Impact Assessment



Assessment of: Exeter Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Service: Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Head of Service: Meg Booth

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1. Description of project / service / activity / policy under review

A Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) has been drafted for the Exeter area. This will focus on the administrative boundary of the city. However, it will also consider opportunities to support active travel accessibility from nearby villages and to provide strategic connections to nearby edge of city growth areas. This LCWIP, outlining various proposals to improve cycling and walking infrastructure in the area, has been through public consultation and feedback has been used to produce a final version of the LCWIP, which will then be used as the basis for infrastructure improvements in the coming years.

2. Reason for change / review

Devon County Council aims to improve cycling and walking levels across the county, in order to tackle the Climate Emergency and improve public health and wellbeing. Therefore, an LCWIP has been drafted, which identifies cycling and walking infrastructure improvements that are likely to have the greatest impact. This will enable Devon County Council to strategically prioritise and seek funding for particular interventions.

3. Aims / objectives, limitations and options going forwards (summary) Aims/Objectives

The LCWIP is intended to:

- Plan for cycling and walking using evidence and data on existing and future potential demand;
- Target investment where it can have the greatest impact;
- Identify cycling and walking infrastructure improvements in readiness for funding bids; and
- Plan cycling and walking networks that meet core design outcomes and the needs of users.

The principal objective of the improvements proposed within the LCWIP is to improve cycling and walking levels, and thus:

- Support Devon County Council's response to the climate emergency
- Promote increased active travel to support physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Encourage inclusivity and accessibility across the Exeter active travel network
- Deliver economic benefits to Exeter

Limitations

A constraint on the delivery of the proposals contained within the LCWIP is that the proposals are not currently funded. The majority of funding is likely to be secured through bids to central government as and when opportunities arise, meaning exact delivery timescales cannot be committed to at this stage. Devon County Council will therefore need to take a flexible approach, adapting to changing circumstances, to ensure the proposals are delivered as efficiently as possible.

Additionally, the proposals in the LCWIP are high level rather than detailed designs. As such, further development of the proposals may identify additional constraints, which may make delivery of the proposals more challenging. Specific proposals will have Impact Assessments prepared once they are in development.

Options Going Forward

Alternative options to proceeding with consulting on this LCWIP include:

- Developing an alternative LCWIP, with alternative routes/infrastructure proposals
- Not progressing an LCWIP for Exeter

Given that the draft LCWIP has been developed rigorously, using the process recommended by central government, it is unlikely that developing an alternative LCWIP would offer sufficient scope for improvement.

Not progressing an LCWIP in any form would leave Devon County Council without a clear pipeline of improvements in the Exeter area, reducing Devon County Council's ability to secure funding and thus reducing the rate of improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure.

4. People affected and their diversity profile

The people potentially affected by the proposals are principally those living or working in the Exeter area. Therefore, their diversity profile is presented below, with Devon and England overall used as comparators. The propensity for certain demographic groups to walk or cycle is also discussed, to inform assessment of the potential differential impacts of the proposals, e.g. whether certain age groups are likely to disproportionately benefit.

Age

As shown below in Table 1, the population of Exeter is slightly younger than the national average at the 2021 Census, with the proportion aged between 20 and 64 above the national average.

Geography	Total	% Age 0-19	% Age 20-64	% Age 65+
Exeter	130,712	23%	60%	17%
Devon	811,638	20%	54%	26%
England	56,490,045	23%	58%	18%

TABLE 1: AGE (CENSUS, 2021)

Younger people (aged 0-20) tend to be more reliant on walking and cycling than those aged 21-59 and older people (aged 60+), making 36% of trips by cycle or foot, compared with 26% and 23%, respectively.

Ethnicity

Exeter, as with Devon as a whole, is lower in ethnic diversity than the national average (Table 2).

Geography	Total	% White	% Mixed/multiple	% Asian/Asian	% Black/African/Caribbean/Black	% Other
			ethnic groups	British	British	ethnic group
Exeter	130,707	90.3%	2.5%	4.9%	0.9%	1.4%
Devon	811,642	96.4%	1.4%	1.5%	0.3%	0.5%
England	56,490,048	81%	3%	9.6%	4.2%	2.2%

TABLE 2: ETHNICITY (CENSUS, 2021)

White people tend to make a greater proportion of trips (2%) by bicycle than Asian or Black people, who both make 1% of trips by bicycle. However, Asian and Black people and people from mixed/other ethnic groups make a greater proportion of trips on foot, and make a greater proportion of trips by 'active travel' (i.e. walking and cycling combined) than White people.

Health and disability

Table 3 shows that Devon and Exeter have similar percentages to the England averages for disability and health of residents.

Geography	% Activities limited	% Activities limited a lot	% Not disabled under	% Very good	% Fair health	% Very bad and
	a little by disability	by disability	the Equality Act	and good		bad health
				health		
Exeter	11.6%	7.3%	81.1%	82.2%	12.6%	5.2%
Devon	11.1%	6.9%	82%	83.4%	12%	4.6%
England	10.2%	7.5%	82.3%	81.7%	13%	5.3%

TABLE 3: DISABILITY AND GENERAL HEALTH (CENSUS, 2021)

Disabled people and people with long-term illnesses tend to make fewer trips by all modes than non-disabled people. The disparity is particularly stark amongst those whose condition(s)/illness(es) reduces their ability to carry out day-to-day activities 'a lot', who make an average of just 594 trips annually, compared to 1,014 among non-disabled people. Additionally, whilst the proportion of trips made by walking is similar amongst both disabled people and non-disabled people, the proportion of trips by cycle is considerably lower for disabled people (1.1%) than non-disabled people (2.0%).

Gender

As in England overall, there were slightly more females than males in the geographies considered here at the 2021 Census. Information about other gender identities was not collected at the 2011 Census.

On average, females make slightly fewer trips in total than males, at 734 per person per year versus 878 per person per year. Females make a greater proportion of trips on foot, but a lower proportion by bicycle, with the result that the proportions by active travel combined were the same for both genders (23%).

Socio-economic status

Levels of deprivation are roughly the same in Exeter and Devon as across the whole of England, as shown below in Table 4.

Geography	% Household is not deprived	% Household is deprived in	% Household is deprived in
	in any dimension	one or two dimensions	three or four dimension
Exeter	49.8%	46.5%	3.6%
Devon	49.6%	37.6%	2.8%
England	48.4%	47.7%	3.9%

TABLE 4: HOUSEHOLD DEPRIVATION (CENSUS 2021)

The proportions of trips made on foot decline from an average of 36% among people in the most deprived areas, to 22% among those in the highest income areas. The proportion of trips made by bicycle is approximately the same (2%) people at all levels of deprivation, albeit the absolute number of bicycle trips is highest among those with the highest income, partly by virtue of said individuals making a greater number of trips across all modes.

5. Stakeholders, their interest and potential impacts

Stakeholders within the transport industry include:

- Sustrans a cycling and walking charity, and custodians of the National Cycle Network. As the proposals in the LCWIP seek to improve walking and cycling levels, they are considered to be aligned with the charity's aim of "creating streets that make walking, wheeling and cycling safer for everyone". Furthermore, some of the proposals would complement the sections of the National Cycle Network within the Heart of Teignbridge.
- Public transport operators (e.g. Great Western Railway, Stagecoach South West). Some of the proposals in the LCWIP could encourage people to switch from bus or rail to walking or cycling for short trips, negatively impacting patronage on public transport services. However, they may also improve access to public transport hubs, making walking or cycling in combination with public transport more attractive when compared to the private car, which would benefit public transport operators. As proposals are developed further, opportunities for integration with public transport will be maximised, ensuring the impacts on public transport are as beneficial as possible. Proposals also seek to reduce congestion, improving public transport journey times.

Political stakeholders include:

- Devon County Council the local transport authority and promoter of the LCWIP. The delivery of proposals within the LCWIP would be aligned with various objectives of the Council, including encouraging modal shift to active modes of transport and tackling the Climate Emergency. It could also help mitigate the impact of development on the local road network, which the Council is responsible for maintaining and improving (where appropriate), thus reducing future costs to the Council.
- Exeter City Council the local planning authority. The delivery of proposals within the LCWIP could reduce the impact of development on the local road network, by improving alternatives to the private car for accessing these developments.

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¹ https://www.sustrans.org.uk/

Other stakeholders include groups representing particular segments of society, who would have an interest in ensuring the needs of the people they represent are considered in any infrastructure delivered through the LCWIP. For instance, Living Options Devon, who represent disabled people and deaf people, would have an interest in ensuring infrastructure is accessible as possible for disabled people.

Additionally, owners of local businesses could stand to benefit from the proposals in the LCWIP, as the improved walking and cycling links may make it easier for customers to access their businesses. Similarly, local employers may benefit from gaining access to a wider pool of labour.

6. Research used to inform this assessment

Demographic data for the geographies affected by the proposal has been sourced from the 2021 Census, using the Nomis website², whilst data on the demographics of users of particular modes of transport was sourced from the 2019 National Travel Survey³

Additionally, Impact Assessments of LCWIPs produced by Devon County Council and other local authorities have been used to inform the equality analysis below.

7. Description of consultation process and outcomes

The draft LCWIP was put out to public consultation, from 1st February 2023 to 31st March 2023, following which feedback was reviewed and used to produce a final version of the LCWIP. The consultation was hosted on the Devon County Council 'Have Your Say' website. It was advertised through press releases, social media, and adverts in the local press. Four public exhibitions were held, attended by over 200 members of the public, and a questionnaire was published to collect public opinion. A total of 726 completed questionnaire were received within the consultation period, as well as a number of emails from the public, stakeholders and organisations.

54% of questionnaire respondents were supportive of the proposed walking and cycling routes, with 29% believing it would connect them to where they want to visit. Of those respondents who provided further comments about the walking routes, the most common theme – from those who support the proposals – is that the LCWIP is not ambitious enough. From those who do not support the proposals responded that those driving cars should not be negatively affected by the proposals. From those who supported the cycling proposals, further comments largely focussed on specific locations or detailed design. Respondents who did not support the proposed cycling network largely stated that the network

² https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/

³ National Travel Survey: 2019 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

is not ambitious enough and needs to be expanded or suggested specific locations which should be linked to.

All individual cycling routes in the LCWIP received at least 50% support; the proposed walking routes each had more than 80% support but had significantly fewer responses than the cycling routes. Comments about the proposals varied, with the majority of comments being very specific or about detailed design. However, throughout there were comments supporting full segregation between motor vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians.

A comprehensive public consultation report is available to view at: devon.cc/exeterlcwip

The outcomes of the public consultation will be used to update the LCWIP document in light of the feedback. A list of the changes made can be seen in the Exeter LCWIP HATOC report, taken to HATOC in July 2023.

8. Equality analysis

Giving Due Regard to Equality and Human Rights

The local authority must consider how people will be affected by the service, policy or practice. In so doing we must give due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Where relevant, we must take into account the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, race, and religion and belief. This means considering how people with different needs get the different services they require and are not disadvantaged, and facilities are available to them on an equal basis in order to meet their needs; advancing equality of opportunity by recognising the disadvantages to which protected groups are subject and considering how they can be overcome.

We also need to ensure that human rights are protected. In particular, that people have:

• A reasonable level of choice in where and how they live their life and interact with others (this is an aspect of the human right to 'private and family life').

- An appropriate level of care which results in dignity and respect (the protection to a private and family life, protection from torture and the freedom of thought, belief and religion within the Human Rights Act and elimination of discrimination and the promotion of good relations under the Equality Act 2010).
- A right to life (ensuring that nothing we do results in unlawful or unnecessary/avoidable death).
- The Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation does not prevent the Council from taking difficult decisions which result in service reductions or closures for example, it does however require the Council to ensure that such decisions are:
 - o Informed and properly considered with a rigorous, conscious approach and open mind, taking due regard of the effects on the protected characteristics and the general duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations.
 - o Proportionate (negative impacts are proportionate to the aims of the policy decision)
 - o Fair
 - Necessary
 - o Reasonable, and
 - o Those affected have been adequately consulted.

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group.	 In what way will you: eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage, where necessary.
	[Please refer to the <u>Diversity Guide</u> and <u>See RED</u>]	 advance equality (to meet needs/ensure access, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'), if possible. foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promoted understanding), if relevant?
		In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim? Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy ?

All residents (include generic equality provisions)	Where proposals involve reallocation of road space to pedestrians and/or cyclists at the expense of general traffic, journey times by motor vehicle may increase.	All residents will benefit from the improved walking and cycling links to employment, education and services. This should enable them to better meet their needs and participate more fully in society, advancing equality. Infrastructure delivered through the LCWIP will be designed according to latest standards and guidance, such as <i>Local Transport Note 1/20: Cycle Infrastructure Design</i> ⁴ . This will ensure the infrastructure best meets the needs
	Construction works to deliver the proposals in the LCWIP may	of all residents, and will reduce as far as practicable the potential for disadvantage.
	generate noise and cause some traffic disruption, negatively impacting local residents.	The potential impacts on all users will be considered further when detailed designs are developed for the proposals. This will include consideration of negative impacts and mitigation, such as encouraging modal shift to tackle the
	Potential modal shift from public transport to walking/cycling may reduce patronage on certain routes.	climate emergency, minimising impacts during construction and integrating public transport within the proposals.
	This may in turn make the routes less commercially viable, potentially leading to service reductions.	
Age	Older people (aged 60+) make a lower proportion of trips by active travel (walking and cycling) than those aged less than 60, meaning older people may receive a smaller	Younger people (aged 20 and under) make a large proportion (36%) of trips by active travel, so younger people will likely particularly benefit from the proposals. This should enable them to better meet their needs and participate more fully in society, advancing equality.
	share of the proposals' benefits than their proportion of the overall population.	The design of individual proposals will be in accordance to the latest standards and guidance, such as <i>Local Transport Note 1/20: Cycle Infrastructure Design</i> . Therefore, it will cater for users of all ages and confidence levels; for instance, it will cater for young/inexperienced cyclists, who may be less confident sharing space with vehicular traffic.
Disability (incl. sensory,	Disabled people make a lower	The infrastructure will be designed according to latest standards and

 $^{^{4}\,\}underline{\text{https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycle-infrastructure-design-ltn-120}}$

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group. [Please refer to the <u>Diversity Guide</u> and <u>See RED</u>]	 In what way will you: eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage, where necessary. advance equality (to meet needs/ensure access, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'), if possible. foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promoted understanding), if relevant? In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim? Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy?
mobility, mental health, learning disability, neurodiversity, long term ill health) and carers of disabled people	proportion of trips by cycle than non-disabled people, meaning disabled people may receive a smaller share of the proposals' benefits than their proportion of the overall population.	guidance, such as Local Transport Note 1/20: Cycle Infrastructure Design, and the needs of disabled people will be considered throughout the development of each of the proposals. For example, segregation between pedestrians and cyclists will be provided where appropriate and practicable, enabling deaf and blind people to use the infrastructure as easily and safely as possible. This will remove barriers disabled people may face when using existing infrastructure, thus improving access to opportunities and encouraging participation.
Culture and ethnicity: nationality/national origin, ethnic origin/race, skin colour, religion and belief	It is not considered that there is the potential for any adverse impacts on the basis of culture and ethnicity.	Black and Asian people, people from mixed/multiple ethnic groups and people of other ethnicities make a greater proportion of trips by active travel than White people, so people of these ethnicities may particularly benefit from the proposals. This should enable them to better meet their needs and participate more fully in society, advancing equality.

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group. [Please refer to the <u>Diversity Guide</u> and <u>See RED</u>]	 In what way will you: eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage, where necessary. advance equality (to meet needs/ensure access, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'), if possible. foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promoted understanding), if relevant? In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim? Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy?
Sex, gender and gender identity (including men, women, non-binary and transgender people), and pregnancy and maternity (including women's right to breastfeed)	Women make a smaller proportion of trips by cycle than men, meaning women may receive a smaller share of the benefits of the proposed cycle infrastructure than their proportion of the overall population.	The infrastructure will be designed according to latest standards and guidance, such as <i>Local Transport Note 1/20: Cycle Infrastructure Design</i> . This may help eliminate some of the barriers to cycling women currently experience, such as safety concerns, and thus enable them to cycle more frequently, redressing the current gender imbalance in cycling levels. Consequently, this should enable women to better meet their needs and participate more fully in society, advancing equality.
Sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership	It is not considered that there is the potential for any adverse impacts on the basis of sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership.	It is not considered that there is the potential for any beneficial impacts on the basis of sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership.

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group. [Please refer to the <u>Diversity Guide</u> and <u>See RED</u>]	 In what way will you: eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage, where necessary. advance equality (to meet needs/ensure access, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'), if possible. foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promoted understanding), if relevant? In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim? Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy?
Other relevant socio- economic factors such as family size/single people/lone parents, income/deprivation, housing, education and skills, literacy, sub-cultures, 'digital exclusion', access to transport options, rural/urban	It is not considered that there is the potential for any adverse impacts. on the basis of other socioeconomic factors	People in lower income groups make a greater proportion of trips by active travel than those in higher income groups, so people in lower income groups may particularly benefit from the proposals. This should enable them to better meet their needs and participate more fully in society, advancing equality.

9. Human rights considerations:

It is not considered that there are any relevant human rights considerations

10. Supporting independence, wellbeing and resilience. Give consideration to the groups listed above and how they may have different needs:

In what way can you support and create opportunities for people and communities (of place and interest) to be independent, empowered and resourceful?

The proposed infrastructure will cater for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages, abilities and confidence levels. Therefore, it may enable certain individuals to travel independently, e.g. it may enable children to walk or cycle to school independently.

Additionally, the proposed infrastructure will likely improve the ease with which people can access opportunities, enabling them to become more empowered.

In what way can you help people to be safe, protected from harm, and with good health and wellbeing? These proposals should encourage greater levels of cycling and walking, improving public health and wellbeing. Furthermore, by providing segregated facilities for pedestrians and cyclists, these proposals will reduce the need for them to share road space with motor vehicles, increasing their safety levels.

In what way can you help people to be connected, and involved in community activities?

The proposed infrastructure will likely improve the ease with which people can visit friends and family and access community activities, enabling them to become more connected with others in their community.

11. Environmental analysis

An impact assessment should give due regard to the following activities in order to ensure we meet a range of environmental legal duties. The policy or practice does not require the identification of environmental impacts using this Impact Assessment process because it is subject to (please mark X in the relevant box below and proceed to the 4c, otherwise complete the environmental analysis table):

Devon County Council's Environmental Review Process	
Planning Permission	
Environmental Impact Assessment	
Strategic Environmental Assessment	

	Describe any actual or potential negative consequences.	Describe any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes.
Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost:	(Consider how to mitigate against these). N/A	(Consider how to improve as far as possible). The use of recycled materials in the construction of the proposed infrastructure will be considered during the development of each proposal.
Conserve and enhance wildlife:	N/A	N/A
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of Devon's landscape:	N/A	The infrastructure proposed in the LCWIP will likely encourage modal shift from car to walking and cycling, enabling the local transport network to more effectively accommodate trips arising from local development. This may reduce or eliminate the need for further improvements to the network, e.g. road capacity increases.
Conserve and enhance Devon's cultural and historic heritage:	N/A	N/A
Minimise greenhouse gas emissions:	The construction of the infrastructure proposed in the LCWIP may generate greenhouse gas emissions in the short term. However, this will be reduced as far as practicable during the detailed design phases of each proposal.	The infrastructure proposed in the LCWIP will likely encourage modal shift from car to walking and cycling, reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transport. This will be improved as far as possible by delivering the improvements as efficiently as possible (following the prioritisation laid out in the LCWIP), enabling benefits to be realised as quickly as possible.

Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise):	The construction of the infrastructure proposed in the LCWIP may generate pollution in the short term. However, this will be reduced as far as practicable during the detailed design phases of each proposal.	The infrastructure proposed in the LCWIP will likely encourage modal shift from car to walking and cycling, reducing pollution from transport. This will be improved as far as possible by delivering the improvements as efficiently as possible (following the prioritisation laid out in the LCWIP), enabling benefits to be realised as quickly as possible.
Contribute to reducing water consumption:	N/A	N/A
Ensure resilience to the future effects of climate change (warmer, wetter winters; drier, hotter summers; more intense storms; and rising sea level):	N/A	N/A
Other (please state below):		

12. Economic analysis

	Describe any actual or potential negative consequences.	Describe any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes.
	(Consider how to mitigate against these).	(Consider how to improve as far as possible).
Impact on knowledge and skills:	N/A	These proposals should improve access to educational establishments and sites where training is provided, enabling residents to improve their knowledge and skills.
Impact on employment levels:	N/A	These proposals should improve access to employment sites, increasing employment levels and enabling residents to access better-paying jobs.
Impact on local business:	N/A	These proposals should improve customers' access to local businesses, increasing revenues for said businesses.

13. Describe and linkages or conflicts between social, environmental and economic impacts (Combined Impacts):

The proposals should deliver social, environmental and economic benefits, by enabling people to more easily access education, employment and services, using sustainable modes of transport. Therefore, they would be expected to reduce transport-related greenhouse gas emissions, improve employment levels and increase revenues for local businesses.

14. How will the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area be improved through what is being proposed? And how, in conducting the process of procurement, might that improvement be secured?

As mentioned above, the proposals should enable people to participate more fully in society, by removing transport-related barriers to opportunities. Consequently, the social wellbeing of the area should be improved, and the modal shift from car to walking and cycling should improve its environmental wellbeing. Similarly, the proposals should provide a boost to the local economy.

15. How will impacts and actions be monitored?

The impacts of individual schemes will be monitored through stakeholder engagement (to understand any positive or negative impacts arising from the schemes) and through cycle/pedestrian counts post-delivery (to monitor usage of the infrastructure).