Rebecca Gibson
Job title	Senior Transport Planning Officer
Service area	Highways and Transportation
Directorate	BES
Signature	
Completion date	14/12/2020

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature): Barrie Mason

Date: 16 December 2020