

Impact Assessment

Version 2015

Assessment of:	A379 Sandy Park Junction Improvement
Service:	PE&T - Transport Planning

Head of Service:	Dave Black
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Section 1 - Background

Description:	The current junction into the Rugby Club at Sandy Park off the A379 is a left-in, left-out only junction. The scheme is to improve the existing junction and provide a full-movements, signalised junction.
Reason for change and options appraisal:	<p>In the past, traffic leaving Sandy Park and heading towards the M5 used the bridge to the west of the site to loop over the A379 and rejoin the eastbound carriageway via Russell Way. The IKEA development on this site has closed this route so traffic now has to U-turn at Russell Way or Newcourt Way but onsite observations suggest some drivers perform illegal and dangerous U-turns on the A379 at the traffic lights. Traffic wishing to access the site from Exeter has to travel around J30 to get there.</p> <p>With development of 400 dwellings and 8.3Ha of employment proposed off this junction, the demand for U-turning traffic will only increase. The provision of a full-movements junction therefore helps to mitigate the impacts of the development.</p>

	Just providing a right turn out of the site was considered but this would not help relieve traffic from the busy J30 and providing a full-movements junction will help the network in future. Provision of a new roundabout was also considered but was discounted due to capacity issues resulting from an imbalance of traffic flows between the A379 and Sandy Park access.
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Section 2 - Key impacts and recommendations

Social/equality impacts:	Improve journey time reliability and provide better access to the rugby club, David Lloyd Leisure Centre and proposed development.
Environmental impacts:	<p>The scheme will reduce journey distances thereby reducing fuel consumption and emissions, this is partly offset by the signals stopping traffic on the A379. The impact on greenhouse gases was monetised using traffic modelling outputs, based on a 60-year appraisal period the predicted benefits are positive, with a saving of £188,000.</p> <p>Initial ecological studies have been undertaken which indicates that European protected species are unlikely to be affected by the proposals. The scrub and trees within the site are considered to have potential for nesting birds which will be mitigated by giving consideration to the bird nesting season prior to any site clearance activities. The semi-improved grassland offers foraging and basking habitat for reptiles, the potential impact of which will be mitigated by careful planning of the site clearance activities.</p> <p>Landscape impacts are considered to be negligible and will be mitigated through the provision of a new planting scheme.</p> <p>An archaeological watching brief will be commissioned if deemed necessary.</p>
Economic impacts:	The reduced journey times for vehicles wanting to turn right at the junction will be improved with the proposed scheme, but there will be a minor increase in delay to vehicles on the A379. The scheme is predicted to deliver £10m of user benefits over a 60-year appraisal period, giving a Benefit-Cost Ratio (BCR) of 5.667. Guidance from the Department for Transport suggests that schemes with a BCR in excess of 4 offer very-high value for

	money.
Other impacts (partner agencies, services, DCC policies, possible 'unintended consequences'):	<p>The scheme will help to unlock the development at Newcourt, improving Exeter's economy. The junction is likely to have an impact on the operation of J30 so the Highways Agency have been involved with the discussions and are in support of the scheme.</p> <p>During construction there may be some short term delays to road users of the A379 and Sandy Park access road however this potential impact is considered to be outweighed by the benefits offered by the completed scheme.</p>
How will impacts and actions be monitored?	Reduced journey times as a result of reduced journey distance will be monitored through Strategis journey time data.

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

People affected:	The scheme will affect everyone travelling on the A379, which is currently 24,000 vehicles a day, and all users of the Sandy Park access road which serves the rugby club and leisure centre.
Diversity profile and needs assessment of affected people:	The scheme is considered to have the same impact on all groups of people.
Other stakeholders:	<p>Members of the public will be given the opportunity to express their views on the scheme via an online consultation.</p> <p>The Rugby Club and David Lloyd will also be consulted, particularly on the construction as it will affect these local businesses.</p>
Consultation process:	<p>An online consultation process will take place, allowing everyone to express their views. A press release will be issued giving contact details of where people can send comments.</p> <p>It is currently intended to hold separate meetings with representatives from both the rugby club and leisure centre.</p>

Research and information used:	The scheme takes into account Government design standards and DCC's Traffic Signals team were involved in the development of the proposals.
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Background Analysis

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

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	Describe any actual or potential negative consequences (e.g. disadvantage or community tensions) for the groups listed. (Consider how to mitigate against these).	Describe any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes for the groups listed. (Consider how to advance equality/reduce inequalities as far as possible).
All residents (in general):	The scheme is considered to have the same impacts on all groups of people. Traffic on the A379 will be marginally delayed however this impact is considered to be outweighed by the wider benefits of the scheme.	The scheme is considered to have the same impacts on all groups of people. The benefits of the scheme will be reduced U-turning traffic at J30, Russell Way and Newcourt Way, with improved journey times due to reduced journey distances. The current junction layout does not offer any crossing facilities for non-motorised users and, after considering the walking and cycling strategy in this area, it has been
Age (from young to old):		
Disability (incl. sensory, mobility, mental health, learning disability, ill		

health) and carers of disabled people:		decided that the revised junction will retain the status quo.
Culture/ethnicity: nationality, skin colour, religion and belief:		
Sex, gender and gender identity (including Transgender & pregnancy/maternity):		
Sexual orientation:		
Other socio-economic factors such as families, carers, single people/couples, low income, vulnerability, education, reading/writing skills, 'digital exclusion' and rural isolation.		
Human rights considerations:		

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):

x	Devon County Council's Environmental Review Process for permitted development highway schemes.
	Planning Permission under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990).
	Strategic Environmental Assessment under European Directive 2001/42/EC "on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment".

	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 waste, and send less waste to landfill:		
Conserve and enhance biodiversity (the variety of living species):		
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of Devon's		

landscape:		
Conserve and enhance the quality and character of our built environment and public spaces:		
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:		Unlocks up to 8ha of employment land which will provide skilled jobs.
Impact on employment levels:		Additional jobs will be created during the construction phase, and the scheme will unlock employment land for future development.
Impact on local business:	During the construction phase the scheme may reduce accessibility to the Rugby Club and Leisure Centre. In order to mitigate this impact, consultation will be undertaken with these local businesses to better understand their needs. The construction contract will then be prepared with a balance between local business needs and construction methodologies.	Once complete the new junction will provide improved access to the Rugby Club and David Lloyd Leisure centre, making these locations more attractive destinations.

Section 4d -Combined Impacts

Linkages or conflicts between social, environmental and economic impacts:	In order to provide a cost-effective and buildable scheme there may be a short-term reduction in accessibility to the adjacent rugby club and leisure centre. There may also be some disruption during works on the A379 however the works will be carefully planned and
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	the impacts mitigated where reasonably practicable and affordable.
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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?	There are some potential environmental impacts as a result of the materials required for constructing the scheme and fuel for the plant during construction, but no more than other schemes of this nature. The close links to the M5 improve access to the site. Construction projects have the potential to attract negative publicity, however, DCC will require the Contractor to participate in the Considerate Contractor Scheme.
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