

## Zero Carbon Harrogate's Draft Response to Question 23 in the North Yorkshire County Council's Harrogate Congestion Engagement Survey

### **Call for a Strategic Sustainable Transport Plan**

We call on North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) to develop and implement a strategic sustainable transport plan for the Harrogate District.

The UK government and Harrogate Borough Council have both recently acknowledged that we are in a state of climate emergency and put forward strategies for radically reducing greenhouse gas emission. In North Yorkshire 26% of these emissions come from transport. Harrogate and Knaresborough are the largest settlements in NYCC and have the largest part to play halving these emissions by 2030 (in line with recommendations by the Intergovernmental Panel on climate change and UK Committee on Climate).

We, therefore, suggest that NYCC utilises the work already conducted by NYCC and WSP on sustainable transport to develop a strategic plan. Low cost, quick wins for carbon and traffic reduction should be implemented immediately and more costly and challenging behavioural changes should be budgeted and planned for over the next 10 years.

Carbon emissions from transport should be monitored during this period to ensure the effectiveness of the strategies implemented.

We therefore, fully support Package B and reject Package E.

### **Core interventions in both packages**

We are fully supportive. The intervention: "Creating better places and managing traffic" mirrors very well our philosophy of prioritising "place over movement" such that the outdoor environment can be enjoyed more widely rather than just being seen as a means to get from A to B. We support the interventions in "Roads and parking" as an appropriate balance of carrot and stick to help create a modal shift from car to public and active transport. We fully agree that it should be more expensive to park and that parking should be more restricted but it is vital to give people positive choices, which your other core interventions: "Cycling" and "Public transport" will address.

### **The measures only in Package B**

Again, we are fully supportive. All of these measures are rated as low or very low cost and consequently should be implemented as soon as possible to effect some immediate traffic and carbon emissions reductions. Two prime examples of this are the idea of planning new developments with sustainable transport in mind and travel planning especially that which focuses on journeys to school.

The more radical measures proposed are particularly encouraging, especially the idea of traffic management zones and road pricing, given that many experts believe that congestion

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cannot be tackled without road pricing. It is so much better that people value their journey and make transport choices accordingly rather than always rely on congestion to be the ultimate limiting factor. Such schemes should be revenue neutral, i.e. that money raised from motorists is used to give everyone valid transport choices and improve the quality of our living spaces.

We are pleased to see car clubs included, as we have had input into the imminent launch of a car club in Harrogate and see huge potential for future growth, which should lead to reduced motoring costs for many and reduced car use as people consider more seriously the necessity of a car journey.

### **The measures only in Package E**

#### **Park and Ride and Bus Priority**

We support the idea of bus priority and also of park and ride but absolutely not if either come with the caveat of a new road being built. We understand the argument put forward as to why the link was made between these measures and road building, but disagree with it. Measures in Package B (e.g. road pricing especially at peak times) can reduce congestion to the point that park and ride and bus priority would be viable and their omission from package B appears to show limited vision.

We suggest that all these measures are considered as part of a strategic transport plan for the Harrogate District.

We are very concerned how support expressed for these measures by survey respondents may be artificially conflated with support for a road, deliberately or otherwise.

#### **Relief Road**

We object to the package E measure "Relief road corridor" as it performs 25 times worse than Package B on greenhouse gas emissions. As both the national government and Harrogate Borough Council have acknowledge that we are in a climate emergency, it is inappropriate to be advancing any plans that are so ineffectual at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

We believe that Package B offers a viable alternative to alleviate traffic congestion within Harrogate and Knaresborough. The following points make a new road intervention an ineffective solution:

- Only 7% of traffic is through traffic

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- The long timescale required to build a new road (beyond the 2030 deadline for halving carbon emissions)
- High cost
- Potential for additional induced traffic by the increased ease of making long distance journeys through the Harrogate District (reducing forecast carbon emissions reductions and journey time savings)
- Damage of a valuable local environmental amenity and biodiversity loss at Nidd Gorge and Nidderdale Greenway
- Permanent irreversible intervention that cannot be trialled