

EXETER • HIGH STREET/QUEEN STREET

CONTEXT

Exeter is the county town of Devon with a population of about 102,000. The main part of the city centre includes the High Street and Queen Street where some of the historic parts of the city are located. Prior to 1977, part of the High Street was a dual carriageway and carried large volumes of traffic. Queen Street also suffered the same problems but was further aggravated by the lack of width of both footways and



34: The carriageway in High Street narrowed to a single lane primarily for buses. Planted areas and seats allow people to rest and enjoy the surroundings. (Photo: Devon County Council)

carriageway particularly at the High Street end. Generally, the area suffered from overwhelming domination by motor





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35: Widened footway in Queen Street has improved the area for pedestrians. The flat top hump at footway level assists pedestrians when crossing and the street furniture and planting help define the route traffic has to take. (Photo: Devon County Council)

vehicles which resulted in a hostile and unsafe environment for pedestrians.

OBJECTIVES

The aim was to relieve the problems typical of a city centre, namely intrusion from high volumes of traffic through the main shopping streets and the resulting conflicts in order to stimulate the upgrading of the physical and commercial environment, and to give priority to pedestrians and public transport.

DESCRIPTION

The approach was to introduce pedestrian priority and environmental enhancement in stages. The first stage was implemented in 1977 and included the removal of the former dual carriageway part of the High Street, giving more space to pedestrians by widening of the footways. In

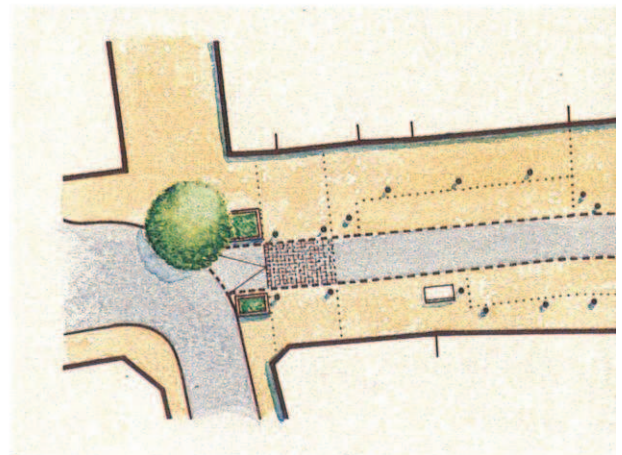
the following years further stages were introduced in the High Street and Queen Street, all of which provided further priority and space for the pedestrians.

Road closures and the introduction of traffic management measures enabled all traffic to be excluded from the High Street except for emergency vehicles and buses.

Carriageway narrowing and the creation of better facilities for pedestrians have been provided in Queen Street. A flat top hump has been installed at a very busy pedestrian crossing point to make crossing the road an easier and safer movement. The scheme also involved measures to improve both the functional and aesthetic elements of the streets involved. These included the provision of high quality paving, new and improved street lighting, seats and other street furniture and colour co-ordinated pedestrian finger posts.

COST

The cost was about £250,000.



ASSESSMENT

An improvement of the "city centre" atmosphere has been achieved with a much enhanced shopping environment. The appearance and furnishing of the area encourage pedestrians to stay or rest in the streets rather than just hurry through as before. This environmental enhancement has also attracted more tourists to the city as the area leads conveniently to the Cathedral Yard, Southernhay Gardens, Exeter Castle and other areas of interest. Buses are permitted through the area and thus passengers have the advantage of travelling directly to the city centre.

