

REPORT OF TRANSPORT, TRAFFIC AND SUSTAINABILITY FOCUS GROUP

FINAL VERSION APPROVED BY ALL FOCUS GROUP MEMBERS

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BACKGROUND

The Focus Group has been asked to consider the effects of transport links (or lack of them) and all modes of transport and traffic on the Pannal and Burn Bridge parish over a 20-year planning period, starting in 2018. The Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group (NPSG) suggested including at least the following factors in these considerations:

1. Current traffic conditions v old statistics v future needs
2. What effects would extra housing/industry have – from both within and outside our parish?
3. Commuting from within and through our parish
4. Car parking provision – Pannal business park, Pannal Junior Sports FC, Pannal School, churches, etc.
5. Train, bus, cycle, car, commercial deliveries and pedestrian use
6. Traffic control – speeding / parking and enforcement
7. Signage

DELIVERABLE

A set of Principles for Traffic, Transport and Sustainability.

Recommendations for the NPSG.

APPROACH

In producing this report the Focus Group drew on their own experiences of the area as well as utilizing data gathered from residents of the area as summarized in the 2015 Pannal Area Community-led Plan. The Focus Group also took account

of the fact that, over the term of the planning period, technology such as electric and fully autonomous vehicles (AV) will significantly change the current transport environment.

SUMMARY OF CURRENT PROBLEMS

HBC's proposed residential and commercial developments within the parish, as detailed in the Draft Local Plan 2018, would result in a significant increase in the numbers of people residing, working and passing through the area. The Focus Group feels that the draft Local Plan does not adequately address the knock-on effect of these developments on transport infrastructure.

Assuming an average of 3 persons per household, the 470 proposed or in development houses (PN17, PN19, Dunlopillo sites) would increase the population of the parish by a minimum of 1410 individuals. This figure could be considerably higher due to the increasing trend for young people to remain in the family home due to the unaffordability and lack of starter homes.

A large percentage of the population will either be of working age or students. Both need cost effective, convenient methods of transportation to their places of work and study. The 2015 Community-led Plan discovered that almost 50% of the respondents utilized some form of transportation to get to work, with the overwhelming majority (73%) utilizing a private car. An increasing population utilizing fossil-fuelled vehicles will significantly impact air quality in the parish, in particular those parts experiencing increasing traffic congestion. This will appear first along the commuter rat-runs, which include the pathways along which the parish's children walk to school. The Focus Group feels that the adoption of electric vehicles by parish residents should be encouraged.

The road infrastructure is already straining to cope with existing people movements. Indeed, over the last several years, traffic within the parish has visibly increased as people travel further and further afield in search of employment opportunities for themselves and better schools for their children. This has resulted in an unknowable and uncontrollable volume of through traffic using Pannal and Burn Bridge as a rat run to reach final destinations.

The Focus Group recognised early on in their discussions that such traffic, increased substantially by the planned and proposed developments, as well as

developments in other parts of the county would significantly exacerbate what has already become an unacceptable level of disruption to village life at certain times of the day.

Another area of concern is parking. Pannal Station, providing as it does a convenient link to the national rail network through Leeds and York, is used by an increasing number of commuters from both inside and outside of the parish. However, the station has limited parking, part of which is not free. Both these factors have resulted in an increasing number of motorists parking their cars on surrounding streets, causing inconvenience to residents and restricting the free flow of traffic.

Short-term parking on Main Street to drop off and collect pupils attending Pannal Primary School causes additional disruption to residents and to the free flow of traffic at peak times on weekdays, and has been the subject of many complaints. An estimated 50% of the school's pupils come from outside of the parish, making walking to and from school an unrealistic expectation for this cohort. As yet there have been no reported accidents, but the increased enrolment of children, in particular from outside of the parish, will substantially increase the risk of such. The situation would continue to worsen over the next 20 years as pupil numbers increase with the residential developments proposed in the Local Plan, and the allocation of increasing numbers of pupils from outside of the parish.

The opening of the Pannal Junior Sports Football Club (FC) will result in similar disruption at weekends as parents and other carers seek parking spots as they ferry their children backwards and forwards for training sessions and other sporting activities.

Considering all of these factors, Focus Group discussions concentrated on those areas with the greatest opportunity for return in terms of maintaining a 'village' identity and improving the environment for residents of the parish. These discussions have been encapsulated as Guiding Principles and Supporting Recommendations and are set out below.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Within the boundary of the parish:

1. All commercial, industrial, and residential developments must provide sufficient parking and adequate traffic calming mechanisms.
2. Traffic must flow freely and not exceed specified speed limits.
3. Non-resident (i.e. commuter) parking to be restricted to designated parking lots.
4. Restricted access conditions to apply to heavy goods vehicles.
5. Everyone to be encouraged to walk, cycle, use public transport or autonomous vehicles as they go about their daily business.
6. Actively support the deployment of electric vehicles and charging infrastructure.

SUPPORTING RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations fall into four categories – Traffic Control, Parking Provision, Reducing Private Car Utilisation, and Future Transport Environment.

1. TRAFFIC CONTROL

These recommendations support Principles 2 and 4: ‘Traffic must flow freely and not exceed specified speed limits’ and ‘Restricted access conditions to apply to heavy goods vehicles’.

R1. Pro-active expansion of the Community Speed Watch Scheme (CSW).

This scheme operates in partnership with North Yorkshire Police (NYP). Since its inception in the parish in late 2016, with four sites and a small team of volunteers, CSW has proved effective in ensuring that vehicles travelling through Pannal village adhere to local speed limits. NYP operates a tiered system of follow-up with offenders aimed at discouraging repetition of speeding behavior. Other settlements in North Yorkshire have subsequently adopted the scheme, and this expansion is expected to continue as news of CSW’s effectiveness spreads. Repeat offenders will thus be detected not just within the parish but also over a wider and wider portion of the county. The expanding database of offenders also allows NYP police to take speeding behavior into account when the same cars are involved in other traffic infractions.

The scheme now needs to be deployed far more frequently and across a wider range of sites within the parish, in particular to address concerns raised by Walton Park and Burn Bridge residents. Sufficient sites have now been negotiated with NYP, so the pressing need is to increase the pool of volunteers, thereby increasing the frequency of deployments. It is hoped to achieve this by wider advertisement of the scheme's success and benefits.

The basic equipment initially supplied has enabled the scheme to prove its worth, but now needs upgrading. A laser gun with a narrower focus would reduce instances of missing a speeding motorist due to interference from traffic travelling in the opposite direction.

In order to counter charges of vigilantism, the Focus Group also believes it to be essential that the partnership between NYP and CSW is clearly communicated to the motoring community via CSW signage.

R 2 Ensure free flowing traffic

The Focus Group support the notion that traffic through the parish should be as free-flowing as possible, thus reducing driver frustration and attendant poor and frequently dangerous behavior. Currently free flow within the parish is restricted by:

- cars dropping off and picking up children from Pannal School,
- ~~by~~ commuter cars unable to find space in the station car park or unwilling to pay the charges levied
- ~~by~~ traffic backing up at the intersection with the A61 – both out of Pannal and out of Follifoot Road/Walton Park/Drury Lane,
- heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) negotiating the parish's narrow roads,
- ~~and, by~~ the Pannal Main Street zebra crossing, which as currently positioned on a bend, provides a poor view of the road and thus represents a hazard and a risk to public safety.

The following proposals will alleviate the above:

- The introduction of a Park and Stride Scheme for Pannal School coupled with effective schemes to discourage school inflow and outflow parking on Main Street and encourage the approximately 50% of pupils who live within 10 minutes walk of the school to walk to school (see R6 and R10).
- Actively seeking to increase the percentage of pupils at Pannal School who live within ten minutes walk of the school, by, for example, giving priority to residents when allocating places at the school.
- Increased provision of station parking (see R6).
- The introduction of double yellow lines on one side of Pannal Main Street and Crimple Meadows.
- The relocation of the zebra crossing away from the bend to a position further up Main Street towards the junction with Church Lane/Spring Lane, coupled with crossing utilization timings during school inflow and outflow to prioritize free flow of traffic over wait time for school children. The Focus Group believes that the most effective method of achieving the latter is via a human crossing officer (a.k.a. a 'lollipop' person).
- Optimization of peak time traffic flows at the parish's various intersections with the A61.
- That no 'in-transit' heavy goods vehicles (i.e. vehicle with a gross mass of 7.5 tonnes) be allowed on any road within the parish. Current signage needs to be relocated so that HGVs are clearly alerted to the restriction. Policing left to NYCC Trading Standards as now is futile.
- That access for other heavy goods vehicles is subject to obtaining prior approval from the Parish Council.

R3 A longer-term Focus Group recommendation is that Pannal Primary School be relocated to the Dunlopillo site. Thus providing for the expected increase in pupil numbers from the new developments proposed in the Local Plan and easing the traffic load on Pannal Main Street at peak

commuter times. Access to the proposed school site should be from the A61, effectively addressing the risks inherent in the current school-related parking arrangements (i.e. on Pannal Main Street).

R4 A further longer-term Focus Group recommendation is that a Western Bypass be constructed for Harrogate. This would have a significant positive impact on the volume of traffic using both Burn Bridge and Pannal villages as rat-runs. It would also serve the large development on the western edge of Harrogate proposed in the Draft Local Plan.

R5 ***Introduction of effective traffic calming mechanisms***

Statistics from the CSW scheme demonstrate that consistently some 10% of cars observed are exceeding the speed limit, demonstrating that neither the Main Street speed bumps nor the numerous static speed limit signs are totally effective measures when faced with the challenge of the incorrigible speedster. The Focus Group would like to see newer, more ‘in your face’, calming technology deployed throughout the parish: for example, digital speed signs that detect actual approach speed, and speed cameras, both dummy and real. To this end:

- to complement the CSW initiative, two digital speed signs need to be erected as soon as possible at both points of entry to the centre of Pannal village,
- and, all new residential, commercial and industrial developments must provide adequate state-of-the-art traffic calming mechanisms.

2) PARKING PROVISION

These recommendations support Principles 1, and 3 – ‘All commercial, industrial, and residential developments must provide sufficient parking and adequate traffic calming mechanisms’ and ‘Non-resident (i.e. commuter) parking to be restricted to designated parking lots’.

R6 ***Introduction of Specialist Parking Areas***

The Focus Group recommends that Specialist Parking Areas be provided for the main commuter groups, i.e. station users, school users, and

football club users, coupled with a level of enforcement (see R7) to encourage the use of these areas.

With regards to Pannal Station parking, additional parking with access to the station will be provided on the 'Dunlopillo' development site, and it is understood that provision has also been made on this site for two mini-football pitches. Given the opening of the FC, it is not at all clear that these mini-football pitches will be well utilized, if at all, and the Focus Group feel that the community would be better served if the area were used for additional station parking or for the proposed relocation of Pannal School. The Focus Group understands that there was a proposal to allocate a sufficient area behind the church to provide a Park and Stride facility for Pannal School users. The Focus Group further understands that this excellent proposal is now at risk from competing proposals for allotments and affordable housing. Allotments are nice to have, but hardly essential. Thus the Focus Group strongly recommends that priority be given to the provision of a Park and Stride facility for the school over allotments. To add weight to the Focus Group recommendation, the group further recommends that the football club use the Park and Stride area at the weekends. Thus, fully utilizing the area 7-days per week. This latter recommendation will require the provision of a footbridge over the River Crimple.

R7 *Discourage parking outside of Specialist Parking Areas*

The introduction of double yellow lines down one side of Main Street and Crimple Meadows has already been recommended as a way to improve traffic flow through Pannal village. This would also discourage on-street parking by station, school and FC users. However, the Focus Group believes that in addition to this, a more pro-active scheme, similar in nature to CSW, is required to effectively manage both on-street parking and parking in specialist parking areas. We have called this scheme 'Parking Watch (PW)'. Like CSW, PW will rely on volunteers from the community to periodically patrol the streets and note down parking offenders (number plate and offence). By working in conjunction with

Harrogate Borough Council (HBC), PW could potentially be a source of additional revenue. People may well feel more inclined to volunteer if there is some tangible benefit to their community. The scheme could also patrol the Park and Stride facility to ensure it is used by 'authorized' users. This would likely require the issuing of permits by the school and the football club, possibly only to those who live outside of a 10-minute walk to these facilities.

R8 *All new developments to provide sufficient parking*

Inadequate public transport outside of urban areas is resulting in an increase in the number of cars per household. A further increase in cars per household comes from the current trend for young people to remain living in the family home after they enter the workforce - the latter situation caused by unaffordable housing. The Focus Group believes that these trends are likely to continue over the next 20 years. The Focus Group recommends that all new developments exceed the minimum with the parking standards laid out by North Yorkshire County Council (see Appendix 2).

3) REDUCING PRIVATE CAR UTILISATION

The following recommendations support Principle 5 - 'Everyone to be encouraged to walk, cycle, use public transport or autonomous vehicles as they go about their daily business.'

R9 *Introduce measures to increase train utilization*

The parish is lucky to have a station, and even more so to have such an attractive station, and the Focus Group seeks to encourage its greater utilization. Responses to the 2015 Community-led Plan indicate that 14% of commuters residing in Pannal use the train for the daily commute, with around 90% mostly or completely satisfied with the service provided. The Focus Group would like to encourage a significant increase in this percentage, and to this end recommends that the Parish Council initiate a study of rail utilization. In support of this initiative the Focus Group has developed strawman sets of possible questions that could be put to station users and parish residents (see Appendix 1).

The proposed business park offers an opportunity to increase the traffic through Pannal station. However the Focus Group believes that the current capacity and frequency of the rail service from the station may be inadequate to cope with the planned increase in parish residents, let alone the impact of other commercial developments in the area. The study mentioned in the previous paragraph could possibly also be used to better quantify this. Rolling stock needs updating, trains need to be more frequent and have more capacity, and station facilities need improving. Convenient and easy access to the platform for those with a disability is also required.

Plans are in place to address some of these issues. New rolling stock, albeit second-hand, will be introduced in May 2018 and a faster 15-minute service between Harrogate and Leeds, stopping at Hornbeam Park and Horsforth will also be introduced. This may ease the station-parking situation in Pannal, as it seems likely that out-of-parish commuters will take advantage of both the extra trains and the free parking at Hornbeam Park station. The new 15-minute service may also relieve the pressure on the current 30-minute service that stops in Pannal, making it easier for Pannal station users to secure a seat.

R10 Pupils living within 10 minutes walk of the school should walk to school

The Focus Group is actively discouraging the transportation of pupils to Pannal school by private car with its recommendations regarding double yellow lines and the introduction of a PW scheme. It is actively encouraging walking by its recommendation to relocate the zebra crossing to a safer location. However the Focus Group recognizes that this will likely be a long battle given people's entrenched attitudes. And so, the Focus Group would like to see its recommendations supported by other community and school initiatives, including:

- consideration of issuing Park and Stride permits only to those pupils who live greater than a 10-minute walk from the school

- a Parish Council sponsored annual prize for the form that reduces car use the most

R11 Provision of an alternative to the private car

Two buses that stop on the A61 – the No 36 and the Airport Bus - serve the parish. Both of these are believed to be viable operations, serving as they do both the parish and the wider population of Harrogate. The Focus Group was split with regards to the provision of a further regular bus service more directly serving the village, with some feeling this unnecessary if the train service were improved, and others feeling that a service is needed. Bus operators terminated such a regular bus service some time ago as poor utilization made it uneconomical. The service was replaced with an on-demand service that also is poorly utilized. There was some debate about the possibility of rerouting an existing a single-decker bus service through the village, possibly for every second or third trip, for example, the airport bus. But no consensus was reached.

A proposal for a Community Bus Service (CBS) achieved greater consensus. The Focus Group felt that there might well be sufficient demand for a small electric bus providing a feeder service to Pannal station and the Leeds Road retail area for parish residents. The Focus Group did not envisage the CBS taking residents into Harrogate – the 36 bus, running as it does every ten minutes and the train were both viewed as being adequate for this purpose. Such a bus service would allow local residents, particularly the elderly without access to a private vehicle, a way of doing their shopping, going to the doctors, and getting into Harrogate town centre (by train or 36 bus). It could also act as a school bus at certain times of the day, a shuttle bus to the football club at the weekends, and possibly also a shuttle bus between the station and the proposed business park. The Focus Group felt it not beyond the bounds of possibility for Marks & Spencer, and maybe other local businesses to contribute to the cost of running such a service. The Focus Group recommends that the Parish Council reach out to the community and local businesses to determine if there is indeed a demand for such service.

The Focus Group feels that the arrival of autonomous vehicles on our roads, likely within the next 5-10 years, will at last provide a viable alternative to uneconomical bus services, high-cost taxis, and private car ownership. As robotaxi companies, such as Uber and others, start to deploy fleets of autonomous vehicles in our larger cities, the parish could pioneer the deployment of one or two of these vehicles for use by parish residents, possibly in partnership with neighbouring areas, such as Follifoot and Beckwithshaw. The current cost per mile for such robotaxis is 40% cheaper than private car ownership, and 70% cheaper than today's taxis (figures come from the 3 March 2018 Economist Special report on Autonomous Vehicles). With widespread adoption the cost will likely reduce further. The Focus Group recommends that this is considered as and when such services become available in Leeds or other cities in the area.

R12 *Encourage cycling, but not on footpaths*

While accepting in principle the desirability of encouraging cycling, the Focus Group agreed that cycling was only safe within the 20 m.p.h. zone and on existing cycleways. Cycling on footpaths must be discouraged with appropriate signage and penalties.

4) FUTURE TRANSPORT ENVIRONMENT

The following recommendation supports Principle 6 – 'Actively support the deployment of electric vehicles and charging infrastructure.'

R13 *Provision of electric vehicle charging points*

Provide electric vehicle charging points in all of the parish's parking facilities, at all retail premises and in all new residential, retail and commercial developments sufficient to support a 50% switchover to electric vehicles by residents of the parish within five years. For new residential developments, there should be a minimum of one fast charging point per household.

Appendix 1 – Questions for Rail Users and Parish Residents

A. Questions for Rail Travellers

Rail Travellers from Pannal station	Rail Travellers into Pannal station
Do you reside in the parish (i.e. Pannal, Burn Bridge or Walton Park)?	Do you reside in the parish (i.e. Pannal, Burn Bridge or Walton Park)?
If not, where do you reside?	If not, where do you reside?
What is the purpose of your journey?	What is the purpose of your journey?
To where are you travelling?	From where are you travelling?
What train do you intend to catch – i.e. departure time?	What time did you set off on your journey?
Will you be making a return journey?	Is this a return journey?
Approximately what time will you return?	How will you get home?
How did you travel to Pannal station?	If by car, where is your car parked?
If you travelled by car, where did you park your car?	
How regularly do you make this journey?	How regularly do you make this journey?
Have you purchased your ticket?	
If yes, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how did you purchase your ticket? • from where did you collect your ticket? • did you experience any problems with the collection? 	
Questions for daily commute passengers?	
What do you most like about this service?	What do you most like about this service?
What do you least like about this service?	What do you least like about this service?
Do you ever have problems finding a seat?	Do you ever have problems finding a seat?
If yes, how frequently?	If yes, how frequently?
If uses car to get to station - Do you ever have problems finding a car park?	If uses car to get to station - Do you ever have problems finding a car park?
If yes, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how frequently? • where do you park if there is no space in the station car park? 	If yes, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how frequently? • where do you park if there is no space in the station car park?

B. Questions for parish residents about their train travel

How often do you take a train from Pannal station? Daily commuter/once a week/once a month/less frequently

How do you usually get to the station? Walk/drive own car/are driven/other method

If you drive to the station:

- Where do you usually park?
- Is the station car park ever full when you arrive?
- If so, where do you park?

If a daily commuter:

- What is your usual route?
- What time do you travel out of Pannal?
- What time do you most often you return?
- What do you most like about the service?
- What do you least like about the service?
- Do you ever have problems finding a seat on the train?
- If yes, how frequently?

If not a daily commuter:

- What is the usual purpose of your journey?
- Where do you travel to most frequently?