

Equality Impact Assessment:

Purpose of the Equality Impact Assessment:

The Equality Act 2010 introduced a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requiring public bodies to give due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations

Consideration must be given to the protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act. Assessments should 'consider relevant evidence relating to persons with protected characteristics in relation to assessments of impact'.

The purpose of an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) is to ensure that policies, functions, plans or decisions (hereafter referred to as 'policy') do not create unnecessary barriers for people protected under the Act. Where negative impacts are identified these should be eliminated or minimised, and opportunities for positive impact should be maximised.

Screening is a short exercise to determine if a policy is relevant to equality and whether a full EQIA should be carried out.

Title/description of the policy	Accessing Inverness, Active Travel EqIA
Name of the person(s) carrying out the assessment?	Fiona McInally Neil Young
Service and Department	Transport Planning, D+I
Date of assessment	08.04.19
What are the aims and objectives of the policy/function/strategy?	
<p>Accessing Inverness is an active travel project, currently in concept design, which is looking to increase walking and cycling in Inverness City Centre, in particular around the Railway Station, Bus Station and Academy Street by widening pavement, reducing road width, slowing vehicle traffic and encouraging modal shift. Accessing Inverness aims to ensure that the improvements to the city centre are designed to provide an accessible, inclusive environment that understands and meets the needs of all users.</p> <p>In particular the scheme in this concept stage is looking to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Widen pavements and define areas creating in which rain gardens (suds), cycle parking, seating, and other improvements can be situated without obstructing pedestrian movements.• Physically narrow the carriageway to around 6.5m, while also allowing for two-way traffic flow to continue. Cyclists will cycle on the carriageway, not the footway and detail in future design will ensure that this is clear for all users.• Kerb heights will be reduced to 60mm between kerb and carriageway. Detail on the specific level, type of tactile edgings and associated infrastructure at raised table junctions will be developed further through additional preliminary	

- and detailed design.
- Bus stops will be maintained at their current locations
 - At key junctions, the interchanges will create more compact, low traffic speed junctions which will crucially still be able to cope with current traffic capacity, service goods, buses and loading requirements for the city centre to function.
 - The scheme will take into account the need for greater provision of cycle parking outside key locations and accommodate the needs of cyclists.

Who may be affected by the policy

All users will be affected by the Accessing Inverness project. Pedestrians, including those with mobility requirements, and wheelchair users will benefit from wider pavements, and narrower road junctions to cross between key city centre locations.

Cyclists will benefit from specific design, including slower speeds and narrower road width, which will direct them onto the carriageway in the primary position, and discourage drivers from overtaking.

Drivers will have to drive at slower road speeds and be aware of all other users in the city centre, they will be able to travel through to reach key destinations. The road will accommodate buses, services, taxis and loading. Traffic modelling in future preliminary work will help understand journey times and the complexity of where signalised crossings will help people to cross the road and enable traffic to flow effectively.

How have stakeholders been involved in the development of the policy?

The following stakeholders have been actively engaged through the initial concept designs:

Date	Venue	Meeting/workshop
03.10.2107	BID office	Meeting with BID manager
09.11.2017	On site at Eastgate	9th Nov, BID/Eastgate meetings regarding concerns around loading bays and servicing in city centre.
11.12.2017	Spectrum Centre	Workshop 1 with active travel stakeholders [attended by representatives from: Highland Cycle Campaign, Living Streets, Sustrans Rangers, NHS

		Highland active travel officers, other local stakeholders who have since formed the campaign group Own Your Streets Inverness.]
12.12.2107	Eden Court	Workshop 1 with Highland disability groups [attended by representatives from: Inverness Access Panel; MS Society; Highland Visually Impaired Working Age Group; Highland & Islands Autism Society; Sight Action; Scottish War Blinded; Signpost TSI; Highland Sensory Project; Ross and Cromarty Disabled Access Group; Guide Dogs Scotland; Inclusion Scotland; and Highland Cycle Campaign]
25.01.2018	HITRANS office	Workshop with bus operators D+E coaches, the afterwards with Stagecoach.
25.01.2018	Eastgate board room	Presentation to BID Board.
13.03.2108	Glasgow, MM offices	Meeting with Mott Macdonald, Abellio Scotrail consultants for Inverness Rail Station Improvement project
25.04.2108	THC	Abellio Scotrail/HITRANS/THC meeting
12.06.2018	HITRANS office	Meeting with Sustrans Scotland (grant funders)
13.06.2108	Spectrum Centre	Workshop 2 with active travel stakeholders [attended by members of Highland Cycle Campaign, Living Streets Scotland, Sustrans, Own Your Streets Inverness, NHS Highland; and

		Cycling UK]
13.06.2108	Spectrum Centre	Workshop 2 with Highland disability groups [attended by representatives from: RNIB Scotland; Ross and Cromarty Disabled Access Group; Guide Dogs Scotland; Inverness Access Panel; Highland Cycle Campaign; and Living Streets. Vice Provost Cllr McAllister was also in attendance.]
13.06.2108	Spectrum Centre	Workshop with bus operators
14.06.2108	Mercure Hotel	Presentation to BID Breakfast
30.11.2108	BID office and M+S	Site visit with BID Manager and Marks and Spencer representative
30.11.2108	Victorian Market	Public drop-in exhibition
11.01.2019	Eastgate Shopping Centre	Public drop-in exhibition
4.01.2019	Spectrum Centre	Meeting with (and in response to invitation from) Making Inverness Streets Ahead [attended by representatives from; RNIB; Inverness Access Panel/Highland Cycle campaign; Nairn Access Panel/Guide Dogs Scotland; Highland & Islands Autism Society; Living Streets Inverness; Inverness Access Panel; Highland Visually Impaired Working Age Group; and Highland Senior Citizens Network]

<i>Which parts of the public sector duty is the policy relevant to?</i>	
1. Eliminate unlawful discrimination	
2. Advance equality	
3. Promote good relations	

Screening: Which of the protected characteristics is the policy relevant to?
Tick and briefly describe any likely equalities impact (positive/negative/neutral).

Characteristic	Positive	Negative	Neutral	comments
Gender	√			There is likely to be a positive impact on gender, especially for those walking or cycling alone , as the improved streetscape, slower traffic speeds and wider pavements will provide an enhanced feeling of safety.
Age	√			There is likely to be a positive impact on people of all ages in regard to an improved design and accessibility to Inverness City Centre.
Disability	√	√		Those with mobility impaired disabilities will find that they are positively impacted through the redesign of Academy Street, Farraline Park, Strothers Lane and Falcon Square. low kerb heights, removal of barriers and clutter, well maintained and even surfaces will ensure that those with mobility impairment find the city centre to be more accessible and inclusive than at present. Concerns have been raised around the impact of initial

				<p>proposals on people affected by sight loss. Locations of signalised crossings have still to be determined, but the narrower road crossing width will make these easier to use.</p> <p>In addition the current levels of disabled parking spaces will be maintained within the city centre, locations to be confirmed through further design works.</p>
Religion or Belief			√	No impacts identified
Race			√	No impacts identified
Sexual Orientation			√	No impacts identified
Gender reassignment			√	No impacts identified
Pregnancy/maternity	√			There is likely to be a positive impact on pregnancy and those on maternity as the wider pavements and narrower road crossings will make it easier to walk down the street, and to gain access into the city centre.
Marriage and Civil Partnership*			√	No impacts identified.

*applies only to Employment and the duty to give regard to the elimination of discrimination

Recommend this policy for full Equality Impact Assessment?

Yes

If the answer is "Yes", continue to the next section. If the answer is "No", please give brief reasons here.

Equality impact Assessment:

Evidence and consultation

What existing sources of information have you gathered to help identify how people covered by the protected characteristics may be affected by this policy or service? E.g Consultations, national or local data and/or research, complaints or customer feedback. Are there gaps in available data?

HITRANS and Highland Council officers worked with Sustrans Scotland to ensure that best practice was followed in terms of design for active travel, which takes into account, while ensuring the street improvements would be of benefit for those with protected characteristics. In particular the following data and best practice was followed:

- 2011 census data
- Annual traffic counts, Academy Street
- Ped/cycle count data across Inverness
- Active travel cordon count 2017
- Scottish Household Survey walking/cycle to school data Highland
- Sustrans Hands up survey
- Sustrans Inverness Travel Behaviour Survey 2018.

Research and best practice:

- Designing streets (Scottish Government, 2010)
- SCOTS National Roads Development Guide (Scottish Government, 2014)
- Roads for ALL, Good Practice Guide for Transport (Transport Scotland, 2013)
- Inclusive mobility , (Department for Transport , 2005)
- Lord Holmes Report on Shared Space
- Site visit to Altrincham, Greater Manchester, where urban realm projects have been implemented. Also consultant led focus on other schemes such as Poynton and several London examples.
- Cycling Infrastructure Design: Inverness CL PLUS, Wittenveen +Bod guidance for scheme development.

The Accessing Inverness consultation was launched on 30 November 2018 with a public drop-in exhibition at the Victorian Market attended by approximately 150 people.

The online consultation ran for eight weeks from 6 December 2018 to 1 February 2019 during which the document was available to view and comment on through the Council's consultation portal consult.highland.gov.uk. Feedback was invited on outline designs for three key areas:

- Academy Street;
- Farraline Park, and the link between Rose Street and the Railway Station entrance;
- Falcon Square and Crown Road junction.

A second public exhibition took place at Eastgate Shopping Centre on 11 January where Council and HITRANS representatives were available to answer questions on proposed layouts and options. It is estimated that roughly 250 people viewed this exhibition. An 'on the day' poll was used to gather immediate feedback on the outline designs, in recognition that not everyone would register for the online consultation. On the whole feedback on the day was very supportive of the scheme proposals. Members of the public were either given the option to take a leaflet away with consultation responses, of which over 150 were distributed, or to use a second option of sticky dots which members of the public could place on 4 key questions to gather support for the full scheme, or the various options at Academy Street, Falcon Square and Strothers Lane areas. Appendix 3 presents results of the "on the day poll".

The consultation was widely publicised in advance and throughout the consultation process by:

- Emails to over 330 stakeholders, agencies and businesses including disability groups, active travel groups, Community Councils, Inverness BID, the Inverness Design Review Panel, and individuals registered on the consultation portal who have expressed an interest in the Inner Moray Firth Area;
- A series of promoted targeted posts on social media, and press releases.

Impact

a) Describe any evidence of, or potential for, negative impact, and/or

b) Does the policy contribute positively to the promotion of equality on any particular group

Gender:	There is likely to be a positive impact on gender, especially for those walking or cycling alone, as the improved streetscape, slower traffic speeds and wider pavements will provide an enhanced feeling of safety.
Age:	There is likely to be a positive impact on people of all ages in regard to an improved design and accessibility to Inverness City Centre.
Disability:	As above, those with mobility impaired disabilities will find that they are positively impacted through the redesign of Academy Street, Farraline Park, Strothers Lane and Falcon Square. low kerb heights, removal of barriers and clutter, well maintained and even surfaces will ensure that

	<p>those with mobility impairments find the city centre to be more accessible and inclusive than at present.</p> <p>Those with visual impairments have understandably raised concerns that schemes of his nature can have negative implications. Concerns have been raised in particular about the original proposals for crossings. Locations of signalised crossings have still to be determined, but the narrower road crossing width will make these easier to use.</p> <p>In addition the current levels of disabled parking spaces will be maintained within the city centre, locations to be confirmed through further design works.</p> <p>It is therefore important that the following is understood:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Due to the inclusion of kerbs, tactile/, materials with both a textural and tonal contract and introduction of traditional controlled crossing (modelling and further stakeholder engagement required to determine key locations) the scheme in Accessing Inverness, and particularly on Academy Street is not ‘shared space’ . It is a public realm improvement scheme, to increase active travel, and aimed at providing a better balance in the street for people to use the space. 2. Going forward to future preliminary design and detailed design, if members agree for officer to proceed with funding, we will ensure to use the analysis of the 8-week public consultation on the scheme, along with stakeholder involvement from those with protected characteristics and active travel. We will also utilise expert guidance from key national organisations such as Living Streets, Sustrans Scotland and design consultants with knowledge in delivering similar schemes in Scotland.
Religion or belief:	No impacts identified
Race:	No impacts identified
Sexual Orientation:	No impacts identified

Gender reassignment:	No impacts identified
Pregnancy/maternity:	There is likely to be a positive impact on pregnancy and those on maternity as the wider pavements and narrower road crossings will make it easier to walk down the street, and to gain access into the city centre.
Marriage and civil partnership:	No impacts identified
Justification	
If negative impact is identified, can this be justified?	<p>Prior to the public engagement, and feedback during consultation has outlined concerns from stakeholders that identified negative impacts of the current concepts designs, with particular regard to the type of crossing points used, and perception of 'shared space'.</p> <p>This has been recognised, and going forward towards preliminary design, signalised crossings will be looked at through traffic modelling and engagement with stakeholders to ensure that these can be incorporated into the scheme so that all users can cross the street safely. The detail with regarding to kerb height was changed to 60mm after feedback with the Inverness Access Panel and RNIB. Additionally the detail regarding level surfaces for crossings requires further study to ensure it is fit for all users.</p>
Mitigation	
Can the potential for negative impact on particular groups be removed or minimised?	Yes, officers have taken on board feedback on crossing points, materials, kerb heights and surfacing, and placement of key additional infrastructure such as lighting, cycle parking , raingardens/SUDS. This will inform the next stage of design which will mitigate any negative impacts previously identified.
Actions	
Are there actions identified to advance or promote equality, or to mitigate potentially negative impact? Please detail or attach an action plan.	
<p>Further preliminary design, traffic modelling, and stakeholder engagement is required, which officers are seeking permission to apply to Sustrans Scotland for 100% of costs, via their 'Places for Everyone' fund (previously community links).</p> <p>Going forward, if the scheme is successful in gaining funding for futher preliminary design and detailed design we will look to establish a specific EqIA working group for</p>	

active travel projects specifically in Inverness with stakeholders including those with protected characteristics, and also including active travel , local transport operators and other key stakeholders to ensure that robust discussion can take place to look at design options and considerations for everyone.

Please provide details of arrangements to monitor and review the policy and any associated actions.

This would form part of the work undertaken by the working group on Accessing Inverness, and the EqIA would be updated at each design phase to recognise changes and consultation which has taken place.

Further options for monitoring the scheme if implemented would be agreed upon during further design stages.

Full impact assessments require to be published, please state where the EQIA will be published:

This will be published, once approved, on both the HITRANS and Highland Council websites.

Equality Impact Assessment Sign off: For completion by Director or Head of Service

1. Please check if you are satisfied that the following elements of the EQIA have been considered:

- √ Gathering information
- √ Consultation and involvement
- √ Assessing impact for all protected characteristics
- √ Mitigating actions identified (if required)
- √ Opportunity to promote equality
- √ Arrangements to monitor and review
- √ Publication arrangements

2. a) Are you prepared to sign off the EQIA? YES NO

b) If "NO" provide details of why and next steps

Name:

Position:

Date:

For publication and monitoring, please send a copy of the completed EQIA to: equal.opportunities@highland.gov.uk or contact the Policy Team for support on tel 01463 702094.