

“WESTMINSTER TO YORK MINSTER” RIDE – LONDON TO YORK in 23 HOURS – OVERVIEW (LBR - v1)

This ride takes you up the eastern side of England, effectively travelling about half the length of the “longer” edge of the country. The “crow flies” distance is over half that of London to Edinburgh.

The route passes through Cambridge and Boston. There is a section on the Water Rail Way, a cycle path next to the River Witham which brings you within sight of Lincoln Cathedral, before the route heads north to cross the Humber Bridge. The final section stays on the flat terrain of the Vale of York, crossing the River Derwent from the East Riding into North Yorkshire.

It will be no surprise that the section through the fens registers just 37m of climbing in 100km. But the rest of the ride is surprisingly flat. There is some rolling countryside around the Herts-Essex-Cambs border then after that only one hill of any note, just south of the Humber bridge. This can get a bit relentless as the respite from pedalling offered by descents is missing.

This route was ridden as an Audax UK “Easter Arrow”, departing on Good Friday 2017. The times shown in this overview are based on that ride.

Length = 382km / 239 miles

Climbing = about 500m the whole way!

Section 1 – London to Cambridge (99.6km / 62 miles / ~249m climbing)

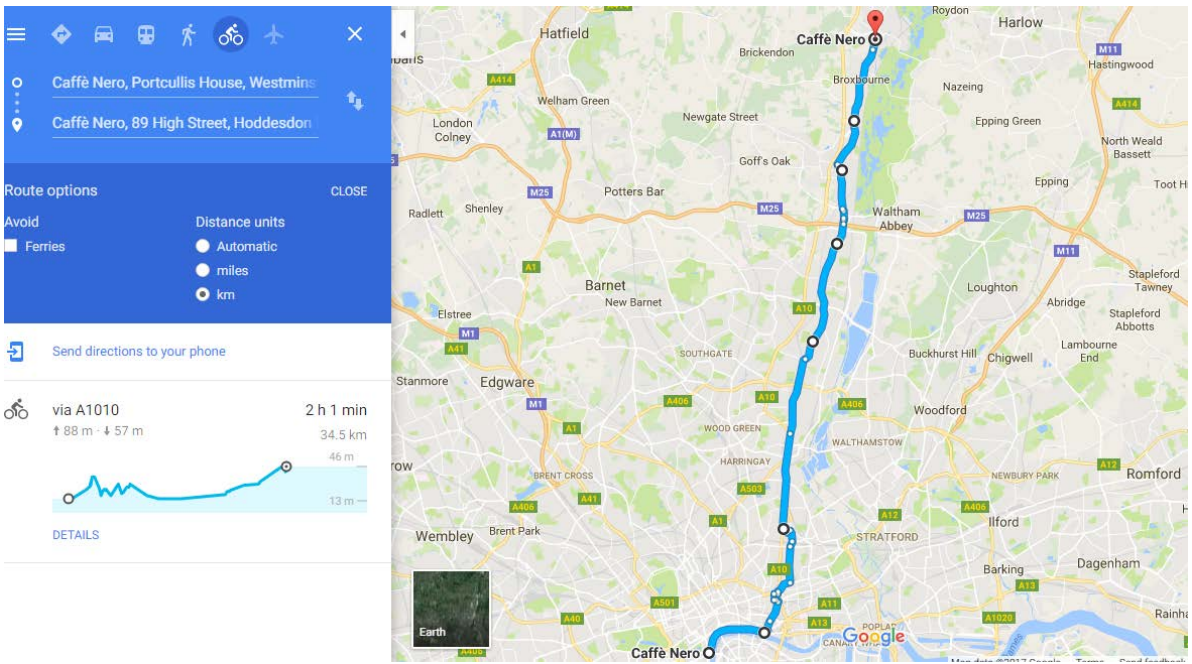
07:30 START at Westminster Abbey

Along the Embankment then turn north to pick up the A10 (early departure on a non-working day will help ensure traffic not too busy) and then switch to smaller (but still direct) roads around Tottenham.

This route avoids the River Lea towpath on the basis that some sections can have a poor surface, especially after rain. But if you and your bike are suitable for the towpath then it keeps you away from traffic all the way from Hackney to Broxbourne, and is very picturesque. (A word of caution - in early 2017 there have been a handful of reports of cyclists being attacked on some of the inner London sections of the canals and River Lea).

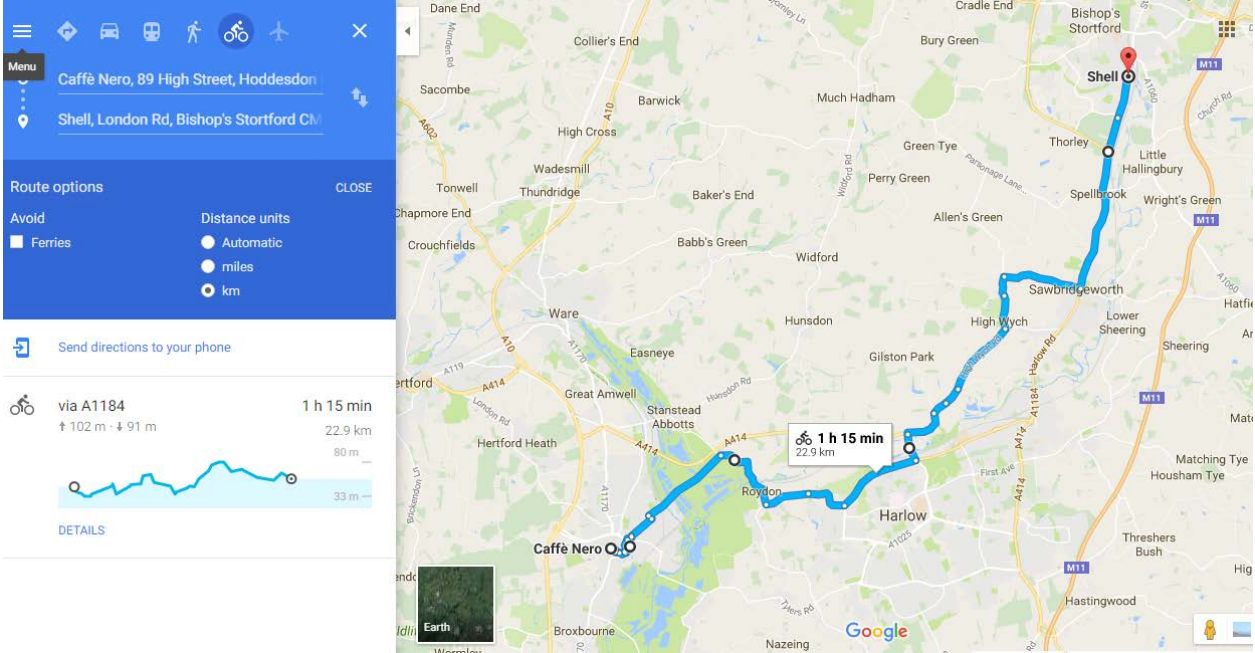
After crossing the M25 near Waltham Cross, the route continues through Cheshunt.

09:00 Tesco Express or Caffè Nero, Hoddesdon

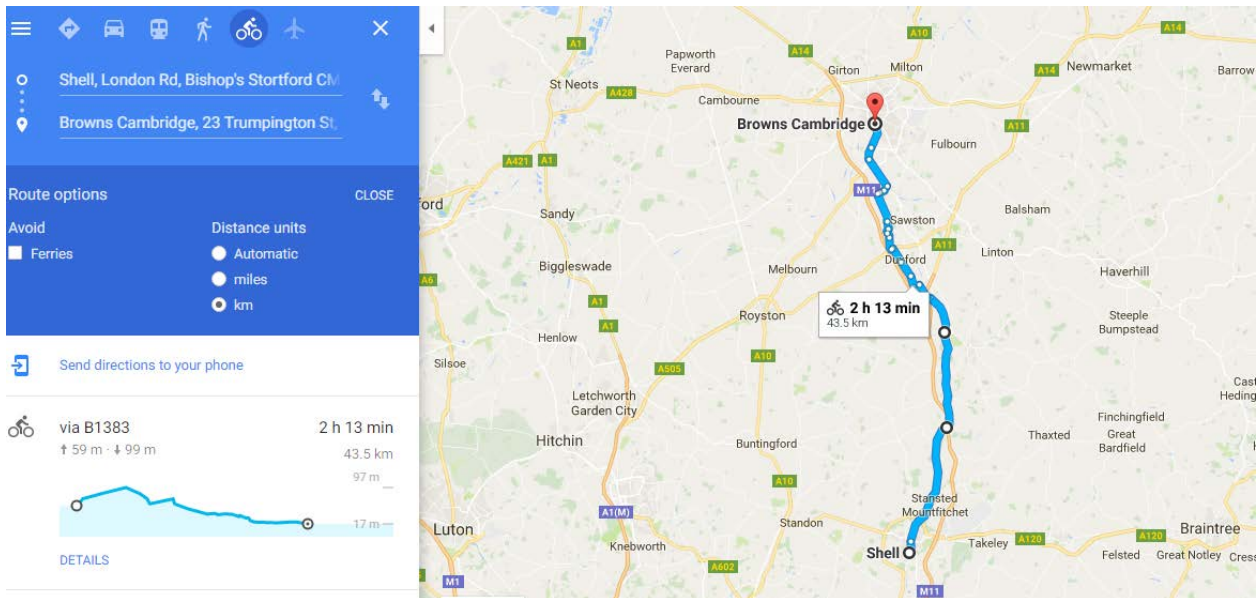


Continue through Roydon, Harlow outskirts, Sawbridgeworth.

10:00 Shell Garage, Bishop's Stortford



Then B1383 through Quendon, Newport, past Audley End, Great Chesterford, Ickleton, Duxford, The Shelfords, and into Cambridge. This route is 110m less climbing than the villages route via Clavering.



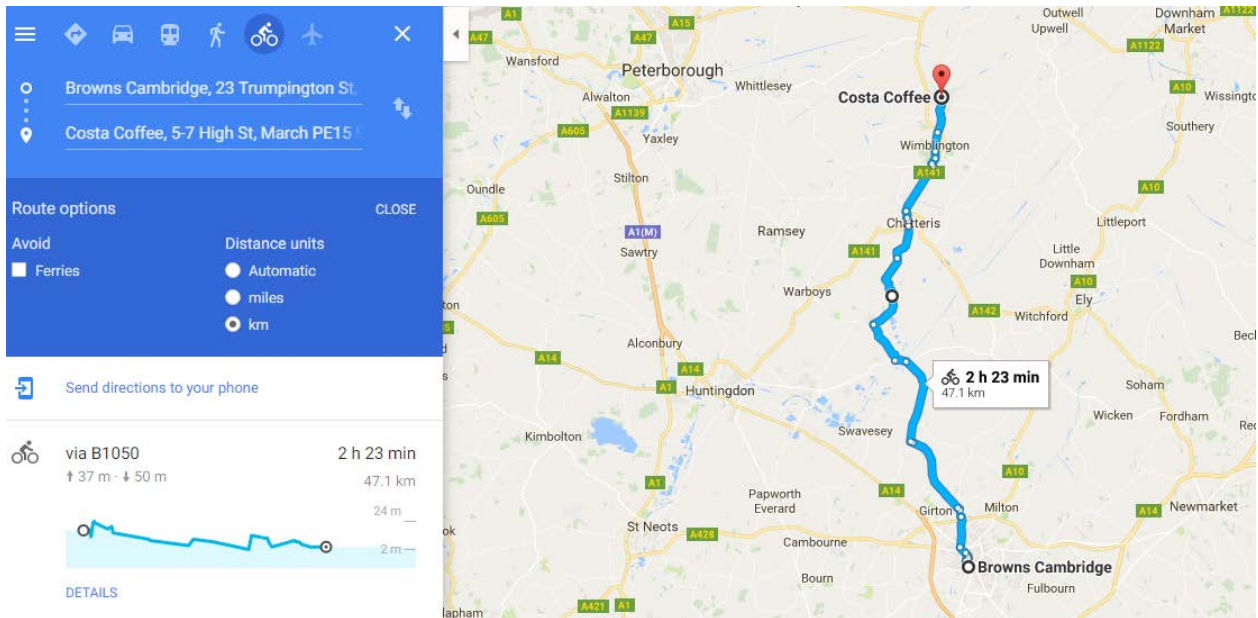
12:00 Arrive Cambridge. Refreshment stop Caffe Nero

Section 2 – Cambridge to Boston (102km / 64 miles / just 37m climbing!)

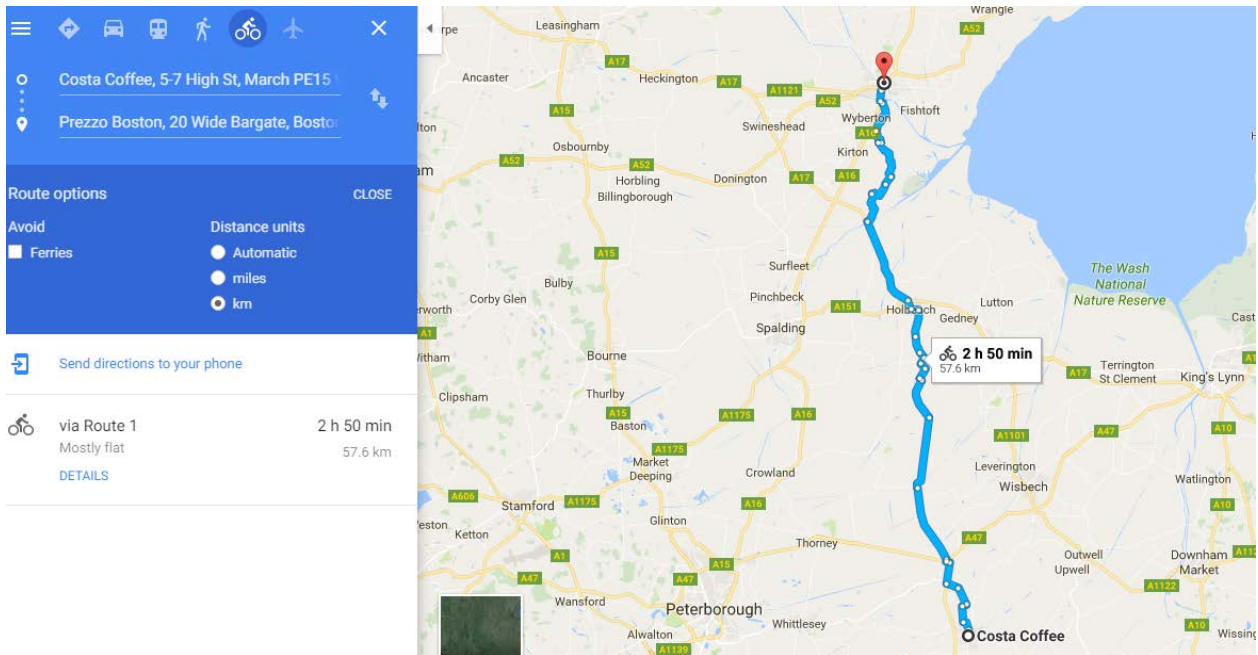
13:00 Depart Cambridge.

Head north and pick up the famous guided busway. Then fast, quiet, flat roads through the fens.

14:30 March – Coffee stop – Costa in a small town about halfway through this section .



On the way again, more fens.

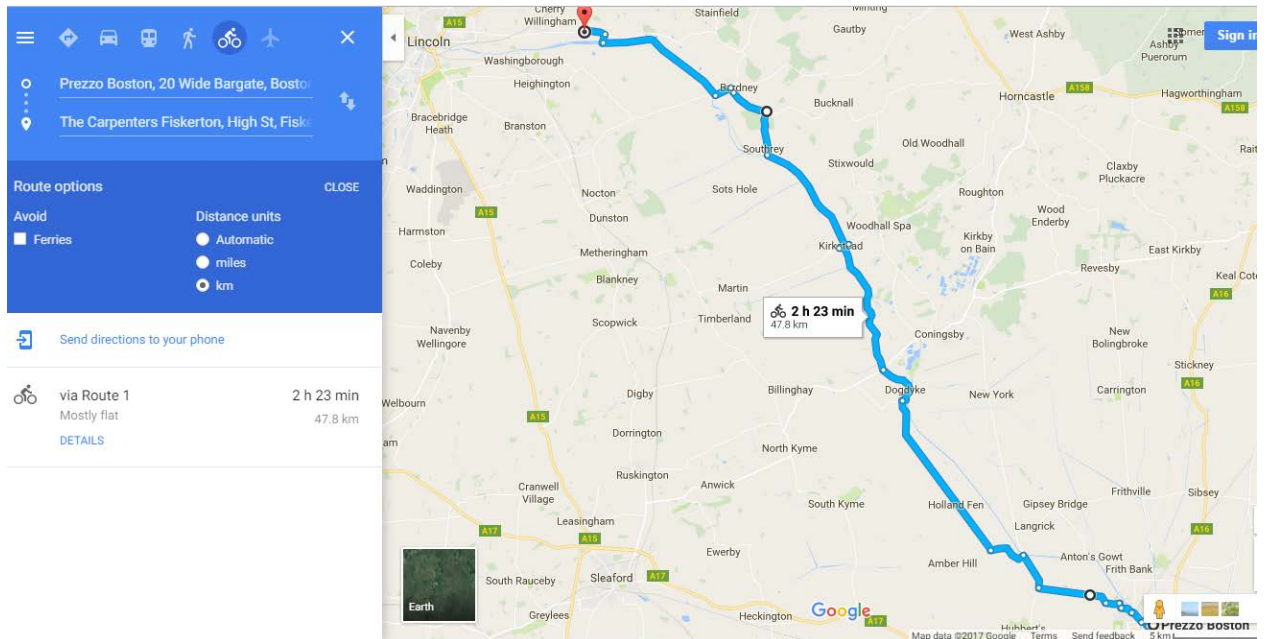


17:30 Arrive Boston. Meal stop – Prezzo.

Section 3 – Boston to Brigg (93km / 58miles / 70m climbing)

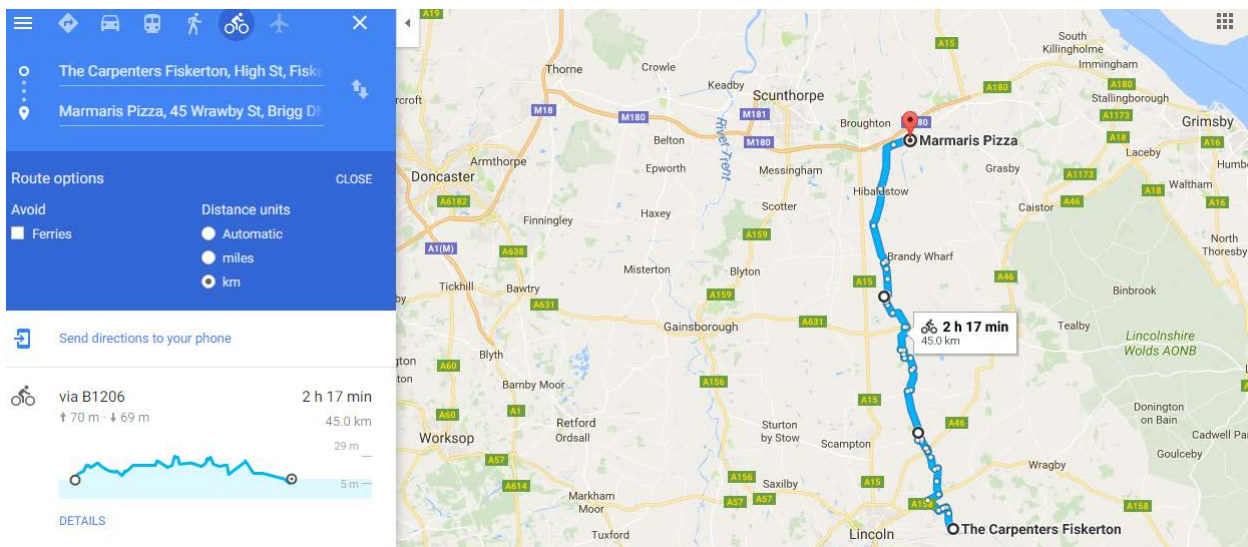
18:30 Depart Boston

Use the River Witham ‘Water Rail Way’ cycle path where tarmacked and fast, otherwise the roads.



20:00 Sunset

21:00 Pub stop - The Carpenter's, Fiskerton



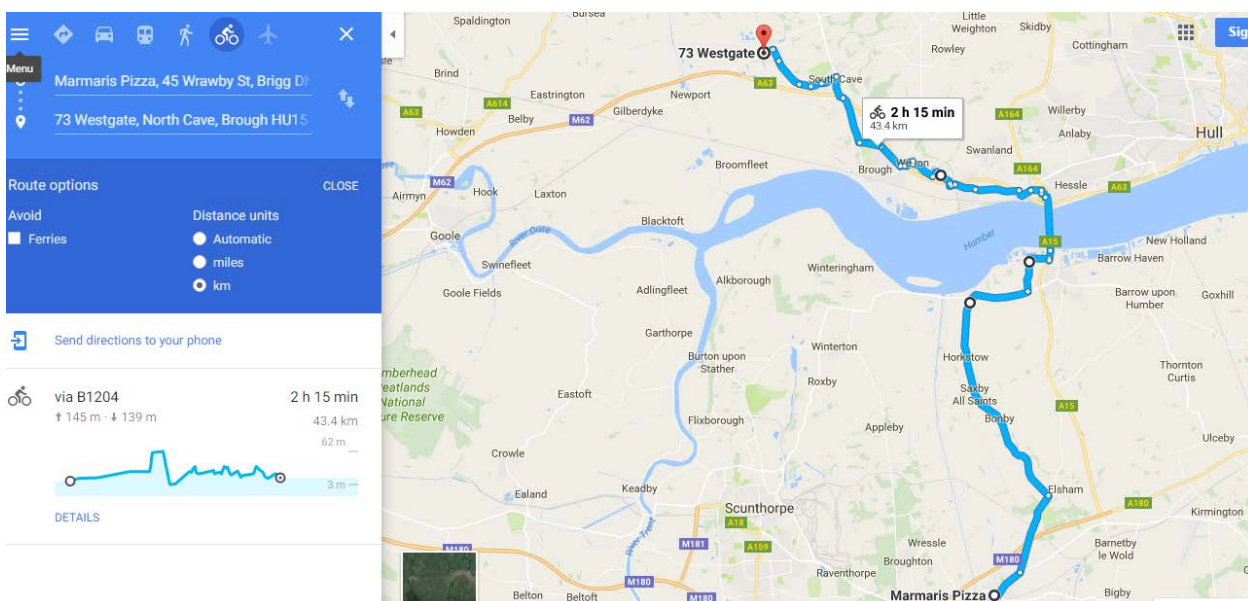
Now dark. Head NNW. Riding on small country lanes – fairly quiet. Gently rolling, no significant climbs. Pass through Scothern, Dunholme / Welton, Normanby-by-Spital, Hibaldstow.

23:30 Arrive Brigg. Takeaway stop = Marmaris. Just in time to sample the wealth of takeaways! Marmaris pizza / kebab / burgers is open until 12.30am on Friday nights.

Section 4 – Brigg to York (88km / 55 miles / 145m climbing)

00:15 Depart Brigg

Brigg to Humber Bridge is 23km via South Ferriby. Very quiet roads, quite spooky at night! One significant hill before the bridge.



01:30 Cross the Humber Bridge.

Humber Bridge to York is about 62km, passing through North Ferriby, Elloughton...

From A63 / A1034 jct there are two options:

Option 1: Quiet route, through South Cave, North Cave, South Cliffe, North Cliffe (North-South Divide etc!). 2km longer. Only 35m climbing. This route is in Excel instructions.

North Cave – Jct of B1230 Westgate & Townend Lane and Low Mill Lane.

Option 2: Busier route, A1034 then Roman Road. 2km shorter, 65m climbing. This is the one to take if need to make up time. Very simple option – at jct simply stay on A1035 and imm cross A63, through South Cave and continue north until Market Weighton ring road.

Options at jct with A1079 Mkt Weighton ring road:

Option 1: Town centre, for interest. R turn then nip behind the fence!

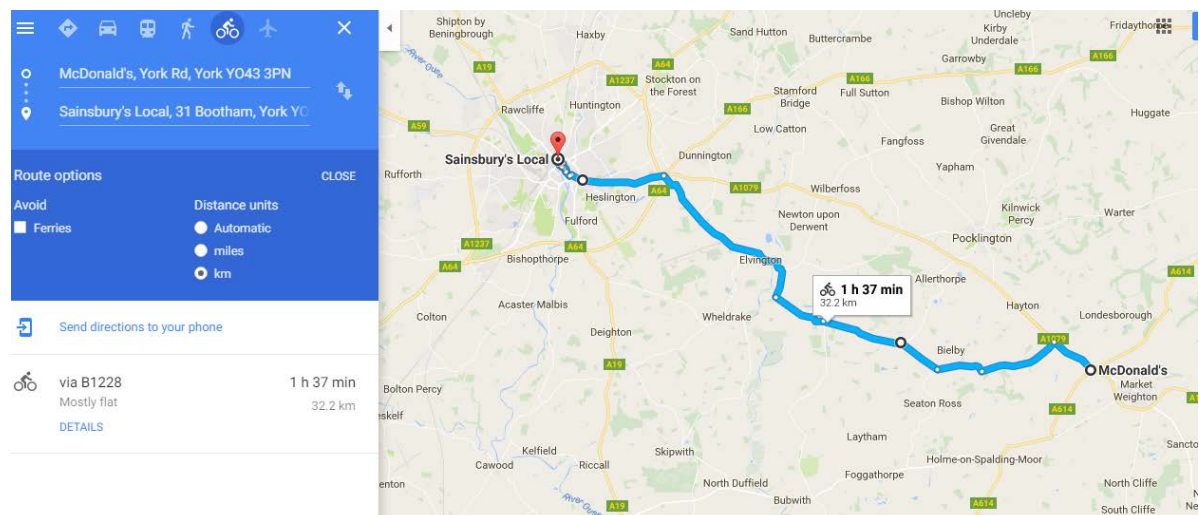
Option 2: Ring road, for speed. Distance is same. L turn \$ A1079 York.

03:45 Night Stop at McDonalds or the BP Garage, just NW of Market Weighton, at the junction of the A1079 and A614 – spoilt for choice! This is the only place around here with anything open at this time of night.

05:00 Depart from Night Stop. Getting light now.

The A1079 after Market Weighton looks pretty horrible to cycle on – fast A road. The alternative (much nicer) is the route through Melbourne, Elverton etc, as shown in the map below.

06:30 Arrive York. Photo opportunities at York Minster.



The Principal Hotel (right next to York Station) 01904 653 681 – the gym opens 7am – day membership £10, just turn up – they provide towels for the showers. Then hotel is open to the public for breakfast, from 7.30 – 10.30am, hot and cold buffet or a la carte. No need to book. Main car park has bike racks.