

Rapid Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

Project title: Bath Road - Castle Hill Active Travel Scheme
Wards affected: Abbey, Coley
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Department: Strategic Transport
Directorate: Directorate of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services (DEGNS)

Summary of the proposal

Give a clear, concise description of the proposal. This should be 50 to 200 words long.

Reading Borough Council's Bath Road–Castle Hill Active Travel Scheme is a major walking and cycling improvement project designed to create a safer, more attractive route between west Reading and the town centre. The scheme covers the corridor from Berkeley Avenue along Bath Road and Castle Hill, continuing across the Inner Distribution Road (IDR) to Castle Street. It forms part of the Council's wider Active Travel Programme, which aims to encourage sustainable travel, reduce dependence on private cars and improve public health and air quality.

The proposals focus on reallocating road space to provide dedicated cycle facilities in both directions, including segregated cycle lanes and improved crossings for cyclists and pedestrians. Key elements include enhanced access around the busy Castle Hill–IDR roundabout, new pedestrian crossing facilities, improved cycle provision at junctions, and measures such as parking restrictions to prevent vehicles obstructing walking and cycling routes. More recent revisions have also extended the route into the town centre to connect with existing cycling infrastructure at Cusden Walk.

The scheme is funded through the Government's Active Travel Fund and has been subject to several rounds of public consultation since 2021. Expected benefits include improved connectivity to the National Cycle Network, increased walking and cycling levels, reduced traffic impacts, better air quality, enhanced accessibility, and safer journeys for all road users travelling between west Reading and the town centre.

Who is affected by this proposal?

Asylum seekers/refugees
Ethnic minorities
Gypsy, Roma and Traveller ethnic groups
People living in areas of high social and economic deprivation
People living with a disability - physical, mental or learning
Families with young children
Children and young people (0 to 19 years)
Adults aged between 18 and 60
Older people (60+)
Women and girls
Men and boys
Carers
Lesbian, gay and/or bisexual people (LGBTQ+)
Unhoused people
People with dementia
Religious or belief groups
Visitors or those working in the district
Other
Everyone

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Scoping	Social and community wellbeing	☐
	Equity, inclusion and protected groups	☐
	Economic and employment impacts	☐
	Crime reduction and community safety	☐
	Health behaviours and mental wellbeing	☒
	Energy use and waste minimisation	☐
	Environment, climate and place	☒
	Access to services	☐
	Other impacts	☐
	No direct impacts expected	☐

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Scoping	Details of potential impact	L	I	Mitigations	Additoinal Comments
Health behaviours and mental wellbeing	Positive Impact - This scheme involves providing additional pedestrian and cycle facilities on Castle Hill Bath Road, which supports Active Travel, making it safer and easier for people to walk and cycle, and has wider health benefits, allowing people to walk and cycle in a safer environment.	Medium	High	None	This impact contributes towards the aims and objectives of Reading's Transport Strategy, Climate Change Action Plan and Air Quality Plan.
Health behaviours and mental wellbeing	Negative Impact - There is likely to be disruption and additional traffic congestion as a result of the construction works to deliver this scheme.	High	High	Transport Officers will work with the contractor to programme the works so as to cause minimal disruption possible. This will include programming works during summer months when there is less traffic in general.	
Health behaviours and mental wellbeing	Negative Impact - As a result of reallocating road space away from private motor vehicle use as well as the inclusion of a new controlled pedestrian crossings this will impact on the overall capacity and performance of the corridor.	Medium	High	Officers and engineers have undertaken modelling of this impact and the impact of this is deemed acceptable. Signalised traffic junctions will benefit from the installation of MOVA (Microprocessor Optimised Vehicle Actuation) which will also improve its performance and mitigate this impact.	