

# SSDC Equality Analysis Template (2017)

## Page 1: What is Equality Analysis?

Q1. Q1.1 Please describe the change that is the subject of this EqA i.e. the introduction of a new, or significant change to an existing, policy strategy, service or function .

The proposal to apply to Somerset County Council (SSC) to alter the Traffic Regulation Order that covers the Top of Middle Street in Yeovil. The proposal would remove all traffic from this area, including on-street accessible spaces that are currently used by Blue Badge Holders.

## Page 2: EQUALITY ANALYSIS (EA)

Q2. Q2.1 What information have you used to analyse the effects on equality, particularly in relation to protected groups?

We have consulted with Access for All Solutions (A4A) who have undertaken an audit of the accessible spaces in the town centre.

We have undertaken a public consultation, details of which were advertised in the press, on our website, social media and on the lampposts in the area affected by the proposed changes. A4A also sent out an article in their newsletter, which is distributed to their members and to other local disability charities.

We wrote to and personally visited all the businesses that could be affected (or their customers could be affected) by the proposed changes.

We researched official studies into pedestrianisation and the issues disabled people can experience in town centres including:-

- The government paper 'Impact Mobility',
- The RNIB Report – 'Who put that there',
- RNIB Street Charter Toolkit and
- The article: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200001/cmselect/cmenvtra/167/167xp03.htm>

We also used Yeovil Town Centre car parking data including the number of Disabled car parking bays.

It is difficult to get accurate figures on the number of people with disabilities at a District Level; furthermore we don't know what proportion of the population is using the Town Centre at any one time. However, the Somerset Intelligence website details the following information for Somerset from the 2011 census.

- 13,317 working-age residents (3.5% of those aged 16-74) described themselves as economically inactive because of long-term sickness or disability.
- There are nearly 9,000 households (3.9% of all households in Somerset) containing at least one adult with a long-term disability or health condition and dependent children.

We know that in South Somerset there are 96,462 people aged 16-64, therefore 3.5% would equate to approximately 3376 people.

**Q3. Q2.2 What has this information told you about the potential effect on equality, particularly in relation to the protected groups?**

The information has shown that the change would negatively affect people with mobility difficulties, who currently use the on-street car parking, as they would have to park elsewhere. The proposals also have the potential to affect older residents particularly if through age they have any conditions affecting their ability to breathe or have reduced mobility.

However, the changes would positively affect people who have hearing or sight loss. Wheelchair users would also have much more room to safely pass pedestrians and other wheelchair/mobility aid users.

The only other protected characteristic that could possibly be affected is Maternity and Pregnancy as parents have anecdotally commented on the impact on their safety of having parked cars in this high footfall area.

Of the 1448 car parking spaces available in the 17 SSDC owned town centre pay and display car parks in and around the town centre (2 car parks were ruled out for this exercise) 84 are disabled accessible spaces with room for a further approximately 30 spaces on-street. There are also additional spaces in other privately owned car parks, for example Tesco, some of which are free.

Given that not all disabled people are going to be using the town centre at the same time and that many of the accessible spaces in the car parks are already currently underutilised, it is considered that the existing accessible parking provision and proposed additional mitigations are realistic and proportionate.

**Q4. Q2.3 The Equality Act Aims to: Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation Advance equality of opportunity Foster good relations With these three aims in mind, what is your assessment of the likely impact of the policy, strategy, service or function on the following?:**

	<b>Likely to benefit (Positive Impact)</b>	<b>Likely to disadvantage (Negative Impact)</b>	<b>No specific impact</b>
<b>People from different age groups</b>		X	
<b>Men or women</b>			X
<b>Women who are pregnant or have recently given birth</b>	X		
<b>People who have undergone, are proposing or are undergoing gender reassignment</b>			X
<b>People with disabilities or carers</b>	X		
<b>People from different religions, belief or faith (including those with no belief)</b>			X
<b>People of different race or ethnicity</b>			X
<b>People who are lesbian, gay or bisexual</b>			X
<b>Marriage/Civil Partnership</b>			X
<b>People who are serving or have served in the armed forces and their families* (* this group is not protected by the Equality Act but are still potentially vulnerable or at risk of exclusion)</b>			X

Q5. Q2.4 Where you have indicated a Positive or Negative Impact in Q2.3, please describe in more detail what the specific Impacts are. □

It would positively impact people who have hearing or sight loss, as studies show that parked cars present obstacles for people who are blind and partially sighted, and the increasing quietness of vehicles makes crossing the road more risky for those who are deaf or have a hearing impairment.. The removal of traffic from the area would allow the removal of the current bollards, which also present obstacles for blind and mobility impaired visitors to that area of the town. Pedestrianisation would assist safe movement through the town.

Wheelchair users would also have much more room to safely pass pedestrians and other wheelchair/mobility aid users, as currently the footpaths are below the recommended 2m width. Removing cars from the area would allow the footpaths to be widened.

The other protected characteristic that could be positively affected is Maternity and Pregnancy as, anecdotally, parents have commented on the safety of having parked cars in this high footfall area, as the car doors open straight into the pavement and also affect the visibility of children crossing the street.

The change would negatively affect people with mobility difficulties, including older people who currently use the on-street car parking, as they would have to park elsewhere.

Q6. Q2.5 What actions will be, or have been taken to either mitigate any negative impacts or create a positive impact as identified in Q4?

If the proposals are agreed then reasonable adjustments will be made in order to accommodate the cars that use the current on-street spaces.

There are already 5 accessible parking spaces available in a public car park 70 metres away (Peter Street) which are currently underutilised thereby having the capacity to pick up some of the additional demand. There are also existing nearby on-street options.

SSDC also provides an additional one hour's free parking for disabled motorists in its other Pay and Display car parks in and around the Town Centre . This provides the additional time some disabled users require to return to their vehicles without limiting the time they are able to spend conducting their town centre business.

There is also a Shopmobility Scheme operating in Yeovil that provides powered scooters, as well as powered and manual wheelchairs for use by mobility impaired people. This helps to increase people's independence and reduce reliance on a carer to use the Town Centre.

In addition to the existing arrangements the negative impacts would be further mitigated through the provision of additional accessible spaces in adjacent streets in order to help accommodate the current Blue Badge holders and extra accessible spaces provided in the nearest public car park (Peter Street), which is also the location of a disabled accessible public toilet.

New signage will be installed to help direct visitors to the correct spaces.

Q7. Q2.6 If there is a need to review the EqA, when do you propose to do this?

*No Response*

Q8. Q2.7 How will you monitor the impact that the decision or policy has had on protected groups?

Q2.6 The EqA should be reviewed:

After the official SCC consultation has been undertaken, in case any further reasonable adjustments are required.

If SCC agree the proposals then a review is required before the any changes take place.

Q2.7

Monitor the new and existing car park provision to check it is being better utilised. Monitor the level of complaints regarding the availability of accessible spaces on-street. Instruct A4A to undertake a review after 12 months to establish any changes in parking patterns.

### Page 3: Quality Check / Approval Log

Q9. Q3.1 Date and name of Officer Completing the EqA

\* 28/11/2018

**Name of Officer Completing the EqA and Date Completed**

Natalie Fortt

Q10. Q3.2 Date and name of the Line Manager/Senior Manager approving the EqA

\* 04/01/2019

**Name of the Line Manager approving the EqA**

Martin Woods

Q11. Q3.3 Date and Name of the Equality Coordinator signing off the EA

\* 03/12/2018

**Name of the Equality Coordinator**

David Crisfield

Q12. Q3.4 Any Comments

*No Response*