

North Yorkshire Council

Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee

14 September 2023

Harrogate Transport Projects

Report of the Corporate Director of Environment

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update Members on the progress on three projects within their area: the Oatlands feasibility study, the Harrogate Transport Improvements Programme and the Killinghall bypass.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report provides an update on each project and it sets out ongoing work where relevant and next steps.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A variety of projects have been under development in the Harrogate area for some time. As these schemes are strategic projects and likely to require significant investment, they are developed in line with the Department for Transport (DfT) framework for large local major transport schemes. These schemes are developed by the Council's transport planning team, who lead on development of scheme business cases, government bidding opportunities and transport policy.
- 3.2 The DfT has a specific framework within which they expect major scheme business cases to be developed and they are also clear that they expect major schemes to have a focus on sustainability, have high levels of public support and to have considered a wide range of options before selecting an optimum solution. Developing a DfT compliant business case is a significant undertaking, which in general would be expected to take as a minimum around six years from the point at which a range of options are shortlisted.
- 3.3 North Yorkshire Council will soon begin the process of forming a Mayoral Combined Authority (MCA) with City of York Council and at that stage, major transport schemes from both authorities are expected to come together to form a major schemes pipeline. A list of potential schemes is currently being developed by officers from both authorities, with the potential that schemes such as Harrogate Transport Improvement Programme (HTIP) may be included in the major schemes list. It is anticipated that the MCA will have a greater degree of control over its investment decisions, but schemes will still need to be assessed through a rigorous assurance process into which the DfT will input.
- 3.4 This report sets out the latest position with the development of the HTIP study, the Oatlands feasibility study and the Killinghall Bypass study, all of these studies are at the optioneering stage. This means that a range of possible options are being identified, considered and tested.

4.0 HARROGATE TRANSPORT IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAMME

- 4.1 Since 2019, when the Harrogate Congestion Study public engagement showed very low support for any of the Harrogate relief road alignments (78% against), the Council has been working on developing a number of options to reduce congestion. This study, known as HTIP, in its first phase considered options for several corridors into the centre of Harrogate, but due to the funding required to develop a compliant business case, its current second phase has been focussed on one corridor, the A61 Leeds Road. The rationale for this, is that whilst discrete intervention can bring some level of benefit, evidence points to a coordinated approach in an area providing more opportunities to reduce congestion and improve facilities for all modes of transport.
- 4.2 The cost of implementing a solution likely to deliver any form of traffic reduction is such that it exceeds the Council's current own budgets. On that basis, officers have been developing a number of potential options which could form a larger major scheme. The intention of that would be gaining entry to the DfT's large local major scheme programme or recommending the scheme for further development as part of the MCA pipeline of major schemes.
- 4.3 Framework consultants WSP have been developing measures to form the basis of a number of possible approaches on the corridor, comprising varying levels of ambition for change. Officers and engineers are currently reviewing these from a technical and policy perspective, with a view to feeding back to consultants and providing a final report in the autumn.
- 4.4 Measures include provision of sections of bus priority facilities, improved signals and crossing facilities for pedestrians, cycle infrastructure and also consideration of how junctions can be improved to enhance movement of all modes along the corridor. Clearly a balance of competing needs will have to be considered and, in particular, the constraints on land availability due to highway extents and Stray land, mean that in some cases, the optimum solution cannot be deliverable.
- 4.5 Work on HTIP has been progressing well, but has taken longer than anticipated, in order to ensure that transport modelling for the project aligns with the transport assessments being undertaken for the West of Harrogate Development Management Plan. Officers from both projects are working closely together to ensure that transport forecasting and modelling is based on figures that have been agreed in line with the development plan work.
- 4.5 Park and Ride forms part of the HTIP study, but the scope of the park and ride element of study is wider than that for the main study itself and considered the whole of the Harrogate and Knaresborough urban area.
- 4.6 The reasoning for the study being extended beyond the A61 considers the recognition that for park and ride to work effectively, would almost certainly require some degree of parking management, and for this to be applied equitably, park and ride options would need to be available from a range of access points around the town centre.
- 4.7 The Park and Ride element of the study builds on the work that was undertaken as part of the first stage HTIP review, but includes some additional potential sites and also considers the deliverability of suitably designed sites in the areas of land that have been considered. At the time of writing, costs are being worked up for the development of the sites, as this will help to inform a broad overview of costs and benefits, in line with expected best practice.

- 4.8 The study has considered a range of operating models, including using a dedicated service, and providing park and ride facilities on an existing bus route. It has also looked at sites on and off the main public highway and on land both publicly, and currently privately owned. Early indications from the study are that none of the sites that have been considered would be financially self-sustaining, but with a degree of subsidy from public funds, could in time operate at a profit. However, this would require a period of investment. Further details on this will be provided in due course, once further technical information has been developed and recommendations of the study can be finalised.
- 4.9 In order to develop final recommendations, and in view of the important links between HTIP and the West of Harrogate Development Project, collaboration between teams will ensure that further reporting can take place at the earliest possible opportunity once the final assessment work has been undertaken. Timescales are still being determined for this, but is expected to be during the Autumn.

5.0 OATLANDS FEASIBILITY STUDY

- 5.1 The Oatlands Feasibility Study came about following the public engagement that was undertaken on the options suggested as part of the Harrogate Active Travel Fund Tranche 2 (ATF2) proposals, which were developed as part of the government's response to social distancing during the Covid 19 pandemic.
- 5.2 The original proposals that were developed at short notice in line with government timescales, were consulted on but failed to gain a level of public support sufficient to allow them to be either developed further
- 5.3 On that basis, officers agreed with the DfT and then Active Travel England (ATE), that the money that had been nominally set aside to consider issues in the Oatlands area could be used to further develop alternative proposals for active travel in that area.
- 5.4 As part of this new project, the responses from the original public engagement were combined with information collected through a number of traffic and transport surveys, to establish what other options might be feasible for delivery in that area. Further, a separate public engagement, using the Commonplace platform, was used to allow local residents and people who visit or travel through the area, the opportunity to comment on issues within the study area, both positive and negative.
- 5.5 In addition to this, officers met with the local ward member and have also met with other key stakeholders as part of on-going discussions around issues and options in the area.
- 5.6 Discussions with stakeholders suggest that two of the biggest areas of concern in the area are indiscriminate parking and also the reduction in bus services and bus penetration into some of the smaller side roads running off the main thoroughfares of Oatlands Road and Hookstone Chase.
- 5.7 Data collected as part of the project showed that a large proportion of vehicles in the study area were making through trips and that traffic speeds on some roads suffered from speeds that were higher than the posted speed limit. The study also demonstrated that high numbers of vehicles were parking on streets between the hours of 8am and 5pm, indicating a level of commuter parking.
- 5.8 With regards to the data collected through the public engagement, there was no clear consensus on what constitute the priority issues in the area, although indiscriminate parking, traffic speeds and issues in crossing the road were all mentioned in responses.

- 5.9 When it came to identifying solutions to the issues in the area, there was somewhat more consensus. Less parking and reduced traffic volumes were the two most popular options, with cycle lanes, slower traffic, and easier ways to cross the road also achieving a high level of support.
- 5.10 Based on this information, officers have been working to determine a series of possible next steps. In addition to this, they have also been meeting with local schools and organisations, to discuss how support for behaviour change initiatives might reduce the numbers of people travelling into the area each day by car. Designs are currently being reviewed and it is envisaged that residents will be consulted later this year. Results of this consultation will be presented to the ACC in the new year, alongside recommended improvements. Currently no budget is available for delivery.
- 5.11 It should be noted that the designs are being considered alongside the 20mph review recommendations in the area and road safety improvements already agreed for delivery such as the Oatlands Drive crossing, at Slingsby Walk.

6.0 KILLINGHALL BYPASS

- 6.1 Work on a possible bypass for the village of Killinghall, has been in consideration for some time, and the project has subsequently featured in the Council's list of major schemes for many years.
- 6.2 Whilst the proposals for potential bypasses of Harrogate were rejected comprehensively in the 2019 Harrogate Congestion Study engagement, a village bypass on Killinghall still had a level of support and on that basis, the Executive agreed that it would be appropriate to consider developing the project further to assess its suitability for submission to the DfT's large local major schemes programme.
- 6.3 Work on the bypass looked at a number of possible highway alignments, and as set out above, in line with DfT requirements also looked at alternative approaches to reducing the impact of traffic in the village of Killinghall. However, in this case, there are fewer opportunities for significant mode switch to walking, cycling or passenger transport because of the more rural nature of Killinghall.
- 6.4 A number of standardised assessments were undertaken of the economic impact of the scheme and on that basis, all of the alignments that were considered offered a strong value for money.
- 6.5 On that basis, it is recommended that the scheme continues to form part of the Council's large local major scheme list. However, it should be noted that the DfT has made it clear that as we move into the new period for the LTP, they expect major schemes pipelines to comprise a range of types of schemes, with far fewer new road schemes than was previously the case.

7.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

- 7.1 Consultation has not been undertaken in this phase of the HTIP study, but as noted in section 4 above, extensive consultation was undertaken as part of the Harrogate Congestion Study. Officers suggest that once a preferred option, or series of options have been recommended as part of the study, these will be taken out to public consultation.

- 7.2 As noted above, scheme specific consultation was undertaken on the original ATF2 proposals and this formed part of the background information for the feasibility study. For the Oatlands Feasibility Study, public engagement was undertaken during the summer of 2022 using the Commonplace online platform. Through this engagement, there was an opportunity to note positive and negative features of the local area, both generally and at specific locations. Approximately 380 comments were received, and they fed into the development of the options.
- 7.3 For the Killinghall Bypass scheme, no public engagement has been undertaken since the Harrogate Congestion Study public engagement in 2019. It is recommended that before the scheme progresses any further, engagement on the principle of pursuing the scheme further, and possible recommended alignments is undertaken.

8.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 All of the projects listed above have followed national guidance and best practice on scheme development, which requires that a variety of options are considered before a preferred option is selected. In all cases, preferred options have not been determined thus far, with that process likely to take place once public engagement or consultation has taken place.

9.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS

- 9.1 All three of these projects are in the early stages of development and no specific impacts have been identified as yet. Should any of the projects be taken forward for further development, impact on other services or organisations will be considered in more detail.

10.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no financial implications arising specifically from this report as it is providing an update. As schemes are in an early stage of development, costs and potential funding sources will be identified as part of the scheme business case work. HTIP and the Killinghall bypass are schemes being developed as part of the existing scheme development budget. The Oatlands feasibility work has been funded out of the Covid response grant funding, which was provided to the Council during the pandemic. In all cases, further scheme development work and budget management will form the basis of a future report to the ACC.

11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no currently identified legal implications related to these studies. Should any of the schemes progress further, consideration will be given to any relevant legal matters.

12.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 There are no equalities impacts as a consequence of this report, which sets out to report on the progress of three transport studies. An equalities impact screening assessment has been undertaken and this recommends that at this time, no further assessment is required, see Appendix A. However, in all cases, should these projects develop further, there will be a requirement for an equalities impact assessment to be undertaken during the development of the scheme.

13.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no climate change impacts as a consequence of this report, which sets out to report on the progress of three transport studies. A climate change impact screening assessment has been undertaken and this recommends that at this time, no further assessment is required, see Appendix B. However, in all cases, should these projects develop further, there will be a requirement for climate, and broader environmental, impact assessments to be undertaken at a number of stages throughout the development the projects.

14.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 To allow members to be updated on several projects within their area and to have the opportunity to comment on those projects.

15.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

15.1 It is recommended that Members note the content of the updates on the three studies: HTIP, the Oatlands feasibility study and the Killinghall Bypass.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment
Appendix B – Climate Change Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Karl Battersby
Corporate Director of Environment
County Hall
Northallerton
25.08.23

Report Authors: *Rebecca Gibson, Senior Transport Planning Officer and Melisa Burnham, Highways and Transportation Area Manager*
Presenter of Report – To be confirmed

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.

Initial equality impact assessment screening form			
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	ENVIRONMENT		
Service area	Network Strategy		
Proposal being screened	Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee: report on Harrogate Transport projects		
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Rebecca Gibson		
What are you proposing to do?	The report updates the ACC on progress on three projects in the Harrogate area.		
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	These projects are part of the ongoing studies undertaken by the transport planning team. The update will give members information on the current stage of scheme development, and potential next steps.		
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	These projects are part of the ongoing, agreed workload of the transport planning team.		
Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYC'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 an 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	Potential for adverse impact		Don't know/No info available
	No	Yes	
Age	X		
Disability	X		
Sex	X		
Race	X		
Sexual orientation	X		
Gender reassignment	X		
Religion or belief	X		
Pregnancy or maternity	X		
Marriage or civil partnership	X		
NYC additional characteristics			
People in rural areas	X		
People on a low income	X		
Carer (unpaid family or friend)	X		

APPENDIX A

<p>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.</p>	<p>No</p>			
<p>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.</p>	<p>No</p>			
<p>Decision (Please tick one option)</p>	<p>EIA not relevant or proportionate:</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>Continue to full EIA:</p>	
<p>Reason for decision</p>	<p>This screening relates to a report on progress on several ongoing projects. Should any of these projects be further developed, a full EIA will be undertaken at the appropriate stage of scheme development.</p>			
<p>Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)</p>	<p>Karl Battersby</p>			
<p>Date</p>	<p>31/08/2023</p>			

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	Harrogate and Knaresborough Area Constituency Committee: Harrogate Transport Projects
Brief description of proposal	The report updates the ACC on progress on three projects in the Harrogate area.
Directorate	Environment
Service area	Network Strategy
Lead officer	Louise Anne Neale
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	Rebecca Gibson, Senior Transport Planning Officer
Date impact assessment started	24.08.23

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.

These projects are part of the ongoing studies undertaken by the transport planning team. The update will give members information on the current stage of scheme development, and potential next steps. Optioneering forms part of the project development process and potential options will be considered if the schemes move forwards.

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.

These projects are part of the ongoing, agreed workload of the transport planning team.

<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>	<p>Emissions from travel</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>This report is providing an update on three projects. More detailed assessment of environmental impacts will be undertaken at the appropriate stage should the projects progress further.</p>		

Appendix B

How will this proposal impact on the environment?		Positive impact <small>(Place a X in the box below where relevant)</small>	No impact <small>(Place a X in the box below where relevant)</small>	Negative impact <small>(Place a X in the box below where relevant)</small>	Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale? Where possible/relevant please include: <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 	Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.	Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.
	Emissions from construction		x		As above		
	Emissions from running of buildings		x		As above		
	Other		n/a				
Minimise waste : Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic			X		As above		
Reduce water consumption			X		As above		
Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise)			x		As above		

Appendix B

How will this proposal impact on the environment? 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.	Positive impact <small>(Place a X in the box below where relevant)</small>	No impact <small>(Place a X in the box below where relevant)</small>	Negative impact <small>(Place a X in the box below where relevant)</small>	Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale? Where possible/relevant please include: <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 	Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.	Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.
Ensure resilience to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers		X		As above		
Enhance conservation and wildlife		X		As above		
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of North Yorkshire's landscape		X		As above		
Other (please state below)						

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

This report sets out progress to date on three transport planning projects. Should these project progress further, each will be required to undertake a range of impact assessments appropriate to the scale of the project, and these will be documented as part of the scheme development.

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.

There are limited findings from this CCIA because the assessment is of a report which is predominantly setting out progress to date and next steps on a number of ongoing transport planning projects. Appropriate impact assessments will be undertaken in due course.

Sign off section

This climate change impact assessment was completed by:

Name	Rebecca Gibson
Job title	Senior Transport Planning Officer - Projects
Service area	Network Strategy
Directorate	Highways and Transportation
Signature	Rebecca E Gibson
Completion date	24.08.23

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature): Karl Battersby

Date: 31/08/2023