

Comments on draft Otley Road cycleway plan

I am a member of HDCA, and fully support its submission, which sets out the reasons why a quality cycle route is needed.

It is disappointing that the timetable has slipped so much already – first, the cycleway was due to be built in July 2018, then autumn 2018, and now I understand it is going to be after the Tour de Yorkshire in 2019. Please don't let it be delayed any more.

The comments below are on the details I have seen in the draft plan.

Heading west away from the Prince of Wales roundabout

Park Avenue junction

The cycleway should be linked to Beech Grove with a cyclist & pedestrian crossing, preferably a zebra, (not a light-controlled crossing as motorised traffic is always given excessive priority).

Please do not put a 'cycle route ends' sign here. It is deeply unhelpful. People riding bikes cannot teleport themselves to another location. There is no other infrastructure where the designer would think it is a good idea to put a sign saying that the route just stops, in the middle of people's journeys.

There should be continuity to Beech Grove. If a crossing cannot be built now, put up a sign saying when it will be done; in any case, point the way to the next part of the route into town.

West End Avenue junction

This looks good – the cycleway has priority over turning traffic. This is how it has to be, otherwise the cycle route won't be used, and it will be a waste of money. It is vital that this is not changed.

A recent example of a cycle route with priority over side roads is in Cambridge on Huntingdon Road and Hills Road (<https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/travel-roads-and-parking/transport-projects/cycling-&-pedestrian-improvements/cycleways-on-huntingdon-road/>).

Please consider giving pedestrians crossing West End Avenue priority over traffic – perhaps one car's length back from the cycle way. Pedestrians are supposed to be top of the hierarchy of road users, but on Otley Road they are given little consideration and less priority.

Please change the settings on the light-controlled crossing of Otley Road here, so that people don't have to wait so long to cross.

Note the NICE recommendations currently being consulted on

(<https://www.nice.org.uk/consultations/50/1/quality-statements>), that say that active travel should be given more space and priority compared with private motorised transport.

Arthur's Avenue junction

It is not easy here, and the arrangement proposed isn't bad.

One possibility would be to design for cyclists to be on the road here, but give them a 5 second head start at the lights – see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Mx2CZUvqjU>

A comment about the crossing of Arthur's Avenue. Even when walking, people don't like to be asked to go part-way up this road to the crossing, rather than crossing at the junction. I think the crossing should be as close as possible to the junction/a straight line when walking/cycling up Otley Road.

Pannal Ash Road

If you're leaving the cycle lane in the road and an ASZ as an option, make sure there is a safe and convenient way of getting onto it. Consider a 5s headstart for cyclists at the lights.

After Pannal Ash Road, there is a long section of shared use pavement. This is a big compromise for people on foot and on bikes, and should only be used as a last resort. I would prefer the paths to be separated.

Pannal Ash Drive & Hill Rise Close

It is an essential feature that the cycleway has priority over these side roads, otherwise it will not be used. I suggest there should also be pedestrian crossings with priority, a little back from Otley Road, with space for one car in between the crossings.

Harlow Moor Road

One of the main failings of British cycle infrastructure is that it covers a short distance, then just stops, and abandons the people who are using it. That's what's going to happen at Harlow Moor Road, by the look of it.

I suggest you do not put an 'end of route' sign here, because it is of no help whatever to anyone riding a bike. Instead, you could put up a sign saying when the next phase is due to be built.

Heading east towards Prince of Wales roundabout

Harlow Moor Road to Harlow Oval

It looks good apart from the arrangement at the bus stop. Can there be a floating bus stop, and a segregated cycleway passing behind it?

Harlow Oval to Manor Drive

There's a long stretch of shared use pavement, which is undesirable except as a last resort. I would prefer to see foot and cycle paths stay separate. If more space is needed outside the vets, could you remove the bricks and metal fence? Perhaps the grass too? The amenity value of the grass is zero.

Manor Drive to Cold Bath Road

The pavement outside So Bar & Eats is really not suitable for shared use. It is quite busy, and not very wide.

I would prefer to see the cycle lane take the existing painted cycle lane; protect it from the traffic with a kerb or metal posts; then give cyclists a 5s head start at the traffic lights.

Cold Bath Road to Victoria Road

Give pedestrians a crossing of Wordsworth Crescent with priority, set one car's length back. The same at Queen's Road and Victoria Road.

Victoria Road to Beech Grove

I feel very strongly that the stretch of pavement outside the houses here is not suitable for shared use. There is enough space on the road, to make a kerb-protected cycle lane on the other side of the grass.

General

After the route is built, please go back and look at how it is being used. A significant proportion of cycle infrastructure in Harrogate is routinely ignored by people riding bikes, because it does not meet their needs. If NYCC looks at what happens in practice, it can prevent mistakes being repeated.

David Mitchell