

West Harrogate Highways Stakeholder Engagement Meeting- 1 October 2021 **West of Harrogate Coord Group (WHCC) Comments**

1. Bluecoat Park

We believe that a statement was made during the discussions that the extant planning permission for H45 had expired. Can you confirm that this is the case and that we did not hear incorrectly? One presumes that if we heard correctly, then no further planning application for this site will be considered until the WHPP (West of Harrogate Parameters Plan) is finalised?

In fact we assume this principle applies for any site within the spatial extent for the WHPP. We ask for confirmation on this point, because it was clearly stated that this plan was important to the western arc and that it would take as long as it takes to get it right. However, from discussions with certain developers it is obvious that they are applying pressure.

2. Housing Numbers and Traffic Modelling

There are several aspects of the NYCC traffic modelling work that we would like clarification on:

- a) Whether the housing numbers used are those in the Local Plan or the significantly larger numbers being sought by developers. A schedule of numbers per site would be helpful, and provide the reassurance that we are seeking.
- b) The trip rate being applied and the assumptions on mode share between private car, cycle and bus.
- c) The broad split of origins/destinations to indicate what assumptions are made in respect of town centre / Leeds / Bradford / York / etc.
- d) Whether this work will give 2035 flows on links in the network and detailed turning movements at all key junctions, so that the public can assess the impact on local roads.
- e) All assumptions relating to uncertainty (mode share, destinations, traffic growth, future changes including working-from-home)

3. Impact on Existing Roads

We have major concerns about the impact of potentially thousands of additional journeys being made on the local road network; not just on junctions but the narrow country lanes between. It did not appear from the comments made on Friday that any proposals are being considered to improve the widths, forward visibility, pedestrian, cycling and equestrian safety of routes such as Lady Lane - Hill Top – Burn Bridge Lane and Beckwithshaw – North Rigton. Based on earlier studies these routes could be expected to carry many times the volume of traffic as currently. Junctions of course will need additional capacity but we would expect the roads between to be upgraded where road widths are less than say 6m and where visibility round bends is seriously substandard.

In the Gladman (H51) Planning Application (18/05202/EIAMAJ) relating to the land east of Lady Lane we have noted a document headed "Planning Statement" listed on the HBC planning portal dated 4th January 2019. In respect of sections 5.3.6 and 5.3.7 of this document there are various proposals made in relation to Lady Lane itself, Hill Top Lane/Hill Foot lane and Burn Bridge Lane/Burn Bridge Road which involve road widening and road improvements. We assume that these still apply.

Although not specifically discussed at our meeting can we take it that these ameliorations have been built into the £15M figure that you quoted? We ask because time and time again we are told that anything to do with roads is expensive, yet the figure quoted above struck us as quite inadequate for what needs to be done.

4. The Objectives of The Parameters Plan

The question of what this work is trying to achieve came up on a number of occasions and was not really addressed. From our perspective, apart from the holistic approach being taken, we would expect a number of solutions that not only mitigate for the expected increase in traffic, but bring about improvements to the current levels being experienced. The LP (Local Plan) premises investment in the road network to achieve reduced levels of congestion and improved air quality (Vision and Objectives). How is this being achieved in the West Harrogate situation?

We appreciate that there is a process to follow, and that there are statutory obligations, but at the end of the day this work is not being carried out to make things worse. To be honest the feeling we were left with was that it was all about the process and not about the end objectives. So when all of this, and the other components of the WHPP work are brought together what exactly are the actual end objectives? The draft WHPP contains a number of aspirational statements, but after all this time we were disappointed that nothing really tangible emerged last Friday.

5. Site in Pannal

On one of the slides covering the spatial extent of the WHPP a site reference H18 was shown. Given where it was shown geographically we take this to be PN18? Is this correct?

6. Cycling Strategy

During the course of the discussions it was mentioned that the cycling lobby had submitted a number of ideas for cycle routes. Would it be possible to see those that apply to the western arc? We appreciate that these active travel ideas will only be part of any overall package of solutions, but it would be useful to see these and compare them with what is being proposed by the developers.

On the subject of cycling it was also mentioned that preliminary work had started on Phase 3 of the Otley Road cycle path. Can we be assured that apart from cycling groups, there will also be representation from local residents when it comes to designing this section? It is fully appreciated that payment for this section will come from S106 allocations, but Phases 1 & 2 were presented as something of a fait accompli, with no real communications with the local residents. Time and time again this scheme has been presented as a major mitigation for the problems being experienced along the Otley Road, but so far we have seen no analysis to support this. Will this be forthcoming from the traffic modelling work.

7. Status of WHPP

During the course of the presentation it was made clear that the WHPP is 'not a policy document', but would be used 'to guide' and would also be a 'material consideration' when planning applications are submitted. Now the phrase 'material consideration' seems to imply that the document will have teeth if a developer does not comply. Yet the other phrases seem to imply the opposite. So when the WHPP is finally published, will it be entirely clear how this document will be used as a tool to 'guide' what is happening on the western arc. There has to be some authority behind it, otherwise what is to stop developers ignoring it and slipping back to their 'business as usual' mode. Just concentrating on their patch and little else.

8. Timescales and Future Engagements

As far as timescales for the publication of the WHPP is concerned, the latest date that has been talked about is towards the end of 2021. Yet from our session on Friday it was made clear that the TAs had not yet been completed. So if there is to be a proper consultation with stakeholders such as ourselves, and if we are to be given sufficient time to comment on the document, then the end of the year makes things extremely tight. With this in mind, could you clarify what timescale you are working to for publication of the WHPP. We ask this because behind everything there is the movement towards the unitary authority, and we do not want to be in a situation where we are expected to comment on the WHPP almost overnight. You clearly stated that you wanted to get this document right, and we wish to contribute in a positive manner towards this objective.