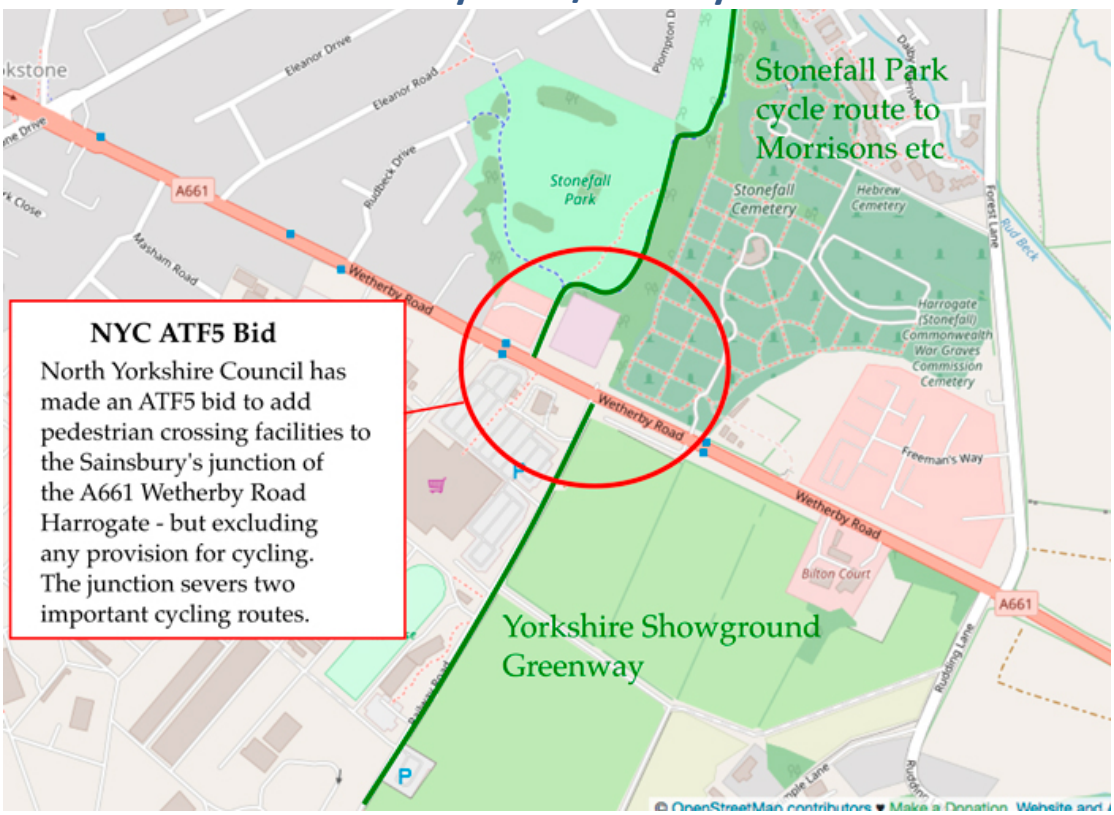
Harrogate Cycle Action Response to NYC Highways Consultation on Wetherby Road/Railway Road Scheme



We object to the scheme put forward by NYC Highways for the following reasons.

1) Policy Conflict, Critical Safety Issues and JAT Score

Active Travel England (ATE) have identified a Policy Conflict in the scheme, in that the junction severs an LCWIP cycle route, but cycle crossing facilities are not provided – see https://harrogatecycleaction.org.uk/2025/09/18/ate-identifies-critical-safety-issues-with-nycs-sainsburys-junction-scheme/.

ATE also raises **multiple Critical Safety Issues**, all arising out of the failure to provide cycle crossing facilities.

The most important point about the failure to address Critical Safety Issues is that it puts road users in danger.

A secondary aspect is that it negatively affects NYC's Active Travel Capability Rating: it is our understanding that the Policy Conflict and unresolved Critical Safety Issues mean that NYC's scheme is non-compliant with the principles of the funding; this non-compliance will be recorded by ATE as a black mark against NYC.

The proposed scheme would increase the Junction Assessment Tool score for the junction from 0% to just 17%.

2) Failure to Put Forward a Concrete Plan and Timetable for Cycle Crossing Facilities

If the scheme proposal were accompanied by a concrete plan and timetable for a next phase with cycle crossing facilities, we would support it.

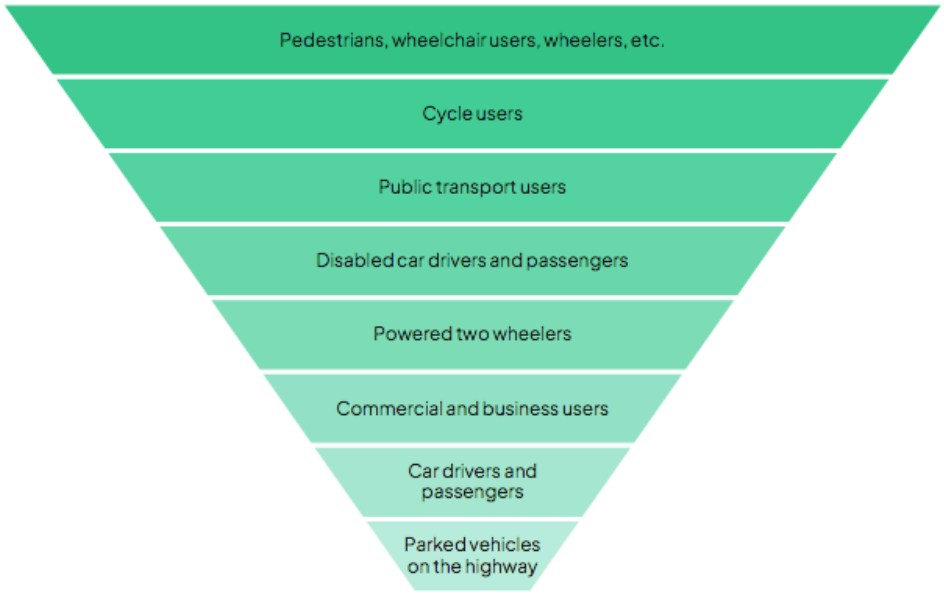
Instead, NYC Highways' letter contains a lot of excuses about how difficult it would be to provide a cycle crossing, and uses words such as 'ambition' 'opportunity…in the future'.

From our experience of NYC Highways, such language gives us no confidence that this will ever happen.

A committed and competent local authority would not take this approach.

3) LTP and Road-User Hierarchy

Figure 6–4: User hierarchy for streets



The region's draft LTP has cycle users second from top in the hierarchy of road users, and car drivers and passengers second from bottom.

In this scheme, NYC Highways is using its own funds to increase motor vehicle throughput – in practice, its top priority. It has obtained outside funding for pedestrian crossings – arguably therefore second priority. It is proposing to do nothing at all for cycle users – who are thus not a priority at all. This is wrong.

The LTP also states that filling short gaps in local walking, wheeling and cycling networks in urban areas is a priority. This is not reflected in NYC's scheme.

4) Congestion in Harrogate

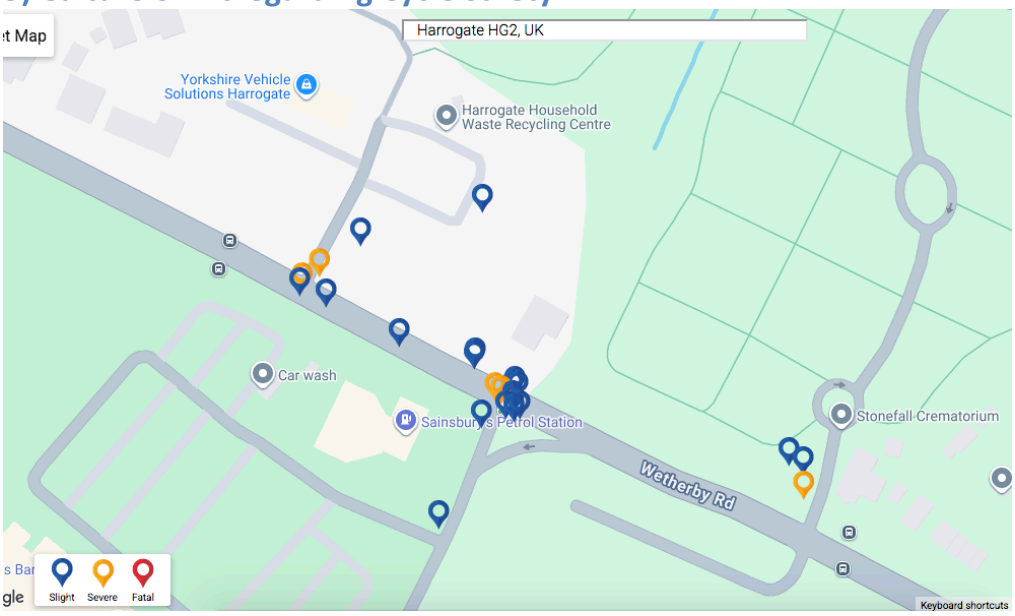
NYC Highways' strategy for dealing with congestion in Harrogate is to try to increase capacity for motor vehicles at junctions, while failing to make any attempt to enable modal shift.

This is a blinkered and failing strategy.

Tinkering with traffic lights just gets drivers to the next traffic jam slightly quicker. Any increase in capacity will simply be eaten up via induced demand.

The only sensible strategy is to enable modal shift, including to cycling – but by refusing to resolve Critical Safety Issues, NYC Highways is not doing this.

5) Culture of Disregarding Cycle Safety



In 2024, 344 people were killed or seriously injured on North Yorkshire's roads.

It is clear from the Think! map above that there has been a significant number of collisions at this junction.

Inevitably, if someone riding a bike is hit by a driver, the consequences are more severe than in a crash involving two vehicles.

By failing to resolve the cycling-related Critical Safety Issues, NYC Highways is demonstrating a disregard for cycle safety.

A similar culture prevailed leading up to the Grenfell Tower disaster; it was only when the risks crystallised that it became clear what a mistake it was.

NYC's decision-makers (senior officers and Executive Members) should consider carefully if ignoring Critical Safety Issues could lead to personal liability, whether criminal or civil or both, in the event of a serious injury or fatality.