

## **REPORT TO EXECUTIVE**

Date of Meeting: 8<sup>th</sup> July 2025

## **REPORT TO COUNCIL**

Date of Meeting: 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2025

Report of: Strategic Director for Place

Title: Newtown Walking & Cycling Infrastructure Programme

### **Is this a Key Decision?**

No

### **Is this an Executive or Council Function?**

Executive

### **1. What is the report about?**

This report proposes delivery of the programme of works in Newtown to improve walking and cycling infrastructure in the neighbourhood. The report seeks approval for changes to the Triangle Car Park, owned and managed by the Council, and seeks endorsement for the whole scheme which include works to the Highway, and to be considered by Devon County Council Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC).

### **2. Recommendations:**

- To approve a new layout, including walking & cycling infrastructure to the Triangle Car Park, resulting in a loss of 28 useable spaces; and
- That the Devon County Council Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC) be requested to consider these proposals concerning the Newtown Walking & Infrastructure Project at its meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025 with a view to implementation of the scheme.

### **3. Reasons for the recommendation:**

The Newtown Programme seeks to increase the amount of walking and cycling through the neighbourhood. The designs and proposals have been informed by significant community and stakeholder consultation since 2021. There are proposed improvements to the public realm, highways and the Triangle Car Park to improve walking and cycling routes through Newtown.

The Triangle Car Park element of the scheme seeks to improve walking and cycling through the car park through a dedicated route. The Car Park will be split into two with improved access and parking layouts for motorists. It will also include new disabled (5) and parent/child friendly (3) parking spaces.

The whole scheme will be proposed by Devon County Council at the HATOC meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025.

#### **4. What are the resource implications including non financial resources**

The scheme is fully budgeted through the Sport England Live and Move Programme, with capacity provided by ECC and DCC Officers working in partnership to deliver the scheme.

Total Budget: £379,880

Total Scheme Cost: £352,765

Contingency: £27,115

The proposed changes to the Triangle Car Park, would result in a loss of 28 spaces. In revenue terms the average occupancy income from 28 spaces would result in a loss of £69,042 per year. The car park currently has 270 spaces stated as available, however only 251 are useable due to tree roots and uneven ground.

The final scheme proposes a total of 231 spaces; this includes 5 disabled bays and 3 parent/child spaces (which are not currently provided on site). The loss of standard spaces generating revenue can be considered as 251 down to 226 (25).

However, this car park is only at full capacity at very occasional times of the year, namely Christmas shopping periods and on Saturdays when Exeter City FC are playing home fixtures.

#### **5. Section 151 Officer comments:**

The loss of 25 chargeable spaces is considered manageable within the overall car park provision. Given the significant improvements that will arise to the layout of the car park, it may actually make the car park more attractive to customers.

#### **6. What are the legal aspects?**

6.1 The Triangle Car Park is owned and managed by the Council. Reducing the number of parking spaces must be considered in accordance with the City of Exeter (Civil Enforcement Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2014 ('the Order').

6.2 Article 12 of the Order states;

*Nothing in this Order shall prevent the Council by notice, sign or barrier displayed in a Parking Place:*

*a) from closing a Parking Place or any part thereof for any period and/or ....*

6.3 The Council will have to amend the Order to reflect changes in the layout of the Triangle Car Park.

6.4 The Council has no legal powers in respect of the public highway. The Council must liaise with Devon County Council the Highways Authority to authorise any changes to the public highway.

#### **7. Monitoring Officer's comments:**

This matter raises no issues for the Monitoring Officer.

## 8. Report details:

The scheme is being proposed for approval at the Devon County Council Highways and Traffic Orders Committee on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2025. Proposed changes to the Triangle Car Park in Newtown have been developed in detail with Exeter City Council Planning colleagues. A planning application is not required as the proposed changes are within permitted development.

Consultation and Engagement has been conducted in accordance with the Exeter City Council Consultation Charter and the Devon County Council Traffic Regulation Orders policy.

### 8.1 Background and Context

The project is led by Exeter City Council, as part of the Live and Move programme, funded by Sport England and delivered in partnership with Devon County Council. It aims to improve everyday life and journeys in Newtown by making it easier and safer to get around and improve access to green spaces for everyone.

Engagement in Newtown regarding the scheme began in 2021 with public surveys and local community and stakeholder conversations. Formal public consultation was delayed allowing for Devon County Council's proposed Local Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) scheme in Heavitree and Whipton, designed to reduce through traffic.

Further detailed designs of the public highway elements were subsequently drawn up. A briefing for Exeter City Council and Devon County Council members was held on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024 to seek approval to move to formal consultation of the Newtown scheme. There were 6 schemes proposed based on comprehensive design and engagement with the local community, local stakeholders, technical specialists and statutory authorities. The scheme is detailed here: [Newtown Plans - Live and Move](#)

The scheme consultation was approved, and officers developed the plan in line with the Exeter City Council Consultation Charter.

The scheme is an Exeter City Council led programme, funded by Sport England, delivered in partnership with Devon County Council.

The scheme is based on Sport England active design principles and is seeking to improve walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure in Newtown.

The proposed outcomes for the scheme, since inception in 2021 are:

1. **Increase physical activity** - The project aims to increase physical activity among residents by making infrastructure changes that positively prioritise active travel modes such as walking, cycling, and wheeling
2. **Enhance community connectivity** - Improve the connection between community spaces and activities, making it easier for residents to move around their community and to destinations beyond

3. **Improve health and wellbeing** - Support the health and wellbeing of Newtown residents by creating more usable green spaces and safer, more accessible routes for active travel
4. **Tackle Climate Emergency** - Contribute to tackling the climate emergency by encouraging behaviour change towards active modes of transport, thereby reducing reliance on vehicular movements
5. **Showcase Active Design Principles** - Demonstrate how embedding active design principles throughout policy and practice can have a lasting positive effect on the community
6. **Community Participation** - Ensure the project is a co-design initiative where the community is actively involved throughout the process, from initial consultation to final implementation
7. **Strategic alignment** - Align with the Exeter Transport Strategy's aspirations for 50% of all local trips in Exeter to be undertaken by foot or by cycle by 2030

## 8.2 Community Consultation and Engagement

The 2021 consultation for Newtown was conducted in April 2021 and aimed to gather feedback from the community on various aspects of life in Newtown. The consultation covered topics such as community and people, play and recreation, public transport, streets and green spaces, traffic and parking, walking and cycling, and the desires and aspirations of the residents, with the output from the consultation aimed at informing the development of the Newtown plans.

The phase one community engagement took place during April and May 2021 with a total of 84 responses received. Of these, 54 were from within the study area and 33 from outside the study area. 79 (91%) of respondents filled out the Walking and Cycling section of the consultation. The responses and baseline report led to a five-point vision being developed to help guide the design ideas:

1. To place pedestrian and cyclists needs first
2. To feel safe and be easy to navigate
3. To offer opportunities for play and recreation
4. To be inclusive for all
5. To enhance the sense of community

There has been a constant innovative approach to design and engagement through the 2022 – 2024 period to further develop the scheme designs. This includes:

- Initial Architects vision based on **Sport England Active Design Principles**. These Principles have been used to guide the design and engagement with residents, communities and stakeholders throughout
- An **Equality Impact Assessment** was conducted in 2023 for the Newtown project that highlighted several key developments and implications for the design. Critically, the proposed schemes in Newtown were not expected to breach the Human Rights Act (1998). The scheme aims were to improve facilities and safety for sustainable travel, supporting access for people without private cars. These changes included interventions to:
  - reduce rat running traffic to create a comfortable environment for cycling,
  - reduce conflict between users to lower collision rates and promoting health benefits through increased walking and cycling.
  - to conserve and enhance wildlife, create green spaces, and minimise greenhouse gas emissions.
- A **Safety Inclusion Assessment (SIA)** was conducted in 2024 that identified several key developments and implications for the project. The assessment was conducted to evaluate the real and perceived safety risks for vulnerable users, particularly women and girls, and to provide design solutions to address these issues. The main developments identified by the SIA are:
  - **Assessment of Sites:** The SIA was conducted on five sites within the Newtown Community, including Denmark Road and Russell Street, Triangle Car Park, Clifton Road and Clifton Street Junction, Clifton Road and Belmont Road Junction, and St Sidwells Point
  - **Methodology:** The assessment used a combination of desktop reviews and the SIA tool to evaluate the sites based on five core criteria: surveillance, space activation, legibility, women's safety, and inclusiveness
  - **Findings:** The assessment identified several issues across the sites, including limited active surveillance, lack of street furniture, inadequate lighting, and poor accessibility
  - **Proposed Design Reviews:** The proposed designs for each site were reviewed, and recommendations were made to improve safety and inclusiveness. These included adding lighting, improving wayfinding, enhancing street furniture, and addressing specific safety concerns

The formal consultation period in 2024/25, a collaborative approach between Exeter City Council and Devon County Council, consisted of two key elements:

- An ECC led 10-week public engagement exercise delivered between 2 December 2024 and 7 February 2025, running for a total of 10 weeks. Across the consultation period, four in person information sessions were hosted at St Matts Hall, Newtown
- A DCC led advertisement of draft Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) in April 2025.

TROs are legal agreements which allow DCC to enforce regulations including speed limits, on-street parking and one-way streets. TROs are created in consultation with local communities and the police, to address specific traffic congestion or quality of life issues.

## Phase 1

Engagement events were attended by residents, and they allowed for discussions to be held in person, with clarification being given around aspects of the proposals. Overall, the mood of attendees was welcoming towards the presented scheme.

The consultation was promoted via a mixture of a letter drop, social media, fliers and word of mouth (through Council members, Community Builders and Community Physical Activity Organisers). Letters to residents were delivered to 1809 addresses identified within Newtown area and bordering streets.

Information regarding the consultation and a link to the survey was also provided via the website:

[Newtown - Live and Move](#)

## **Phase 2**

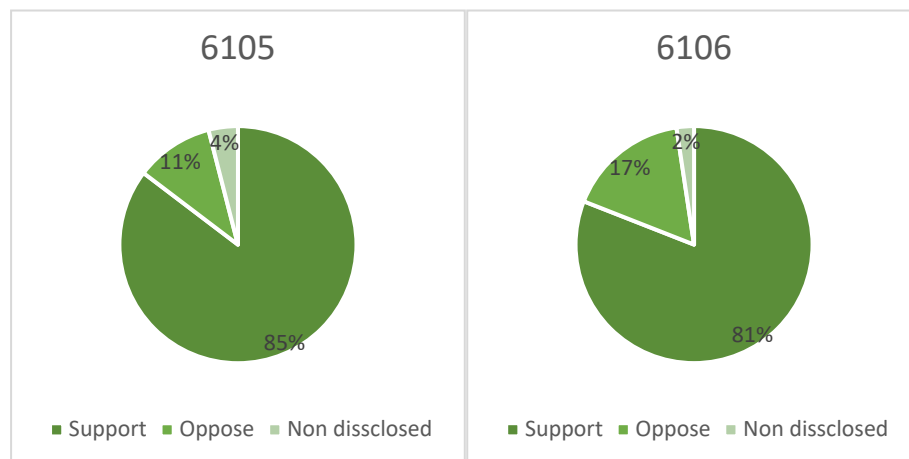
The formal draft traffic regulation orders (TROs) consultation went live on 3<sup>rd</sup> April and will run to 28<sup>th</sup> April. The orders being advertised are:

### **Proposed Restrictions in Newtown, Exeter**

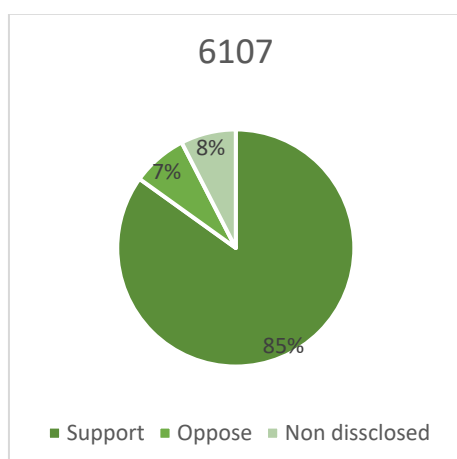
Following on from the informal consultation that ran between December 2024 and February 2025, which showed public support for the scheme to progress. The formal Traffic Regulation Order consultation was undertaken between 3<sup>rd</sup> April and 28<sup>th</sup> April. The three advertised orders were:

- *Ref 6105 – Devon County Council (Russell Street, Newtown, Exeter) (Prohibition of Motor Vehicles) Order*
- *Ref 6106 – Devon County Council (Clifton Hill, Newtown, Exeter) (One-Way with Contraflow Cycling) Order*
- *Ref 6107 – Devon County Council (Newtown, Exeter) (Waiting Restrictions) Amendment Order*

In total 212 responses were received across the three advertised orders and the response distribution was:



**FIGURE 1 - CHARTS OF OVERALL RESPONSES PER TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER – SHOWING DISTRIBUTION OF SUPPORT / OPPOSITION**



The consultation responses show overall support for all advertised orders. Looking more closely at the detail of the submissions there are elements of clarity, on topics such as access routes and availability of parking, requested by respondents. Further to this, discussions with local key stakeholders has identified that further work could be undertaken to investigate the provision of a loading bay within the centre of Clifton Road, this provision is being considered.

Following the conclusion of the engagement processes an informal member briefing has been held with the Exeter City Council Leader, Portfolio Holder and Ward Members, this briefing took place at the Civic Centre on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2025. There was positive and constructive feedback on all elements of the scheme which will be taken forward in final design. Members gave their endorsement for the scheme to be taken through the formal ECC Executive and DCC HATOC approval processes.

### 8.3 Proposed Designs

In line with the overall positive theme of the responses to the engagement processes, each of scheme elements were supported. With the following specific points being revised:

## Denmark Road and Russell Street – Section 1

There is general support for this element and for the closure of this section of Russell Street.

The scheme design has been reviewed in line with the suggestions and comments received through the engagement processes.

Changes are being made to the transitions from Heavitree Road to the new facility and where the route crosses Russell Street.



**FIGURE 2 - SCHEME IMAGE OF DENMARK ROAD / RUSSELL STREET ELEMENT**

*Sept 24 Cost Estimate -  
£75,788.90*

## The Triangle Car Park – Section 2

The car park currently has 270 spaces stated as available, however only 251 are useable due to tree roots and uneven ground.

The final scheme proposes a total of 231 spaces, this includes 5 disabled bays and 3 parent/child spaces (which are not currently provided on site).

The loss of standard spaces generating revenue can be considered as 251 down to 226 (25), (i.e. 231 spaces less the 5 disabled bays which would not generate revenue).

In revenue terms the average income from 25 spaces would result in a loss of £69,042 per year. However, this car park is only at full capacity on very occasional times of the year, namely Christmas shopping periods and on Saturday's when Exeter City FC are playing home fixtures.

The scheme also proposes to improve the general access and quality of the car park, that it is assumed will improve overall patronage. This includes:

- *Tree-pit re-alignment - each of the perimeter spaces have been redistributed to provide a suitable area around each tree base. This ensures that each full parking space on the perimeter is fully useable and also helps to improve the health and longevity of each tree.*
- *Footway and cycleway widening - the reallocation of space to improved footway and cycleway facilities will provide greater connectivity through this route making it more attractive for community users.*



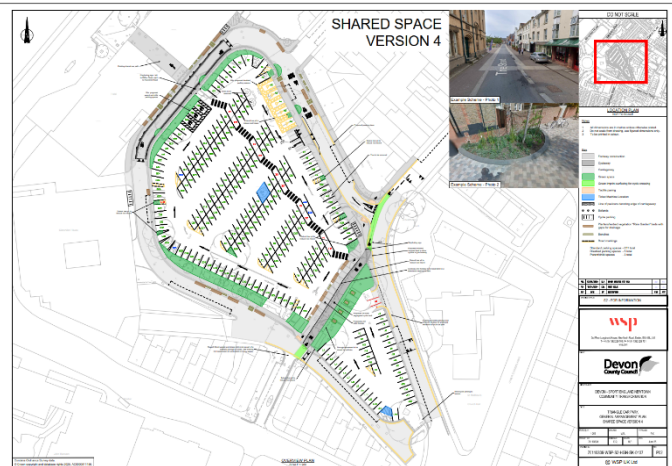
- *Introduction of green space along the footway/cycleway facility - this improvement will complement the widened facilities and aims to create more community ownership by improving the environment and people's proximity to green space.*
- *Designated walkway through the car park - north to south - this facility will help to aide the movement of walkers and wheelers through the car park, not only accessing vehicles but also moving across this space and reducing conflict with vehicles.*
- *Introduction of 5 No. Disabled parking spaces - this will provide a designated facility for users with the greatest need. The positioning of these towards the top of the car park has been deliberately chosen to provide the easiest route through to SSP and the wider City Centre.*
- *Introduction of 3 No. Parent and child spaces - these will assist drivers by providing easier places to park for parents accessing the City Centre with their children.*
- *Relocation of the exit/entry to the main car park - this will provide greater stacking capacity away from the Russell Street junction thus easing movements around and through the car park.*
- *Full separation of the two car park elements - this will reduce conflict with pedestrians but will also provide more clarity around land usage, potentially leading to greater utilisation of the spaces through the future changes in parking behaviours.*

There is general support for the design of the car park and the proposed walking routes within.

The scheme design has been reviewed in line with the concerns raised.

Due to the constraints of the scheme environment and the requirement to deliver provision for all stakeholders the provision of the new facility will be slightly below national cycling standards guidance. Acceptance of this allows for greater continuity of the route as a whole.

*Sept 24 Cost Estimate - £125,765.20*



**FIGURE 3 - SCHEME IMAGE OF TRIANGLE CAR PARK ELEMENT**

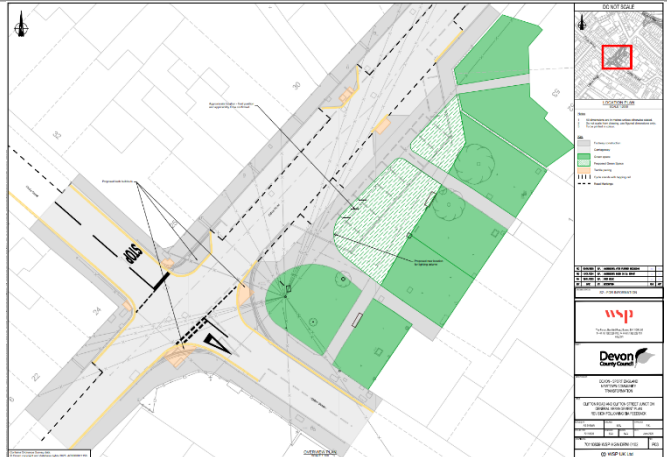
### Clifton Road and Clifton Street Junction – Section 3

There is general support for the Clifton Road – Clifton Street element of the scheme with option 2 (parallel layout) being the preferred option of respondents.

This section has been revised slightly to inset the first parking space on the east side beyond the junction with Clifton Street.

Further discussions are ongoing with local stakeholders regarding the provision of a loading bay within the scheme design.

*Sept 24 Cost Estimate -  
£63,351.20*



**FIGURE 4 - SCHEME IMAGE OF CLIFTON ROAD/CLIFTON STREET JUNCTION – OPTION 2 - ELEMENT**

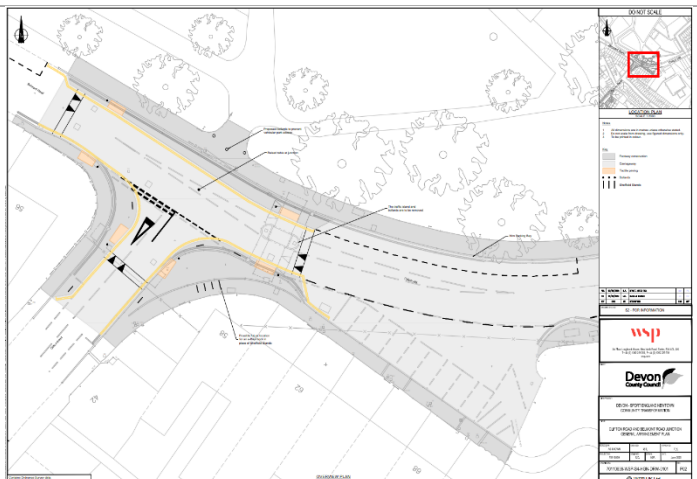
### Clifton Road and Belmont Road Junction – Section 4

There is general support for this element of the scheme with respondents raising concerns regarding the ability of people to cross at the junction and efficacy of the raised table in slowing vehicle speeds.

The scheme design has been reviewed in line with the suggestions and comments received.

The alignment of the designated crossing points has been adjusted, and the efficacy of the raised table has been reviewed.

*Sept 24 Cost Estimate -  
£75,189.40*



**FIGURE 5 - SCHEME IMAGE OF CLIFTON ROAD / BELMONT ROAD**

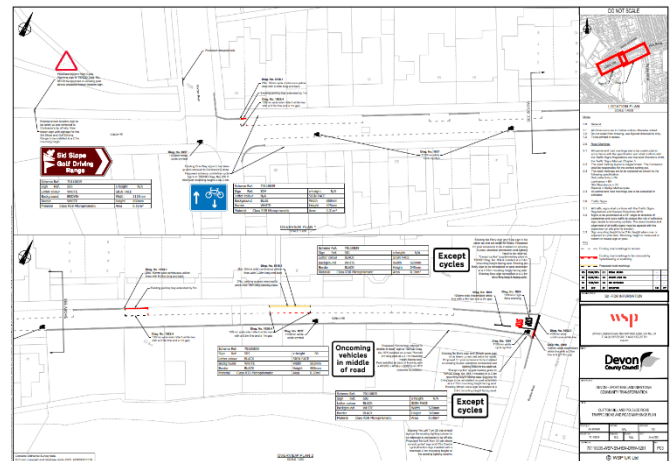
### Clifton Hill – Section 5

There is support for this element of the scheme within the received responses. However, this element received a proportion of comments regarding cyclists' safety within the proposed scheme.

The scheme design and Road Safety Audit have been reviewed in line with the concerns raised.

Additional road markings and signage will be put in place to emphasize the behaviour and activities that will be enabled by the scheme.

*Sept 24 Cost Estimate - £5,170.00*



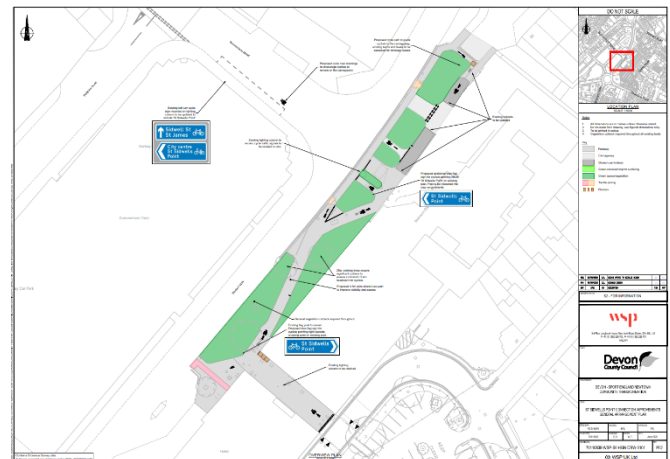
**FIGURE 6 - SCHEME IMAGE OF CLIFTON HILL ELEMENT**

### Western Way – Section 6

The Western Way element of the scheme received general support overall. However, this element received the largest number of suggestions for alterations. It is therefore being recommended that this element of the scheme is reduced in scope. This will allow the suggestions/considerations to be fully reviewed and provide time for possible inclusion with other highway changes, resulting from other developments, within this area.

Therefore, this section has been reviewed and scaled back to ensure that it remains included but does not undertake work that will be abortive. The section will be progressed with vegetation clearance and signing / lining works only.

*June 25 Cost Estimate - £7,500.00*



**FIGURE 7 - SCHEME IMAGE OF REDUCED WESTERN WAY ELEMENT**

Therefore, this section has been reviewed and scaled back to ensure that it remains included but does not undertake work that will be abortive. The section will be progressed with vegetation clearance and signing / lining works only.

## 8.4 Proposed procurement and works

The current schedule of approvals and scheme programme are as follows:

- Report to ECC Executive – 8<sup>th</sup> July 2025
- Report for decision to deliver the scheme to DCC HATOC – 15<sup>th</sup> July
- Proceed to Procurement following HATOC decision – e/o July 2025
- Appointment of contractor – e/o September 2025

- Construction Programme – November 25 – May 2026

The programme of construction will be procured and managed by Devon County Council

There are conversations with officers of the Commercial Assets and Car Parks Operations Team to propose the construction programme as to limit the impact of inconvenience of the Triangle Car Park works during the busy Christmas shopping period

## 8.5 Programme Management and Budget

The Programme has been developed within the Live and Move programme team in the Council. The Project Manager is seconded in from Devon County Council through their consultant framework.

The Project Manager reports into the Live and Move team through Place Partnership Manager, with regular briefings and updates to Senior responsible officer, Strategic Director for Place.

The Programme is fully funded by Sport England and the Council has commissioned Devon County Council to deliver this active travel infrastructure scheme as part of the work.

The budget is as below, and there is currently a £27,115 contingency underspend for the construction programme

Scheme 1	£75,788.90
	£125,765.2
Scheme 2	0
Scheme 3	£63,351.20
Scheme 4	£75,189.40
Scheme 5	£5,170.00
Scheme 6	£7,500.00
	<b>£352,764.7</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>£379,880.0</b>
<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>CONTINGEN</b>	
<b>CY</b>	<b>£27,115.30</b>

## 9. How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Plan?

This scheme contributes towards the People priority of the Corporate Plan by:

- Increasing the number of residents walking and cycling
- Improving wellbeing through more walking and cycling

- Connecting communities by improved access to walking and cycling infrastructure in Newtown

This scheme contributes towards the Place priority of the Corporate Plan by:

- Creating a safer place and neighbourhood through improved walking and cycling infrastructure
- Learning from the Active Design and Safety Inclusion Assessment approach to improve future walking and cycling schemes in the city

This scheme also contributes towards sustainability, by contributing towards the Net Zero 2030 ambition. By improving walking and cycling infrastructure the number of car trips and lengths of journeys will be reduced.

## **10. What risks are there and how can they be reduced?**

### **Key Risks**

- Increased costs because of final programme design amends following consultation / member engagement – MITIGATION: Contingency in place
- Approvals process delays implementation – MITIGATION: clear decision-making process through SMB, members, Executive and DCC HATOC
- Programme implementation – MITIGATION: DCC led procurement process within highways framework; clear communication with Car Parks Operations team to avoid clashes with busy Christmas period; regular and consistent community and stakeholder engagement and communication

## **11. Equality Act 2010 (The Act)**

11.1 Under the Act's Public Sector Equalities Duty, decision makers are required to consider 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.

11.2 In order to comply with the general duty authorities must assess the impact on equality of decisions, policies and practices. These duties do not prevent the authority from reducing services where necessary, but they offer a way of developing proposals that consider the impacts on all members of the community.

11.3 In making decisions the authority must take into account the potential impact of that decision in relation to age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), sex and gender, gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women and

new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage and civil partnership status in coming to a decision.

11.4 In recommending this proposal potential impact has been identified on people with protected characteristics as determined by the Act and an Equalities Impact Assessment has been included in the background papers for Member's attention.

## **12. Carbon Footprint (Environmental) Implications:**

12.1 The recommendations in this report will help achieve impact on delivering our carbon reduction target:

- By reducing car usage
- By increasing walking and cycling
- By providing more convenient access for disabled and parent car users, thus reducing length of trips
- By increasing access to green space in the neighbourhood

## **13. Are there any other options?**

13.1 The council could:

- Not approve the scheme and the status quo would remain
- Determine which elements of the scheme should progress rather than the scheme as a whole
- Explore additional resources to enhance the scheme on a larger scale

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Author: James Bogue, Place Partnership Manager

## **Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1972 (as amended)**

Background papers used in compiling this report:-

None

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