

Impact Assessment

Assessment of: Higher Bull Ring Heritage Action Zone Improvement Scheme

Service: Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Head of Service: Meg Booth

Version / date of sign off by Head of Service: 19/12/2022

Assessment carried out by (job title): Tom Vaughan (Neighbourhood Highways Manager)

1. Description of project under review

The Cullompton Higher Bullring public realm enhancement project is proposed to be delivered as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone which has the following objectives, as set out in the original Delivery Plan agreed with Historic England:

- Enhance the heritage setting of the town centre;
- Reduce the dominance of motor vehicles;
- Provide an extended space for community events and cultural activities while providing a focus for civic pride.

The proposed changes include a reduction in carriageway width to enable the creation of the enhanced public realm whilst remaining sufficient to maintain the current traffic flows, moving the bus stop south of the St John Court access, freeing up the setting of the War Memorial, realigning the pedestrian crossing slightly to reflect the new kerb alignments, and adjusting disabled parking bays to enable the offset pedestrian crossing to function safely. The market access will be designed to facilitate market days. The creation of the larger public realm allows for future market expansion.

2. Reason for change / review

The streets and spaces in the town centre are currently dominated by traffic. The majority of the high street, particularly Fore Street, consists of a wide carriageway, with narrow pavements, poor quality surfacing, and little planting or street furniture. Whilst there are very few existing public spaces in the town centre, the street width is much wider at the Bullring, allowing for street trees, seating, wider pavements and the war memorial, differing in character. The Heritage Access Zone is an opportunity to improve and create new public spaces to enhance the experience of visitors to the town centre.

The aim of the project is to make Cullompton Town Centre a more desirable place for businesses, visitors, investors and local people, by encouraging new and sustainable cultural activity in the high street areas, helping improve perceptions of the high street and its heritage and restoring and enhancing the local character of the high street area.

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

Cullompton Higher Bullring public realm enhancement project aims to:

- Enhance the local character of the high street area
- Enable the creation of the enhanced public realm

These aims will be achieved through:

- Widening footways and pedestrian areas
- A reduction of on-street parking
- Enhanced greening and seating

The proposal has been through two stages of public consultation on the details of the scheme

Limitations

The exact specification of proposals is under development and will be subject to a Mid Devon District Council budgetary review in light of a scheme cost estimate.

Scheme delivery is dependent of the Historic England Heritage Action Zone Government grant allocation, which has an achievable but ambitious delivery timescale.

A stage 1 road safety audit will be carried out during the detailed design process.

Options

Alternative options to proceeding with the current proposal include:

As an alternative, the District and County Councils could abort the scheme to keep the status quo as a result of which the streets and spaces in the town centre will remain dominated by traffic, a wide carriageway, with narrow pavements, poor quality surfacing, and little planting or street furniture. This option would also risk other potential Government investment at this time and could also damage potential for securing funding for schemes in the future.

4. People affected and their diversity profile

The people potentially affected by the Higher Bull Ring Heritage Action Zone proposals are those principally living or working in Cullompton. The diversity profile for Mid Devon is presented below, with Devon and England overall used as comparators.

Age

As shown below in Table 1, the population of Mid Devon was somewhat older than the national average at the 2011 Census, with the proportions aged 0-19 and 20-64 below the national average, and the proportions age 65+ being above the national average. However, the town has a younger population than Devon as a whole.

Geography	Total	% Age 0-19	% Age 20-64	% Age 65+
Mid Devon	83290	22.5%	54%	24%
Devon	746,399	21%	56%	23%
England	53,012,456	24%	60%	16%

Table 1 Age (Census 2011)

Younger people (aged 0-10) tend to be more reliant on walking and cycling than those aged 21-59 and older people (aged 60+). Under 20s make 40% of their journeys by foot or by cycle, compared to 33% for those aged 21-59, and 31% for those 65+ (National Travel Survey, 2020).

Data from the National Travel Survey in 2020 highlighted that young children aged 5 to 10 years old have the highest rates of cycle access (88%), while only 25% of those aged 60+ owns or has access to a bicycle.

Ethnicity

Table 2 shows that Cullompton, as with Devon as a whole, is significantly lower in ethnic diversity than England as a whole, with 98% of the population being White, compared with a national average of 85%. The non-White population was predominantly Asian/ Asian British and from mixed/multiple ethnic groups.

Geography	Total	% White	% Mixed/multiple ethnic groups	% Asian/Asian	% Black/African/Caribbean/Black	% Other
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				British	British	Ethnic Group
Cullompton	9526	98%	0.5%	0.8%	0.2%	0%
Devon	746,399	97.5%	0.9%	1.2%	0.2%	0.2%
England	53,012,456	85.4%	2.3%	7.8%	3.5%	1.0%

Table 2 Ethnicity (Census 2011)

The 2019 National Travel Survey indicated that White people tend to make 2% of trips by cycle and Asian or Black people cycle for 1% of trips. However, Asian and Black people and people from mixed/other ethnic groups make a greater proportion of trips on foot, a greater proportion of trips by 'active travel' (i.e. walking and cycling combined) than White people¹.

¹ [Travel by distance, trips, type of transport and purpose - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures \(ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/ethnicity-facts-figures)

Health and disability

The proportions of people describing themselves as being in bad health or being limited in their day-to-day activities by disability within Cullompton were approximately in line with the Devon and England averages (Table 3).

Geography	Total	% Activities Limited	% Activities not limited	% (Very) good health	% Fair Health	% (Very) bad health
Cullompton	9687	18%	82%	81%	14%	5%
Devon	746,399	19%	81%	81%	14%	5%
England	53,012,456	18%	82%	81%	13%	5%

Table 3 Health and Disability (Census 2011)

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) reduce their ability to carry out day-to-day activities 'a lot', these people 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 nondisabled people (2.0%).

Gender

Table 4 shows that, as in England overall, there were slightly more females than males recorded as resident in Mid Devon at the 2011 Census. Information about other gender identities was not collected at the 2011 Census.

Geography	Total	Male	Female
Mid Devon	83,290	49%	51%
Devon	746,399	48%	52%
England	53,012,456	49%	51%

Table 4 Gender (Census 2011)

According to the 2019 National Travel Survey, on average, females make slightly more trips in total than males, at 990 per person per year versus 915 per person per year. Females make a greater proportion of trips on foot, but a lower proportion by cycle – with males taking on average 24 trips by cycle per year compared to 8 trips for women².

Socio-economic status

The Index of Multiple Deprivation³ ranks LSOAs (Lower Super Output Areas) based on a range of aspects of an individual's living conditions including income, education, employment and health, to produce a relative measure of deprivation. The average social deprivation score taken from the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2010) shows Cullompton as having a relatively low level of deprivation, but this does mask some pockets of deprivation. A section of Cullompton town centre is ranked the 8th most deprived Lower-layer Super Output Area (LSOA) in Mid Devon. The proportion of trips made on foot decline from an average of 37% among people in the lowest income quintile, to 34% among those in the highest income quintile.

² [2018 National Travel Survey Factsheets \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)

³ [Indices of Deprivation 2015 and 2019 \(communities.gov.uk\)](https://communities.gov.uk)

Businesses and Residents

In the short term, during construction work for Cullompton Higher Bullring public realm enhancement project, it is anticipated that some negative impact on nearby businesses and resident may be experienced. This would be managed and monitored as far as possible, including thorough liaison with local businesses and stakeholders to minimise the impact of improvement works.

5. Stakeholders, their interest and potential impacts

- Mid Devon District Council. - The Cullompton Higher Bullring public realm enhancement project is being delivered as part of the High Street Heritage Action Zone by MDDC
- Devon County Council – the local transport authority. The delivery of the proposal aligns with various objectives of the Council, including supporting sustainable economic recovery and, improving health and wellbeing
- Cullompton Town Council – the residents and business owners in this council area would be expected to benefit from the proposals.

6. Research used to inform this assessment

Demographic data for the geographies affected by the proposal has been sourced from the 2011 Census using the Nomis website², whilst data on the demographics of users of individual modes of transport was sourced from the 2019 National Travel Survey³. Deprivation data was taken from the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2019)⁴.

² [Nomis - Official Labour Market Statistics \(nomisweb.co.uk\)](https://nomisweb.co.uk)

³ [National Travel Survey: 2019 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

⁴ [English indices of deprivation 2019 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

7. Description of consultation process and outcomes

A two-stage public consultation has been undertaken. The first stage of public consultation concluded last year to form the basis for the initial design to pass through Stage 2 consultation process which has recently been completed.

The Stage 1 consultation on the public realm enhancement project took place at the same time as a consultation on the Cullompton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan and the draft Cullompton Town Centre Masterplan. Officers from Mid Devon Council undertook the consultation in Cullompton between the 28th June and 13th August 2021. In terms of the HSHAZ public realm project, the consultation was to gather initial views on the Higher Bullring (and Fore Street) space and how the community would like to see them enhanced. Between 28th June and 13th August, comments on the public realm enhancement project were invited through the following approaches:

- Interactive map;
- Online and paper questionnaire
- Permanent exhibitions were made available at the Cullompton Community Centre and the Hayridge Centre.

Additionally, three face to face public consultations took place when Mid Devon District Council Officers attended

Farmers Market in Cullompton - 24th July 2021;

· Art Week at The Walronds - 26th July 2021;

· Tesco's car park in Cullompton in the late afternoon - 26th July 2021

Stage 2 consultation on the public realm enhancement project took place between 4 July and 21 August. Design proposals and feedback surveys were made available on the Mid Devon District Council website and at the Hayridge centre. Two drop in events were held at the Farmers market 30th July and Walronds Gardens 26th July. 32 feedback surveys were received, 21 completed online and 11 paper copies. In addition, 10 emails were received from local businesses/ residents raising specific queries.

Generally strong support for the proposals was received. There are a number of comments made by residents/businesses adjacent to the area of works which have been considered as part of Stage 4 design. These have been in relation to:

- The location of the bus stop
- The impact on Tiverton Road junction
- The provision of a loading bay for adjacent businesses
- Vehicular access for market traders
- Emergency services bay for Clarks Court
- Reduction in on street parking

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:
 - 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.

<p>Characteristics</p>	<p>Potential or actual issues for this group.</p> <p>[Please refer to the Diversity Guide and See RED]</p>	<p>In what way will you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? <p>In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim?</p> <p>Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy?</p>
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<p>All residents (include generic equality provisions)</p>	<p>Proposals involve the reduction of on-street parking provision, which may impact shoppers who previously parked directly outside shops and facilities at the Higher Bull Ring.</p> <p>Construction works to deliver the proposals may generate noise and cause some disruption, negatively impacting local residents and businesses.</p>	<p>A parking demand survey was undertaken during the initial concept design process. It was demonstrated that with the removal of 10 spaces, 31 including 4 disabled spaces remaining, weekday demand would exceed capacity between 09:40 and 12:20 and 12:40 and 13:10. During this period, up to 5 cars would need to park elsewhere. Saturday demand would exceed capacity between 09:40 and 11:40 when up to 8 cars would need to park elsewhere. There is considered to be sufficient capacity in the nearby Forge Way car park to accommodate the displaced parking.</p> <p>This would be managed and monitored as far as possible, including through liaison with local businesses and stakeholders to minimise the impact of improvement works.</p>
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<p>Characteristics</p>	<p>Potential or actual issues for this group.</p> <p>[Please refer to the Diversity Guide and See RED]</p>	<p>In what way will you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? <p>In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim?</p> <p>Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy?</p>
<p>Age</p>	<p>Older people (aged 60+) make a higher proportion of trips by car, and a lower proportion of trips by walking and cycling than those aged less than 60 meaning they may benefit less from pedestrian enhancements than younger visitors.</p>	<p>31 parking spaces including 4 disabled spaces will remain. Public transport provision will not be detrimentally affected and waiting facilities will be improved.</p>

<p>Disability (incl. sensory, mobility, mental health, learning disability, neurodiversity, long term ill health) and carers of disabled people</p>	<p>Disabled people make a lower proportion of trips by foot and 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.</p>	<p>31 parking spaces including 4 disabled spaces will remain. Public transport provision will not be detrimentally affected and waiting facilities will be improved.</p> <p>Proposed crossing improvements and widened footways will make the area safer and more accessible for all users, in particular those using wheelchairs or mobility scooters.</p>
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<p>Characteristics</p>	<p>Potential or actual issues for this group.</p> <p>[Please refer to the Diversity Guide and See RED]</p>	<p>In what way will you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? <p>In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim?</p> <p>Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy?</p>
<p>Culture and ethnicity: nationality/national origin, ethnic origin/race, skin colour, religion and belief</p>	<p>It is not considered that there is the potential for any adverse impacts on the basis of culture and ethnicity.</p>	<p>Black and Asian people, people from mixed/multiple ethnic groups and people of other ethnicities make a greater proportion of trips by walking and cycling than White people, so people of these ethnicities may particularly benefit from the proposals.</p>

<p>Sex, gender and gender identity (including men, women, non-binary and transgender people), and pregnancy and maternity (including women's right to breastfeed)</p>	<p>It is not considered that there is the potential for any adverse impacts on the basis of sex, gender and gender identity.</p>	<p>It is not considered that there is the potential for any beneficial impacts on the basis of sex, gender and gender identity.</p>
<p>Sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership</p>	<p>It is not considered that there is the potential for any adverse impacts on the basis of sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership.</p>	<p>It is not considered that there is the potential for any beneficial impacts on the basis of sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership.</p>
<p>Characteristics</p>	<p>Potential or actual issues for this group.</p> <p>[Please refer to the Diversity Guide and See RED]</p>	<p>In what way will you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? <p>In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim?</p> <p>Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy?</p>

<p>Other relevant socioeconomic 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</p>	<p>It is not considered that there is the potential for any adverse impacts on the basis of other socioeconomic factors.</p>	<p>People in lower income groups in general make a greater proportion of trips by walking and cycling 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.</p> <p>The improvement to the Heritage Action Zone in the Higher Bull Ring will create an environment in which everyone is encouraged to feel safe, welcome and relaxed and thus increase social interaction between all visitors, residents and business owners.</p>
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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 Higher Bull Ring Heritage Action Zone proposals will provide a more desirable place for businesses, visitors, investors and local people, by encouraging new and sustainable cultural activity in the high street areas, helping improve perceptions of the high street and its heritage and restoring and enhancing the local character of the high street area. The improvements to the pedestrian realm will increase dwelling time for visitors, creating more opportunities for visitors and communities.

In what way can you help people to be safe, protected from harm, and with good health and wellbeing?

These proposals will improve safety in The Higher Bull Ring due to wider footways and improved crossings. The increased provision for active travel should encourage greater levels of activity for visitors, improving public health and increasing accessibility to community facilities and shops.

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

The improvement to the pedestrian realm in The Higher Bull Ring, including the widening of footways, the provision of seating and additional greening, where possible, will create a welcoming, relaxed and safe setting for visitors to spend time together and within their communities.

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. (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:	N/A	N/A
Conserve and enhance wildlife:	N/A	N/A
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of Devon's landscape:	N/A	N/A
Conserve and enhance Devon's cultural and historic heritage:	N/A	N/A
Minimise greenhouse gas emissions:	It is recognised that some local traffic may have to divert creating longer journeys, however, it also expected that some users will switch modes rather than simply changing driving route.	Overall, it is expected that the reallocation of road space from vehicles to active travel users is expected to have a positive environmental impact, reducing carbon emissions.

Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise):	The construction of The Higher Bull Ring Enhancement scheme may generate pollution in the short term. However, this will be reduced as far as practicable during the detailed design phases of the proposal.	Proposals aim to deliver air quality benefits
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. (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:	N/A	N/A
Impact on employment levels:	N/A	Proposals should improve sustainable, low-cost access to the Town Centre employment area.
Impact on local business:	A parking demand survey was undertaken during the initial concept design process. It was demonstrated that with the removal of 10 spaces, 31 including 4 disabled spaces remaining, weekday demand would exceed capacity between 09:40 and 12:20 and 12:40 and 13:10. During this period, up to 5 cars would need to park elsewhere. Saturday demand would exceed capacity between 09:40 and 11:40 when up to 8 cars would need to park elsewhere. There is considered to be sufficient	Public transport provision will not be detrimentally affected and waiting facilities will be improved. The Higher Bull Ring is likely to become a more popular destination for shopping and recreation which will increase trade for local businesses.

	capacity in the nearby Forge Way car park to accommodate the displaced parking.	
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13. Describe and linkages or conflicts between social, environmental and economic impacts (Combined Impacts):

The removal of 10 on-street parking spaces and improved active travel facilities may reduce the number of motorised visitors to The Higher Bull Ring but will transform the street into a healthier, safer and more welcoming environment for people accessing the area on foot, by cycle and public transport. This will bring social and environmental benefits for visitors and economic benefits to 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, these proposals will bring economic benefits for local businesses in The Higher Bull Ring by encouraging increased dwelling in the area, and by making The Higher Bull Ring a more pedestrian-friendly environment. The social wellbeing of the area will be improved through the improvement of The Higher Bull Ring into a safer, more welcoming, and healthier street and the environmental wellbeing will be improved through the modal shift towards active travel.

15. How will impacts and actions be monitored?

The Higher Bull Ring Heritage Action Zone enhancement scheme will be monitored through consultation with the local member and local stakeholders.