

North Yorkshire Council

Environment Executive Members

17 November 2025

Proposed Traffic Regulation Order for Harrogate Town Centre

Report of the Assistant Director – Highways and Infrastructure

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1. To advise the Corporate Director for Environment in consultation with the Executive Member for Highways and Transportation of the outcome of the public consultation and statutory advertisement which took place to introduce a Traffic Regulation Order to facilitate the Harrogate Transforming Cities Fund (TCF) project proposals.
- 1.2. A decision from the Corporate Director for Environment in consultation with the Executive Member for Highways and Transportation is sought regarding whether to proceed with the making of the Order in view of the comments received.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1. North Yorkshire Council has been awarded funding from the Government's Transforming Cities Fund (Harrogate TCF) to deliver an infrastructure project that will improve sustainable travel in Harrogate Town Centre. The proposals will:
 - Provide better bus access into the bus station with a new bus lane on Station Parade,
 - Introduce cycling infrastructure between Bower Road and Station Bridge,
 - Improve pedestrian accessibility with raised table crossing points,
 - Improve pedestrian and vehicle movements with linked signals,
 - Retain two motor vehicles lanes between the bus and railway stations, and
 - Improve the public realm at One Arch and Station Square
- 2.2. It is necessary to introduce new Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) to allow for these improvements. It is common practice for the TRO process to be commenced ahead of major projects receiving full funding to ensure that necessary measures can be enabled so that the project will function appropriately. At full business case stage (January 2024) the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) appraised the scheme and set out a condition that, prior to 'approval to proceed', the council must 'provide a progress update on the TRO consultation'. It is, therefore, prudent to update on the consultations carried out in relation to the proposed TRO and to seek decisions where appropriate in order that reassurance can be provided to WYCA that this element is progressing in tandem with the project and funding approvals.
- 2.3. The 'Parking & Waiting' TRO that is the subject matter of this report was previously advertised in July 2024. After considering the responses received the Council decided not to introduce the proposals at the southern extent of Station Parade between Station Bridge and Victoria Avenue nor a loading bay at the north-east side of (Lower/North) Station Parade. An incorrect description was also provided. Consequently, a decision was taken in December 2024 to re-advertise an amended TRO.

Proposals & Recommendations Summary

- 2.4 Consultation proposals are shown in Appendix A. They consist of - Alteration to existing layout to amend provisions on/adjacent to Station Parade; this includes amendments to:
- Waiting restrictions at various points along the extent of Station Parade and behind James Street and Princes Street.
 - Loading Restrictions at peak times on Station Parade Central
 - Designated areas for loading and unloading on the Eastern side of Station Parade North and Western side of Station Parade South
 - Accessible Bays – removal from Station Parade Central and South with redistribution along the extent of Station Parade
 - Designated Parking Bays – revocation of existing arrangements and new designations in Station Parade North and South.
- 2.4.1 Details can be found at Appendix A.
- 2.5 An Order proposing changes to parking and waiting along Station Parade was previously advertised in July 2024. Following consultation feedback, the Order required modifying as a consequence of removing the loading bay on Station Parade North from the proposals and removing the proposed amendments to Station Parade South. An incorrect description was also provided.

3.0 CONSULTATION

- 3.1 The proposals have been the subject of consultation and public advertisement in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. The enabling Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) was advertised for public comment in the local press, published on North Yorkshire Council's website and by means of a legal notice placed on the relevant street in accordance with the requirements of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations. The TRO was advertised for public comment on 28 August 2025. The last date for receipt of objections was 19 September 2025.
- 3.2 In this instance the proposed order was first consulted upon in 2024. Following representations made it was decided to modify the earlier proposed order and the procedure followed complied with Regulation 14 of [Local Authorities' Traffic Orders \(Procedure\) Regulations](#). Officers are satisfied that consultation has been carried out in accordance with all legal requirements.
- 3.3 Under the Council's Constitution Scheme of Delegation to Officers Para 8.3 (a) (i) and (ii) the consideration of objections has been delegated by the Executive to the Corporate Director of Environment in consultation with the Executive Member. Where an objection is received from any person or body entitled under the relevant statute this must be considered prior to any decision being taken. In some cases a TRO can be classed as a 'wide area impact TRO' where it satisfies all three criteria set out below.
- The proposal affects more than one street or road, and
 - The proposal affects more than one community, and
 - The proposal is located within the ward of more than one Councillor.
- 3.4 In this case the proposal does not meet the criteria for a wide area impact TRO because it is located within the ward of one Councillor only. Therefore, in accordance with the constitution it is not necessary to consult the Area Committee.

4.0 RESPONSES, OBJECTIONS AND OFFICER COMMENTS

- 4.1 25 responses were received regarding the proposed readvertised TRO (see comments and responses at Appendix B). After considering the comments received, Officers recommend proceeding with making of the Order as advertised. The proposals have been formed in order to facilitate a project that will improve the environment for sustainable travel choices whilst, as far as possible, mitigating any detrimental impact on other highway users. Whilst a reduction in pay and display parking is proposed, this is considered proportionate given that there is more than adequate parking in the town centre.
- 4.2 In accordance with the protocol for Environment Executive Member reports, the Local Elected Member will be provided with a copy of this report and be invited to the decision meeting.

5.0 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE ORDER SOUGHT:

- 5.1 This section of the report seeks to justify whether the proposed order satisfies what is known as a 'qualifying purpose' and then whether it is expedient for the Council to make the Order in light of the objections that have been received. As part of this process the Council must consider its duty under Section 122 of the 1984 Act. The Order will seek to deliver a scheme which will provide improved infrastructure for those walking, cycling and for bus passengers.
- 5.2 The first question is whether the TRO which delivers these proposals would meet one or more of the qualifying purposes under s.1 (1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 ('the 1984 Act'). A local authority has powers to make a TRO where it appears expedient to make it on one or more of the following grounds: -
- (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, or
 - (b) for preventing damage to the road or to any building on or near the road, or
 - (c) for facilitating the passage on the road or any other road of any class of traffic (including pedestrians), or
 - (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, or
 - (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; or
 - (g) for any of the purposes specified in paragraphs (a) to (c) of subsection (1) of Section 87 of the Environment Act 1995 (air quality).
- 5.3 The North Yorkshire Council (Harrogate, Knaresborough, Pannal and Burn Bridge) (Prohibition of Waiting and Loading and Provision of Parking) (Amendment No ## (TBC once the order is sealed)) Modification Order 2025 would meet the following purposes.
- 5.4 Amending waiting restrictions, on-street parking (including accessible bays) and revoking previous TROs. This will reduce on street parking but will allow for the improvement of the area through which the road runs in line with ground (f). It will also prevent vehicles parking in areas and at times that could impact the flow of traffic and otherwise potentially create danger to persons or other traffic using the road and impede passage on the road; in accordance with ground (a). The proposals will introduce a better distribution of accessible parking along Station Parade that will allow people with a disability to park safely and closer to their destination. It will also allow for improved amenities in the area in the form of a bus lane facilitating the passage on the road for buses and enabling the provision of wider footways and planting, improving the amenities for pedestrians using the area in line with grounds(c) and(f).

- 5.5 Removing and designating loading bays. This will prevent vehicles parking in areas and at times that could impact the flow of traffic and otherwise potentially create danger to persons or other traffic using the road and impede passage on the road which clearly falls within grounds (a) and (c). The removal of the loading bays along central Station Parade will maintain two lanes of traffic flow so facilitating the passage of traffic in line with ground (c). The introduction of the two loading bays North and South will serve to prevent vehicles from having to stop in the carriageway thereby avoiding danger to persons or other traffic using the road in line with ground (a). It will also allow for improved amenities in the area – in this instance a cycle lane along central Station Parade and wider pedestrian footways in accordance with ground (f).
- 5.6 Prohibiting loading/unloading between 7:30am to 9:30am and 4:00pm to 6:00pm and revoking previous TROs. This will ensure loading/parking in areas and at times that will not impact the flow of traffic on Station Parade Central so will avoid creating danger to persons or other traffic using the road and impede passage on the road in line with ground (a) and facilitate passage on the road in accordance with ground (c)
- 5.7 Taking into account the above, Officers are therefore satisfied that the TRO would meet several qualifying purposes under the 1984 Act. The second question that this section of the report needs to consider is whether it is expedient for the TRO to be made. The benefits of the TRO proposals are that they will create improved infrastructure for all road users by making better use of available highway space in the interests of balancing the needs of all vehicles (including buses) pedestrians and cyclists. The TRO enables this by re-organising parking and waiting in a way that makes highway space available for pedestrians, cyclists and buses. Currently the highway arrangements prioritise the private motor vehicle above other users – in order to re-balance this priority, mitigation is also required to maintain the expeditious safe and convenient movement of these private vehicles through the network and the proposals seek to achieve this re-balancing.
- 5.8 The proposals have been formed in order to facilitate a project that will improve the environment for sustainable travel choices whilst, as far as possible, mitigating any detrimental impact on other highway users. Whilst a reduction in pay and display parking is proposed, this is considered proportionate given that there is more than adequate parking in close proximity to Station Parade and the town centre. While this is a decision concerning a specific TRO (and not the wider scheme) it is noted that objectors have raised issues around the impact on the local economy as well as businesses in Station Parade and so it is appropriate for Officers to deal with them here for completeness in addition to the responses to the objections in Appendix B. There are economic and social benefits that the wider scheme will deliver such as supporting inclusive growth through enabling enhanced accessibility for working-age people to opportunities in Harrogate Town and beyond through tackling first and last mile connectivity issues – particularly for those who do not own a car. Six of the LSOAs (Lower Super Output Areas) within a Harrogate study area boundary, rank among the third most deprived of areas in the country; all are within a 20-minute cycle ride of the Station Gateway scheme area. The scheme links to a wider strategic plan of active travel interventions which will improve linkages between the largest residential areas of the town to job and education opportunities. Retail vacancy rates and numbers of units suggests that the town centre retail sector is at risk of decline in the medium term. Consumer behaviours and expectations are evolving, and towns must diversify and advance to maintain healthy and vibrant visitor economies. The TRO and wider scheme is seeking to do just this. The scheme contributes to sustainable and inclusive economic development in Harrogate. According to DfT guidance, the scheme has been appraised as follows:

- Present Value Benefits (PVB): £5.88 million.
- Present Value Costs (PVC): £5.13 million.
- Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR): 1.2 – categorised as low value for money, but with significant non-monetised benefits including:
 - Public realm improvements (£1.78 million).
 - Rail revenue uplift (£965,000).
 - Accident reduction (£135,000).
 - Noise and air quality improvements (£13,000).

5.9 The Council has carefully considered the objections received and potential disadvantages that are alleged to arise from the TRO. Detailed consideration and response is provided at Appendix B which should be considered as part of the justification for the TRO. Representations have identified that the loss of parking bays would impact businesses immediately adjacent. It is right to note that there will be a loss, however, whilst Officers recognise the importance of parking for Station Parade and other town centre businesses, from the mid-point of Station Parade (North) it takes three minutes to walk to a multi-story car park, which can accommodate parking. The TRO is not restricting loading on the north-east section of Station Parade North and is also introducing accessible parking at that location. The bus lane that the removal of the parking will facilitate seeks to improve conditions for public transport and meets a number of local policy objectives. Whilst there will be impacts for some businesses in terms of parking in their immediate vicinity, the benefit for public transport and alternative available parking is considered by Officers to be proportionate justification.

5.10 Furthermore, Officers consider that the proposed measures and recommendations set out in this report will support local travel improvements and wider strategic aims in accordance with the aims of the Transforming Cities Fund initiative. It will enable the Council to comply with its duty under Section 122 (1) of the Road Traffic Act 1984 to exercise their functions as road traffic authority so as to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of vehicular and other traffic (including pedestrians), as set out in the Statements of Reasons for proposing to make the Order attached to this report (see Appendix C). This includes consideration of all the specific factors set out at s.122 (2) including the desirability of securing and maintaining reasonable access to premises (which officers are satisfied that the TRO would for the reasons set out above). The proposed measures will also enable the Council to carry out its network management duty under Section 16 of the Traffic Management Act 2004 to secure the expeditious movement of traffic on the authority's road network and both the more efficient use and the avoidance, elimination or reduction of road congestion or other disruption to the movement of traffic on their road network.

5.11 A recent Road Safety Audit on the final designs of the wider Harrogate Town Centre scheme identified 10 problems and subsequent recommendations. While this is a decision concerning a specific TRO (and not the wider scheme) it is noted that objectors have raised safety concerns and so it is appropriate for Officers to deal with them here for completeness. Officers met with the designers to discuss the Audit and agree a response. Of the 10 recommendations, one had been resolved by a reduction in scope, seven were rejected and two were accepted (relating to road markings). A report outlining the problems, recommendations and the designer's response can be found at Appendix D. The designs are considered to be safe for all users and, in this respect, improve conditions for active modes. By way of example, pedestrian safety and accessibility has been improved through the incorporation of:

- New areas of dropped kerbs with tactiles
- Speed tables around the crossing points, reducing vehicle speed approaches
- For the proposed rain gardens there are kerbs surrounding them in line with Inclusive Mobility requirements
- Crossings and Ladder and tramline paving improved
- Crossing distances reduced in most locations
- Waiting times reduced at crossing signals

- Tonal differences in primary paving areas with the Yorkstone flags and Granite Kerbs
- Footway widths not <1.5m, mostly around 2m in line with the inclusive mobility guidance.

5.12 Additionally, both the West Yorkshire Combined Authority Quality Panel and a local resident previously raised a concern regarding the omission of signalised early release of cyclists at the Cheltenham Parade/Station Parade/bus station junction. This was considered an opportunity lost.

5.13 The designs followed the guidance given in LTN 1/20 concerning provision of facilities for cyclists. Paragraphs 10.6.39, 10.6.43 and 10.6.44 of LTN 1/20 are particularly key as to the interaction between the signalling and the wider cycling provision that makes an early release inappropriate at the bus station junctions. In this design, although the existing Advanced Stop Lines (ASL) have been retained, they do not meet the design criteria set in LTN 1/20. For this reason, Low Level Cycle Signals (LLCS) have not been included and the opportunity for early release of cyclists cannot be introduced.

5.14 ASLs should only be considered to meet the full accessibility needs of people on a junction (where) the approach is on green for no more than 30% of the cycle time (and) there is a nearside protected route to the ASL that is of sufficient width to accommodate the cycle design vehicle. Unfortunately, neither of these criteria are met at the approaches to the bus station. It should, however, be noted that cyclists will already be on the correct side of the road to merge with the segregated cycle lane and the advisory road markings will guide the cyclist to this lane. In this regard, conditions are improved for cycling safety compared to the existing arrangement. Where the designs have been able to provide appropriate infrastructure on approach (e.g. at Station Bridge and the crossing at the bus station exit) LLCS's are provided.

6.0 EQUALITIES

6.1 Consideration has been given to the potential for any equality impacts arising from the recommendation as part of the Council's Public Sector Equality Duty under s.149 of the Equality Act 2010. An objection was previously raised as to the removal of disabled parking spaces next to the opticians on Station Parade. However, blue badge holders are still able to park next to the premises (on double yellow lines) for up to 3 hours outside of the loading restriction times. To mitigate against the loss of these disabled parking bays it is proposed to introduce three disabled parking bays within the car park that is around 80 metres away from the existing bays. The total number of disabled parking bays within the scheme extent remains the same but are distributed more evenly over the area. The Harrogate Disability Forum were consulted on this approach and had no objections. Furthermore, an Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out in relation to the wider scheme to ensure that the Council has the information required to have due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out at s.149 of the Act. It is the view of officers that although the recommendation could have an adverse impact on one of the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010 this is mitigated and a copy of the Equalities Impact Assessment is attached as Appendix E. As the scheme progresses equality issues will continue to be a consideration and impacts will be monitored

7.0 FINANCE

7.1 The cost of advertising the Traffic Regulation Order is estimated at approximately £1,500, which has been funded by the TCF Project budget.

8.0 LEGAL

- 8.1 In the event that the Corporate Director for Environment in consultation with the Executive Member resolve to follow the recommendations contained in this report, then in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 (the Regulations), the Council will be required to make the relevant Traffic Regulation Orders (with or without modifications) and publish a notice of making the Orders in the local press before the Orders come into operation. The Council will also be required to notify the objectors of its decision and the reasons for making that decision within 14 days of the Order being made. Where the Council proposes to modify an Order which has been subject to consultation and those modifications appear to make a substantial change to the Order the Council has to follow the Regulation 14 of the Regulations which requires informing persons likely to be affected by the modifications and giving those persons an opportunity to make representations.
- 8.2 Where an Order has been made (i.e. sealed), if any person wishes to question the validity of the Order or any of its provisions on the grounds that it or they are not within the powers conferred by the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, or that any requirement of the 1984 Act or of any instrument made under the 1984 Act has not been complied with, they may apply to the High Court within six weeks from the date on which the Order is made.
- 8.3 Under Regulation 18 of the Regulations there is a requirement for the necessary traffic signs to be in place before a TRO comes into force. Whilst there is a clear backstop that a failure to accord with this requirement will simply mean the TRO is not effective/enforceable until this is rectified (**Heron v Parking Adjudicator** [2011] EWCA Civ 905), the Council believes it prudent to give sufficient time for such signs to be erected. In the event that the making of the TRO is approved the TRO would be made immediately, but it will not come into force until 01 July 2026 which is when Officers believe that traffic signs will be in place.
- 8.4 In recommending the implementation of the proposed TRO, officers consider that it will enable the Council to comply with its duties under Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and Section 16 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.

9.0 CONSIDERATION OF HOLDING A PUBLIC INQUIRY

- 9.1 Regulation 9 of the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 outlines the circumstances in which the Council would be required to hold a Public Inquiry. The current proposals do not include permanent restrictions on loading and unloading, or other elements which would make it a requirement to hold a public inquiry before a decision on the TRO's is taken. The mandatory requirements for a public inquiry under Regulation 9 are therefore not met.
- 9.2 However, there is still a discretion under Regulation 9 to hold a public inquiry regardless of the mandatory triggers not being met. The Council must therefore consider whether to exercise that discretion.
- 9.3 In this case a relatively small number of objections has been received although some of the objections raise a number of issues, including the loss of parking and the impact on the economy and community. Officers have considered these issues and responded in Appendix B. It is the Officers view that the TRO and wider scheme will bring significant benefits to Harrogate and meets numerous local, regional and national policy objectives. The holding of a Public Inquiry would need to be resourced and would result in a delay to the order. This in turn could impact on the Council's ability to progress the project. The detailed objections that have been made have been with regard to the proposed TRO considered fully as part of this report. In the circumstances it is considered that in taking into account the number of objections, their nature and the scope of the proposals together with the resource and potential for the impact of delay on the project (and its funding

parameters) it would not be proportionate or appropriate to hold a Public Inquiry in respect of the Order.

10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 Consideration has also been given to the potential for any adverse Climate Change impacts arising from the recommendation. A full carbon assessment was undertaken for the larger TCF scheme that examined the universal impact of all project elements (including public realm) many of which are not the subject of the TRO decision. As with all highway infrastructure projects, the embodied carbon impact from construction derives an overall negative impact however, in this case, the council is seeking to offset that impact by encouraging a shift to more sustainable modes of travel. It is the view of Officers that the recommendations related to TRO do not have an adverse impact on Climate Change and a copy of the Climate Change Impact Assessment decision form is attached as Appendix F.

11.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 It is recommended that: -

- i) The results of the consultation exercise are noted.
The Corporate Director, Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member for Highways and Transportation, does not consider a Public Inquiry is appropriate for the reasons set out in para 10.1 and 10.2 above and approves the making of the TRO to come into force on 1st July 2026.
- ii) That the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) be authorised to seal the relevant Traffic Regulation Order by the Corporate Director, Environment in consultation with the Executive Member for Highways and Transportation in light of the objections received and that the objectors are notified within 14 days of the order being made.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Proposed TRO locations
Appendix B - Summary of comments received and officer response
Appendix C – Statement of reasons
Appendix D – Road Safety Audit
Appendix E – Equality Impact Assessment Screening
Appendix F – Climate Change Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: Letters/ Emails objecting to the proposals, as outlined in this report are held in the scheme files held by the Harrogate Area 6 Highways Office.

- [Harrogate Transforming Cities Fund - North \(pdf / 2 MB\)](#)
- [Harrogate Transforming Cities Fund - Centre \(pdf / 3 MB\)](#)
- [Harrogate Transforming Cities Fund - South \(pdf / 2 MB\)](#)
- [Harrogate Transforming Cities Fund – One Arch \(pdf / 1 MB\)](#)
- [Full Business Case August 2025 \(pdf / 4 MB\)](#)
- [Report to Environment Executive Members \(December 2024\)](#)
- High Court Judgement of Mr C M G Ockelton in the case of A&E Baines and The North Yorkshire Council (August 2025)
- [Impacts of parking and accessibility on retail-oriented city centres](#) Laura Merten & Tobias Kuhnimhof
- [Town Centre Recovery Post Covid](#) Parking Perspectives
- [Do Parking Charges Drive Success? Evaluating the Impact of Parking Fees on Town Centres](#) Rob Leet
- [The relevance of parking in the success of urban centres. A review for London Councils](#) Sophie Tyler, Giles Semper Peter Guest & Ben Fieldhouse
- [The conundrum of the car park](#) Uma Saranya Kesavan

- [Why fewer \(polluting\) cars in cities are good news for local shops. A review of evidence: impact of low emission zones and other “Urban Vehicle Access Regulations” on retail in European cities](#) CleanCities
- [Re-Think! Parking on the High Street Guidance on Parking Provision in Town and City Centres](#) British Parking Association
- [Impact of Parking on Town Centre Retail](#) Parking Perspectives
-

BARRIE MASON

Assistant Director – Highways & Infrastructure, Environment Directorate

Author of Report: Matt Roberts, Economic & Regeneration Project Manager

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