

Meeting:	Executive Member Decision Session
Meeting date:	12/3/24
Report of:	Corporate Director of Place
Portfolio of:	Executive Member for Transport

Decision Report: Active Travel Programme – Badger Hill Scheme

Subject of Report

1. As part of the Active Travel Programme, feasibility work has been completed for the 'Badger Hill Active Travel Scheme'. This report presents the proposed scheme and seeks a decision to progress to detailed design and delivery.

Benefits and Challenges

2. If implemented this scheme would provide improvements to safety for pedestrians and cyclists travelling in the vicinity of Badger Hill Primary School through clarification of crossing points and reducing the impact of traffic.

Policy Basis for Decision

3. The proposed scheme will encourage active travel and promote the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. The scheme is therefore directly related to the Council Plan, specifically Priority d) Transport: Sustainable, accessible transport for all.
4. This scheme also relates to the Climate Change Strategy objective 3.2 which is about increasing take-up of active travel and reducing overall car usage through alternative modes of transport, public transport and car sharing.

5. This scheme has also been developed with consideration of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) Scoping Report.

Financial Strategy Implications

6. This scheme is funded through a Department for Transport Active Travel Fund grant, awarded in March 2022.
7. The preliminary cost estimates for the implementation of the scheme are below:

Feasibility work (already incurred)	£26,459
CYC internal costs (already incurred)	£8452
Further design & development	£24,405
Construction	£40,675
Risk contingency (25%)	£16,270
Total	£116,260

8. £200k of funding was awarded by Active Travel England to deliver this scheme and another similar scheme at Clifton Green. Feasibility is not yet complete for the Clifton Green scheme, however that scheme will be developed on an understanding that the budget available will be £200k minus the costs incurred on this scheme.

Recommendation and Reasons

9. The Executive is asked to:

Approve Option 1 – Approve the scheme option presented in this report and visually represented in Annex A, and proceed to detailed design and construction.

Reason: This proposal achieves the scheme objectives, enhancing the local environment for pedestrian and cyclists and de-prioritising motor vehicle traffic and discouraging parent parking on verge areas during school drop-off and pick-up times. The scheme falls within the available budget.

Background

10. The Active Travel Programme aims to improve the amenity and safety of active travel forms such as walking and cycling, promoting the adoption of healthier, more environmentally friendly travel.
11. The mandate for this project derives from a bid to the government for 'Active Travel Fund' support. This scheme aims to improve the streets and walking / cycling routes in the immediate vicinity of a primary schools to encourage more parents to walk or cycle their children to school.
12. The project outline for this scheme and progression through Feasibility was approved in an Executive Member Decision in July 2022. Now the feasibility work has been completed, the next step is to gain approval to progress to detailed design and construction.

Consultation Analysis

13. In addition to an internal consultation, an electronic consultation has been carried out with local ward councillors for Hull Road ward and external stakeholders. Targeted external stakeholders included residents and businesses on and in the immediate vicinity of the crossing site, parents and staff associated with the Badger Hill Primary School, transport groups, equalities groups and industry bodies. Refer to Annex B for a full summary of the consultation responses received.

Consultation Commentary

14. It was expressed that the addition of trees within the verges would not only improve the amenity of the street, but would also slow traffic down due to the 'perceived restriction due to vertical elements' and prevent parking on verges. Sites clear of over and underground services would have to be identified during Detailed Design, in order to successfully plant new trees. Retaining visibility for drivers and avoiding subsequent root damage to footways would also need attention.
15. It was noted however that increasing the number of 'obstacles' (in the form of trees and bollards) would negatively impact the ease of maintenance of the grass verges.

16. Additional leaf-litter from the trees may cause a hazard for pedestrians and cyclists.
17. The placement of the 2D speed cushions near driveways may result in increased wear from tyre movement, and therefore increased need for maintenance in future.
18. Clarifying crossings through the use of fencing may result in pedestrian bottlenecks at peak times.
19. Qualitative responses indicate that as the issues with traffic are only at school drop-off/pick-up times, a time-specific resolution would be preferred.
20. There was concern expressed that the new bollards may cause problems for medical care reaching residents.
21. 20% of respondents answered that 'Perception of safety' in the area prevented them from walking/cycling at present, and 44% rated existing conditions for pedestrians as 'Fair' or 'Poor'. 53% rated existing conditions for cyclists as 'Fair' or 'Poor'.
22. For all design features proposed, the majority of respondents (ranging from 55%-67% depending on the feature) 'Agreed' or 'Strongly Agreed' that the features would encourage them to walk/cycle more often.
23. 49% of respondents 'Agreed' or 'Strongly Agreed' that they would support and personally benefit from the implementation of the scheme. However, 30% of respondents 'Disagreed' or 'Strongly Disagreed' with the statement. 17% 'Agreed' or 'Strongly Agreed' that they would be personally negatively affected by the installation of the scheme.
24. Officers have engaged directly with Active Travel England, and are awaiting a formal response giving their position regarding the scheme. Though this has yet to be received, it is not expected that it will highlight anything other than what is already presented within this report.

Options Analysis and Evidential Basis

25. The following options are available:
26. Option 1 - Approve the proposed scheme presented in this report and proceed to detailed design and construction.
27. Option 2 – Do not approve the proposed scheme presented within this report. Redefine the scope of the scheme to consider alternative solutions.

Analysis (Option 1)

Description of Changes

28. The proposed scheme includes the following features (please see Annex A for visual representation):
29. Replacement of existing and introduction of additional bollards to prevent verge side parking
30. Sections of low-level fencing around Badger Hill Primary School entrance junction to encourage crossing at existing uncontrolled crossing locations.
31. 1057 markings / school markings / 2D speed tables and additional signage
32. Additional 'School slow down' signage
33. Tree planting on verges for pedestrian amenity

Reasoning

34. Surveys carried out during CYC's preliminary work indicate a high frequency of illegal parking near the Badger Hill Primary school entrance. The introduction of additional bollards, trees and fencing will help prevent this.

35. Traffic speeds in the area commonly exceed the 20mph speed limit. Further traffic calming measures and signage would further reduce speeds near the school entrance.
36. Significant numbers of pedestrians cross the road at unofficial crossing points, making their movements harder to predict by passing traffic. Fencing to guide pedestrians to cross at existing crossing locations would combat this, and reduce the risk of children running into the road unexpectedly.
37. Traffic flows are considered low. Therefore, an on-street quiet route for cyclists meets LTN 1/20 requirements. The addition of 1057 markings would raise driver awareness of cyclists and encourage cyclists to take primary position where the road is too narrow.
38. Tree planting would increase appeal for pedestrians, encouraging them to walk to school rather than drive. It may also serve to slow down vehicles, due to 'perceived restriction due to vertical elements'. Planting of the trees will be explored at the Detailed Design work stage.

Impact on pedestrians

39. A School Street Audit was carried out on the proposed scheme. Proposed changes would result in a higher score than existing conditions, however would not result in a pass (see attached Annex C). Main improvements would be relating to the reduction of safety hazards for children crossing, vehicle speeds, reduction of parking on verges and route continuity.

Impact on cyclists

40. A Cycling Level of Service (CLOs) Assessment based on LTN 1/20 was carried out on the proposed scheme. Proposed changes would result in a higher score than existing conditions, however would not result in a pass (please see attached Annex B), mainly due to issues with coherence and connections to other cycling routes.
41. It is preferable to delivery schemes that score well on pedestrian and cycling assessment criteria. However, this desire

must be weighed against factors such as the available funding and local constraints. The proposed scheme maximises the improvements for active travel users within the currently defined constraints.

Impact on vehicles

42. Motor vehicle users that comply with existing restrictions will not be negatively affected. Proposals will only serve to discourage illegal behaviour within existing TROs.

Impact on residents

43. Parking is likely to be displaced to other areas nearby, potentially causing problems for residents on neighbouring streets. This scheme alone is unlikely to significantly reduce the overall number of parents driving their children to school, only reduce their impact outside the school entrance.
44. The installation of additional bollards may decrease accessibility to residential properties, though this is unlikely to be significantly detrimental.

Analysis (Option 2)

45. This option represents a decision to go back to drawing board and redefine the fundamental scope of the project, and to restart the feasibility process.
46. The new scheme scope would be defined in consultation with the Executive Member and key stakeholders.
47. The impacts of this approach are that overall scheme costs will increase due to the need to redo feasibility work and consultation. Further implications beyond this depend on what the new scope becomes.

Other options considered during feasibility work

48. Design options numbered 2-4 in Annex F were created as part of the feasibility work. However these options were not within the available budget and were therefore not progressed.
49. It is understood that there is a desire to address speed concerns on Field Lane. Although we have undertaken speed surveys in this area, exploring options for tackling this are currently out of scope for this scheme. This may, however, potentially be considered as part of the wider programme.

Organisational Impact and Implications

50. **Financial** - There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

The external funding (£200k) for the scheme is provided by Dft grant which covers 2 schemes: Badger Hill and Clifton Green People Street.

If scheme is contained within £116k budget, this will leave £84k for Clifton Green People Street scheme. Any additional costs for this scheme will reduce the funding available to the other scheme.

51. **Human Resources (HR)** - There are no HR implications contained within this report.

52. **Legal** - The Traffic Management Act 2004 places a duty on local traffic authorities to manage the road network with a view to securing, as far as reasonably practicable, the expeditious, convenient, and safe movement of all types of traffic. The Council regulates traffic by means of traffic regulation orders (TROs) made under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which can prohibit, restrict, or regulate the use of a road, or any part of the width of a road, by vehicular traffic. It is noted that existing TROs will cover the proposals set out in this report.

53. **Procurement** - Any proposed works or services will need to be commissioned via a compliant procurement route under the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and where applicable, the Public Contract Regulations 2015. All tenders will need to be conducted in an open, fair, and transparent way to capture the key principles of procurement. Further advice regarding the procurement routes, strategies and markets must be sought from

the Commercial Procurement team.

- 54. Health and Wellbeing** - Public health support the options as outlined in this report, initiatives which promote the safety of children has a direct impact on the life outcomes and health of children and young people and as such we would support the plan as outlined.
- 55. Environment and Climate action** - The York Climate Change Strategy includes objectives for 'Reduce distances travelled by motorised vehicles' and 'Increase take-up of active travel'. The proposed scheme at Badger Hill Primary School has the potential to support these objectives through the implementation of safety improvements for pedestrians and cyclists.
Consideration should be given to the tree planting opportunities which have the potential additional benefits to health & wellbeing, biodiversity and climate adaptation.
- 56. Affordability** - this report has positive implications for low cost travel methods such as walking and cycling.
- 57. Equalities and Human Rights** - The Council recognises, and needs to take into account its Public Sector Equality Duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct; advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it in the exercise of a public authority's functions).
An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and is annexed to this report at Annex E.
- 58. Data Protection and Privacy** – As there is no new personal data, special categories of personal data or criminal offence data being processed for this decision, there is no requirement to complete a DPIA. This is evidenced by completion of DPIA screening questions - reference AD-02967.
- 59. Communications** - The report identifies a number of measures to offer improvements to safety for pedestrians and cyclists travelling in the direct vicinity of Badger Hill Primary

School. These proposals have already received feedback from local residents, businesses and councillors when this went out to consultation, which at the time was supported by the communications team. If the scheme is approved, this will be supported by the communications team in the same way, to help inform and support the school, residents, businesses, visitors and commuters in this localised area of any planned works taking place and to offer advice on how to move around in the area while the works take place, to help minimise disruption. There is also a wider awareness piece of work to help inform people that the new infrastructure is in place and what the benefits of this is to them.

60. **Economy** - There are no economic implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Risks and Mitigations

61. Project Risks are recorded in the Project Risk Register and are handled in line with the Corporate Risk Management Strategy.

Wards Impacted

- Hull Road Ward

Contact details

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Background papers

Executive Member for Transport Decision Session 19/7/22

<https://democracy.york.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=738&MId=13548&Ver=4>

Annexes

Annex A – Preliminary Design 1

Annex B – LTN 1/20 Cycling Level of Service Audit Assessment

Annex C – School Street Audit Assessment

Annex D – Consultation Summary Document

Annex E – Equalities Impact Assessment

Annex F – Principal Designer’s Report

List of Abbreviations Used in this Report

CYC – City of York Council

ATP – Active Travel Programme