

Decision Session
Executive Member for Transport & Planning

14 July 2016

Report of the Director of City and Environmental Services

**Revisions to the Strategic Cycle Route Network Evaluation and
Prioritisation Methodology**

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Executive Member on revisions to the current methodology used for evaluating and prioritising the strategic cycle route network. The updated methodology will be used to identify future schemes to be investigated and delivered as part of the Transport Capital Programme.

Recommendations

2. The Executive Member is asked to note and approve the amendments to the methodology for the evaluation and prioritisation of the strategic cycle route network.

Reason: To enable the revised methodology, network and prioritised list of schemes to be adopted as council policy and to become part of the emerging Local Plan.

Timescale: The new methodology is proposed to be used from 2016/17 onwards.

Background

3. The current proposed strategic cycle route network, including the associated prioritised list of schemes to deliver it, were approved by the Cabinet Member for Transport, Planning and Sustainability on the 13th March 2013.
4. In the period since the network and prioritised list of schemes were first adopted an internal Transport Board has been established whose remit is to oversee and manage the delivery of strategic transport schemes across the city area covering all modes of transport.

5. The starting point for effective management of schemes is to ensure that the limited transport funds are allocated to projects which deliver the greatest benefit.
6. In recent years many local transport authorities have adopted a superhighway-type approach to planning cycle networks to mirror the equivalent road networks and to acknowledge that cycling is a realistic mode of transport for many shorter journeys and that many cyclists do not necessarily want to take long diversions to avoid busy road corridors. The provision of a direct, strategic network has benefits to both the national and local economy in terms of reduced levels of congestion and traffic-related air pollution and to individuals in terms of improvements to their health, safety on the roads and financially in terms of savings made in transport costs.
7. Whilst York's current strategic cycle route network does comprise many longer routes it can be very difficult to identify and to appreciate the strategic importance of many of the missing links. In order to make identification of the most critical missing links easier the network has been broken down into individual strategic routes. The majority of these routes form the radial links into the city centre from surrounding villages and the outskirts of the urban area. Other strategic routes, for example the Orbital Cycle Route, link up many radial routes without the need to travel anywhere near the city centre. The remainder of the network is made up of other minor links. An overall schematic plan of the strategic cycle network for the city is provided in Annex A
8. The main strategic routes proposed to be used in the prioritisation methodology are listed in the table below:

No.	Name of Strategic Route
1	Wigginton to City Centre via Wigginton Road & Haxby
2	Haxby to City Centre via Haxby Road & Bootham Stray
3	Strensall to City Centre via Huntington Rd & Foss Towpath
4	Hopgrove to City Centre via Malton Road
5	Stockton on the Forest to City Centre via Stockton Lane
6	Stamford Bridge to City Centre via NCN66 / 658 & DVLR
7	Dunnington to City Centre via A1079
8	Elvington & Wheldrake to City Centre via Heslington
9	Escrick & Naburn to City Centre via A19 & riverside paths
10	Selby to City Centre via NCN65

11	Acaster Malbis to City Centre via Bishopthorpe
No.	Name of Strategic Route
12	Tadcaster & Copmanthorpe to City Centre via Tadcaster Rd
13	Askham Richard & Askham Bryan to City Centre via Acomb
14	Askham Bryan to City Centre via Woodthorpe / Foxwood / Holgate / York Station
15	Rufforth to City Centre via Knapton / Acomb
16	Hessay & Poppleton to City Centre via A59
17	Acomb to City Centre via off-road and quiet roads
18	Beningbrough to City Centre via NCN65 / 658
19	Skelton to City Centre via A19
20	Clifton Moor to City Centre via Clifton and Wigginton Rd
21	Orbital Cycle Route
22	Outer Orbital Cycle Route
23	Racecourse to City Centre via South Bank / Bishophill
24	New Earswick to Monks Cross
25	Tang Hall to Millennium Bridge via NCN66
26	York Station to York Hospital

9. All of the strategic routes have been broken down into discrete, deliverable links. The Dunnington to City Centre route is provided as an example in Annex B. Each of these links has been colour-coded to indicate whether cycle facilities are currently in place or not using a red, amber, green traffic light-type system (see Annex B). Routes shown in green are already in existence and are of satisfactory quality, those shown in amber are in existence but need some improvement to bring them up to current design standards, and finally, those shown in red do not currently exist.
10. The existing methodology includes scores for a variety of factors including whether the route serves important destinations such as the City Centre, Major Employers, Shops etc. There are also added value factors such as tackling safety, overcoming barriers etc.
11. The new methodology continues to use the majority of the same factors as the original, however, a couple of new factors have also been taken into consideration. These are;
 - the number of strategic routes the link contributes towards, and;

- whether those strategic routes are near to completion.

These new factors will enable the routes which have the highest strategic importance to be identified and also those which are the most urgent because they are the final missing links on a specific route (see Annex C for the revised prioritised list of schemes).

Consultation

12. Separate consultation on the revised methodology has not been undertaken as it is considered that the changes follow the principles of the original methodology. The key change is how proposed cycle schemes will be justified and presented in future reports to the Executive Member.
13. Other aspects of cycling policy, including cycle parking, will be reviewed and brought forward separately to a future Executive Member Decision Session.

Options & Analysis

14. The Executive Member has the option to either continue with the existing policy or approve the proposed changes to the prioritisation methodology. The additional criteria added to the methodology will mean that resources will be directed towards schemes which will have the highest benefit for the residents of the city.

Council Plan

15. Considering this matter contributes to the following Council corporate priorities and their constituent aims, as set out in the Council Plan 2015-19:

A prosperous city for all

- *Efficient and affordable transport links enable residents and businesses to access key services and opportunities –*
A more joined-up cycle route network which connects surrounding villages, suburbs and the city centre via continuous cycle routes will give more residents travel opportunities which they may not currently consider appropriate.
- *Environmental sustainability underpins everything we do –*
cycling is one of the most sustainable forms of transport and is second only to walking in terms of its environmental impact.

- *Everyone who lives in the city can enjoy its unique heritage and range of activities* – connecting residential areas with leisure destinations by providing the appropriate cycle routes gives residents more travel options and reduces their reliance on motorised transport.
- *Visitors, businesses and residents are impressed with the quality of our city* – provision of an extensive cycle route network has the potential to give the city a more continental feel and reductions in traffic levels and congestion will reduce car-dominance.

A focus on frontline services

- *All York's residents live and thrive in a city which allows them to contribute fully to their communities and neighbourhoods* – providing residents with a continuous safe cycle route network makes cycling a realistic travel choice for many journeys in the city.
- *Everyone has access to opportunities regardless of their background* – cycle networks are a great leveller and have the potential to link all parts of the city equally. Cycling is a very cheap form of travel which many residents can access. Providing a safe, continuous network will draw in many more potential users than the current disjointed network.
- *Every child has the opportunity to get the best possible start in life* – provision of a safe network will encourage parents to let their children cycle for many journeys, safe in the knowledge that they will not be vulnerable. Cycling has the potential to improve the health of children and reductions in congestion also have positive impacts on local air quality.
- *Residents are encouraged and supported to live healthily* – provision of a continuous, safe cycle network, which links all residential areas will give residents a healthy option for their journeys within the city. Links beyond the Outer Ring Road to surrounding villages and beyond into the surrounding countryside will help encourage cycling as a leisure activity. As above, any reductions in traffic and congestion will have positive impacts on air quality.
- *Residents are protected from harm, with a low risk of crime* – provision of a safe cycle network will reduce the potential danger at junctions, roundabouts and across the city. Higher levels of cycling also help to raise awareness of the presence of cyclists and lower traffic speeds.

Higher levels of use of more remote cycle routes will help discourage crime on or alongside them.

A council that listens to residents

- *Focus on cost and efficiency to make the right decisions in a challenging financial environment* – Evidence shows that cycle facilities provide much higher cost to benefit ratios than facilities for motorised transport especially in terms of the health benefits. Investment in cycle route networks delivers many types of benefit including improved air quality, traffic reduction, reduced congestion, improved health and improved road safety.
- *Celebrate and champion the diversity of our population and encourage everyone to play an active role in the city* – cycling is an activity that many residents can enjoy irrespective of their gender, age, ethnic group and abilities. Cycling can help break down barriers in terms of disability with adapted cycles becoming more widely available. Several groups have been started across the city in the past few years which encourage older people back into cycling or target groups such as women or people with young children.

Implications

16. **Financial** : There are no financial implications of the recommendations. The new prioritisation methodology will only influence the choice of schemes to deliver within specified budgets.

Human Resources (HR) : There are no HR implications

Equalities : There are no Equalities implications other than the potential increase in transport options available to residents as a result of future expansion of the strategic cycle route network.

Legal : There are no Legal implications

Crime and Disorder : There are no Crime and Disorder implications

Information Technology (IT) : There are no IT implications

Property : There are no Property implications.

Other : There are no other implications

Risk Management

17. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy there are no risks associated with the recommendations in this report.

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Report
Approved



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2016

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes

Annex A – Schematic Map of York's Strategic Cycle Route Network

Annex B – Colour-Coded Plan of a Specific Strategic Route -
Dunnington to City Centre via A1079

Annex C – Revised prioritised list of schemes using the new scoring
criteria