

Impact Assessment

Version 2017

To publish, please send a dated PDF to impactassessment-mailbox@devon.gov.uk



Assessment of:	South West Exeter Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF)
Service:	Planning, Transport and Environment

Head of Service:	Dave Black
Date of sign off by Head of Service/version:	8 th November 2019
Assessment carried out by (incl. job title):	Alex Crump, Senior Engineer Sarah Ratnage, Special Projects and Planning Manager

Section 1 - Background

Description:	<p>South West Exeter is a strategic allocation of 2,500 dwellings and 5 hectares of employment on the edge of Exeter, which spans two administrative areas – Teignbridge District Council and Exeter City Council. The Teignbridge Local Plan allocates land for 2,000 dwellings and the Exeter Core Strategy allocates land for 500 dwellings. SW Exeter is a complex site. The development straddles a key arterial road (the A379), is close to the Exe Estuary Special Protection Area requiring additional mitigation and has multiple land ownerships. It requires a significant amount of infrastructure to enable the development to come forward, much of which is needed early, and involves coordination to minimise disruption. To help deliver the infrastructure early, Devon County Council submitted a bid for £55.1 million of funding from the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF). In February 2019 it was announced that this funding bid was successful. The bid includes infrastructure such as</p>
---------------------	---

	new roads and junctions, upgrades to roads, a pedestrian/cycle bridge, a community building, Alphington Village enhancements and a Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS).
Reason for change/review:	In September 2019 a previous Impact Assessment was produced (available here) for the two highway junctions which are likely to be delivered first. This Impact Assessment builds on this previous publication to include all of the infrastructure in the scope of the HIF bid.

Section 2 - Impacts, options and recommendations

See sections 3, 4 and 5 for background analysis

Options Appraisal and Recommendations:	<p>As described in Section 1, South West Exeter is a strategic allocation of 2,500 dwellings and 5 hectares of employment. However, the nature of the site means there are significant difficulties associated with unlocking the development. Devon County Council therefore successfully bid for £55.1m of HIF funding to progress the works. This option has multiple benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced disruption to highway users and stakeholders through coordination of construction activities • Ensure timely delivery of a new school to meet existing need for secondary school places in the area. A delay in the delivery of the Interim School Access Junction would have the impact of delaying the delivery of the all-through school at South West Exeter, which cannot be delivered in advance of the junction works and access. The risk of a delay to the delivery of the school is the loss of the free school. This would have a significant cost implication for the county council as the cost of the free school is estimated to be in excess of £30 million. There would likely also be a delay to the delivery of the school, which is a significant risk as there is considerable pressure for secondary school places in Exeter. • County Council has increased influence over design of infrastructure to ensure needs of all users are considered • Holistic approach to infrastructure design to ensure all parcels are unlocked
--	--

	<p>The alternative would be that DCC do not deliver any infrastructure. This would likely delay delivery of housing and the school. Furthermore, the disruption to highway users would be spread over a longer period. Finally, landowners/developers who are less advanced in the planning process may be disadvantaged (e.g. lack of service capacity) and would struggle to develop</p> <p>Since then the HIF bid was approved, DCC's Cabinet have also approved a public consultation on the inclusion of an additional Park and Ride site. This option would be expected to have environmental benefits based on reducing traffic flows into Exeter.</p>
<p>Social/equality impacts (summary):</p>	<p>A Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been produced which includes identification of those who could be affected and how they will be consulted with. Those identified include highway users, local residents and businesses, landowners and developers, national/local government, emergency services etc.</p> <p>The positive impacts of this project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination of infrastructure delivery • Delivery of new homes within the local area, including affordable housing • Delivery of a new all-through school, including nursery provision • Accelerated delivery of the development <p>The following negative impacts may be realised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disruption due to traffic management (this would happen regardless of who delivers the development) • Increase in local highway users (again, this would happen regardless of who delivers the development but may be mitigated by the Park and Ride option) • DCC could delay delivery of the most advanced development sites due to the need to follow local government procurement regulations <p>Throughout the development, stakeholder views will be considered and they will be kept informed of the proposed works and necessary traffic management.</p>

Environmental impacts
(summary):

The planning applications for the 2,500 dwellings and employment, which includes consideration of the infrastructure that is needed to support it, have been supported by Environmental Statements where appropriate. These planning applications span the administrative areas of Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council, both of which are recent signatories to the Devon Climate Declaration along with Devon County Council. We are aware negotiations are currently taking place between the developers and the planning authorities to reduce the carbon generation of the development.

Specific environmental considerations associated with the HIF project include the following positive impacts:

- we are considering an option to ensure sufficient electric capacity is available for the whole development to go carbon neutral in the future
- The long-term aim, by 2030, is to work with our supply chain to enable carbon neutrality. This is in the process of emerging, we will therefore work with the suppliers of the HIF works to encourage them to reduce carbon emissions from their operations.
- Looking more specifically at the transport infrastructure discussed. The carbon footprint of end users of this infrastructure has been considered through the design of pedestrian/cycle provisions which include linking the new development with the existing strategic pedestrian/cycle network. Furthermore, the proposed pedestrian/cycle bridge will not only provide a gateway structure but also ensure low carbon transport modes are safe and desirable for pupils and residents alike. Improved walking and cycling infrastructure is a specific inclusion in the Devon Climate Declaration.
- An important aspect of the HIF infrastructure is the delivery of a spine road through the development. A key purpose of this is to enable good access to public transport with every house being within walking distance of a bus stop.
- The possibility of a Park & Ride site provides an opportunity to reduce carbon emissions further through reducing vehicle movements. This site also has the potential for the installation of a solar PV roof over parked vehicles. Devon County Council will encourage proposals for solar PV over the Park and Ride site in the stakeholder consultations. Using renewable energy systems and new public transport infrastructure are also specific aims of the Devon Climate Declaration.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project includes a Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS) which aims to reduce the amount of dog walking on the Exe Estuary and thus minimise impacts on the estuary’s wildlife <p>The following negative impact will be realised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction of new signalised junctions may have a slight impact on air quality as vehicles will be required to stop at red lights • There will be the removal of vegetation to enable the delivery of the junctions. This has been considered through the planning application process • The scheme will require the introduction of some new street lighting <p>There is expected to be a neutral impact on noise, given the existing road noise from the major highways in the area.</p>
<p>Economic impacts (summary):</p>	<p>The positive impacts outlined below will be achieved through this project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlock housing at South West Exeter and associated employment • Unlock the school site (if this wasn’t done it would have a significant cost implication for the county council as the cost of the free school is estimated to be in excess of £30 million. • Introduction of a community centre • Repayments from developers will be recycled by Devon County Council <p>The following negative impact will be realised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the short term, during the construction works, it is anticipated that some negative impact will be realised as a result of traffic management. <p>This negative impact will be mitigated as far as possible by liaising with Devon County Council’s highway co-ordination, traffic management groups and other relevant stakeholders identified in the Stakeholder Communication Plan.</p>

<p>Other impacts (partner agencies, services, DCC policies, possible 'unintended consequences'):</p>	<p>A broad range of stakeholders and consultees were identified in the production of the scheme's Stakeholder Management Plan. Devon County Council will communicate with those identified either specifically or via the scheme's website and press releases. Those identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highway users (impact minimised by DCC coordinating construction activities) • Local residents (impacts minimised through inclusion of a new community centre and ongoing resident engagement through Parish Councils, Alphington Village Forum, scheme website etc.) • Local Businesses (some businesses may be affected, and coordination will be required to mitigate this) • Landowners and developers (the development is allocated but close coordination around programme, access requirements etc. will be required to ensure timely and efficient delivery) • National/local government (HIF funding will be received from central government whilst Exeter City Council and Teignbridge District Council are the relevant Planning) • Emergency services (traffic management could impact services, this will be coordinated through DCC's Highway Coordination team) • Education providers (unlocking an all-through school site in a timely manner) • Supply Chain (procurement required for significant amount of infrastructure so supply chain will be engaged throughout)
<p>How will impacts and actions be monitored?</p>	<p>Impacts and actions will be monitored in multiple ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supply chain will be consulted through market engagement activities and the results report to Project Steering Board • Project management includes a Risk Register with mitigation strategies being discussed at Project Steering Board • Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) will be collated and published on the scheme's website • The Project Manager will meet landowners, developers and residents regularly

Background Analysis

This section describes how relevant questions and issues have been explored during the options appraisal.

Section 3 - Profile and views of stakeholders and people directly affected

People affected:	<p>The delivery of the infrastructure will affect all road users of the A379 and surrounding road network. However, DCC will coordinate works to minimise this disruption.</p> <p>The A379 dissects the land allocated for development. This could adversely affect those who don't drive (young, elderly etc.) as it's currently difficult for non-motorised users to cross. The HIF bid therefore included funds for a new bridge to enable non-motorised users to cross the A379 safely.</p> <p>The Local Planning Authorities (Teignbridge District Council and Exeter City Council) includes minimum percentages of affordable housing to be included within the development.</p> <p>There is a requirement for additional secondary school places in the Exeter area and delivery of the school will affect those living in the wider vicinity.</p> <p>Local businesses may be affected by traffic management activities, particularly by any road closures. However, custom may also increase in medium/long term as the number of people living/working in the area increases.</p>
Diversity profile and needs assessment of affected people:	<p>As highlighted above, action has been taken where the scheme has the potential to have an adverse impact on a particular audience. It is not envisaged that the proposals will have an adverse impact on any other specific audience, regardless of age, race, gender, sexual orientation and religion / belief. However, all stakeholder/consultee needs will be understood through engagement.</p>
Other stakeholders (agencies etc.):	<p>A broad range of stakeholders and consultees have been identified through the Stakeholder Engagement Plan. These groups/individuals will be communicated with at the appropriate time. They include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Highway users (interest in traffic management and long-term implications for network capacity)• Local residents (interest in community centre, education facilities, local roads, engagement through parishes councils/village forum etc.)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local businesses (interest in local roads, changing market opportunities in the area etc.) • Landowners and developers (development has been allocated but maintain an interest in coordination, programme, funding etc.) • National/local government (Central government interest in funding, programme etc, local government interest as planning authority) • Emergency services (interest in traffic management) • Education (infrastructure unlocking an all-through school) • Supply Chain (interest in procurement for significant amount of infrastructure)
<p>Consultation process and results:</p>	<p>Proposals for development have been through the planning process. This includes a consultation process and the acceptability of the proposals are considered as part of this. The planning process includes direct consultation with statutory consultees as well as site notices.</p> <p>Devon County Council's actions are governed by its Constitution which includes the role of Cabinet in making key decisions. Cabinet is a public-facing process and the most recent Cabinet Report/Update is available here</p> <p>A Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been used to identify those affected and suitable means for consulting with them.</p> <p>Market Engagement has been used to engage the supply chain and this will continue as required throughout the project (link here).</p> <p>The scheme website is updated regularly including a 'project progress' section</p> <p>Road closures and traffic management will be advertised (scheme website, Roadworks.org, WDM etc.)</p>
<p>Research and information used:</p>	<p>Highway improvements are generally designed in accordance with Design Manual for Roads and Bridges and/or local network guidance like Manual for Streets. Improvements for vulnerable road users will also consider Sustrans guidance, Inclusive Mobility etc.</p>

Section 4a - Social Impacts

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:

- 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.

- Proportionate (negative impacts are proportionate to the aims of the policy decision)
- Fair
- Necessary
- Reasonable, and
- Those affected have been adequately consulted.

Characteristics	In what way can you eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage? Are there any lawful, reasonable and proportionate, unavoidable negative consequences?	In what way can you advance equality (meet needs, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'). In what way can you foster good relations between groups (tackle prejudice and promote understanding), if relevant?
All residents (include generic equality provisions):	The proposals allow for vehicular access to the site. Provision is also made for pedestrian / cycle access along the A379, with the addition of a separate crossing across the A379 in relation to the Eastern Junction.	Provision of connection across A379 to connect to existing pedestrian / cycle route. Design community building with input from local community to ensure integration of communities
Age:	The proposals will ensure the A379 does not act as a barrier to integration between communities. This will be achieved through altering the highway network and non-motorised user facilities e.g. new bridge (which is accessible to all ages)	Supports provision of all-through school which will benefit school age children.

Disability (incl. sensory, mobility, mental health, learning disability, ill health) and carers of disabled people:	Separate crossing of the A379 in relation to the Eastern Junction will provide connection to existing pedestrian / cycle routes. Crossings will be delivered to ensure accessibility for disabled people (e.g. tactile paving, spindles on pedestrian crossing controls for visually impaired users etc.). disability needs to be considered in temporary situations (e.g. at roadworks) as well as permanent arrangement.	Crossings at junctions will be provided to ensure access for all pedestrians / cyclists. Crossings will be delivered to ensure accessibility for disabled people e.g. design in accordance with Inclusive Mobility etc. to ensure tactile paving
Culture and ethnicity: nationality/national origin, skin colour, religion and belief:	None Identified	None Identified
Sex, gender and gender identity (including men, women, non-binary and transgender people), and pregnancy and maternity (including women's right to breastfeed).	None Identified	None Identified
Sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership:	None Identified	None Identified
Other socio-economic factors such as families, carers, single people/couples, low income, vulnerability, education, reading/writing skills, 'digital exclusion' and rural isolation.	Housing (delivered by others) will include a mix of affordable housing with the percentages being agreed by the relevant Planning Authority (Teignbridge District Council and/or Exeter City Council)	Ensure stakeholder engagement enables participation from all relevant groups/individuals and that responses are acted upon.

Human rights considerations:	None Identified
------------------------------	-----------------

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?	<p>The new HIF infrastructure will support the delivery of a new development and will thus be critical to quality of life of those living and working in the new community. It will also support those travelling around and through the community.</p> <p>The infrastructure will ensure everyone is suitably connected and therefore give opportunities for communities to access housing, education, employment, healthcare, community building, services etc.</p>
In what way can you help people to be safe, protected from harm, and with good health and wellbeing?	The infrastructure will be designed in accordance with relevant codes and legislation which includes independent safety audits where appropriate.
In what way can you help people to be connected, and involved in community activities?	As described above, the new HIF infrastructure is critical to ensuring the new communities are well connected. It will give opportunities for communities to access housing, education, employment, healthcare, community building, services etc.

Section 4b - Environmental impacts

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 select from the table below and proceed to the 4c, otherwise complete the environmental analysis table):

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

	Describe any actual or potential negative consequences. (Consider how to mitigate against these).	Describe any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes. (Consider how to improve as far as possible).
Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost:		
Conserve and enhance wildlife:		
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of Devon's landscape:		
Conserve and enhance Devon's cultural and historic heritage:		
Minimise greenhouse gas emissions:		

Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise):		
Contribute to reducing water consumption:		
Ensure resilience to the future effects of climate change (warmer, wetter winters; drier, hotter summers; more intense storms; and rising sea level):		
Other (please state below):		

Section 4c - Economic impacts

	Describe any actual or potential negative consequences. (Consider how to mitigate against these).	Describe any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes. (Consider how to improve as far as possible).
Impact on knowledge and skills:	None identified	Enables delivery of new all-through school at South West Exeter
Impact on employment levels:	None identified	Enables delivery of new all-through school at South West Exeter which will provide employment. Unlocks allocated employment land at Peamore.
Impact on local business:	Potential negative impact on local business e.g. at Marsh Barton during construction.	New development (2,500 houses etc.) may create new markets for local businesses

Section 4d - Combined Impacts

Linkages or conflicts between social, environmental and economic impacts:	The implementation of the schemes will unlock housing at South West Exeter. Providing housing in areas where people want to live is one of the key aims of the Government.
---	--

Section 5 - 'Social Value' of planned commissioned/procured services:

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?	The proposals will support the delivery of development and a new all-through school, supporting social value in the area.
---	---