

Report of the Director for City & Environmental Services

**Review of Strategic Cycle Network &
Strategic Cycle Scheme Prioritisation**

Summary

1. This report presents a draft revised strategic cycling network and prioritised list of strategic cycle schemes for consideration, and if approved, adoption by the council. Once adopted the list would be used to inform the future years' cycling infrastructure component of the transport capital programmes.
2. Although not a completely exhaustive list it is a living document that aims to address the majority of the key missing links in the network and address major safety concerns of users.

Recommendations

3. The Cabinet Member is asked to consider:
 - 1) Putting out to consultation the revised strategic cycling network map, the cycling scheme prioritisation methodology and prioritised list of schemes and to then feed the resulting post-consultation proposals into the Local Development Framework Allocations Document.

Reason: to help to achieve an effective future cycling network, to ensure future developments take it into account and contribute towards it, and to shape future Transport Capital Programmes

Background

4. In the late 1980s a proposed network of cycle routes was adopted by the former York City Council as part of its first Cycling Strategy. This network sought to link up as many journey origins and

destinations as possible to make travel by cycle a viable alternative to other modes for all journeys within the city boundary and between the city and its surrounding suburbs and villages.

5. In 1996, following Local Government Reorganisation, the proposed network was further expanded into the surrounding parish areas which formerly came under the jurisdiction of Harrogate, Ryedale, East Riding of Yorkshire and Selby councils. This was then adopted by the City of York Council as a blueprint for future network development and included in the Local Plan Deposit Draft.
6. This proposed network has since greatly influenced transport capital programmes and has also enabled development management to secure, through the planning process, other sections of route or connections from developers.
7. The proposed network is now over 15 years old and a great deal has changed in the intervening period both in terms of new developments and also through land use changes, for these reasons a decision was taken to update the proposed network to better reflect current land use patterns and planned developments.
8. A group of officers was put together to identify those routes which should be included on the revised network. This group's main remit was to design a network to connect the various sections of existing cycle route and to link journey origins such as residential areas to key destinations such as employment sites, schools, shops and leisure facilities.
9. This revised network, shown in Annex A, fills the gaps in the current network and provides continuous routes across and around the city for all types of journey purpose whether it be commuting, attending school, shopping or for leisure purposes. The network also reflects work which has been done in preparing the LDF and major site supplementary planning documents. Examples of the latter include:
 - Cycle / footbridge between the former British Sugar site and York Business Park
 - Cycle / footbridge parallel with the inadequate Scarborough Bridge to link the York Central site to the city centre
 - Cycle facilities on the proposed Chancery Rise and Water End accesses into the York Central site

- Routes parallel with the A1237 Outer Ring Road to link Haxby and Wigginton to Clifton Moor and to Strensall Road
- Cycle / footbridge across the River Foss at the Castle Piccadilly site
- Cycle links to Monks Cross to serve the existing and proposed businesses and leisure facilities

10. In order that officers and the cabinet member can make the most informed decision on which schemes proposed as part of the revised network should be delivered in any financial year within the available budgets, a new prioritisation methodology has also been developed which takes into account the following factors:

- Added Value – this covers a range of factors as listed below which mainly relate to the reasons for providing the scheme
 - i. Safety - whether the scheme addresses safety concerns, both in terms of cycle users and also those of other vulnerable users especially disabled and older or much younger pedestrians who may be affected by a new scheme or route;
 - ii. Pinch-points - whether the scheme addresses specific points on a longer route where no facilities are currently available and which act as a deterrent to its use. These are often junctions where cycle lanes are discontinuous, busy sections of road or narrow roads where there is insufficient space to provide formal facilities;
 - iii. Barriers - whether the scheme overcomes specific barriers to cycling such as the inner and outer ring roads, river crossings, railway crossings and large tracts of open land (Strays);
 - iv. Alternative route - whether the scheme provides an alternative to a major road either through provision of a parallel off-road path or using quieter residential streets;

- v. Fills gap in the proposed network - whether the scheme fills a gap in a strategic route, many routes into the city centre are disjointed and have missing sections, other routes may have sections built by developers which don't link up to the remainder of the network.
 - vi. Link to new development – additional priority will be given to schemes linked to new developments to ensure cycling connections are available on day one of their opening.
- Usage – how many potential users the facility could attract or encourage to start cycling as an alternative to another mode along the intended route
 - Cost – how affordable the scheme will be for the council and whether there are opportunities to attract external funding to offset the cost to the council
 - Build-ability – how difficult the scheme will be to implement taking into consideration such factors as construction constraints, whether the land is publicly or privately owned and how significant a scheme might be in affecting other road user groups

11. Taking all the above into consideration each scheme has been given an overall score calculated as below

$$\text{Overall Score} = (\text{Added Value} + \text{Usage}) - (\text{Cost} + \text{Build-ability})$$

Once scored, the list was then sorted into a priority order and this prioritised list is presented as Annex B.

12. Although the prioritised list has been prepared primarily to help shape future capital programmes it is not proposed to use it prescriptively and schemes which are lower down the list may have their delivery accelerated if other external factors influence their priority. Examples of this include:

- A development site comes forward of which the scheme forms part, links to, or helps mitigate against the traffic impact,

- The scheme is an integral part of a longer, higher priority route already being delivered, to ensure the longer route doesn't end up with a "missing" section.

Consultation

13. Several cycle-related groups have been consulted on the prioritised list including the York Cycle Campaign, Cyclists' Touring Club, Sustrans and local independent cycle retailers. Some additional schemes were suggested by the consultees and these have been added to the draft network and scheme list where appropriate and the list reprioritised.
14. The list has also been forwarded to the Highway Maintenance team to assess whether there is any synergy with their prioritised list of maintenance schemes. It has also been forwarded to the LDF and Major Projects teams to enable it to be taken into account for current and future developments.
15. It's proposed to circulate the proposed network to ward members for comments then to the wider public, businesses etc. The scheme prioritisation approach and list will be made available for public consultation at the same time. The post-consultation proposals will then go to the LDF Working Group to be fed into the Allocations Document.

Options

16. There are two options available to the Cabinet Member:
 - Option A - Keep the current, out of date proposed cycling network and mostly reactive scheme prioritisation system
 - Option B - Adopt a more up to date and evidence-based network and scheme prioritisation method with future schemes better prioritised against set criteria

Analysis

17. Option A – the main advantage of this option is that new schemes are able to be parachuted into the programme more easily and aren't necessarily assessed against other schemes. The disadvantages are that it doesn't take into account all the factors which will influence the decision as to whether a scheme should be delivered or not.

18. Option B – the advantages of this option are that the updated network will better reflect current land use patterns and once adopted into the LDF documentation will shape, more appropriately, future cycle route provision both by the council and developers. The new prioritisation methodology will enable schemes to be compared more easily and improve scheme filtering to identify those which don't meet the criteria. The option also enables a longer term delivery plan to be prepared and a bigger picture to be seen of where the gaps are. The disadvantage of this option is that the prioritised list will need to be updated as and when new schemes are highlighted or circumstances change. It may also be difficult to deliver the schemes in the prioritised order with limited budgets so the smaller, more affordable ones may still be delivered first even though they may not necessarily be top of the list.

Council Plan

19. The outcome of this report will contribute to the following aspects of the Council Plan:
- Create jobs and grow the economy – provision of some of the links to employment sites will make it easier for staff to access their workplace safely by cycle. It may also influence employers' decisions as to whether they set up in York. By encouraging more people to cycle to work this should reduce congestion in the city which then makes the movement of other vehicles more efficient thus saving businesses money in lost time.
 - Get York moving – making cycling a more attractive and efficient mode of travel should reduce residents' reliance on motorised transport thus reducing congestion and helping to get the remaining traffic moving better
 - Build strong communities – provision of better cycle links between parts of York should help communities by reducing severance caused by major roads, rivers and railways
 - Protect vulnerable people – cyclist are one of the most vulnerable types of road user and provision of cycle route infrastructure will help raise awareness of cyclists by other road users and should improve road safety
 - Protect the environment – cycling is one of the most sustainable forms of transport so the more people who can

be encouraged to cycle the better it will be for the local environment both in terms of air quality and the visual impact of parked vehicles

Implications

20. The outcome of this report will have the following implications:

- **Financial** – the prioritised list will be used to inform future CoYC Transport Capital Programmes. Any resultant schemes will also add to the council's list of Transport Assets and maintenance burden. The approximate cost to deliver the full prioritised list will run into tens of millions of pounds and at current levels of funding provision will take several decades to complete.
- **Human Resources (HR)** – there are no HR implications
- **Equalities** – there are equalities implications and they have been dealt with in the bullet points following Paragraph 10 above.
- **Legal** – there are no legal implications
- **Crime and Disorder** – there are no Crime & Disorder implications
- **Information Technology (IT)** – there are no IT implications
- **Property** – Where any proposed cycle path would be located on land owned by the Council then the Head of Asset and Property Management should be consulted to check on the current and potential future use of this land to avoid any conflict in requirements.
- **Highways** – as the majority of the suggested schemes are on-highway or use land which is designated as adopted highway there will, in several cases, be an impact on the current highway network as a result of reallocating road space or through the implementation of measures to reduce traffic speeds.

Risk Management

21. The recommendations of the report seek to reduce any risk to the council's reputation by clearly demonstrating the justification for future cycle scheme implementation. If the cabinet member were not to accept the recommendations it may leave the council open to

criticism about selection of future schemes if there isn't sufficient evidence to support this.

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**Report
Approved**



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Wards Affected:

All



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Background Papers: None

Annexes

Annex A – Proposed Strategic Cycle Route Network Map
Annex B – Prioritised List of Strategic Cycle Schemes