

HDCA Submission on NPIF and ATF2 Funds

NPIF

Background

£565,000 of the £4.275 million funding remains.

'Phase 1' of Otley Road cycleway was built from September to December 2021. In isolation, it does not provide a useful route.

The officer's report of 10th February 2023 claims (para 7.4) that 'the Phase 1 route has provided a recognised cycle link between Cardale Park, the local school and the businesses and retail area of Cold Bath Road.'

This is untrue. Phase 1 does not get near Cardale Park, does not reach Harrogate Grammar School, and does not make any provision on Cold Bath Road.

Our views

1) The need to complete Otley Road cycleway

The Otley Road cycleway needs to reach Beech Grove to be of any value. There are no parallel side streets and there is no alternative route.

Cold Bath Road is a different route. While we would like to see it developed as a cycle route, it would require significant changes as set out in our Zone 18 plan, and would be a long-term scheme not a quick fix.

Large housing developments are planned to the west of Harrogate, and traffic volumes on Otley Road will continue to increase. This makes Otley Road too hostile for most people to consider cycling.

Buses get stuck in traffic and there is no space for bus lanes.

To provide a sustainable travel link to the new west of Harrogate developments, the only option is to create a cycle route along Otley Road. Therefore NYC must build Phase 2.

If people can use a high-quality bi-directional cycle track, separate from the footway, from Windmill Farm to the top of Harlow Hill (Phase 3), they may be prepared to accept the lower standards on Phase 1. They will still need Phase 2.

2) Active Travel England

Active Travel England's technical team is now in place and getting involved in all schemes, not just ATF schemes.

We ask NYC to involve ATE in this project as soon as possible, so ATE can provide the expertise that has been lacking to date.

3) £565,000

If NYC insist on spending the remaining funds on side streets, against our recommendations, we suggest:

a) a scheme to make Beech Grove safe for cycling. This could be:

- the return of the modal filters
- replacing the parking with a bi-directional cycle track with physical protection, or
- making Beech Grove Access Only (with camera enforcement). **Note:** we would need to be convinced that this would make a significant difference. For example, how would it be possible to differentiate between drivers using the parking on Beech Grove, and those using it as a through route?

b) a parallel crossing of Otley Road near the junction with Beech Grove

4) Delay

There has been unconscionable delay of more than 5 years since funding. This fails local residents in two ways:

- We are not getting the benefit of the funding obtained in on-the-ground active travel improvements
- The value of the funding diminishes as time is wasted, particularly with inflation at 10%

The project must now proceed with urgency.

ATF2

Background

In November 2020, NYCC successfully bid for the following sums from the Active Travel Fund 2:

- £215,000 for Oatlands Drive
- £250,000 for A59 High Bridge to the Golf Club
- £250,000 for Victoria Avenue

The funding has not resulted in any on-the-ground improvements to date.

Our views

1) Account of funding

We request an account, so we can see what money has been spent on designs etc. and what remains.

NYC has committed to a parallel crossing of Oatlands Drive. We would like to know the source of the funding for this.

2) Spending the money

We would like to see the funding used for on-the-ground improvements now. Our suggestions are:

- a) Build the missing link between High Bridge and the start of the A59 cycle path. Please involve ATE in the designs.
- b) Secure covered cycle parking on Victoria Avenue near to the Library.
- c) Physical measures to prevent drivers going straight across from Beech Grove to Victoria Avenue.
- d) Do an analysis of school bus routes to and from St Aidan's and St John Fisher so that the schools can understand what the impact of one-way traffic on Oatlands Drive would be.
- e) On Coach Road, provide a push button at cyclist level for a phase of the lights at the junction with Hookstone Road/Drive and Oatlands Drive.

Currently the 'beg button' is at horse rider level only (and this is not a route regularly used by horse riders).

HDCA

5th April 2023