



TECHNICAL NOTE 1

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|-----------------|--|-------------------------|---------------|
| DATE: | 08 August 2025 | CONFIDENTIALITY: | Internal |
| SUBJECT: | GETS Scenario 2 Stage 1 - Assessment Updates | | |
| PROJECT: | Greater Exeter Transport Study | AUTHOR: | Lloyd Cole |
| CHECKED: | Dan Tomlinson | APPROVED: | Chris Sanders |

INTRODUCTION

This technical note provides a summary of the updates to the scheme identification and appraisal process that has taken place as part of the updates to the Greater Exeter Transport Study (GETS) Scenario 2 Stage 1 activities. This document supplements the wider GETS Scenario 2 Stage 1 report produced in November 2024.

The GETS Scenario 2 Stage 1 work to date has identified a package of potential sustainable transport schemes to support the delivery of forthcoming Local Plan development across the four neighbouring districts of Mid Devon, East Devon, Exeter and Teignbridge. To date, the GETS has identified a total of 70 potential sustainable transport schemes across the Greater Exeter area that could mitigate the traffic impacts of forthcoming Local Plan development. These schemes can be categorised as: Active Travel, Bus, Rail and Mobility Hubs. These schemes were subsequently appraised within a Multi Criteria Assessment Framework (MCAF) to compare and rank schemes based on the following assessment criteria:

- Timescales for implementation;
- Performance against project objectives;
- Probability of implementation;
- Deliverability;
- Interdependencies; and
- Stakeholder Acceptability

Following feedback obtained from the Greater Exeter Transport Study Officer Group, changes to the scheme identification and appraisal process have been incorporated to reduce the overall number of schemes considered within the GETS and to simplify the assessment of schemes within the MCAF. The purpose of these changes is to rationalise the schemes considered within the MCAF and to provide a simplified qualitative review of the schemes rather than a scored list which prioritises schemes. The updated MCAF also considers additional schemes identified in the East Devon New Community transport vision, developed by East Devon District Council (EDDC).

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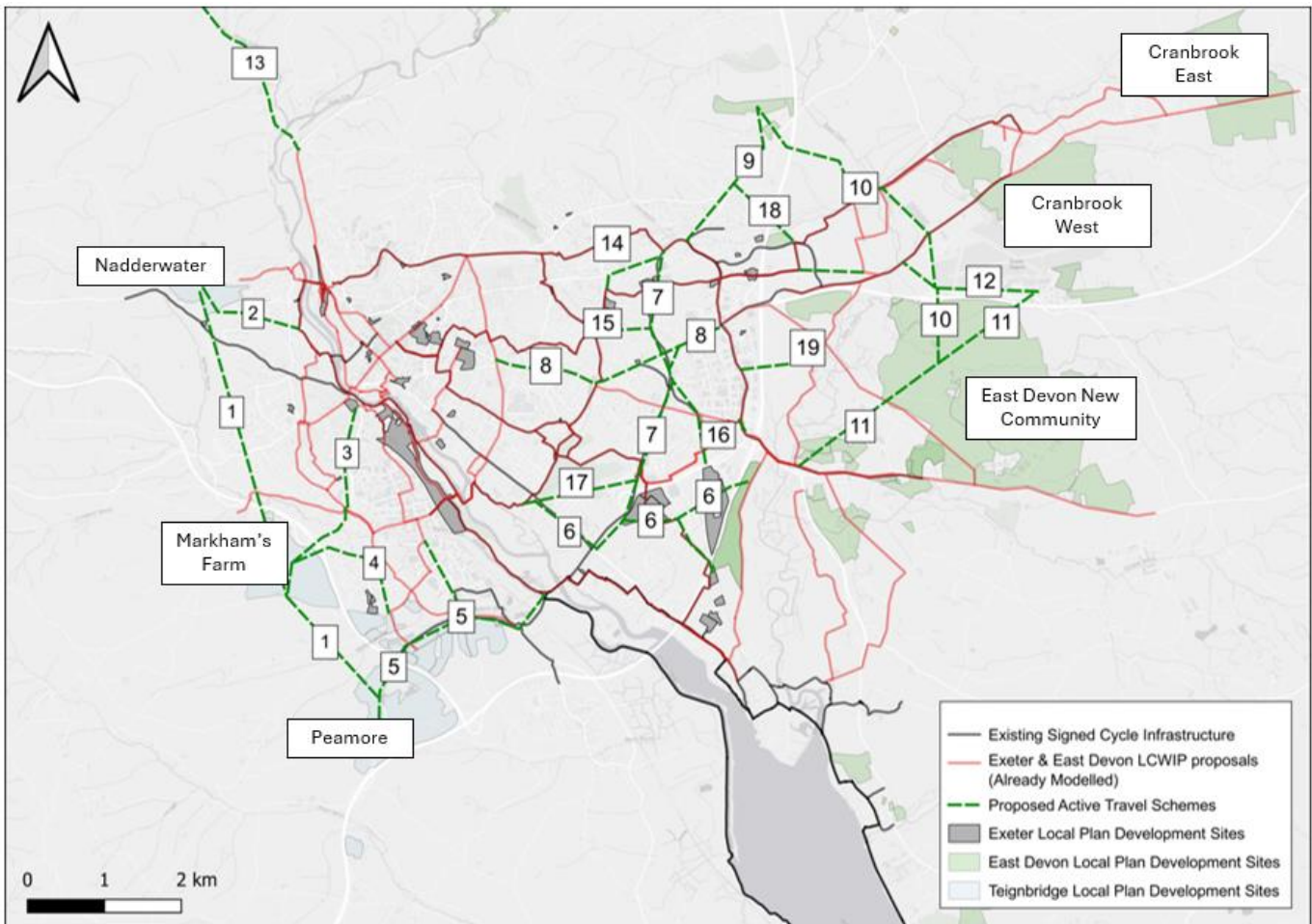
METHODOLOGY

Task 1: Reduce the overall number of schemes considered within the GETS

The purpose of this task is to simplify and consolidate the long list of 70 transport schemes initially identified within the GETS Scenario 2 Stage 1 into a shorter more focussed list. Where possible, smaller Active Travel and Bus Priority schemes along joined up corridors have been combined into single, larger schemes. Many of these schemes link key origins (predominantly new developments) and key destinations (existing and proposed employment sites) based on forthcoming Local Plan allocations. The number of schemes for Bus Service Provision, Rail, and Mobility Hub remains unchanged.

The updated list of GETS Scenario 2 Stage 1 Active Travel schemes are presented in Figure 1, whilst the updated list of Bus schemes are presented in Figure 2.

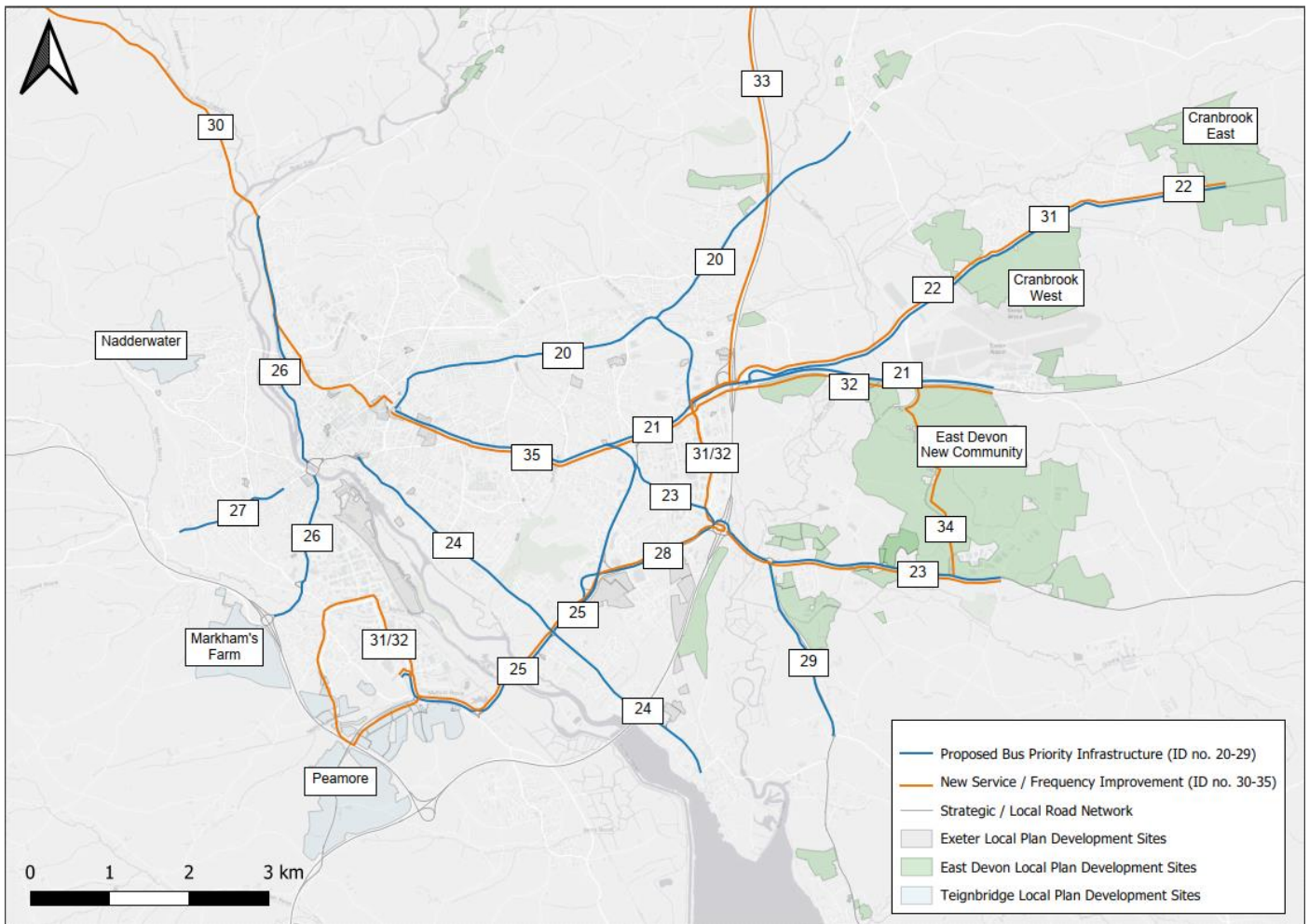
Figure 1: Updated Active Travel Schemes



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Figure 2: Updated Bus Infrastructure Schemes



Updated scheme and location descriptions for each scheme (including ID number) have been recorded in a complementary MCAF spreadsheet. The consolidation of proposed Scenario 2 Stage 1 schemes resulted in the number of Active Travel schemes being reduced from 36 to 19 and the number of Bus Priority schemes being reduced from 21 to 16.

Following further discussion with EDDC regarding the development of their East Devon New Community Transport Vision, one additional scheme was included in the GETS Scenario 2 Stage 1 MCAF assessment – a new, direct bus service operating between the northern side of the East Devon New Community and Exeter city centre (ID 35 in Figure 2).

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Task 2: Simplification of MCAF criteria

The purpose of this activity was to simplify the assessment criteria used within the Scenario 2 Stage 1 MCAF to assess the updated list of transport schemes. This change in approach provides a high-level qualitative review of the schemes rather than a ranked list of prioritised schemes. This approach has been followed due to complimentary traffic modelling of schemes that indicates that all of the proposed schemes would likely be required to ensure Local Plan targets are met. This new assessment therefore looks at demonstrating the comparative impact of schemes and highlighting at an early stage where risks and challenges may arise.

Following discussion with the GETS Officer Group, it was agreed that the following high-level criteria would be used to assess the updated Scenario 2 Stage 1 scheme list:

- **Timescales:** How quickly could the scheme be delivered?
- **Deliverability:** How likely is it that the scheme can be delivered?
- **Effectiveness:** How effective is the scheme at reducing the traffic impact of future developments?
- **High-level cost:** What is the indicative high-level cost of the scheme?

These criteria have been selected for use within the updated MCAF assessment as they were deemed key factors for determining whether the delivery of a scheme could be possible and provide the required impact.

To demonstrate the performance of each scheme, a simplified RAG (Red, Amber Green) rating was used to assess the extent to which the schemes aligned with each criterion. The definitions used for each scoring threshold are shown in Table 1.

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Table 1: Identified scoring thresholds for each criterion

| Rating | Timescales | Deliverability | Effectiveness | High-level Cost |
|--------|--|--|--|--|
| Green | Short-term: delivery within 0–2 years | Scheme delivery is likely with few / no constraints. | Scheme has a positive contribution towards modal shift and reducing car trips. | Low-cost: < £1 million |
| Amber | Medium-term: delivery within 2-5 years | It is expected that the scheme could be delivered but will need to overcome constraints. | Scheme has a neutral contribution towards modal shift and has limited impact on car trips. | Moderate cost: £1 million – £5 million |
| Red | Long-term / Unknown: delivery beyond 5 years | It is unlikely that the scheme could be delivered given the constraints. | Scheme has a negative contribution towards modal shift and increases car trips. | High cost: > £5 million |

This updated approach provides a high-level, simplified, qualitative assessment of the Scenario 2 Stage 1 schemes, helping to easily identify the best and worst performing schemes, rather than a ranked listed of prioritised schemes. High level, qualitative input from WSP Highways Designers was incorporated into the scoring, providing further insight regarding the feasibility and potential barriers associated with each scheme. Note that designs have not been produced and assumptions were required for a broad range of factors such as Land Acquisition and Stakeholder Acceptability. This assessment was based on available local knowledge and imagery through online mapping resources (e.g. Google aerial imagery and Streetview).

Overall, the proposals for new/upgraded Active Travel infrastructure (with the exception of scheme ID 19) and Mobility Hub schemes performed positively due to the proposed schemes being relatively quick and simple to deliver at relatively low costs compared to other travel modes. However, many of these schemes have been rated Amber due to their limited impact in terms of effectiveness at contributing towards modal shift with a reliance on wider behavioural change.

Rail schemes are considered significantly more expensive to implement than Active Travel and Mobility Hub schemes. Schemes involving bus priority scored poorest within the assessment due to multiple constraints (primarily land availability and wider highway impacts) affecting deliverability and comparatively high costs, despite scoring Green against effectiveness.

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No scheme was rated 'Green' for all four of the assessment criteria. In total, 20 out of 45 schemes were rated 'Green' for three out of the four scoring criteria. However, there were three schemes that received at least one 'Red' rating. These scores were given due to the requirement for significant land purchases and conflicts with other infrastructure affecting the potential deliverability of each scheme, with cost impacts also being flagged as a key issue. These schemes are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Schemes rated 'Red' in updated MCAF assessment

| ID | Scheme Name | Criteria rated Red | Comments |
|----|--|------------------------------------|--|
| 24 | Bus Priority on South-East Corridor | Deliverability | No land is available to accommodate new bus lanes with residential properties adjacent to the highway. |
| 26 | Bus Priority on South-West Corridor | Deliverability and High-level Cost | Railway bridge on Alphington Road is narrow, and it is not likely this can be widened to accommodate bus infrastructure. There is likely to also be land constraints affecting the ability to widen the highway to allow for the provision of bus facilities. |
| 42 | 30-minute service frequency between Exeter Central and Axminster | High-level Cost | Significant investment (>£50m) in rail infrastructure upgrades required to support this ambition. |

The full results of the updated Scenario 2 Stage 1 MCAF assessment have been included in a supporting spreadsheet and will be shared separately.

CONCLUSION

This technical note provides a summary of the updates to the GETS Scenario 2 Stage 1 scheme identification and assessment process. The purpose of these changes have been to simplify the overall list of proposed schemes considered within the GETS Scenario 2 Stage 1 assessment.

Alongside this, the updates have also introduced a simplified assessment criteria through an updated MCAF. The aim of this refreshed assessment is to clearly set out the comparative impact expected to be delivered by each scheme, while also looking to highlight potential challenges around future delivery of the proposed schemes.

Through this updated assessment, it has been identified that the Active Travel schemes, Mobility Hubs and provision of new bus services would, within the parameters of the assessment, be the quickest to



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implement and easiest and cheapest to deliver. The outcomes of the assessment has also shown that the delivery of the proposed bus priority measures is likely to be the most challenging to deliver within Scenario 2 Stage 1. This is due to the potential for additional land purchases and interactions the proposed schemes are likely to have with other key infrastructure, limiting the options for certain corridors/routes between future developments and Exeter.

Building upon this high-level assessment of the Scenario 2 Stage 1 schemes, which has supported the appraisal of future local plan traffic impacts, presented opportunities for future transport schemes and flagged potential risks with these schemes and associated developments. It is now recommended that the following steps are explored/undertaken:

- 1 Further refinement and development of the proposed scheme options allowing the individual districts to understand better the potential costs of delivering individual schemes. Providing an understanding of the likely affordability and feasibility of individual schemes will in turn support with the identification of future funding sources and allow District Councils to understand potential funding gaps.
- 2 Further discussion between District Councils and Devon County Council with relation to overcoming the risks associated with the schemes. The primary purpose will be to identify how schemes that support the delivery of development in one District can be delivered in another and confirm the level of design required to achieve support of the local plan by stakeholders.