

Transport and Infrastructure

6 Transport and Infrastructure

Transport and Infrastructure Key Facts

- The district has benefited from significant recent investment in broadband infrastructure.
- Only 16.4% of households do not own a car/van compared to 27.6% nationally.
- Large parts of the district do not have access to an at least hourly bus or rail service however the majority of rail stations in the district continue to experience growth in passenger numbers.
- Harrogate sees a small level of net in-commuting for work.
- The proportion of the district's residents who cycle to work/school is substantially lower than the proportion nationally.
- Access to services is a significant issue for parts of the district, particularly in the outlying rural areas.
- Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon have been identified by North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) as priority areas to tackle congestion.
- Improvements to the York - Harrogate - Leeds railway have been identified by NYCC as priority.
- Across the local education authority the number of primary schools at or above capacity has increased and whilst this applies to a number of secondary schools in the district, there remains a large number of unused spaces at several secondary schools.

TI1: Sustainable Transport

Draft Policy TI 1

TI1: Sustainable Transport

The council will work in partnership with other authorities, transport providers and local groups to promote a sustainable and improved transport system which is safe, reliable, and convenient and will:

- A. Improve road and rail connections both within the district and to the wider area, in particular the improvement of the Leeds-Harrogate-York Railway;
- B. Seek reductions in traffic congestion in Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon;
- C. Promote improvements to public transport, including the provision of better parking at rail stations and park and ride facilities, the creation of walking and cycling routes, provision of electric vehicle charging points for both cars and bikes, the Harrogate car-share scheme and measures to reduce air pollution;
- D. Ensure development proposals seek to minimise the need to travel and achieve more sustainable travel behaviour by requiring all developments which will generate significant amounts of traffic to be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment and a Travel Plan;
- E. Locate, as far as possible, the majority of future development so that it is accessible to a station on the Leeds-Harrogate-York Railway or within the Key Bus Service Corridor;

- F. Improve accessibility in rural areas;
- G. Undertake a Strategic Transport Priorities Study for the district in order to set out the council's priorities for sustainable transport.

Justification

- 6.1** The NPPF states that local planning authorities should work with other authorities and transport providers to develop strategies for the provision of viable infrastructure necessary to support sustainable development. In paragraph 29 the NPPF sets out the need for the transport system to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel and therefore the need to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling and to support transport measures that help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. Recognition is also given to the fact that this will be achieved differently in rural areas and the need for road improvements where this will contribute towards sustainable development.
- 6.2** North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC), as the Local Highway Authority, has set out its long term vision for how improved transport in North Yorkshire can contribute towards a thriving economy in its Strategic Transport Prospectus 2015, which sets out three main Strategic Transport Priorities: improving east-west connectivity, improving access to high speed and conventional rail, and improving long distance connectivity to the north and south. In April 2016, it also published the Local Transport Plan 2016-2046 (LTP4) setting out its proposals for and approach to transport provision. These documents detail a number of key sustainable transport proposals which are particularly relevant to the creation of a sustainable transport system in Harrogate district and where the council is working closely with the county council and other stakeholders. These include:
- **Leeds-Harrogate-York Railway:** a transformational change to the line delivering improved journey times is proposed including, increased train frequency, modern high quality rolling stock and customer service and ultimately electrification. Double tracking of the single track sections to the east of Knaresborough will be taking place over the next 10 years. These improvements will provide the district with a better link to the wider rail network and future HS2 Hub stations at Leeds and York. Harrogate Station is also identified as a key station for significant improvement, and the need for improved parking and transport interchange at stations along the line is recognised.
 - **A59 Harrogate Relief Road Study:** In parallel with the traffic modelling work the borough council has undertaken as part of the process of preparing this Local Plan, NYCC has undertaken testing of relief road options to assess whether the local plan housing allocations will influence the choice of potential preferred routes for a possible relief road which is intended to improve east-west connections, address urban congestion issues and journey time reliability.
 - **Priority areas to tackle traffic congestion:** NYCC have identified Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon as priority areas in which to address traffic congestion. In recognition that congestion is an important issue in many of the district's larger settlements, the Local Plan includes a draft objective to reduce congestion and the council will continue to work with NYCC to identify schemes to reduce existing and future congestion,
 - **Sustainable and healthy transport:** a range of measures are being undertaken jointly including measures to reduce air pollution from transport and encourage walking and cycling. The Harrogate and Knaresborough Cycling Implementation plan has been reviewed and updated and will inform future mitigation measures in relation to development proposals. This work is being undertaken with the Harrogate District Cycle Forum. NYCC will be undertaking a cycle study in Ripon following developer contributions

received in association with planning permission granted for housing at Bellman Walk in Ripon.

- 6.3** The NPPF, in paragraphs 32 and 36, identifies the important role played by Transport Assessments, or Transport Statements, and Travel Plans in assessing and mitigating the negative transport impacts of development and promoting sustainable development. These will be required for all developments which generate significant amounts of traffic and should positively contribute to:
- encouraging sustainable travel,
 - lessening the traffic generated and its detrimental impacts,
 - reducing carbon emissions and climate impacts,
 - creating accessible, connected, inclusive communities,
 - improving health outcomes and quality of life,
 - improving road safety, and
 - reducing the need for new development to increase existing road capacity and provide new roads.
- 6.4** NYCC as the local highway authority will advise on when these assessments will be required.
- 6.5** Sustainable transport has been a factor in the development of this plan's growth option which is focused around the key public transport corridors. This has been chosen based upon how a number of growth options, consulted upon as part of the Issues and Options Consultation (2015), performed when assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal and land availability. The need for new homes and jobs is being met as far as possible in those settlements which are well related to the Key Public Transport Corridor. This includes the Key Bus Service Corridor and the Leeds-Harrogate-York Railway.
- 6.6** The council will be producing its own Strategic Transport Priorities Study to inform the council's response on transport matters.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy TI3: Parking Provision
- Policy TI2: Protection of Transport Routes and Sites

Further information/guidance for applicants (see bibliography Transport and Infrastructure for more details)

- North Yorkshire County Council: Local Transport Plan 2016-2046 (LTP4)
- North Yorkshire County Council: Strategic Transport Prospectus (2015)

Evidence that may be required from applicants to accompany a planning application

- Proposals that generate significant amounts of traffic must be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment and will normally be required to provide a Travel Plan.
- A validation certificate relating to this requirement must accompany planning applications where required and must be signed by North Yorkshire County Council as the Local Highway Authority.

TI2: Protection of Transport Sites and Routes

Draft Policy TI 2

TI2: Protection of Transport Sites and Routes

New sites and routes which have the potential to contribute towards the provision of a sustainable and improved transport system will be safeguarded where there is a reasonable prospect of them accommodating new transport infrastructure before 2035. This will apply when a scheme is:

- A. Included within the investment strategies or plans produced by Highways England, as the strategic highway authority, North Yorkshire County Council, as the local highway authority, or by another body or organisation contributing towards the creation of a sustainable and improved transport system for the district, and for which there is an agreed preferred route or site;
- B. Along the route of a former railway line; in particular the sections of the Harrogate-Ripon-Northallerton line and the Harrogate to Wetherby line that lie within Harrogate district;
- C. A cycle or pedestrian route identified by the local highway authority or the district council and included within an approved plan or strategy.

Justification

- 6.7** The importance of identifying and protecting, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice, is set out in the NPPF (paragraph 41). The council works closely with NYCC as the local highway authority and Highways England as the strategic highway authority in order to integrate development proposals with transport provision and will seek to protect routes or sites required for new transport infrastructure where appropriate.
- 6.8** The council, through the Harrogate District Local Plan 2001, has given long term protection to the routes of former railway lines for use as cycle paths in response to the need to create a more sustainable transport system by encouraging more trips to be made by walking and cycling. In recent years, four miles of the former railway between Harrogate and Ripley have been converted into the Nidderdale Greenway, a traffic free path which also links to cycle routes to Starbeck and Knaresborough and forms part of a wider network of cycle paths included in the Harrogate and Knaresborough Cycling Implementation Plan, which has now been updated.
- 6.9** The long term protection of former strategic rail routes provides options for sustainable transport in the future. NYCC's Strategic Transport Prospectus 2015 provides a long term vision for how improved transport in North Yorkshire can contribute towards a thriving northern economy. The Strategy supports in principle proposals for rail reopening and also identifies the need for a new railway from Leeds to Harrogate and Ripon joining the East Coast Mainline north at Northallerton. This policy therefore continues the protection of the Harrogate-Ripon-Northallerton and Harrogate-Wetherby sections of the line within the district, for future transport use. Whilst parts of both these former railway lines are currently used as cycle paths it is considered that rail and cycle use could co-exist in the future.

- 6.10** The council is working closely with NYCC and the Harrogate District Cycle Forum to update cycle strategies for the urban areas. These will include routes for new cycle infrastructure required in association with sites allocated under policy DM1: Housing Allocations and DM3: Mixed Use Allocations, linking new developments to existing cycle networks, key services and facilities.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy DM1: Site Allocations
- Policy DM3: Mixed Use Allocations

Further information/guidance for applicants (see bibliography Transport and Infrastructure for more details)

- Harrogate Borough Council: Harrogate and Knaresborough Cycling Implementation Plan, (2013)
- North Yorkshire County Council: Strategic Transport Prospectus, 2015

Designations/boundaries to be shown on the policies map

- Protection of former railway routes.

TI3: Parking Provision

Draft Policy TI 3

TI3: Parking Provision

When considering the provision of parking, proposals for development should recognise an overall need to reduce the use of private cars, and take suitable account of the following factors:

- A. The need to provide safe, secure and convenient parking at appropriate levels, including parking or storage for cycles, motor cycles and, where relevant, coaches and lorries;
- B. Parking standards for cars, cycles, motorised two wheel vehicles, disabled parking and operational servicing requirements as prepared by the local highway authority, North Yorkshire County Council;
- C. Policies set out in the North Yorkshire County Council Parking Strategy (and successive strategies);
- D. Where relevant, the location of the site within an area covered by an Area Travel Plan;
- E. Where appropriate, the need to make provision for car club and car share parking spaces;
- F. Means to encourage the use of low emission vehicles as part of the proposal, including the ability to provide electric vehicle charging points.

Justification

- 6.11** The NPPF (paragraph 29) identifies that the transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes in order to give people a real choice about how they travel. The framework also supports transport measures that help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion. In recognition that congestion is an important issue in many of the district's larger settlements, the Local Plan includes a draft objective to reduce existing congestion. As the availability of parking spaces has an influence on how people choose to travel, the provision of parking in connection with new development can help to minimise car use in order to help achieve these aims.
- 6.12** The 2011 census shows that car ownership in Harrogate district is higher than the national average, with 84% of households owning a car or van compared to the national average of 74%. The higher level of ownership is reflected in a higher proportion of residents driving to work in a private car or van, 57.8% in the district compared to 54% nationally.

Parking guidance and parking standards

- 6.13** The NPPF identifies a number of issues to consider when setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development:
- The accessibility of the development
 - The type, mix and use of development
 - The availability of and opportunities for public transport
 - Local car ownership levels
 - An overall need to reduce the use of high-emission vehicles

- 6.14** Provision for cyclists, sustainable travel measures (such as car clubs and the provision of car share spaces), accessibility to public transport, and availability of public parking all have a bearing on the level of parking to be provided as part of development proposals. The amenity value and character of an area, particularly where heritage assets or areas of high landscape value are affected, must also be considered when determining the level of parking appropriate in relation to a development proposal. To this end, where opportunities exist, the use of shared parking provision should be investigated. The local highway authority, NYCC, has set out guidance on a range of transport issues in the document Interim Guidance on Transport Issues (2015). The document sets out the parking standards to be used across the Harrogate district.

North Yorkshire County Council Parking Strategy

- 6.15** While Harrogate Borough Council is responsible for off street car parks under the council's control, NYCC is responsible for on-street parking throughout the district. The North Yorkshire County Council Parking Strategy (2011) relates to all aspects of parking under the control of the county council. In the longer term, it is the county council's hope to work with partners to develop a strategy covering both on and off street parking.
- 6.16** The strategy should be read in the context of the current North Yorkshire Local Transport Plan, which sets out the wider transport strategy for the county. The plan recognises the importance of managing on-street parking provision because of the potential for major impacts on the transport network. It identifies that appropriate management can deliver a range of benefits including reducing traffic congestion, improving localised air quality, road safety and access to public transport, and improving parking and servicing of businesses. The county council has begun working on a new local transport plan that will provide an updated approach to all aspects of the local transport system for the next 30 years.

Area travel plans

- 6.17** Travel plans are long-term management strategies that seek to deliver sustainable transport objectives in relation to a particular organisation or development site through specified actions. Area travel plans cover a set of sites in a particular geographical area where the sharing of resources and ideas for developing and implementing travel plans can lead to greater success for each party in achieving sustainable transport objectives. Organisations in the area still develop their own travel plans but there is usually also a shared travel plan for the whole area. Area travel plans could be developed for key business and visitor destinations in Harrogate.

Provision of electric vehicle charging points

- 6.18** The use of ultra-low emission vehicles, such as electric, plug-in hybrid and hydrogen powered cars and vans, will help to cut greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution on the district's roads. The government is supporting the greater use of these vehicles through, for example, the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) and the Plugged-in-Places programme, and it is expected that usage will increase significantly over the life of the Local Plan. To help realise this ambition, the government intend to set out a framework for the development of a recharging network for electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles. In order to encourage the wider use of these ultra-low emission vehicles locally, the council will support the provision of vehicle charging points as part of development proposals. The satisfactory location and design of such infrastructure will be an important consideration.

Car clubs and car share parking spaces

- 6.19** Car clubs involve the provision of cars parked in reserved spaces in accessible locations for the use of club members who book to use a car for a particular period of time. Such schemes have been operating in several cities across the UK for a number of years. City Car Club

offer such a service in both Leeds and York. The development of car clubs in the district's larger settlements, in particular Harrogate, is a possible sustainable transport measure that could be investigated further. If car clubs are set up it will be important that reserved parking spaces are provided in locations that encourage people to join the clubs.

- 6.20** Car share schemes contribute to reducing congestion and emissions from transport by encouraging people who make similar journeys in separate cars to travel together in a single vehicle. The availability and convenient siting of parking spaces designated for use only by car share users is an important incentive that encourages people to join the schemes. As a result, the council encourages the provision of car share only parking spaces where these do not have a substantial negative effect on the overall provision of parking. In assessing proposals it will be recognised that the use of car share schemes will lower the demand for the remaining parking spaces.

Park and ride

- 6.21** The local transport authority, NYCC, has not identified a need to protect any site for a park and ride scheme during the period covered by the Local Plan. However, they have indicated that should proposals for park and ride come forward as part of other development proposals they will be considered on their merits. Opportunities for park and rail will be supported where they meet the requirement of other relevant Local Plan policies.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Further guidance for applicants (see bibliography Transport and Infrastructure for more details)

- North Yorkshire County Council: Local Transport Plan
- North Yorkshire County Council: Parking Strategy, (2011)
- North Yorkshire County Council: Interim Guidance on Transport Issues Including Parking Standards, (2015)

Evidence that may be required from applicants to accompany a planning application

- A travel plan.
- A transport assessment.

TI4: Delivery of New Infrastructure

Draft Policy TI 4

TI4: Delivery of New Infrastructure

In order to deliver sustainable development, the council will work with infrastructure and service providers and developers to deliver infrastructure and services to support existing and future development across the district.

Depending on the nature and scale of development proposed, and subject to viability, developers will be expected to make reasonable on-site provision, off-site provision and/or contributions towards infrastructure and services in order to cater for the needs generated by development.

Proposals involving the delivery of new or improved infrastructure or services, either on its own or in combination with other development, will be supported provided that:

- A. It can be demonstrated that they are necessary to support new development and/or to rectify existing evidenced deficiencies in infrastructure or service provision;
- B. Development is phased so as to cause minimal disruption to existing infrastructure and service provision for residents and businesses;
- C. Where associated with other development, the infrastructure and services required to support the development are provided in advance of the development's completion and occupation;
- D. The development complies with the provisions of Policies GS6: Sustainable Development and HP3: Local Distinctiveness.

Justification

6.22 The Local Plan seeks to deliver the infrastructure necessary to support the council's strategy for growth, making the most of opportunities to improve green infrastructure, exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes and increase the vitality and viability of the district's main urban areas. New development should be fully integrated with existing settlements and deliver adequate infrastructure and services to support itself. Where new development generates a need for new physical or social infrastructure, it is reasonable to expect the developer to provide, or contribute towards, these facilities so as not to place an undue burden on existing infrastructure. Examples of the types of infrastructure and services that will commonly be required to support development in the district are:

- highway and transport infrastructure, including public transport improvements, walking and cycling facilities;
- water supply, sewerage and waste water treatment facilities;
- waste disposal and recycling facilities;
- flood protection measures including sustainable drainage systems;
- gas and electricity supply;
- communications infrastructure, including telecommunications and high speed broadband;
- health care services and facilities;
- schools and other services and facilities for children and young adults;
- community facilities;
- facilities for disabled people;
- community safety and crime prevention measures;
- public open space, sports and recreation facilities;

- appropriate hard and soft landscape infrastructure; and
- habitat creation.

This should not be seen as a definitive list. The requirements for each development will vary considerably and should be determined in consultation with infrastructure and service providers, and the local community.

6.23 The second part of the policy seeks to ensure that new infrastructure and services are necessary, delivered either in advance or alongside the development they are intended to support, cause minimal disruption to existing services, and are appropriately located and designed. The council has commissioned consultants to prepare a Infrastructure Capacity Study to identify the infrastructure and services required to support the level of planned growth in the district, prepared in consultation with infrastructure and service providers. The purpose of this document is to:

- assess the existing quality and capacity of the district's infrastructure;
- inform the council's selection of a preferred development strategy for the district;
- determine what infrastructure is required to support the council's selected growth strategy and preferred development allocations - setting this information out in a delivery plan;
- identify the priorities for investment and the bodies responsible for delivering the infrastructure required; and
- provide the evidence needed to support funding bids for identified infrastructure projects.

6.24 The Infrastructure Capacity Study, including the associated delivery plan, can be viewed on the council's website. The council will review this document on a regular basis to ensure that it provides the most up-to-date picture of the infrastructure needs of the district and to monitor progress in the delivery of infrastructure. Should issues arise with the delivery of strategic infrastructure required to enable growth, the council will seek to work actively with developers and infrastructure providers to resolve the issue.

6.25 Planning obligations can be required by a local planning authority in order to make an otherwise unacceptable development proposal acceptable in planning terms, where the use of planning conditions would not suffice. Planning obligations are private agreements negotiated with the developer or landowner (S106 Agreements), or can alternatively be secured through a unilateral undertaking by the developer or landowner. Planning obligations are required to offset the direct physical, social or environmental impacts of development and/or to ensure that the essential needs of new residents/workers resulting from development are catered for.

6.26 The 2010 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations placed into law the tests that planning obligations are:

- necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- directly related to the development; and
- fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

6.27 The council will expect developers to provide for and/or contribute towards the provision of community and other infrastructure needs generated directly by their development where this is necessary to make a scheme acceptable in planning terms.

6.28 The council recognises that on some sites there may be particular site specific circumstances that reduce the economic viability of development. In line with the statutory test, planning obligations towards infrastructure provision will only be sought by the council in order to make a development acceptable in planning terms, and without such provision a development could therefore be deemed unacceptable. In such cases the applicant must provide evidence

to demonstrate that the viability of development would be jeopardised by the imposition of a planning obligation, and a robust planning case as to why the development should be permitted even with a reduction in, or absence of, the infrastructure sought by the obligation.

- 6.29** The 2010 CIL Regulations allow local planning authorities to introduce a tariff based approach to funding infrastructure. Under a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) charges will be applicable to most forms of development, not just housing, with the level of the charge dependent on the scale and type of development. The CIL differs from planning obligations in that it widens the net for attracting contributions towards infrastructure provision and breaks the direct link between a development and the infrastructure provided. This allows authorities to pool funds and manage their investment in infrastructure strategically, funding a wide range of local and sub regional infrastructure priorities identified through the infrastructure planning process. The CIL is not intended to replace mainstream funding programmes for infrastructure but simply to augment available funds to ensure the timely delivery of necessary works. The CIL will provide more certainty to developers, allowing them to calculate the likely charge early in the development process.
- 6.30** The council is preparing a CIL for the district alongside the emerging Local Plan and will be consulting on a Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule, the first stage in this process, in spring 2017.
- 6.31** Prior to the implementation of a CIL charging schedule, the council will continue to use planning obligations, where appropriate, to ensure that developments are adequately supported by infrastructure and services. The council will also continue to operate commuted sums policies with regards to the provision of open space and village halls in connection with new residential development. Once the CIL is in place, the council will continue to make use of development specific planning obligations to enable the direct local consequences of a development to be mitigated where this is considered necessary and appropriate. In all cases, the restrictions introduced on the use of planning obligations by the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) will be adhered to (specifically regulations 122 and 123).

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy GS6: Sustainable Development
- Policy HP3: Local Distinctiveness
- Policy HP7: New Sports, Open Space and Recreation Development
- Policy NE5: Green Infrastructure
- Policy NE7: Trees and Woodland

Further information/guidance for applicants (see bibliography Transport and Infrastructure for more details)

- Harrogate Borough Council: Draft Provision for Open Space in Connection with New Housing Development Supplementary Planning Document, (2016)
- Harrogate Borough Council: Provision for Village Halls in Connection with New Housing Development Supplementary Planning Document, (2015)
- Harrogate Borough Council: Harrogate District Infrastructure Capacity Study - Stage 2, O'Neill's, (2016)
- Harrogate Borough Council: Guidance on Developer Contributions to Education Facilities, (2016)

- Harrogate Borough Council: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) web page
- The Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010

Evidence that may be required from applicants to accompany a planning application

- Pre-application consultation with infrastructure and service providers.
- Economic Viability Assessment.

TI5: Telecommunications

Draft Policy TI 5

TI5: Telecommunications

The expansion of communications infrastructure including Next Generation broadband and mobile connectivity will be supported. This will be achieved by:

- A. Supporting the expansion of communications networks which use existing infrastructure, including masts and structures;
- B. Supporting the provision of new communications infrastructure where it can be demonstrated that using existing infrastructure or equipment would not be feasible and provided the proposal does not have a significant adverse impact on the character or appearance of the surrounding area. Where apparatus or associated infrastructure is proposed to be located on a building, the proposal will be supported provided the siting scale and design of the apparatus or associated infrastructure does not have a significant adverse impact on the external appearance of the building;
- C. Ensuring the location and design of proposals avoid harm to sensitive areas or buildings/structures and accord with local plan policies HP2: Heritage Assets, NE3: Protecting the Natural Environment and NE4: Landscape Character.

Broadband access in new developments:

- D. New employment and housing development proposals will be required to demonstrate the anticipated connectivity requirements of the proposed use and how the development will contribute to, and be compatible with, Next Generation Access broadband;
- E. All new development will be required to enable a Next Generation Access broadband connection where viable. Where it can be demonstrated that the provision of a Next Generation Access broadband connection is not viable, proposals should provide a minimum download connection of 10Mbps and incorporate suitable infrastructure to support delivery of Next Generation Access broadband at a future date;
- F. Applicants proposing major development schemes should engage with communication providers and local broadband groups to explore how Next Generation Access broadband can be provided and how the development may contribute to and integrate with active broadband projects within the local area.

Justification

- 6.32** The NPPF emphasises that advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks also plays a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services. The expansion of telecommunication infrastructure across the Harrogate district will be supported, particularly in areas where mobile and broadband connectivity is poor or non-existent.

Mobile telephony

- 6.33** There is likely to be a need to establish new mobile telecommunications infrastructure within Harrogate district and this policy seeks to ensure that new infrastructure makes use of existing sites and structures wherever possible. Any applications for new telecommunications infrastructure will be expected to demonstrate the need for their location if this is not the case.

Broadband access

- 6.34** Access to broadband is a vital component of infrastructure in today's world. It is key to growing a sustainable local economy, vital for education and home working and increasingly central part of community cohesions and resilience, particularly in rural areas. Broadband connectivity across the plan area varies considerably. Government initiatives aim to enable everybody in the UK to access broadband speeds of at least two megabits per second and 95% of the UK to receive far greater speeds, (at least 24 Mbps), by 2017. In addition the European Commission, through the Digital Agenda for Europe, anticipates 100% coverage of 30Mbps broadband or more by 2020 and that over 50% of households will have a subscription to broadband connection in excess of 100Mbps.⁽²⁰⁾
- 6.35** Occupiers of new residential or commercial premises now often expect a high quality broadband connection as a utility similar to the provision of electricity or water. Applicants are required to actively demonstrate that they have considered broadband within their proposals and the digital requirements of the development and the resulting level of connectivity.
- 6.36** This policy indicates that all development will enable Next Generation Access broadband where viable. The definition of Next Generation Access used within this policy is defined as a broadband service that provides a download speed in excess of 30Mbps as detailed in the Digital Agenda for Europe.
- 6.37** Where it can be demonstrated that Next Generation Access broadband is not viable the development should provide a minimum download speed of 10Mbps and incorporate measures to facilitate future delivery of Next Generation Access broadband within their plans i.e. laying ducting capable of carrying fibre cables from multiple providers.
- 6.38** Where a proposal would be classed as major development applicants should engage with communication providers and local broadband projects as appropriate to identify where the development may contribute and integrate with existing initiatives.
- 6.39** Agreement in February 2016 between the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Home Builders Federation and Openreach have outlined a process for the delivery of Next Generation Access broadband on new residential development which should be considered.
- 6.40** Access to free public wireless broadband supports the vitality of town and village centres for residents, visitors and businesses. Opportunities to add to the visitor experience by extending existing or creating new public wireless broadband networks will be supported provided the infrastructure meets the requirements of this policy.

20 Please see the European Commission's website for further information.

Further Information

Related planning policies

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- Policy HP2: Heritage Assets
- Policy NE3: Protecting the Natural Environment
- Policy NE4: Landscape Character

Further information/guidance for applicants (see bibliography Transport and Infrastructure for more details)

- European Commission: Broadband Strategy and Policy

Evidence that may be required from applicants to accompany a planning application

- Justification for not locating new telecommunications infrastructure using existing sites or structures.

Safeguarding of Minerals and Waste Infrastructure

- 6.41** North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) is responsible for minerals and waste planning within Harrogate district. Working with City of York Council and the North York Moors National Park they are jointly preparing a new Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Once adopted the policies map will indicate safeguarded areas for minerals resources, minerals transport infrastructure and ancillary infrastructure and waste infrastructure. Safeguarding of minerals resources together with minerals and waste infrastructure is necessary to ensure such resources are not sterilised. The purpose of safeguarding is not to prevent other forms of development but to ensure that the presence of the resource or infrastructure is taking into account when other development proposals are being considered.
- 6.42** A number of safeguarded areas are identified in Harrogate district on the emerging North Yorkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan policies map. Where non-exempt development is proposed in safeguarded areas, consultation will take place with NYCC before permission is granted.