

A379 Sandy Park Junction, Newcourt, Exeter

Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.

Recommendations:

- (a) that the feedback from the public consultation be noted;**
- (b) that the junction improvement design shown on drawings E11044/007 and E11004/008 (attached to this report) be approved for construction at an estimated cost of £2.68m;**
- (c) that the 2016/17 capital programme be enhanced by £1.025 million, funded by developer contributions;**
- (d) that approval be given to secure the required land by negotiation and/or Compulsory Purchase Order powers to facilitate the widening of Sandy Park Way;**
- (e) that approval be given to advertise and, if no substantial objections are received, make and seal Traffic Regulation Orders detailed in the report and as shown on drawing E11044/010;**
- (f) that the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Policy and Corporate, and the Local Member, be given delegated authority to make minor amendments to the scheme design and Traffic Regulation Orders.**

1. Summary

Newcourt is one of the strategic sites in the Exeter Local Plan and part of this includes up to 400 dwellings and 8.3 hectares of employment accessed off the A379 Sandy Park junction. This junction is currently a left-in, left-out arrangement and it is proposed to upgrade this to a full movements, signalised junction.

2. Background/Introduction

The existing junction is currently used to access the land to the east of the railway, including Sandy Park rugby ground and David Lloyd leisure centre. This arrangement was intended as an interim solution, which would require upgrading with more development in the local area. The area of Newcourt development east of the railway line up to the Motorway is planned to have 8.3 hectares of employment and approximately 400 dwellings, which will put increased pressure on the existing junction and on other, less suitable routes in the area. This includes the narrow section under the railway and the road serving the A376 via Old Rydon Lane.

The upgrading of the junction is identified in the adopted Exeter Core Strategy as part of the Newcourt allocation and was also set out within the accompanying Infrastructure Delivery Plan. A new road junction on to the A379 at Newcourt is included on the Exeter City Council Regulation 123 List. This list sets out the infrastructure which will be funded by the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This implicitly identifies that the junction is a strategic requirement associated with wider development in Exeter and is therefore not directly the responsibility of the developer to deliver.

Maintaining the left-in, left-out arrangement would be problematic for vehicles wishing to access the motorway. Previously, the majority of this traffic had to use the slip road west of Sandy Park to loop via Russell Way and re-join the A379 eastbound carriageway. However, this loop is proposed to be closed as part of the longer term development plan and this could have major safety implications as vehicles attempt to make prohibited U-turns at the new signalised junctions at Newcourt Way or Russell Way. Other routes likely to be used are via Old Rydon Lane under the railway bridge or over the M5 and joining the A376 via Clyst Road. Both of these routes are unsuitable for accommodating an increase in traffic levels.

Traffic approaching Sandy Park from the city on the A379 currently has to loop around Sandygate Roundabout (Junction 30) and re-join the westbound carriageway. The increased number of people making this movement because of the development will have a detrimental impact on M5 Junction 30, particularly during peak hours when it is already close to capacity.

3. Proposal

The scheme upgrades the junction to allow the right turn into and out of the site. This can only be accommodated through the introduction of traffic signals. To provide adequate capacity for the traffic, the Sandy Park Way approach needs to be widened to three lanes (two right turning lanes and one left) and this requires earthworks to cut into the existing land. In addition to this, an additional lane on the A379 westbound approach is required which will continue all the way to the existing Russell Way right turn lane.

To facilitate this new junction it is proposed to reduce the speed limit along the A379 to 50mph, to introduce a number of banned movements to prohibit unsafe manoeuvres through the new junction and to amend the existing clearway to include the new junction.

4. Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

An online public consultation was held in the summer of 2015 to obtain feedback on the proposed scheme. Of the 48 people who responded, 60% agreed that an improvement to the junction was required and 45% supported the proposal, with 20% unsure and 35% against. Of the people who didn't support the scheme, 50% were against the idea of another set of traffic lights on this corridor, while 20% did not realise that the scheme was for the proposed development and not just for the existing businesses.

Different junction layouts were assessed, including a roundabout, but given the height difference between the two carriageways, alignment of existing roads, size of central reserve and the unbalanced traffic flows across the three arms, this would not operate as well as the proposed traffic signals.

Highways England have recognised the advantage of removing U-turning traffic from Junction 30, which is saturated during peak times. Detailed analysis shows that the proposed traffic signals have adequate capacity to prevent queues from extending back towards the motorway junction.

5. Financial Considerations

The proposed scheme has a cost estimate of £2.68m and this is considered a robust estimate based upon recent tender returns. Exeter City Council have confirmed £1,025,000 towards the scheme through their CIL and the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) have also agreed a £1m contribution through Growth Deal 1. The remaining £655,000 will be funded from the DfT's Local Transport Plan grant allocation, some of which has already been spent on design to date.

6. Environmental Impact Considerations

The proposed scheme will reduce journey times and distances for vehicles given the full movements junction. The air quality benefits of this will be neutralised by the introduction of the signals stopping all the traffic.

Widening of Sandy Park Way requires some earthworks and the additional road in the central reservation will increase the footprint of the junction but the site is not overlooked by any properties and the whole area will be developed in the near future so the visual impacts can be assumed to be minimal.

The undeveloped land west of Sandy Park Way (currently used for turf/grass production) holds potential for prehistoric into Romano-British settlement evidence and is possibly part of the Clyst Heath Prayerbook Rebellion battlefield site. Archaeological monitoring and recording will therefore be required whilst stripping the topsoil in this area and/or whilst advanced slot trenches are undertaken.

7. Equality Considerations

Where relevant to the decision, the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to;

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
 - advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Taking account of age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), gender and gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women/new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage/civil partnership status in coming to a decision, a decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation or socio-economic disadvantage.

This may be achieved, for example, through completing a full Equality Impact Needs Assessment/Impact Assessment or other form of options/project management appraisal that achieves the same objective.

In progressing this particular scheme, an Impact Assessment has been prepared which has been circulated separately to Cabinet Members and also is available alongside this Report on the Council's website at: <http://www.devon.gov.uk/cma.htm>, which Members will need to consider for the purposes of this item.

8. Legal Considerations

Due consideration to the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, Traffic Management Act 2004, The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 and all other enabling powers has been given in respect of the proposed traffic regulation orders.

When approving a traffic scheme it is the County Council's responsibility to ensure that all relevant legislation is complied with. This includes Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 that states that it is the duty of the local authority, so far as practicable to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic and provision of parking facilities.

9. Risk Management Considerations

This proposal has been assessed and all necessary safeguards or action have been taken to safeguard the Council's position.

The scheme is subject to normal engineering risks and suitable risk allowances have been included in the costings.

In order to widen the existing Sandy Park Way cutting, land must be secured from two owners however initial discussions are promising and this is currently considered to be a low risk.

10. Options/Alternatives

Keeping the existing arrangement was considered but given the additional development proposed in the area, the local highway network would be put under considerable pressure with no improvement.

A roundabout was also considered but given the unbalanced flows across all three arms, this would struggle to work operationally. Signals also allow the queue to be controlled and any potential queueing back reduced.

11. Reason for Recommendation/Conclusion

The proposed scheme will unlock a strategic development in the Exeter Local Plan as well as improving access to the current businesses in the area. It will remove U-turning traffic from M5 Junction 30, a strategic junction on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) as well as reducing dangerous manoeuvres at the Newcourt Way and Russell Way junction.

Dave Black
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Electoral Division: St Loyes & Topsham

Cabinet Member for Policy and Corporate: Councillor John Hart

Strategic Director, Place: Heather Barnes

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for enquiries: Stuart Jarvis

Room No. Lucombe House, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter, EX2 4QD

Tel No: (01392) 383000

Background Paper	Date	File Reference
Impact Assessment	2016	http://www.devon.gov.uk/cma.htm



Continued on Sheet 2 of 2

Continued on Sheet 1 of 2

Do not scale from this drawing in either hard or electronic format. No responsibility is accepted where this drawing is used in circumstances other than that for which it was originally prepared and issued.

NOTES	
No.	Details
1.	Existing street furniture and vehicle safety fence has been omitted for clarity.

KEY	
	Existing carriageway
	Existing traffic island
	Existing verge / cutting
	Existing road marking
	Proposed carriageway
	Proposed traffic island
	Proposed verge
	Proposed road markings

No.	Date	Drawn	Revised	By
P0	17/04/15	DC	First issue	JS
P1	20/04/15	DC	Revision	JS
P2	19/12/15	DC	Sandy Park Way widening removed	JS
P3	19/01/16	DC	Sandy Park Way widening added	JS



Engineering Design Group

Matford Offices
County Hall
Topilium Road
Exeter
EX2 4QD
Tel: 0845 155 1004
Fax: 01392 382342
customer@devon.gov.uk
www.devon.gov.uk

JOB
**A379
SANDY PARK JUNCTION
EXETER**

DRAWING TITLE

**GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 1 OF 2**

Drawing Number:	E11044/007	Revision:	P3
Scale:	1:500	Sheet:	A1



Do not scale from this drawing in either hard or electronic format. No responsibility is accepted where this drawing is used in circumstances other than that for which it was originally prepared and issued.

NOTES

1. Refer to Sheet 1 of 2 for notes and key for this drawing

Rev	Date	Drawn	Revisions	CHK
P0	17/04/15	DC	First issue	JS
P1	20/04/15	DC	Revision	JS
P2	16/12/15	DC	Sandy Park Way widening removed	JS
P3	19/01/16	DC	Sandy Park Way widening added	JS



Engineering Design Group

Matford Offices
County Hall
Topsham Road
Exeter
EX2 4QQ

Tel. 0845 155 1004
Fax. 01392 382342
customer@devon.gov.uk
www.devon.gov.uk

JOB
**A379
SANDY PARK JUNCTION
EXETER**

DRAWING TITLE
**GENERAL ARRANGEMENT
SHEET 2 OF 2**

drawing number	E11044/008	revision	P3
scale	1:500	sheet	A1

Do not scale from this drawing. It is intended to be used in conjunction with the accompanying text. No liability is accepted for any errors or omissions. It is intended to be used in conjunction with the accompanying text. No liability is accepted for any errors or omissions. It is intended to be used in conjunction with the accompanying text. No liability is accepted for any errors or omissions.

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1.		Speed limits and other Traffic Regulation Orders to remain unaltered unless specified on this drawing.

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1.		Speed limits and other Traffic Regulation Orders to remain unaltered unless specified on this drawing.

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1.		Speed limits and other Traffic Regulation Orders to remain unaltered unless specified on this drawing.

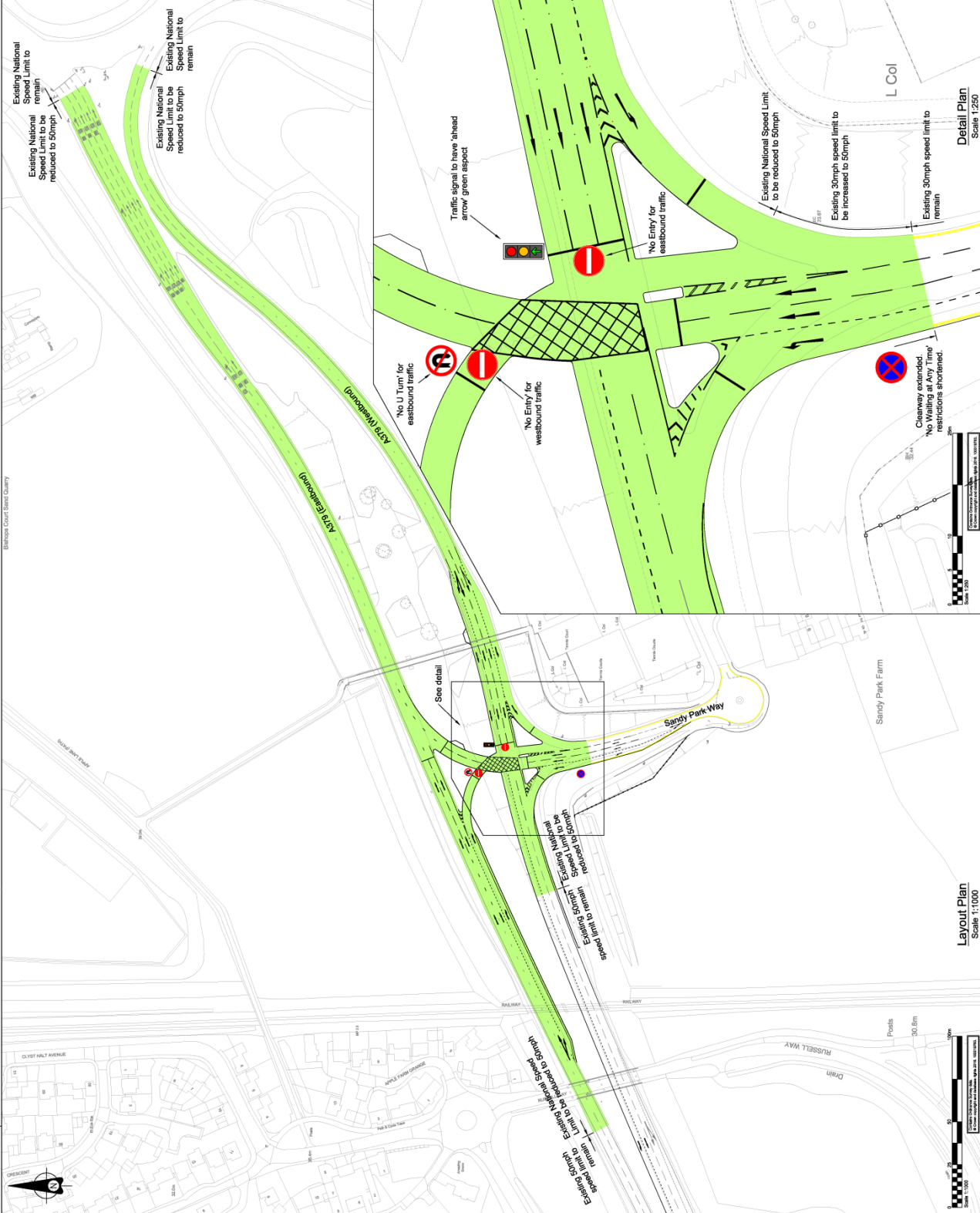
NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1.		Speed limits and other Traffic Regulation Orders to remain unaltered unless specified on this drawing.

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1.		Speed limits and other Traffic Regulation Orders to remain unaltered unless specified on this drawing.

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1.		Speed limits and other Traffic Regulation Orders to remain unaltered unless specified on this drawing.

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1.		Speed limits and other Traffic Regulation Orders to remain unaltered unless specified on this drawing.

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1.		Speed limits and other Traffic Regulation Orders to remain unaltered unless specified on this drawing.



Devon County Council

Engineering Design Group

Matford Offices
Tel: 0845 55 1004
County Hall
Tel: 01392 362342
T. South Road
Exeter
EX2 4QD
www.devon.gov.uk

A379 SANDY PARK JUNCTION EXETER

Job No: []

DRAWING TITLE

TRO PLAN

Scale: 1:1250

Revision: P2

AS SHOWN