

City of York Council
Equalities Impact Assessment

Who is submitting the proposal?

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| Directorate: | Transport, Highways and Environment | | |
| Service Area: | Transport | | |
| Name of the proposal : | Shaping an Accessible city Centre – recommendations by MIMA access consultants | | |
| Lead officer: | James Gilchrist, Director of Transport, Highways and Environment | | |
| Date assessment completed: | Ongoing – subject to further development | | |
| Names of those who contributed to the assessment (this has been developed over several months): | | | |
| Name | Job title | Organisation | Area of expertise |
| Claire Foale | AD Policy and Strategy | CYC | Policy development |
| Sam Blyth | Strategy and Partnerships Manager | CYC | Policy development |
| Laura Williams | AD Communities and Equalities | CYC | Equalities lead |
| Julian Ridge | Head of Transport | CYC | Local Transport Strategy lead |
| Katie Peeke-Vout | Interim Head of Regeneration | CYC | Regeneration |

Step 1 – Aims and intended outcomes

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| 1.1 | What is the purpose of the proposal? Please explain your proposal in Plain English avoiding acronyms and jargon. |
| | The council invited Access Consultants, MIMA, to tell the council how to make the city centre a more accessible and welcoming place. MIMA developed recommendations that this HREIA is considering. |
| 1.2 | Are there any external considerations? (Legislation/government directive/codes of practice etc.) |
| | Accessibility Standards and Guidance (listed in the MIMA report) Martin Higgitt Associates report, 2021 York's Local Transport Strategy (draft) 2024-2040 |

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| 1.3 | Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests? |
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| | <p>External:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disabled residents (with or without a Blue Badge)• Disabled visitors• Carers• City centre businesses and business representatives• Café Licence holders and street traders• City Centre Cyclists• Business representative groups• Disabled community representative groups <p>Internal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Executive member for Transport• Working group, comprised of Transport team, Access team, Regeneration team• Communications team |
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| 1.4 | <p>What results/outcomes do we want to achieve and for whom? This section should explain what outcomes you want to achieve for service users, staff and/or the wider community. Demonstrate how the proposal links to the Council Plan (2019- 2023) and other corporate strategies and plans.</p> |
| | <p>The council needed an independent report from Access Consultants that listened and learned to the disabled community to advise the council how best ‘Shape a more Accessible City Centre’ (one of the Council Plan actions), following removing the restrictions to Blue Badge Holders to access some of the pedestrianised streets. This report would inform the Local Transport Strategy and the City Centre spatial plan, provide a number of “quick wins” and contribute to decisions about the Movement and Place Plan. Actions will be documented in the refreshed Access Plan for the city.</p> <p>This EIA addresses the recommendations only from MIMA, and not the subsequent implementation plan.</p> <p>Equalities and Human Rights</p> <p>MIMA were invited to tell the council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to improve access to the city centre, exploring different issues and making recommendations • The impact of these different options on different groups who visit and work in the city centre • The Human Rights impacts of the recommendations, by working in close partnership with the Centre for Applied Human Rights throughout the consultation stages <p>In addition, this EIA explores the Equalities and human rights Impacts of the recommendations on all protected communities and businesses.</p> <p>Affordability</p> <p>The MIMA recommendations are designed to ensure there is a blend of transport and information options that mean an individual’s financial circumstance will not impact their decision to move through the city centre.</p> |

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| | <p>Climate The MIMA recommendations do not impact climate with the access options not specifying there energy options.</p> <p>Health By Shaping a more Accessible City Centre, there will be greater opportunity for everyone to enjoy and connect with the city, improving mental health and wellbeing as everyone feels valued and respected.</p> |
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Step 2 – Gathering the information and feedback

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| 2.1 | What sources of data, evidence and consultation feedback do we have to help us understand the impact of the proposal on equality rights and human rights? Please consider a range of sources, including: consultation exercises, surveys, feedback from staff, stakeholders, participants, research reports, the views of equality groups, as well your own experience of working in this area etc. | |
| | Source of data/supporting evidence | Reason for using |
| | MIMA evidence (set out in the report) | MIMA have facilitated and in-depth consultation that brings together feedback from multiple sources, including the workshops held by the Council in December 2023, feedback from Our Big Transport Conversation, feedback from MIMA facilitated workshops throughout March and May 2024. |
| | Our Big Conversation | Feedback from Our Big Conversation which has taken place over the last two years has provided rich insight into how people use the city centre. |
| | MyCityCentre consultation | Feedback from MyCityCentre specifically identifies issues raised by different groups who use the city centre. |
| | Business representatives | Business representative groups raised issues following the reinstatement of Blue Badge access to the city centre |

Step 3 – Gaps in data and knowledge

EIA MIMA recommendations

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| 3.1 | What are the main gaps in information and understanding of the impact of your proposal? Please indicate how any gaps will be dealt with. | | |
| Gaps in data or knowledge | | Action to deal with this | |
| How to support city centre businesses growth and sustainability plans following restrictions in café licencing and the impact this will have | | Continue consultation throughout development of the City Centre Spatial Plan | |
| How to provide additional parking and/or cycle routes through the city centre and the impact this will have | | Continue consultation throughout development of the City Centre Spatial Plan | |

Step 4 – Analysing the impacts or effects.

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| 4.1 | Please consider what the evidence tells you about the likely impact (positive or negative) on people sharing a protected characteristic, i.e. how significant could the impacts be if we did not make any adjustments? Remember the duty is also positive – so please identify where the proposal offers opportunities to promote equality and/or foster good relations. | | | |
| Equality Groups and Human Rights. | Key Findings/Impacts | Positive (+) | Negative (-) | Neutral (0) |
| | | | | High (H) Medium (M) Low (L) |
| Age | The online information recommendation does not recognise the broader information needs of people who are digitally excluded. Younger children could be at a disadvantage as they will not be expecting cars or cyclists where previously there haven't been any, preventing their access to foot streets that had previously been traffic free. | - | - | M |
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| | <p>Although many of the recommendations will support anyone needing mobility support, there could be an impact on older people with sensory impairment who are unable to safely respond to the increase in traffic in the city centre. Younger children could also be at a disadvantage as they could be at risk of traffic accidents as will not be expecting cars where previously there haven't been any.</p> | | |
| Disability | <p>Online information is not always accessible - providing information about how the city centre is accessible must be accessible and meet common accessibility standards to allow everyone to access it.</p> <p>Feedback suggests that the disabled community value café licences and resting/eating outside. If space allows, outdoor café licences are accessible and easy to enjoy. The restrictions to café licences will reduce the availability of outdoor eating space for everyone, including the disabled community.</p> <p>feedback from the disabled community has informed the recommendations. The community have confirmed the recommendations will improve their health and wellbeing as well as increase social connections and economic activity, such as enjoying outside café space.</p> | - | H |
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| Gender | | | |
| Gender Reassignment | | | |

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| Marriage and civil partnership | | | |
| Pregnancy and maternity | Although many of the recommendations are beneficial for this group (such as increased seating and accessible toilets), people with buggies or prams will need to be mindful of increased traffic and need to cross foot streets quickly and safely. | - | M |
| Race | | | |
| Religion and belief | | | |
| Sexual orientation | | | |
| Other Socio-economic groups including : | Could other socio-economic groups be affected e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes? | | |
| Carer | Although many of the recommendations are beneficial for this group, carers will need to be aware of their role supporting the disabled person access the city centre, areas to drop-off and pick-up and where there are access arrangements that could support them. | - | M |
| Low income groups | | | |
| Veterans, Armed Forces Community | | | |
| Other | Businesses – although the increase in disabled people able to shop and linger in the city centre could be economically beneficial, restricting café licences will have a detrimental impact on businesses, many already struggling. | - | H |

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| | <p>Everyone – people’s ability to freely move through the city will be more managed to allow access to all community groups, meaning some areas that were car-free before, now have traffic and parking. The recommendation to consider introducing cycling into the city centre could impact residents and visitors ability to safely move through the city.</p> | - | H |
| Impact on human rights: | | | |
| List any human rights impacted. | <p>Right to education: Everyone – the recommendations cover improved information – both online and an information hub, however many people are digitally excluded and will not get the information where and when they need it.</p> <p>Right to Life: balancing the needs of the different groups of people who use, work, visit and enjoy the city centre and its amenities remains a challenge, with many issues highlighted throughout the consultation</p> <p>Right to freedom of expression: the consultation was designed to enable as many voices to be heard as possible. This resulted in opposing views and differences of opinion which has created a tension inherent in spatial recommendations of a small and constrained space</p> | | |

Step 5 - Mitigating adverse impacts and maximising positive impacts

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| 5.1 | Based on your findings, explain ways you plan to mitigate any unlawful prohibited conduct or unwanted adverse impact. Where positive impacts have been identified, what is been done to optimise opportunities to advance equality or foster good relations? |
| <p>Explore initiation of a project to improve information about how this city centre is more welcoming and inclusive (more than Blue Badge parking information) to engage as many people as possible, targeting information to the identified groups above.</p> <p>Explore street signage to improve access to information.</p> <p>Continue to build relationships with community groups and businesses throughout development of the City Centre Spatial plan.</p> <p>The consultation to reverse the Blue Badge restrictions in the city centre, and subsequent MIMA workshops has helped to demonstrate to the disabled community the value the council place on them and their right to enjoy and linger in the city centre. It is now critical this continues throughout development of the schemes under the Local Transport Strategy, Movement and Place Plan and City Centre Spatial Plan, together with the refreshed Access Plan 2.</p> | |

Step 6 – Recommendations and conclusions of the assessment

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| 6.1 | <p>Having considered the potential or actual impacts you should be in a position to make an informed judgement on what should be done. In all cases, document your reasoning that justifies your decision. There are four main options you can take:</p> | |
| Option selected | Conclusions/justification | |
| Executive to continue to be invited to accept the recommendations | The additional work / consultation identified above is designed to support the adverse impact of the recommendations. | |

Step 7 – Summary of agreed actions resulting from the assessment

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| 7.1 | <p>What action, by whom, will be undertaken as a result of the impact assessment.</p> | | |
| Impact/issue | Action to be taken | Person responsible | Timescale |
| Comprehensive and accessible information | Review, refresh and improve all information about how the city centre is accessible, (not just Blue Badge parking) | Head of Comms | November 2024 |
| City Centre Spatial Plan | Review recommendations and impact on groups identified above to mitigate or address concerns raised | Director of City Developments | TBC |

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| Access Plan 2 | Include reviewing street furniture, placement and messaging to address impacts above | Director of Transport, Highways and Environment | September 2024 |
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Step 8 - Monitor, review and improve

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| 8. 1 | <p>How will the impact of your proposal be monitored and improved upon going forward? Consider how will you identify the impact of activities on protected characteristics and other marginalised groups going forward? How will any learning and enhancements be capitalised on and embedded?</p> |
| | <p>The council will continue to work closely with the communities affected by changes to the city centre, initially through development of the city centre spatial plan, and then as the Local Transport Strategy Implementation Plan gathers momentum (due for publication later in 2024). This EIA will remain “live” as listening and learning to communities continues to inform mitigations and next steps.</p> |