

Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration



As a public authority we need to ensure that all our strategies, policies, service and functions, both current and proposed have given proper consideration to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration. In all appropriate instances we will need to carry out an equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment.

This form:

- can be used to prompt discussion when carrying out your impact assessment
- should be completed either during the assessment process or following completion of the assessment
- should include a brief explanation where a section is not applicable

Directorate: City Development	Service area: Highways and Transportation
Lead person: Kasia Speakman	Contact number:
Date of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment:	

1. Title: City Centre Gateways – Corn Exchange

Is this a:

Strategy /Policy
 Service / Function
 Other

If other, please specify

Highway Scheme

2. Members of the assessment team:

Name	Organisation	Role on assessment team e.g. service user, manager of service, specialist
Kasia Speakman	Senior Transport Planner	Active travel and sustainable transport lead
David Ellis	Team Leader Transport Planning (Projects)	Project Manager
Bairbre McKendrick	Access Officer	Access Specialist
Geoff Turnbull	Senior Policy and Performance Officer	Equality Lead
Gwyn Owen	Principal Transport Planner	Project Manager

3. Summary of strategy, policy, service or function that was assessed:

The Corn Exchange Gateway scheme is part of the LPTIP programme. The programme was created in response to the DfT's decision not to fund a NGT trolleybus project in Leeds, but instead offer £197,000,000 funding to substantially improve public transport offer in the city. The scheme centres on the junction of Call Lane, Kirkgate, Vicar Lane, New Market Street and Duncan Street, but also stretched the length of New York, and York Street to the Bus station, and in the other direction, along Duncan Street, south on Lower Briggate, across Leeds bridge and onto the environs of the proposed City Park at on Meadow Lane.

The scheme will deliver a series of improvements to bus infrastructure, public realm, pedestrian infrastructure and cycling infrastructure which will reduce delays, improve bus reliability and improve facilities for bus users. The specific proposals are:

- The creation of a public realm area around the Corn Exchange
- Provision of a far simpler junction arrangement at Kirkgate/New Market Street/Vicar Lane
- Transformation of Meadow Lane from a four lane highway road into a much reduced (two lane for the most part, three towards the Great Wilson Street junction) highway through the emerging city park
- Provision of segregated cycle facilities on Call Lane, Meadow Lane and Lower Briggate
- Footway widening on Duncan Street, Lower Briggate, York Street, Kirkgate and New York Street
- Improving reliability of bus services and bus journey times through the provision of bus gates, restricting access to general traffic during peak periods

4. Scope of the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment (complete - 4a. if you are assessing a strategy, policy or plan and 4b. if you are assessing a service, function or event)

4a. Strategy, policy or plan

(please tick the appropriate box below)

The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes	<input type="checkbox"/>
The vision and themes, objectives or outcomes and the supporting guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific section within the strategy, policy or plan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please provide detail:

The Corn Exchange Gateway Scheme aims to transform bus travel in the city centre and to create a high quality environment for all users. However, this will necessitate changes to how the highway is used and managed. It's those changes that are subject to this EDCI assessment.

Specifically, the scheme will involve:

- Changes to general traffic movements, including restrictions on general traffic circulating within, and on the edge of, the 'public transport box'.
- Changes to road layout, including junctions and closure(s) of sections of the highway to motorised vehicles
- Changes to the location and layout of pedestrian crossings
- Provision for cyclists
- Changes to the location of bus stops
- Changes to the provision and the location of Blue Badge parking
- Changes to the provision and the location of taxi ranks

4b. Service, function, event

please tick the appropriate box below

The whole service (including service provision and employment)	<input type="checkbox"/>
A specific part of the service (including service provision or employment or a specific section of the service)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Procuring of a service (by contract or grant) (please see equality assurance in procurement)	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please provide detail:

5. Fact finding – what do we already know

Make a note here of all information you will be using to carry out this assessment. This could include: previous consultation, involvement, research, results from perception surveys, equality monitoring and customer/ staff feedback.

(priority should be given to equality, diversity, cohesion and integration related information)

Following the DfT's announcement of funding for a public transport investment programme in Leeds, the city held a three month Transport Conversation in the Autumn of 2016. This generated 8,169 questionnaire responses, (along with feedback from 100 workshops, meetings and presentations). The results of the Transport Conversation were compiled into a report and show a potential differential impact on women, BAME, older people and

disabled people.

The Leeds Public Transport Investment Programme was developed from the Leeds Transport Conversation and involved extensive engagement with a wide range of groups such as Voluntary Action Leeds, Child Friendly Leeds, BME Hub, Disability Hub, LGBT Hub, Leeds Society for the Deaf and Blind, Physical and Sensory Impairment (PSI) Network, Womens' Live Leeds, Elderly Action groups and various groups representing accessibility and usability.

Leeds Involving People (LIP) are a key partner in ensuring that seldom heard groups are involved in shaping a transport strategy for Leeds that's inclusive and meets the needs of individuals, communities and the city. Through their involvement we have undertaken multiple Seldom Heard Group workshops as part of the overall LPTIP proposals.

Public consultations for the Corn Exchange Gateway scheme took place in Autumn 2019. These involved engagement through the Commonplace platform as well as a series of drop in events in the city centre (the Corn Exchange, the bus station and the Leeds Market). As part of the consultations:

Over 6000 letters were delivered directly to residents who may be affected by changes in the roads and public space. Social media was used extensively to bring awareness of the consultation and link to the online response option. 9000 leaflets, cards and posters were distributed through on street outreach, informing of upcoming changes and directing respondents to on line consultations and drop in events.

Outreach was deployed on buses and at bus stops, including real-time information displays, posters, and cards given out to passengers.

Every business along every route was engaged in person twice, asking about their loading and delivery needs and then giving them leaflets regarding the consultation process.

2264 contributions (comments, agreements and surveys) were made.

Due to the location of the proposals at the heart of the City Centre, they will potentially impact on everybody in Leeds as well as visitors to Leeds. In terms of differential impacts, there are likely to be implications for disabled people, women, children, carers, older people and LGBTQ+ people, the latter due to the specific location of the scheme covering the area of the Freedom Quarter.

Specific impacts have been raised in relation to disability. Comments have highlighted the negative impact of the removal/ re-location of disabled parking bays (Lower Briggate, Central Road), loss of drop off and pick up opportunities, concerns over potentially sharing surfaces with cyclists and 'impact on disabled access', especially around York Street/ New York Street area.

A proportion of comments expressed their concerns over bus route/services: 'Bus stops are not strategically located'. 'Bus users will have further to walk, which leads to concerns for disabled people/those with poor mobility'. The cost of bus fares was also seen as a barrier, as well as their accessibility.

Changes to taxi ranks have been highlighted as an equality and inclusion issue by the Access and Use-ability Group (AUAG) and the Access Committee for Leeds. It is worth

noting that taxi and private hire drivers come disproportionately from BAME backgrounds. The above groups have highlighted specific issues relating to the loss of taxi ranks on Lower Briggate and Duncan Street.

Are there any gaps in equality and diversity information

Please provide detail:

The information used to inform this EDCI was obtained from consultation and engagement, national guidance and standards documents, Combined Authority data and published peer reviewed research as well as stakeholders' interviews. We are satisfied that we have had all the relevant information to give due regard. Throughout this process we have not been made aware of any issues differentially affecting the diverse communities in Leeds.

Action required:

6. Wider involvement – have you involved groups of people who are most likely to be affected or interested

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Seldom-heard and community groups were specifically reached, including: MESMAC, African Rainbow Family, Stonewall, Touchstone, Migration Yorkshire, Path Yorkshire, Leeds Autism Services, Leeds Mencap, People Matter, Better Leeds Communities, GIPSIL, Leeds Mind, Carers Leeds, Action for Blind People, Visually Impaired Social Club, Leep1, Volition, Independence Mobility Shop, Help Mobility. Meetings with businesses, community groups and interest groups to look at their possible direct impact and needs, including groups representing those with disabilities and the Leeds Cycle Consultation Forum.

The Disability Hub and the Access and Use-Ability Group (AUAG) were consulted on 18th of March 2019 in an inclusive presentation and joint site visits to illustrate proposed changes. A presentation was also given to this group as part of the AUAG meeting on 23rd of October 2019.

Representatives from the Access and Use-ability Group and the Leeds Disabled People's Organisation (LDPO) have fed directly to public realm proposals for the Corn Exchange area.

The proposals affect a number of businesses on Call Lane and on Lower Briggate. Many of the Lower Briggate businesses serve in particular the LGBT community as part of the city's Freedom Quarter. As part of the consultation process, specific engagement took place with representatives of the LGBT Business Alliance and all four LGBT champions have been involved. Copies of the proposed layout were given to all businesses prior to the opening of public consultations and a Freedom Quarter walk and talk through the proposals was also organised.

The Access and Use-ability Group are a pan-disability group that represents peer-led grass roots disabled people's organisations that include the National Federation for the Blind, Access Committee for Leeds, Accessible Leeds, the Deaf Blind Forum; it also includes the BAME Hub and the Age Hub reps.

The group were involved in determining the internal design of the new buses being purchased by operators as part of the public transport improvements programme. Members of the group provided feedback on the design of the wheelchair space and access to the space, on the internal colour scheme, including the need for contrasting colour on handrails, and on the on-board audible information system being piloted. They also helped inform the provision of real time information in a visual and audible format at bus stops on key public transport corridors and the design of the new bus stop flag.

The Access and Use-ability group have also had an opportunity to review and to comment on a range of materials that were going to be used for the landscaping of the City Centre Gateways. These included pavements, drainage features, crossings, kerbs and cycle tracks, laid out in an interactive display.

Meetings were held with the representatives of the taxi trade and the trade unions (Unite) in respect to proposed changes to taxi ranks; these involved AUAG representatives as well.

Action required:

7. Who may be affected by this activity?

please tick all relevant and significant equality characteristics, stakeholders and barriers that apply to your strategy, policy, service or function

Equality characteristics

Age

Carers

Disability

Gender reassignment

Race

Religion
or Belief

Sex (male or female)

Sexual orientation

Other

(for example – marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, social class, income, unemployment, residential location or family background, education or skills level)

Please specify:		
Stakeholders		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Services users	<input type="checkbox"/> Employees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trade Unions
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Partners	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Suppliers
<input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify		
Potential barriers.		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Built environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Location of premises and services	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information and communication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Customer care	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stereotypes and assumptions	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cost	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation and involvement	
<input type="checkbox"/> specific barriers to the strategy, policy, services or function		
Please specify		

<p>8. Positive and negative impact</p> <p>Think about what you are assessing (scope), the fact finding information, the potential positive and negative impact on equality characteristics, stakeholders and the effect of the barriers</p>
<p>8a. Positive impact:</p> <p>The project is likely to have positive impacts on the following equality characteristics:</p> <p>1. Disability and Age</p> <p>These two characteristics face similar barriers to travel and in the built environment and therefore have been grouped together, as the benefits for both groups tend to overlap. As people age, their mobility can reduce; age can also compound impacts of any disability. Any differential impacts have been highlighted separately.</p> <p>Having a disability significantly increases the probability of travelling by bus (<i>Disabled Peoples Travel Behaviour and Attitudes to Travel, 2017</i>). In Leeds, some 4 million bus journeys were made last year by disabled concessionary pass holders, and 9.5 million</p>

journeys were made by senior concessionary pass holders (WYCA data). Disabled people are more likely to travel to work by bus (40%), less likely to agree that the city centre (in its current shape) is pedestrian friendly (65%) and less likely to agree that transport links to city centre are good (42%) – compared to non-disabled respondents in the Leeds Transport Conversation. For some disabled people, accessibility of a facility or attraction is dictated by the fact of it being positioned on, or close to, a bus route.

98% of buses in England in 2016/17 were compliant with the Public Service Vehicle Accessibility Regulations, up from 28% in 2004/05. Bus operators in Leeds have invested in new, accessible vehicles, with improved wheelchair access and audible information on board. Disabled people are more socio-economically disadvantaged and therefore more reliant on public transport. Some disabled people would not be able to drive.

Disabled people and older people are likely to benefit from general improvements to bus journey times and reliability. For some older people, the (potential) length of the bus journey and access to toilet facilities are a major factor in making a decision over whether to travel, and how to travel. The impact of poor bus service reliability can also have a disproportionate effect on disabled people due to additional discomfort, fatigue, pain and the need to rest, or take medication. Poor reliability of public transport can lead to missed or cancelled health appointments. Disabled bus users have to do a greater amount of pre-planning for their journey and needing to build in extra time into their journey to compensate for poor reliability of bus services has a disproportionate impact on this user group.

Improved bus stop infrastructure will offer visual and audible real time information (a major benefit to blind and partially sighted people for stops serving multiple routes) and improved waiting environment. Provision of bus lay-bys will ensure buses can dock properly at stops, unhindered by other vehicles, and provide more seamless boarding for wheelchair users and anyone with reduced mobility, as the vehicle is able to 'kneel' to the kerb. Provision of additional bus stops, closer to the core of the City Centre on Lower Briggate, will also have positive impact on disabled people and older people, particularly those with a mobility impairment, as this may reduce walking distances.

Narrow, busy footways, especially around bus stops, are having a disproportionately negative impact on people with disabilities. Sections of York Street and Lower Call Lane are currently inaccessible to some disabled people (complaints and requests for improvements received over the years from members of the public), and very sub-standard for a busy city centre location (where the desirable footway width is 4m). Widened footways are being delivered on Meadow Lane, Call Lane, Lower Briggate, , Duncan Street, Boar Lane, New York Street and York Street as part of the scheme that will improve accessibility to disabled people. A minor change, but one that offers benefits to disabled people and older people, is the merging of the pedestrian 'island' between New York Street and Kirkgate with the existing footway – this section previously lacked any form of crossing due to reduced sight lines and this was highlighted by users as problematic.

Another positive impact on the above equality characteristics are the changes to crossings. Older people and their organisations have highlighted concerns over the timing of pedestrian crossings, anxiety over crossing over a long distance over a wide, multi-lane carriageway or junction, especially where traffic is busy. Complex layouts of crossings, requiring negotiating an island or changes in direction can present a barrier to blind and partially sighted people, and multiple stages of pedestrian crossings, where there is no 'all

green' phase for pedestrians, mean that crossings cannot have an audible signal.

Narrow islands surrounded by guardrail, such as those on Boar Lane, present a barrier to mobility scooter users, some wheelchair users and to blind and visually impaired people walking with a sighted companion; this is exacerbated in busy locations where groups of pedestrians will be crossing at the same time.

The project will simplify the junction of Meadow Lane, Hunslet Road, Dock Street and Water Lane, reducing the number of roads to cross. It will provide a single stage crossing of Meadow Lane over a narrowed carriageway width. Similarly, the closure of a section Upper Call Lane to traffic will remove a central island making it possible to cross from the Corn Exchange to Duncan Street/New Market Street in a single stage and over a reduced distance. Additional pedestrian crossing will be provided at Bridge End. An existing pedestrian crossing outside the bus station is being re-located slightly to better serve the pedestrian desire line, from inbound bus stops to the bus and coach station. Crossings over Boar Lane will become a single-stage crossing. All of these changes will enhance the usability and accessibility of pedestrian crossings.

Substantial refurbishment of the pavements will provide new, accessible, even surfaces, which will benefit white cane users, wheelchair and mobility scooter users and anyone with walking difficulties as they will minimise trip hazards, pain and discomfort experienced by some wheelchair users or white cane users on uneven surfaces. They will also minimise the effort required to propel manual wheelchair users.

Additional seating is being provided as part of the public realm improvements which will help reduce walking distances between seats. These proposals will also provide additional planting and greenery, creating better resting places and offering shade in summer – something older people have been asking for.

Introduction of safe, segregated cycle provision on Meadow Lane, Bridge End and Lower Briggate will open up cycling as a mode to some people with disabilities and older people. The DfT's *Inclusive Transport Strategy* discusses the possibility of classifying cycles as a mobility aid. The rise in the use of electric bikes and adapted bikes, along with so-called 'social prescribing' adopted by some medical practices and the support for novice and returning cyclists mean that this mode is becoming more feasible to some disabled people and older people. Cycling is a form of no-weight bearing exercise and can replace some longer walking trips, or trips requiring weight carrying, e.g. shopping, for people with arthritis. However, older cyclists and disabled cyclists face additional challenges – turning movements at junctions can be hindered by difficulty in looking over the shoulder to check for traffic without losing balance and stopping and starting, especially on a gradient, may require disproportionate effort. The provision of safe, legible cycling facilities which include provision at junctions can therefore benefit this group.

Disabled people's organisations have been calling for segregation of cyclists, not just from motor traffic but also from pedestrians. Segregating cyclists and protecting pedestrians from cyclist has also come across as specific needs through consultations. Where cycling facilities had been provided, they brought significant reductions in the number of cyclists using the pavement (50% on City Connect routes) – this is especially the case on one-way streets, with no 'alternative' provision for cyclists. Provision of high quality routes can therefore have a positive impact on disabled people and older people, especially in one-way streets where the use of pavement might have been seen as a 'reasonable' alternative.

2. LGBTQ Community

Due to the location of proposals on Lower Briggate, in the Freedom Quarter, the proposals will impact directly on LGBT community. Previous consultation and engagement identified issues with overcrowding on footways and risks associated with high volumes of users of LGBT-friendly venues in the Freedom Quarter entering the carriageway.

The provision of wider footways and additional bus stops and cycle tracks will benefit the LGBT community accessing the venues within the Freedom Quarter and the uplift in the quality of the public realm will also benefit the Freedom Quarter businesses.

The restrictions on general traffic using Lower Briggate will result in an overall safer environment; as will the provision of additional crossing points on Lower Briggate and Bridge End.

The retention of a taxi rank on Boar Lane, a taxi rank on Call Lane and an evening and night-time taxi rank on the far-side of Lower Briggate opposite Heaton's Court and re-positioned to the west side of Lower Briggate (doubling as a loading bay in the day time) will help service the night time economy of the area; with taxis also being able to operate a hail and ride service and pick up from bus stops after 11 pm, when bus services cease.

3. Women

Improvements to public transport waiting facilities and reliability will benefit all. There is potentially a greater beneficial effect for women: the results of the Leeds Transport Conversation indicated that women are more likely to use public transport, especially buses, either now or in the future, as an alternative to car travel. Women are still less likely to drive, or have access to a car, especially in single car households. However, women are more likely to have caring responsibilities (for children, older or disabled relatives) and more likely to have to 'chain' their trips into multi-purpose journeys. Improvements in bus reliability, frequency, journey time, waiting environment and real time information and better interchange opportunities (e.g. through improved crossings) are therefore more likely to benefit women. As they are more likely than men to travel with children, women would also benefit from seamless boarding when using a pushchair. Women are more likely to benefit from improved reliability of bus services due to time dependent child caring responsibilities, e.g. pick up or feeding.

As care givers, women are also likely to benefit from wider, smoother pavements, additional crossings and simpler junction arrangements with continuous pavements. Women visiting the city centre with children will additionally benefit from public realm improvements, including seating and planting – the first providing resting places and the latter interest for children.

The provision of bus stops and taxi ranks in well-lit areas with heavy footfall will have a beneficial effect on safety and perception of safety, which is a particular concern for women. Improvements to public realm, restrictions to general traffic and safety and security measures delivered as part of this will reduce opportunities for unlicensed vehicle picking up passengers from the kerbside.

Women are currently less likely to cycle than men. This is due to a number of factors, but chief among them are road safety concerns and the need to travel with children. The

provision of safe, segregated cycle infrastructure is therefore likely to benefit women – in places with high standard of safe cycling infrastructure women cycle as much as men do.

4. Carers

It is estimated that last year around half a million trips by bus were made by disabled people with a non-disabled companion. It is therefore expected that the benefits for bus users described above, in particular easier boarding, better waiting facilities, additional bus stops and real time information will benefit carers.

Carers will also benefit from additional crossings and the ‘straight across’ single stage crossings. These reduce the need to manoeuvre and turn a wheelchair or a pushchair. Staggered crossings are problematic for this user groups as they require at least two additional 90 degree turns and the central island has often a limited width (as was the case on Boar Lane). Blind and visually impaired people walking with a sighted companion will face the same difficulties. In locations where crossings are busy such as in the city centre it is often difficult to negotiate the central island. This issue will no longer occur once the scheme is delivered.

Refurbished streets with even surfaces will also benefit carers – those assisting people in wheelchairs, pushing a pushchair or acting as a companion-assistant to a person with a mobility impairment or a sight loss as they minimise effort required in pushing a chair and minimise trip hazard.

Continuous pavement, such as those being delivered along Meadow Lane junctions benefit carers specifically – they are preferable to this user group to dropped kerbs as they minimise the effort of pushing a wheelchair or a pushchair up and down.

5. Children and Young People

That ‘Children can travel around the city safely and independently’ was the first of the children’s 12 wishes on how to make Leeds a Child Friendly City.

Children and young people are unable to drive and are therefore are more reliant on public transport, walking and cycling. Changes to the city centre brought as part of the Corn Exchange Gateway project, which help improve bus services and provide safe cycling facilities will benefit this equality characteristic, helping them travel independently.

Children under the age of 12 are unable to effectively judge traffic speeds or more complex manoeuvres and would therefore benefit specifically from the provision of pedestrian crossings.

Action required:

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8b. Negative impact:

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1. Disability and Age

Ageing in general is associated with greater levels of public transport use, although people with disabilities grow more likely to **never** use public transport as they age. People with disabilities aged 65+ are more likely to use lifts from friends and family, and to use taxis. For these people, changes to general traffic movements with greater restrictions on journeys within the public transport box (specifically, bus gates on Duncan Street, Leeds Bridge, Kirkgate, York Street and Vicar Lane) will be a disbenefit.

This is likely to have a differential impact on older people and disabled people, who may need to walk further to access their destination, and on carers, who may need to offer additional assistance for a longer journey on foot. This may also increase the cost of travel for people needing door to door transport who may now need to get a hackney cab rather than their local private hire. This may be a particular issue at times when public transport provision is less good.

Disabled people and older people with limited mobility may have more complicated journeys to access destinations within the core of the city centre, including accessing blue badge parking spaces. Driving around the city centre looking for an available space to park (e.g. a free Blue Badge bay) will also become longer and more complicated due to restrictions on general traffic and introduction of bus gates.

Changes to the provision of Blue Badge Parking will also have negative impact on people with disabilities. Specific concerns were expressed about the loss of disabled parking bays on Central Road. Occupancy surveys were carried out and indicate around 50% level of use for these parking bays. However, this provision is now largely being retained (with the loss of roughly three spaces).

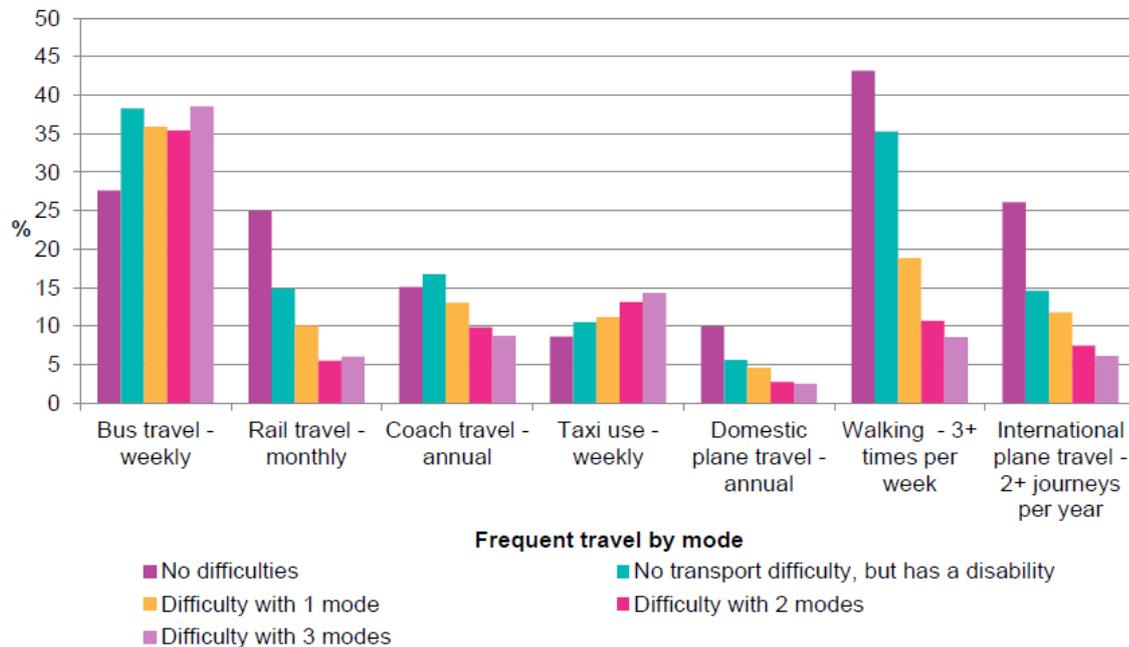
Bus re-routing may have specific negative impacts on older people and some disabled people (learning difficulties, dementia, blind and partially sighted people) as changes are often confusing and unsettling. This may result in missed buses, being carried to an unknown destination and may affect loss of confidence to go out independently.

Private hire vehicles will have more limited opportunities to pick up and drop off within the public transport box – again, this will impact disproportionately on older people and disabled people. However, private hire and other vehicles will be able to pick up and set down blue badge holders in disabled parking bays.

Both the Inclusive Transport Strategy and the DPTAC report 'The importance of taxis for disabled people' recognise that "Taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs) are one of the most popular modes of transport for disabled people after the private motor car. Disabled people use taxis more than non-disabled people despite more of them living in relative poverty. Taxis and PHVs provide a door-to-door service, with scope for individual assistance with the particular needs of a disabled passenger."

The *Disabled People Transport Behaviour and Attitudes to Travel* report gives the following illustration of use of transport by mode:

Figure 10 Frequency of travelling using different modes, by grading of disability, 2007-2014 combined



Source: National Travel Survey 2007-2014 combined individual data-set
 Base: all respondents aged 16+ (128,196 -146,432 for different modes)

Hackney Carriage and private hire fleets are currently lacking a ‘universally accessible vehicle’ and that the current fleets use a combination of standard and wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV). Nationally, the percentage of WAV is 58% for Hackney Carriages, in Leeds it is slightly higher, at 63% and about 2% for private hire vehicles.

The DPTAC document acknowledges the need for VAW to be ‘readily available’ to those who require it. DPTAC acknowledges that, despite the cost of taxi fares being comparatively high, the use of wheelchair accessible taxis for many wheelchair users may be preferable to the cost of purchase, running and maintenance of a specialist adapted vehicle.

The above documents do not specifically refer to the provision of Hackney Ranks, however, *Inclusive Mobility* (2002) mentions the provision next to railway and bus station, and all major attractors, including retail areas. It stresses the need for Hackney ranks to have resting and seating places nearby, and having sufficient footway width to deploy a side ramp and facilitate wheelchair access (in excess of 4m).

In order to provide some of the benefits identified in the section above, in particular additional bus stops and bus lay-bys, the project necessitates changes to the provision of taxi ranks, including loss of some ranks, reduction in hours of operation and moving some ranks to an alternative location.

Throughout the engagement, the Access and Use-ability Group has stressed the need for taxi ranks to be strategically positioned within the city centre to help meet the needs of disabled users, especially those requiring door to door transport provision. Specific areas of loss highlighted as areas of concern were Lower Briggate and Duncan Street. Lower Briggate is losing its double stacked rank and the far-side night-time rank on Lower Briggate opposite Heaton Court. The contraflow rank does not meet accessibility criteria

as specified in *Inclusive Mobility*. On the double stacking rank, the WAV taxis would need to be located next to the kerb to be accessible.

Some retained taxi ranks are to be positioned at footway level. A parking area without kerb upstand between a parked car and a footway can be a barrier to blind and partially sighted people, as highlighted by campaigns run by national charities and indeed by a deputation to Full Council asking Leeds to sign up to a Street Charter. However, without this, it would be impossible to retain these taxi ranks that disabled peoples' organisations have highlighted as important to them and still be able to provide the benefits in the form of straight across pedestrian crossings and bus stops with adequate lay-bys. This type of provision was highlighted by AUAG as desirable as it offered a safe transference area for wheelchair users, whether using a side loaded or a rear loaded vehicle. They are also being provided in places where the footway would not otherwise meet the widths stipulated in *Inclusive Mobility* to be able to accommodate ramped access and a turning circle for a wheelchair user, especially assisted wheelchair.

There is some risk that public realm proposals around the Corn Exchange may produce disbenefits to older people and disabled people. The provision of public realm removes a section of the carriageway on Upper Call Lane, with the corresponding kerblines. This has the potential to make navigation more difficult for white cane users, especially as surrounding building lines are not easy to follow – white cane users are unable to navigate wide open spaces and rely on tactile clues in the environment. The proposal will also re-position bus stops and bus services, potentially resulting in longer walking journeys, which may adversely affect disabled people and older people. Changes to bus stops and bus routes will also negatively affect blind and partially sighted people who may become confused when alighting and unable to follow their learned route, miss their stop or be unable to locate their 'usual' bus stop.

The provision of segregated cycle infrastructure can also have a negative impact on blind and partially sighted people in particular. They may be required to cross cycle tracks when accessing pedestrian crossings and bus stops and struggle to establish priority and cross with confidence, especially where they cannot hear cyclists approach. There is also a risk of inadvertently stepping into a cycle track. This may result in blind people undertaking longer journeys and making detours in order to avoid the risk of interaction with cyclists.

Last but not least, it needs to be acknowledged that any change to the street environment and changes to bus stops and bus routes will have a negative effect on people with certain mental conditions that rely on the familiarity of their surroundings – this may affect people with autism and people with dementia and Alzheimer's (with specific implications for older people) and their carers. There is a risk that those people may be unsettled by the changed surroundings, reducing their propensity and willingness to go out, or their ability to go out independently.

These substantial changes to junction layouts, crossings and bus stop locations and the introduction of cycle tracks will also mean that blind and partially sighted people may need to re-learn their routes. For some blind people this will result in negative experiences of the city centre that may reduce their willingness to go out or go out independently, leading to increased social isolation. Cooperation with the Visual Impairment Training Officers and national and local charities will be key in providing sufficient level of support to inform blind and visually impaired people of the changes and help them re-learn their routes.

2. LGBTQ Community

The EDCI screening report highlighted concerns from the Freedom Quarter business owners over unequal treatment in terms of public realm uplift – it was felt that the removal of traffic on Call Lane was being delivered at the expense of Lower Briggate. The LGBT Business Alliance and LGBT Champions raised concerns over introducing two way operation on Lower Briggate, over safe access to both taxis and private hire vehicles and about crime and safety, especially at night time.

An alternative option was subsequently developed, with one-way operation retained on Lower Briggate and Lower Call Lane (except for cycles, which are provided with a two-way cycleway on Lower Briggate) which has successfully addressed these concerns.

3. Women

Changes to the provision of taxi ranks and more limited private hire pick up opportunities may have negative impact on women in terms of personal safety, especially for participants in the night time economy. Women with caring responsibilities will find it more difficult to drive around parts of the city centre, or to travel there by private hire.

4. Carers

Changes to the provision of taxi ranks and more limited private higher pick up opportunities coupled with additional restrictions for general traffic may have negative impact on carers who may need to travel to the city centre by car or taxi and who, due to the nature of their caring responsibilities and needs, may not have easy access to another transport mode as an alternative. This can make it more difficult for them to access services and events located in the city centre.

Carers for people who have dementia, Alzheimer's or autism may experience additional difficulties if the people they care for are emotionally adversely affected by the changes to their environment that no longer feels familiar and that they now do not recognise. If those people who have been previously able to go out independently, relying, say, on a familiar bus route are no longer able to do so, this will place an additional burden on carers.

Action required:

To offset potential negative impacts, the following steps are being taken:

- Restrictions to general traffic are limited to peak periods only (with the exception of the Boar Lane contra-flow bus lane which must be 24-hour hours to meet traffic regulations).
- Access to the core of the city centre is retained for loading, Pay and Display and Blue Badge User Parking, as well as private car parks located within the public transport box.
- New restrictions will be clearly signed with information made available on suitable access routes.
- Disabled parking spaces will be provided where they can be easily accessed by car (e.g. The Calls, Cross York Street) in a number that should help ensure good level of

availability (at least six at each location).

- Taxi ranks are being retained wherever possible; especially those operating at times when bus service reduce or cease. The key 24-hour taxi rank on Boar Lane will be retained by the project. Taxi ranks were surveyed for their usage; on Lower Briggate there were just five passenger departures over an 8-hour weekday daytime period, with 97% of cars departing empty. During a weekday night period, 97% of cars departed empty. Even during the busiest period for the rank – Saturday daytime – only 4 passengers departed per hour and 82% of cars left empty. The double stacking could make it challenging to ensure that WAV taxis are positioned next to the kerb. This taxi rank is therefore being removed with no replacement nearby. An alternative location for a feeder rank for Leeds Railway station was suggested. The taxi rank near the southern end of Lower Briggate (opposite Heaton’s Court) is positioned on the far-side of a one way street and is therefore not accessible to wheelchair users. A 24 hour taxi rank on nearby Call Lane (Loop Road section) is being retained.
- Taxi ranks positioned at footway level will have a contrasting surface to assist visually impaired people. Positioning of street furniture will also be considered to try and minimise the risk of a blind person colliding with a parked vehicle.
- The Duncan Street taxi rank does not meet the *Inclusive Mobility* standards in terms of footway width or the provision of seating, but there will be alternative provision close by on Boar Lane and Call Lane (between Crown Street and Kirkgate), with improved crossing provision. An alternative location was offered on Central Road, with level access, but rejected by the trade. Surveys show 82% of vehicles leave the Duncan Street rank without a fare.
- Hackney carriages continue to be permitted to use the public transport box, and they are able to operate a hail and ride service within the box, and will also be able to pick up from bus stops after the last bus.
- There should be less delay for Hackney Cabs servicing existing ranks as the use of the public transport box by the general traffic will be even more restricted. Hackney ranks are being retained close to the heart of the pedestrianised area (Boar Lane) and the key transport hub of the station (York Street) and Leeds Market.
- Hackney rank retained on a corridor not served by public transport (Call Lane, east of Crown Street).
- Evening hackney ranks positioned within the public transport box when public transport offer reduces
- The public realm around the Corn Exchange should contain a navigable line that blind and partially sighted people can follow to access bus stops and crossings. Positioning of planting and street furniture will be crucial to ensuring the environment contains enough navigable clues to aid white cane users but does not result in an obstacle course. It will also be important to provide a segregated route for cyclists through the space to avoid the negative impacts of shared use.
- Cycle tracks will have a kerb segregation and colour/ tonal contrast to aid navigation. Formal crossings will be provided in areas of high pedestrian flow so that pedestrians have a clear priority, in line with the standards set in the LTN1/20.

9. Will this activity promote strong and positive relationships between the groups/communities identified?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

Leeds aims to be an inclusive, Child Friendly and Age Friendly city. The city's Inclusive Growth strategy recognises the importance of everyone being able to participate in the city's success and being able to access and enjoy the wider 'offer' of a vibrant city centre is part of this vision. At the same time, the city realises the importance of the 'purple pound' and the 'grey pound' – the spending power of disabled and older people have – is a key part of the economic success of the city.

Reducing the dominance of traffic, improving the public realm and the quality of the footways creates a better environment for all sections of the local communities to come together and interact. Creating a more inclusive environment will hopefully assist in greater participation in public life.

Provision of segregated cycle facilities will help reduce friction between different road users, which will benefit particularly older people and blind and partially sighted people. Making those facilities safe and inclusive will help broaden the range of people who feel there are able to cycle.

Investing in the Lower Briggate area, also known as the Freedom Quarter, the heart of LGBT community in the city, is a statement of the city's commitment to support their infrastructure. The culture of the Freedom Quarter is very inclusive so improvements in infrastructure there will support that quarter of the city that prides itself on being inclusive and accessible to everyone.

Action required:

Training, education, promotion and awareness raising will be needed on the use of the new cycling facilities. This will include the use of crossings and pedestrian priority.

10. Does this activity bring groups/communities into increased contact with each other (e.g. in schools, neighbourhood, workplace)?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

The project aims to increase the attractiveness of the city centre for all; increased use and footfall is expected. Creating 'spaces to dwell' and encouraging a shift from private transport towards public transport and active modes will increase and improve interaction between groups and communities.

Action required:

11. Could this activity be perceived as benefiting one group at the expense of another?

Yes

No

Please provide detail:

The project will re-purpose and re-prioritise the use of road space – giving greater priority to buses, bus users, pedestrians and cyclists. This can be perceived as being done at the expense of private car users. The hackney trade have expressed a view that the bus improvements are taking place at the expense of the trade. The Access Committee for Leeds has submitted comments that the improvements to public transport provision that displace taxi ranks and reduce their hours of operation will disadvantage those disabled people who rely on door to door transport and will exclude them from the city centre.

Action required:

12. Equality, diversity, cohesion and integration action plan

(insert all your actions from your assessment here, set timescales, measures and identify a lead person for each action)

Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
Re-route passing traffic away from the city centre	By 2022	Signage and improvements to the network	David O'Donoghue
Publicise restrictions to general traffic using the city centre; promote alternative routes	Ongoing	Signage, maps and leaflets, information and mapping on line	Yvonne Roberts
Publicise and promote access routes to pick up and drop off facilities and disabled parking bays	Ongoing	Signage, maps and leaflets, information and mapping on line	Yvonne Roberts
Group disabled parking bays together to minimise the need for driving around looking for a place to park	Done	Amended TROs	David Ellis
Ensure that public realm elements of the project do not create exclusive environments; minimise interaction between pedestrians and cyclists and ensure there is a navigable route that white cane users can follow.	By end 2021	Provision of appropriate segregated cycle facilities and crossing points, planting and street furniture placed appropriately following desire lines	Jane Walne

Action	Timescale	Measure	Lead person
Publicise the changes to the location of disabled parking bays	Ongoing	Information provided through LCC website, leaflets and disseminated via stakeholders	Yvonne Roberts
Ensure that taxis can pick up and set down within the public transport box; display a telephone number for the hackney carriages at taxi ranks which are in use for part of the day (as recommended by <i>Inclusive Mobility</i>)	Ongoing	As described in Action column	Gwyn Owen
Taxi ranks positioned at footway level will have a contrasting surface to assist visually impaired people; consider using street furniture to minimise risk of collision	By early 2022	As described in Action column	David Ellis
Publicise changes to bus routes, in accessible formats	Ongoing	As described in Action column	WYCA Comms
Continue to work with stakeholders to help ensure blind and partially sighted people are aware of the changes in the environment	Ongoing	Organise meetings, share plans and arrange site visits where appropriate	Bairbre McKendrick
Ensure cycle tracks do not form a barrier to disabled people	By early 2022	Provision of formal crossing points, give way markings, colour/ tonal contrast and kerb upstand	David Ellis

13. Governance, ownership and approval

State here who has approved the actions and outcomes from the equality, diversity, cohesion and integration impact assessment

Name	Job Title	Date
Gary Bartlett	Director of Highways and Transportation	1 st December 2020

14. Monitoring progress for equality, diversity, cohesion and integration actions (please tick)

- As part of Service Planning performance monitoring
- As part of Project monitoring
- Update report will be agreed and provided to the appropriate board
Please specify which board
- Other (please specify)

15. Publishing

Date copy sent to Equality Team	15th December, 2020.
Date published	14th January, 2021.