

North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

20 November 2019

District Council and LAF Project Updates

Report of the Secretary

1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 An opportunity for LAF members to update the Forum on District Council liaison and other LAF representative project activity since the last meeting.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The LAF operates an agreed list of nominated representatives willing to act as the first point of liaison with the constituent District Councils in relation to planning and other relevant matters. Individual LAF members are also nominated from time to time to take a lead on specific projects that the LAF has an interest in or in representing the LAF on other partnership bodies. Both are represented in the table below:

Name	Representation
Vacant	Craven District
Barrie Mounty	Selby District
Rachel Connelly	Hambleton District Richmondshire District A1 & A19
Roma Haigh	Ryedale District HS2
Paul Sherwood	NYCC Countryside Access Service User Group Regional Access Forum A66
Helen Soutar	Harrogate District
County Councillor David Jeffels	Scarborough District Regional Access Forum
Vacant	2026

- 2.3 This agenda item provides an opportunity for the Forum to be updated on activity since the previous meeting.

3.0 District Council Liaison

3.1 The following updates have been provided by Rachel Connolly:

Hambleton District Council

Hambleton are in the throes of writing their draft Local Plan, so I made an appointment and spent a constructive time going through the Hambleton report which had just been written, and discussing what the LAF expected from their policy team according to the training given by Natural England. They found this really useful and will be issuing their Plan for response in due course.

Hambleton District Council have had various planning responses and an in-depth response to their draft Local Plan. Feedback has been positive about the Forum's input.

Richmondshire District Council (RDC)

The LAF has submitted two reports on planning applications since the last meeting, the most significant of which is the proposed motorway service area adjacent to the Catterick north interchange on the A1(M). This response was also sent to NYCC highways – unusually – in order that they might appreciate the strong case for rejecting the access plan, and highlights the difficulty for the district council when advice from us and the county council might disagree. As I write NYCC have failed to give their input to date, leaving planners and applicants with uncertainty as the committee date draws nearer.

Ministry of Defence – Catterick Garrison

There are some very major developments in the pipeline for the Ministry of Defence, all of which will need planning permission from RDC and will need to conform to the National Planning Policy Framework regarding 'Access'. However, this will not be for another year and the manager was unwilling for the LAF to have input at this stage and said we would be treated as any other consultee when the time came. One of the issues I have with the MOD in Catterick is that they have made cycle-only paths through the garrison patch – this is a defined area of Crown Estate with particular self-determining powers, as opposed to the civilian area which surrounds it; the MOD areas beyond the Garrison are under the management of someone different. However, although Crown Land, their planning comes under the local district council i.e. RDC.

The cycle-only paths exclude horses which then have to mix with traffic (including tanks) on the roads, with the result that no-one dares ride round the garrison now. I asked if there was a likelihood of them changing their policy in line with government advice, non-discrimination and equality of safer travel in the meantime, and the answer was a categorical NO!

Highways England (HE)

HE came for a day's discussion and site visit regarding the local access roads. Various proposals will go forward to NYCC regarding improvements that they could suggest, funded by HE, as there was recognition that HE had failed NMUs to some degree on this project, together with agreed actions that HE could affect themselves to remedy some of the defects. Visitors were surprised and shocked to see the neglect of the verges on the LAR. HE will have discussions with NYCC.

Verge Cutting

At the last meeting it was expected that the BHS representative would be contacted by NYCC with a similar letter to the one sent to the Forum, but she heard nothing. Therefore, she asked me to liaise with the area highway manager to discuss where mowing was needed as I had more knowledge of this than she did. Consequently, we looked at the maps and had what seemed a useful plan to go forward. A further site meeting has been arranged and negotiations are still ongoing

3.2 The following update has been provided by Helen Soutar:

Report on the A59 Kex Gill new alignment public information event

Paul Sherwood and I attended the open public consultation events held over 3 days at the beginning of October. I attended the Huberstone Farm event on the 2nd October and Paul attended the Harrogate event on the 3rd October.

North Yorkshire County Council has been working on developing the new alignment of the A59 at Kex Gill, between Harrogate and Skipton, due to landslips and instability. The sessions were staffed by NYCC project officers and gave opportunity to discuss design, view plans, photo montages and a very useful 3D computer generated model.

The new section of A59 will follow the path of the Roman road on the opposite hillside to the present road, this is a bridleway now. The new bridleway will broadly follow the new road but from the maps available on the link below it appears to be 50m or more away from the road and is often separated from the new road by banking and dry-stone walls. There will be 2 bridleway underpasses with mounting blocks provided for horse riders. The old A59 will be a shared bridleway and farm access until it links onto the new bridleway. The rest of the old A59 will not be maintained due to stability issues. The road junction will be improved near the popular water authority carpark for Fewston Reservoir and Blubberhouses church making a safer junction and improved access to the carpark

The full detailed proposals are available at www.northyorks.gov.uk/a59-kex-gill-re-alignment .

It's interesting to note under frequently asked questions:

Q. Will pedestrians, cyclists, equestrians and other non-motorised users be able to enjoy the local area?

A. We will be engaging with the local access forum on the details of this – As far as I know the LAF has not t been directly involved in the consultation yet, but I am new to the Forum so if other members know more please let me know.

In general discussions at the consultation event with the project manager he said overall people were generally happy with the proposals and that they had received no indication of any complaints or objections to date (beginning October). The events seemed very well attended with many user groups represented even in the short space of time I attended.

4.0 LAF projects

- 4.1 The following update on 'Getting Out and About Together' (GOAT) has been provided by Cllr David Jeffels:

The aspiration of the LAF to take forward a project designed to enhance the learning experience of primary school age children through outdoor visits in their locality, has been on the drawing board for some time, and officers in NYCC's Countryside Services Department have studied possible opportunities.

However, because of constraints on budgets and staff resources, it has not been possible at this stage to take forward the initiative as was originally envisaged. Members of LAF however, obviously remain committed to the concept that enabling children to get out into the local area to study nature, wildlife, local history and heritage because all our communities have much to offer them.

Despite the council's constraints, schemes have been taken forward at Selby and Scarborough, focusing on health the environment and heritage and a further scheme is being progressed at Ripon on the theme of "Discoveries on Your Doorstep".

Officers are enthusiastic about the prospects of getting our primary schools involved in outdoor pursuits, as are members of the LAF because such activity has much to achieve in terms of generating interest by primary age children in their environment and encouraging them in activities through the GOAT idea which will benefit the youngsters in their wider curriculum such as geography, history, mathematics, heritage, essay writing and reading etc.

In summary, derivations of the GOAT scheme are still alive and as the member of the LAF who agreed to take it forward, members can be assured that it is still 'work in progress' on my part but the pressure on staff and budget has meant it cannot be pursued in its original concept though I shall be taking an active interest in the Ripon scheme from which it may be possible to expand its objectives to other communities.

- 4.3 Nominated representatives are invited to report verbally on any other activity undertaken since the last meeting.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 That members:
- i) Note the updates;
 - ii) Agree any further actions required

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