

Dear David,

Consultation:- proposed Malton to Pickering Cycle Route

The task of responding from the Local Access Forum of the North York Moors National Park Authority has been passed to me from John Richardson, our Chair. He first asked Alison Fuller, also a LAF member, but she has already responded from Ryedale Bridleways Group, and so he decided that I should respond on behalf of the LAF.

The Local Access Forum are supportive of the principal of the route because it will offer a more attractive access from Malton Railway Station to the National Park for cycle tourism. It will also be a continuation of longer distance cycle routes to the National Park from York and from Hull, and hence from the continent via the ferries from Rotterdam and Zeebrugge, and via the national rail network. Tourism always has some degree of negative environmental impact, and one way of mitigating this will be making it easier for visitors to arrive by bicycle instead of by car. We would hope that the route will enable more foreign cycle-touring visitors by being a more pleasant route and by being well signed "on the ground", and easy to find on the internet.

Having said this, some sections of the route are on B-roads, and so are not as safe as continental cycling visitors are used to, so feedback to further potential visitors on the continent may not be universally positive.

The Local Access Forum strive for a balance between different modes of recreational travel. It isn't always easy to combine the demands and needs of ramblers, horse riders, road cycling, mountain biking and off-road vehicles. In this instance, Alison Fuller has already very clearly described how the needs of horse-riders can be accommodated alongside the cycle-route intentions. I have added her comments, which you have already seen, at the bottom of this email. Most parts of the route are already used by farm vehicles, and use by other off-road vehicles would probably be very rare, because it is not adventurous terrain. All the route that you have indicated is existing highway or existing bridleways, which Ramblers can already use if they wish to. Because the route is likely to get more use through publicity, the Local Access Forum would be keen to see clear but tasteful signs at junctions along the route reminding users that it is a shared use path.

Though the route is not within the National Park, the Local Access Forum are always mindful of environmental impact. The intention along the route that you have indicated is just to repair the existing surfaces as they are, so disturbance to wild-life will be of short duration, and no habitats will be destroyed.

The Local Access Forum are aware that funding is needed to repair the surfaces on much of the bridleway sections. Funding is being sort for this route through European Structural Development funds, and this imposes time limits because to some extent the funding is "first come first served". This means that there is not time for landowner negotiations to get the best possible route, and it may be better to press ahead with what is achievable within this funding time-frame. We would suggest that the route be seen as a step in the right direction, but that further work needs to be done in the future because avoiding the B-

roads would make the route safer for horse-riders and cyclists, particularly family groups or novices of both horse-riders or cyclists. Another aspect to this is that promotion of the route will be hampered by the B-road sections, so the positive impacts for environment and local economy will not be fully felt.

Thank you for consulting the Local Access Forum about this route, and we hope that the combined responses to the consultation give sound footings for a successful bid for the necessary funding. I have added Alison Fullers comments as an appendix below. I know that Ryedale Cycle Forum will also be responding.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Gundry,

On behalf of the Local Access Forum,  
North York Moors National Park Authority.  
The Old Vicarage,  
Helmsley,  
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Appendix 1, by Alison Fuller

Ryedale Bridleways Group supports this proposal but has the following comments:

1. on the bridleways that are to be upgraded to make it easier to cycle on we have no objection so long as the improvements are not to the detriment of horse riders. By this we mean that there be no change to the existing surface type; if it is tarmac, repairs can be made in tarmac but we ask that Stone Mastic Asphalt is not used. This is slippery for horses and may in deed also be for cycles. An existing stone surface must not be tarmaced. The bridleway is not to be fenced in as this creates an additional hazard to riders as there would be less room for a cycle and horse to pass.

2. any additional signing on a bridleway e.g. the blue Sustrans signs must not obscure the legal bridleway sign. If there is no bridleway sign from the tarmac road (which is required by law) we ask that you contact NYCC Rights of Way department to have such erected. This is to ensure that cyclists know that it is a bridleway and certain specific laws apply e.g. a cyclist must give way to a horse rider or walker.

3. where a new on-road cycleway is to be created we ask that the siting of such takes into account the verge alongside the road. The cycleway should be nearest the road leaving the grass verge furthest away from the road. The on road cycleway must not be fenced in for the reasons given in point 1.

4. If a new on-road cycle route is to be created that would take up all or the majority of the verge we ask that this is made multi-user and that the surface is not tarmac; crushed stone is fine. This is to ensure that riders are not disadvantaged by being forced to ride on the road where previously there was a verge.

5. I see that you plan to change the existing bridleway route around Lendales Farm. We have no objection to this and indeed support it as going through the farm yard is not pleasant because of (from memory) the dogs and general farm machinery movements. I think many people already use the private access road to the farm rather than using the definitive line which goes around the field, where it joins Kirby Misperton Road. However rather than creating an additional shared footway/cycletrack using bridleway material, which implies that the existing definitive line of the bridleway would remain and by reference to using bridleway material I assume you think horses would use that also, I suggest the solution is to do a Highways Act 1980 s25 Creation Agreement to divert the bridleway out of the farmyard and down the private access track. You would still have to create a multi-user track in the field to get round the farm but by offering to divert out of the farmyard and out of the field, this is a real "bargaining chip". The Creation Agreement is done by the Highway Authority but, unlike a Creation Order, you don't need to consult the parish council and the public and it only has to be advertised once in a local paper. The landowner is though entitled to claim compensation but in this case it would be easy to argue that this was to his benefit as well and therefore no compensation should be payable.

6. I met Helen Grundy on 8th April 2018 and we walked a route from the south of Kirby Misperton, through Sandlands Farm to North West Farm to White Lily and onto Dicky Grounds Lane. This is an obvious short cut and takes out a large on road section on Habton Road which would be advantageous to all users. Unfortunately I think this may be difficult to achieve because of landowner resistance e.g. at Sandlands Farm, sections of the existing definitive public footpath would have to be upgraded and/or diverted to bridleway and surfaced as currently field and there is a private access road with no public user rights.

Please will you keep us informed of developments and do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further information.

Yours sincerely,

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