

Public Realm Improvements in Leominster's Historic Town Centre Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. THE DESIGN

What street improvement works are taking place in Leominster?

Herefordshire Council is now investing in improvements to the town centre.

Improvements are planned for:

- High Street
- Iron Cross
- Victoria Street
- Corn Street
- Corn Square

What will the roads look like?

All the carriageways will be in a buff coloured asphalt. Corn Square pavements will remain as they are, but will be repaired using recycled stone flags from the existing High Street pavements.

What height will the kerbs be?

All pavements on High Street, Victoria Street, and Corn Street will be a consistent 100mm upstand height. On the junctions of the High Street with Victoria Street and with Corn Street, the carriageway will be raised to be level with the pavement - there will be no upstand kerbs in these two areas (see below under "How will the works improve access for pedestrians ..." for further detail). The kerbs in Corn Square will remain at their existing height.

How will the works improve access for pedestrians and those using buggies and walking

aids? The two existing dropped kerb crossings on the High Street by Cordwainers and Ironmongers Lanes will be improved. There will be a new raised crossing at the start of the High Street by Buttercross.

The pavements will be widened and flattened where possible so they are safer and easier for everyone to use

There will be altered crossing areas on the High Street junctions with Victoria Street and Corn Street. On these junctions there will be a raised table, where the carriageway will be raised to be level with the pavement. This is to reduce accessibility issues caused by the very narrow and steeply sloped pavements currently in these areas.

The current raised crossings on Victoria Street by Drapers Lane, and on Corn Street by Oxfam, will be of improved design and of a consistent construction to that of the new raised crossings mentioned above.

What will Corn Square look like?

In Corn Square the carriageways will be resurfaced in buff colour asphalt and the pavements will be repaired using reclaimed stone flags from the High Street pavements.

The pavements will be levelled and widened where possible, and there will be new planting and uplighting on the wide pavement area by the Flying Dutchman.

In Corn Square the carriageways will be resurfaced in buff coloured asphalt, and the pavements will be repaired using reclaimed stone flags from the High Street pavements. The island at the eastern edge near Lloyd's Bank will be enhanced with seating, planting and uplighting. The central parking area in Corn Square will be fully remade with new stone sets. There will be new power supplies in the Square to enable better use of this space for events.

Will the new design change cycle and blue badge parking?

No

Will there be the same number of parking bays in Corn Square?

Yes the same number of parking bays in Corn Square will be retained but in the future, subject to consultation and an approved Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), car parking may be removed.

Will there still be events and markets in Corn Square.

Yes: the regular Leominster Friday Charter Market and monthly Farmers' markets will return to their usual place as soon as works finish.

The regeneration works in Corn Square include an improved electricity supply, which will allow the Square to be used for a larger range of events. Event organisers looking to use the space for events following the completion of improvement works should contact Leominster Town Council (<https://www.leominstertowncouncil.gov.uk/>)

Why aren't the streets level with the pavements as originally proposed?

It has not been possible to create the level shared spaces, with no kerbs, as was originally proposed. This is because a level shared space would require us to fully remove motor vehicle traffic from these areas and this requires a Traffic Regulation Order (TRO).

Currently there will be no change to existing traffic access or parking arrangements.

However once the works are complete there will be consultation with the public on the proposed TRO to pedestrianise Corn Square and part-pedestrianise the High Street.

Will there be the same number of parking bays in Corn Square?

Yes, there will be the same number of parking bays in Corn Square will be retained but in the future, subject to consultation and an approved Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) -see question above -, car parking may be removed.

2. THE CONSTRUCTION WORKS:

When will the street works take place?

The works started on 7th May and are currently scheduled to finish on Friday 29th November.

The project has encountered some initial difficulties with drainage and the sourcing of materials which the project team have now mitigated as much as possible. As a result, all of the work to the High Street, Corn Street, Victoria Street and Iron Cross will be complete within the existing project timescales by the end of September. This means that only the work to Corn Square will remain unfinished and this work will continue until the end of November.

Since the initial disruption, the improvement work has and continues to be delivered to the revised programme. However, as with any work of this nature, there are risks such as basements that extend under the carriageway, which we are closely monitoring and managing.

Support for Leominster businesses

Herefordshire Council is introducing the following in order to support local businesses throughout the construction period:

- Free Parking – from 7 August two hours free parking in Etnam Street Car Park for the duration of the improvement work.
- Promotion of Leominster – funding to be provided by Herefordshire Council to support the promotion of events and festivals in Leominster. A total of £2,500 will be made available and we will be liaising with local businesses and Leominster Town Council on how this can be allocated most effectively.
- Support for events affected by the work – we understand the extension of this work may impact on planned events. We are keen to ensure the events continue and we will provide support to the organisers to help facilitate these where possible.
- Signage – Some businesses and residents have expressed concern about the placement of signs and safety barriers. We are committed to minimising disruption where possible and if notified of any concerns we will work with the contractors to alter signage.
- Herefordshire County Business Improvement District have, we understand, also separately committed to support businesses in Leominster, including committing to supporting up to £10,000 of marketing activities.

Will the works be noisy?

As with all construction works of this nature there will be some noise and dust. We will continue to work closely with our contractor, MF Freeman, to minimise the impact on local people as much as possible. MF Freeman is required to register the project with the “Considerate Constructors Scheme” and comply with the scheme’s “Code of Considerate Practice”.

Will they be working at the weekends and evenings/nights?

It may be necessary for construction works to take place over weekends and evenings. The key focus of our planning is to try to minimise the impact these works will have on local people. For example, we may decide that weekend working is beneficial as this would mean that the work will finish sooner.

3. PEDESTRIAN AND MOTOR VEHICLE TRAFFIC DURING THE CONSTRUCTION WORKS:

Will the streets be closed to pedestrians?

All areas will remain accessible to pedestrians in order to enable businesses to remain open as usual during the construction works. The contractor will continue to work closely with businesses and residents in the affected areas to plan for the least disruption possible.

How will motor vehicle traffic be managed during construction works?

The areas of:

- High Street

- Iron Cross
- Victoria Street
- Corn Street
- Corn Square

will need to be closed to motor vehicle traffic for some time during the works. The construction work areas will be phased in order to minimise any disruption these road closures may cause, with the aim to close key areas for the shortest time possible.

Where can I park while the works are taking place?

Other than in Corn Square all car parks in the town will remain open including Broad Street, Central and Etnam Street car parks, all three of which are within 100m of the town centre.

From 7 August 2024 there will be two hours free parking in Etnam Street Car Park for the duration of the works.

Where can I find disabled parking bays while the works take place?

The disabled parking spaces in Corn Square will not be available during the construction works. Nearby (within 100m of the town centre) disabled parking bays are available in Etnam Street and Central car parks and on Broad Street. Three additional permanent disabled parking bays have recently been added to the Etnam Street car park, increasing disabled parking provision in the town.

Will deliveries be able to be made during construction works?

The loading bays in the construction area will be unavailable when these roads are closed for road works. Alternative provision will be made to ease this disruption and we will share this with the affected businesses once full details are known. Please contact the contractor on 07761 482805 to discuss any delivery issues.

Will refuse collections be made during construction works?

Yes. We are working with refuse teams to ensure collections are maintained.

4. CALENDAR EVENTS:

What will happen to the Friday Market, the Farmers Market, and other events during the works?

These events will be relocated to other locations in the town whilst the construction works take place. The weekly Friday markets and monthly Saturday farmers markets will temporarily move to Etnam Street car park.

If the markets are moving to Etnam Street car park during the works, will there be an allocated space for them?

Yes. The allocated space for these markets has been agreed and will be sectioned off from the rest of the car park.

5. LONGER TERM TRAFFIC PLANS FOR LEOMINSTER:

Traffic Regulation Order

Currently there will be no change to existing traffic access or parking arrangements.

However once the works are complete there will be consultation with the public on the proposed TRO to pedestrianise Corn Square and part-pedestrianise the High Street.

Will HGVs still be allowed down High Street?

During the construction period, no, as the streets involved will be closed to all motor vehicles.

After the construction work HGVs under 7.5 tonnes will continue to be allowed. Vehicles over 7.5 tonnes will not be allowed in the town centre, except for access.

What control measures will be put in place for the future maintenance so the streets continue to look good in the future?

A Section 58 notice under the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 will be in place for two years which allows a local authority to protect a street from any planned street works following any major surfacing works. Additionally, part of the planned programme will include a requirement to reinstate materials 'like for like'. Where emergency works are undertaken (often resulting in a temporary surface being applied) the local authority will seek 'like for like' reinstatement within an agreed timeframe.

As well as at surface level, much design work has gone into determining what is below ground and making the new street and pavement construction more robust which will make surfaces stronger and less likely to break in the future.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Where can further information be found?

Please email the project team at: LeominsterHSHAZ@Herefordshire.gov.uk