

Exmouth: Dinan Way Extension

Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Cabinet (and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution) before taking effect.

Recommendation:

- (a) That the preliminary scheme layout shown on drawings DWG A10020/22 (attached to the report Appendix 4) be approved to proceed with a planning application;**
- (b) Following receipt of planning consent that land acquisition is commenced by negotiation and approval is given to use compulsory purchase powers for a route with planning permission if required;**
- (c) That the previously approved alignment as shown on DWG 6045E/88 (attached to the report as Appendix 5) be rescinded;**
- (d) That an appraisal of route options will support a planning application for the preferred route option.**

1. Summary

This report seeks approval to proceed with the appraisal and assessment process for the route options, prepare a planning application, and undertake land acquisition for the preferred option for the Dinan Way Extension scheme.

2. Background

The scheme is based upon achieving the following objectives:

- Provide a route of appropriate standard to connect the A376 and Dinan Way distributor road. Thus, providing a high quality continuous link to the large residential and employment areas on the northern edge of Exmouth.
- Improve safety and amenity around the existing highway network in and around Exmouth.
- Mitigate the impact of new developments planned around the Northern edge of Exmouth.
- The scheme is identified in the emerging Local Plan.

Current Issues

Car use within Exmouth and along the A376 is high due to commuting trends and the need to access some facilities in the Exeter area. Exmouth's growth is constrained by the coast and estuary which has resulted in the town expanding on its northern edge. There is, therefore, a considerable distance between the residential areas in northern and eastern edges of the town, and the town centre and railway station. Dinan Way is the main distributor road around the northern and eastern edge of town and new developments tend to emerge around this route. However, Dinan Way has only been partially completed and does not connect to the A376 as was envisaged through previous Plans.

Due to the incomplete Dinan Way the route to the A376 for a large proportion of the population is along inappropriate residential streets and single track country lanes such as Summer Lane, Wotton Lane, Featherbed Lane and Rivermead Avenue. The access to and from the commercial area surrounding the Liverton Industrial Estate is constrained by inappropriate route options. There are a number of routes which HGVs could use, the majority of which are unsuitable; however the predominant HGV route from the A376 to Salterton Road is via Gypsy Lane/Marlpool Hill/Claremont Grove on a route past the Exmouth Community College – one of the largest secondary schools in Europe.

The 2011 census indicates that approximately one third of the working population of Exmouth commute to Exeter. This suggests that Exeter is a significant commuting destination for people living in Exmouth.

Further analysis of the census data shows that approximately 80% of Exmouth – Exeter commuters travel by car. The majority of the Exmouth workers who commute into Exeter by car use the A376, however the B3179 through Woodbury is another commonly used route. Whilst the A376 is congested at peak times, like many arterial routes around Exeter, it is also a suitable route choice at other times and remains the primary route and the most appropriate for HGVs.

The constraints on the A376 corridor and particularly at Junction 30 mean that rail and bus service improvements will need to play a growing part in travel to and from Exeter. Stagecoach have recently launched their new 'Gold' brand on the 57 bus service which could benefit from the additional routing options that an extended Dinan Way would provide. Railway rolling stock improvements are anticipated around 2018 which will provide additional capacity and passenger facilities. Further rail improvements such as the new stations at Newcourt and Marsh Barton and platform extensions for longer trains are also in progress. Newcourt Station was opened in June 2015.

Manual Counts have been undertaken for Featherbed Lane, Rivermead Avenue, Roundhouse Lane and Summer Lane. The classified counts indicate that the volume of traffic using these routes is inappropriate for the type of road.

Future Development

East Devon District Council's Local Plan is not adopted as yet. It sets out proposed residential and employment developments in the area up to 2031. In particular Upper Lovering Farm is a strategic mixed use development for 350 homes and 5ha for community and employment use. This development is sited in north east Exmouth at the junction of Dinan Way and Hulham Road. Further planning applications in the same area are also being considered by the Local Planning Authority.

A second area of strategic development, Littleham Plumb Park, has an allocation of 350 dwellings.

Liverton Business Park is a strategic employment site in the south east of Exmouth. This development consists of 8ha of land in phase 2 and 3 ha of land in phase 3.

These developments, shown in Appendix 1, will cumulatively generate additional traffic impacts, some of which would be mitigated by this scheme.

3. Proposal

Scheme Description

The scheme is currently progressing through preliminary design and is proposed to consist of a 6.5m wide carriageway approximately 830m long from the junction of Dinan Way/Hulham Road to the A376 Exmouth Road. A roundabout will form the junction at each end of the road.

A new shared use pedestrian and cycle path along one side of the Dinan Way Extension will provide a facility for pedestrians and cyclists from north east of Exmouth to access the A376, bus stops at the confluence of future routes and footpaths around the Wotton Valley area.

Provision of the Dinan Way Extension will provide the opportunity to close Summer Lane to through traffic. This will provide an alternative sustainable route for pedestrians and cyclists. Summer Lane would still continue to provide access to adjacent properties including A la Ronde.

In addition, a walking and cycling route is being developed to connect northern Exmouth (including the Goodmores Farm development) to the Exe Estuary Trail, the rail station and town centre. Discussions are in progress with the National Trust regarding the options to connect the route through the A la Ronde site to Summer Lane.

Land Assembly

Private land belonging to a number of land owners will be required for this scheme. All land owners have been contacted and visited by the design team, and are aware of the proposals.

Environment

Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey Reports and Individual species surveys are complete. A final wildlife report is expected imminently this will bring attention to any key concerns and proposed suitable mitigation.

The route itself resides within a low risk area (flood zone 1), however a flood risk assessment is due to be commissioned to inform the SUDS action plan. It is a planning consideration that the scheme does not adversely impact on the local watercourses such as the Wotton Brook.

The landscape is being considered with stakeholders and specialist consultants. Initial option assessment reports commented on the size of embankment required. Subsequent alterations have been made within the proposal under consideration here, though further mitigation will be required. A visual impact assessment will be undertaken to fully understand implications and inform the suitability of mitigation techniques. Of key consideration is the visual impact of the proposal on adjacent Designated Heritage Assets (DHAs). The presence of three Grade 1 listed buildings, just south of Summer Lane (Manse, Point in View, A la Ronde), means that the physical landscape impact of the scheme must also be understood alongside its cultural impact. To date, views have been sought from Historic England and National Trust and a report prepared by an external consultant. A further detailed appraisal of route options will be undertaken as part of the planning process.

A desktop study has been completed for the Built Environment (Archaeology and Listed Buildings), and this has informed the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). Given that a number of heritage assets reside within the site, associating trenching works are proposed.

At time of writing the scheme is current subject to scoping opinion. It is envisaged that an Environmental Impact Assessment will be required and that the most significant categories to be covered under the Environmental Statement (ES) will include the landscaping and cultural / historical aspects. The ES will form part of the planning application.

4. Consultations, Representations and Technical Data

The East Devon Local Plan, both the adopted and emerging versions, include a safeguarded area of land for the construction of Dinan Way Extension. All the route options are within the safeguarded area. The Local Plan states that the completion of Dinan Way will help remove traffic from residential streets and ease access to the south eastern parts of Exmouth.

There are many stakeholders involved in this scheme and all have been consulted throughout the process. These include East Devon District Council (EDDC), Exmouth Town Council, Lympstone Parish Council, landowners, National Trust, Historic England, Stagecoach and members of the public.

A public consultation on the preliminary scheme design was held in June 2015. A report has been produced detailing how the consultation was conducted and summarising the results. The report is attached at Appendix 2. The majority of the public responses were in favour of the south route however it is noted that Historic England, National Trust and EDDC were not in favour of this due to its proximity to the Grade I Listed A la Ronde and the surrounding heritage assets.

The importance of these heritage assets is noted and the two authorities, DCC and EDDC, have jointly developed the modified valley route to minimise any adverse impact. The route assumes departures from design standards and follows existing land contours closely allowing a reduction in earthworks. Soft landscaping will form an integral part of the design. The design will consider the possibility of introduction of Suitable Alternative Green Space between the proposed route and Summer Lane. Its development and stakeholder engagement is documented in the attached report at Appendix 3.

5. Financial Considerations

The Dinan Way Extension is currently estimated to cost in the region of £8m to £12m. The design costs for the scheme are funded by the Integrated Block allocation. It is proposed that future land acquisition costs are also funded through the Integrated Block or alternatively the corporately funded budget set aside for matching Growth Deal bids. No funds have yet been identified for the construction of the scheme. S106 contributions will be negotiated from a number of developments in the area including Upper Lovering Farm which will be required as match funding for any external funding bid. East Devon DC has in addition submitted a CIL schedule to the Local Plan inspector. If this is adopted it may provide an additional funding source but may also replace some S106 negotiations depending on the adoption date. The County Council will investigate options for external funding including the Growth Deal through the LEP.

6. Sustainability and Equality Considerations

Where relevant to the decision, the Equality Act 2010 Public Sector Equality Duty requires decision makers to give due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other prohibited conduct;
- advance equality by encouraging participation, removing disadvantage, taking account of disabilities and meeting people's needs; and
- foster good relations between people by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Taking account of age, disability, race/ethnicity (includes Gypsies and Travellers), gender and gender identity, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnant women/ new and breastfeeding mothers, marriage/civil partnership status in coming to a decision, a decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation or socio-economic disadvantage.

This may be achieved, for example, through completing a full Equality Impact Needs Assessment/Impact Assessment or other form of options/project management appraisal that achieves the same objective'

In progressing this particular scheme, an Impact Assessment has been prepared which has been circulated separately to Cabinet Members and also is available alongside this Report on the Council's website at: <http://www.devon.gov.uk/cma.htm>, which Members will need to consider for the purposes of this item.

The scheme will have a positive impact on pedestrians and cyclists with the provision of a new shared pedestrian/cycle path and additional improvements along Summer Lane. It will also open up new opportunities for revised bus routing.

The scheme has the potential to provide benefits to public transport users by creating the possibility for new routes offering shorter journey times.

In economic terms the scheme will facilitate travel and development which will have a beneficial impact upon the local economy by enabling employment and housing development in the area to proceed with mitigated impact.

7. Carbon Impact Considerations

There may be a slight adverse impact on air quality resulting from increased traffic flows however the scheme reduces inappropriate traffic through residential streets which will mitigate the air quality impacts. Improving traffic flow also has the advantage of improving the fuel efficiency of engines and reducing certain emissions including carbon.

8. Legal Considerations

The lawful implications of the recommendations have been considered and taken into account in the formulation of the recommendations set out above.

9. Risk Management Considerations

The scheme is subject to the normal engineering risks. Optimism bias has been included within the scheme estimate.

10. Public Health Impact

The scheme will be subject to a three phase (preliminary, detailed and post construction) Road Safety Audit (RSA) process. The design is currently within the preliminary phase and items of discussion include the safe use of roundabouts, and acceptability of proposed departures from design standards. No significant risks to project delivery have been raised.

The scheme includes the provision of a shared pedestrian/cycle path which will encourage travel by sustainable modes between the north east of Exmouth and the Exe Estuary Trail.

The scheme will reduce inappropriate traffic from residential areas and hence lead to an improvement in air quality.

11. Options and Alternatives

Initial Option Development

An Option Assessment Report has been produced which considered potential sustainable options such as improving existing highway, walking and cycling, bus and rail. It was concluded that it is unlikely that any of these measures in isolation would achieve the removal of inappropriate traffic from residential areas of Exmouth and assist in promoting future development.

The initial options were then narrowed down to four – construct Dinan Way Extension, increase capacity of trains, modify bus routes on highway, and Do Nothing. These were weighted against the criteria of amenity and safety of the transport network particularly residential roads, impact on economic activity, impact on delivery of residential development, impact on delivery of industrial development and impact on the existing Dinan Way. The assessment scored highest in favour of constructing the Dinan Way Extension.

Design Options

A number of options were then considered relating to route alignments of the proposed Dinan Way. These were narrowed down to the south route and valley route options which were presented to the public during June 2015.

The current approved alignment along Wotton Valley was reassessed and discarded due to its adverse impact upon the environment.

The carriageway width of 6.5m was chosen over 7.3m to minimise the impact of the proposal on the heritage assets, landscape and land requirements. In addition the design standards have been relaxed and junction size kept to the minimum requirements.

The selected design option provides a proposal that considers the feedback received. This modified design is included in Appendix 4.

12. Reason for Recommendation

The scheme is required in order to:

- Provide a route of appropriate standard to connect the A376 and Dinan Way distributor road. Thus, providing a high quality continuous link to the large residential and employment areas on the northern edge of Exmouth.
- Improve safety and amenity around the existing highway network in and around Exmouth.
- Mitigate the impact of new developments.
- Fulfil the requirements of the emerging Local Plan.

Dave Black
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Electoral Divisions: Exmouth Halsdon and Woodbury, Exmouth Brixington and Withycombe, and Exmouth Littleham and Town

Cabinet Member for Economy, Growth and Cabinet Liaison for Exeter: Councillor Andrew Leadbetter

Strategic Director, Place: Heather Barnes

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for enquiries: Anjumn Kanani

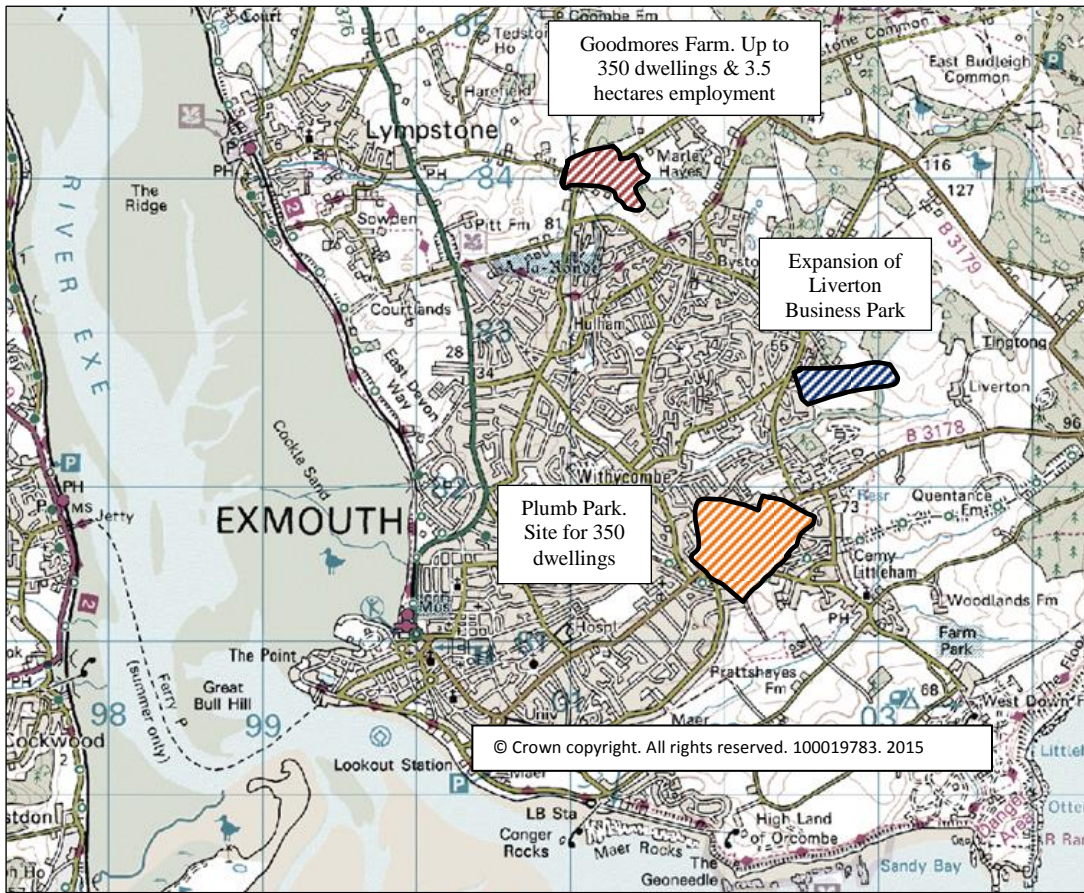
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Tel No: (01392) 383000

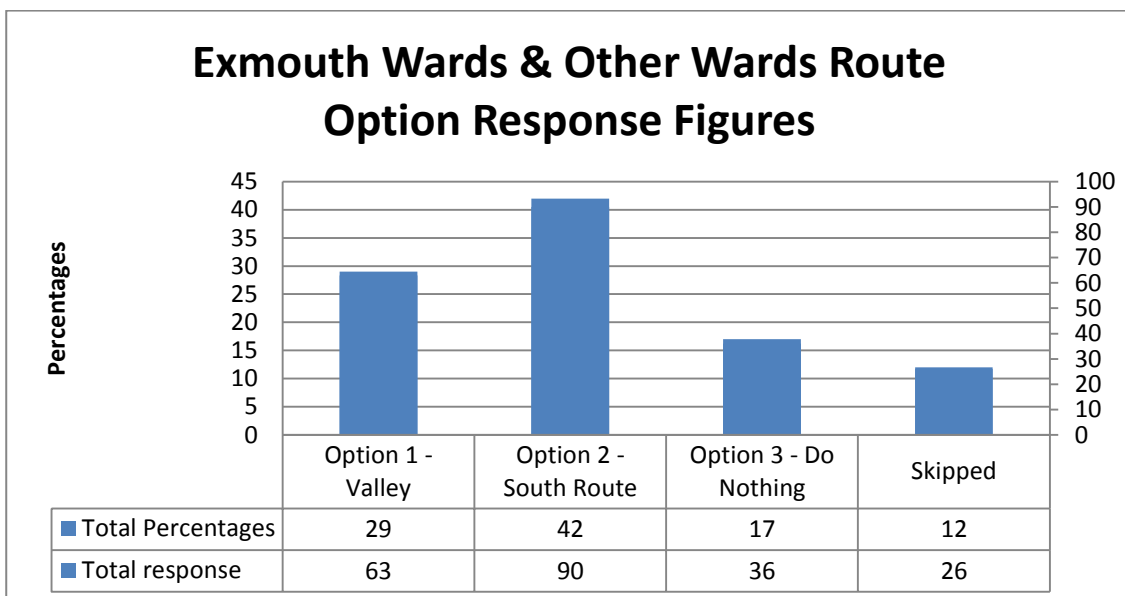
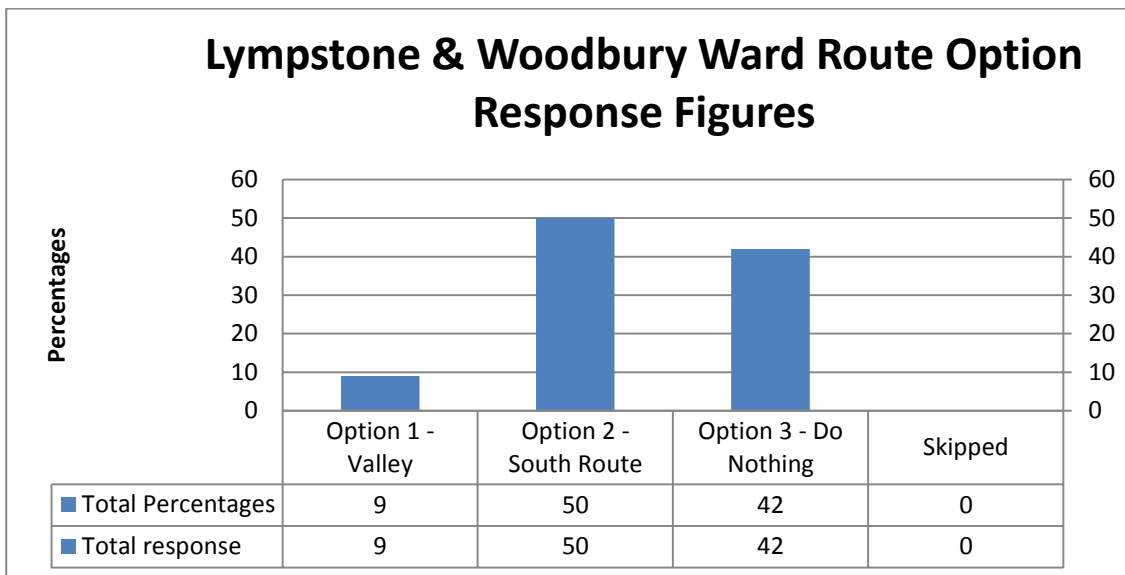
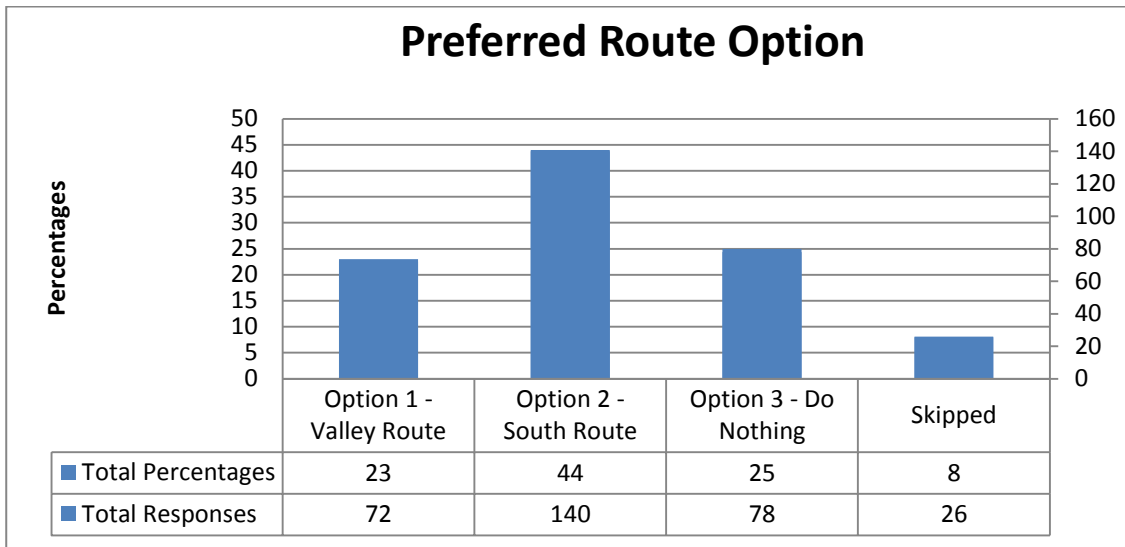
Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
Impact Assessment	December 2015	http://www.devon.gov.uk/cma.htm (alongside report PTE/16/2)

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**Appendix 1
To HCW/16/2**



Planned Development in Exmouth



Background

Public consultations were held at Brixington and Lympstone in June 2015, documents were also made available via the internet. Three options were consulted on 1) Valley option, 2) South option 3) Do Nothing option. Of the total 316 questionnaires received, 44% were in favour of the South option, 23% for the Valley option, and 25% the Do Nothing option. The remaining 8% had not answered. Key reasons for the public's preference of the South option included the reduced physical impact on the landscape, ecological impact, and cost (*Consultation Summary Report - Appendix A*).

Historic England, National Trust and EDDC are not in support of the South option, referencing its proximity to A la Ronde and other listed properties, and the various impacts/effects this would likely have. The Valley option was seen to be less contentious; however, concern over potential landscape impact due to embankment size has been noted, along with the need to further develop the Valley option alongside other options – particularly further north, and their assessment against heritage and environmental factors.

DCC acknowledge the weight given to heritage under the planning policy framework, and understand the importance of preserving such assets. The outcome of the consultation and preference for the South option is something DCC recommend be reconsidered, though in doing so one needs to be wary not only of the movement away from the very attributes that made this route so popular but also the more secure spacial strategy the South route affords - keeping to existing boundaries the South option eradicates potential for development infill (concern shared by National Trust and Historic England), and any risk of merging Exmouth with Lympstone. It is also the preferred option of Pitt Farm's residents – a sensitive matter in itself. Broadly, from a network sense the South option keeps status quo, alleviating much local concern.

Rationale for the continued modification of the proposed routes

Alignments north of Summer Lane are contentious, however those north of Pitt Farm such as the previously considered Wotton alignment have complexities that may affect the efficient operation of the link, conflict with Lympstone's Neighbourhood Plan, and are not supported by Lympstone Parish and District Councillors nor local residents.

- 50% of Lympstone's votes were for the South option, with almost all of the remaining votes (41%) in support of the Do Nothing option.
- Responses also focus on the detrimental impact of the Wotton Valley and interruption of the countryside, affecting the village's character/heritage. Any route within the floodplain would require extensive engineering measures, further questioning the environmental acceptability of such routes.
- Lympstone has voiced these concerns since the scheme's conception, and has recently made clear in its neighbourhood plan that, though the need for the link is necessary it should be situated on the south side of the Valley (Exmouth) and should **not** form the basis for ribbon development either side.
- Distance between new junction and Saddler Arms Cross insufficient for correct operation (lack of stacking length)

A compromise is proposed. Whilst there is a clear desire within Lympstone to keep the option as far south and away from Lympstone as possible, these views have to be balanced against heritage/cultural aspects which carry weight under planning terms.

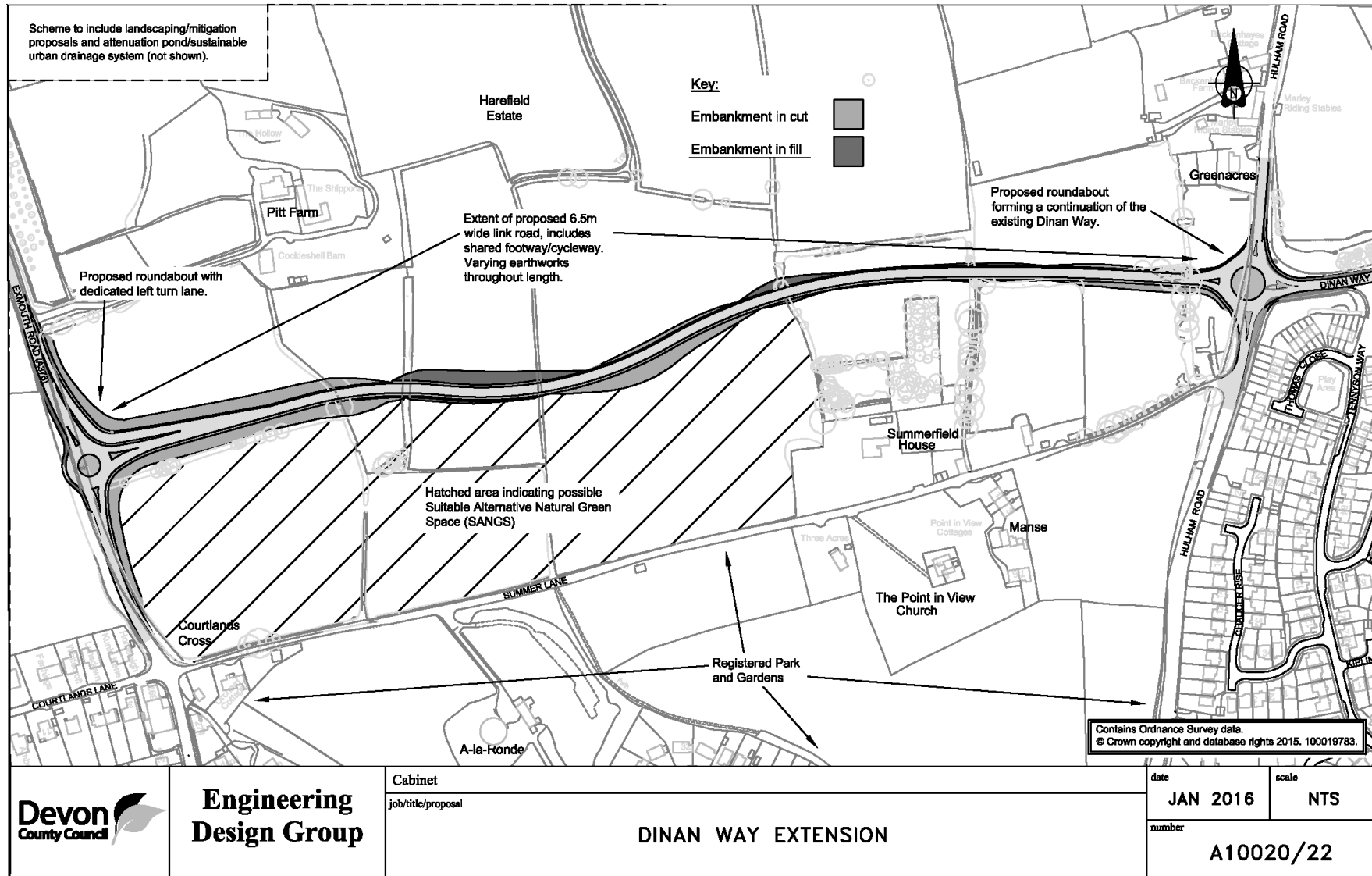
In light of this, DCC have developed a new alignment in collaboration with EDDC which aims at minimising obtrusion and thus the negative effect upon such assets and the wider landscape context. The revised alignment known as the Modified Valley option is considered deliverable subject to certain audits. The route assumes departures, and keeps to existing land contours as closely as possible, allowing for large reductions in earthworks, also keeping cost down. Its junction is kept away from Summer Lane so as to minimise impact on the views from A la Ronde or the Summer Lane entrance. It also maximises the benefits of existing landscape features by utilising existing vegetation to shield the proposal.

Continued Development

It is acknowledged by both DCC and EDDC that the alignment itself will need to be supported by a complete approach to mitigation, developed with key stakeholders, backed with adequate appraisal. DCC, in partnership with EDDC and stakeholders will work towards and explore:

- Relocation of National Trust Car Park
- Correct, sympathetic use of SUDS, screening – including noise
- The use and designation of any land between Summer Lane and the proposed option. Including the possibility of 'Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space' (SANGS) designation, providing a pleasing area, keeping in character with existing surroundings.
- The adequate appraisal of other options including those north of Pitt Farm to support the decision making process.

Appendix 4
To HCW/16/2



**Engineering
Design Group**

Cabinet

job/title/proposal

DINAN WAY EXTENSION

date

JAN 2016

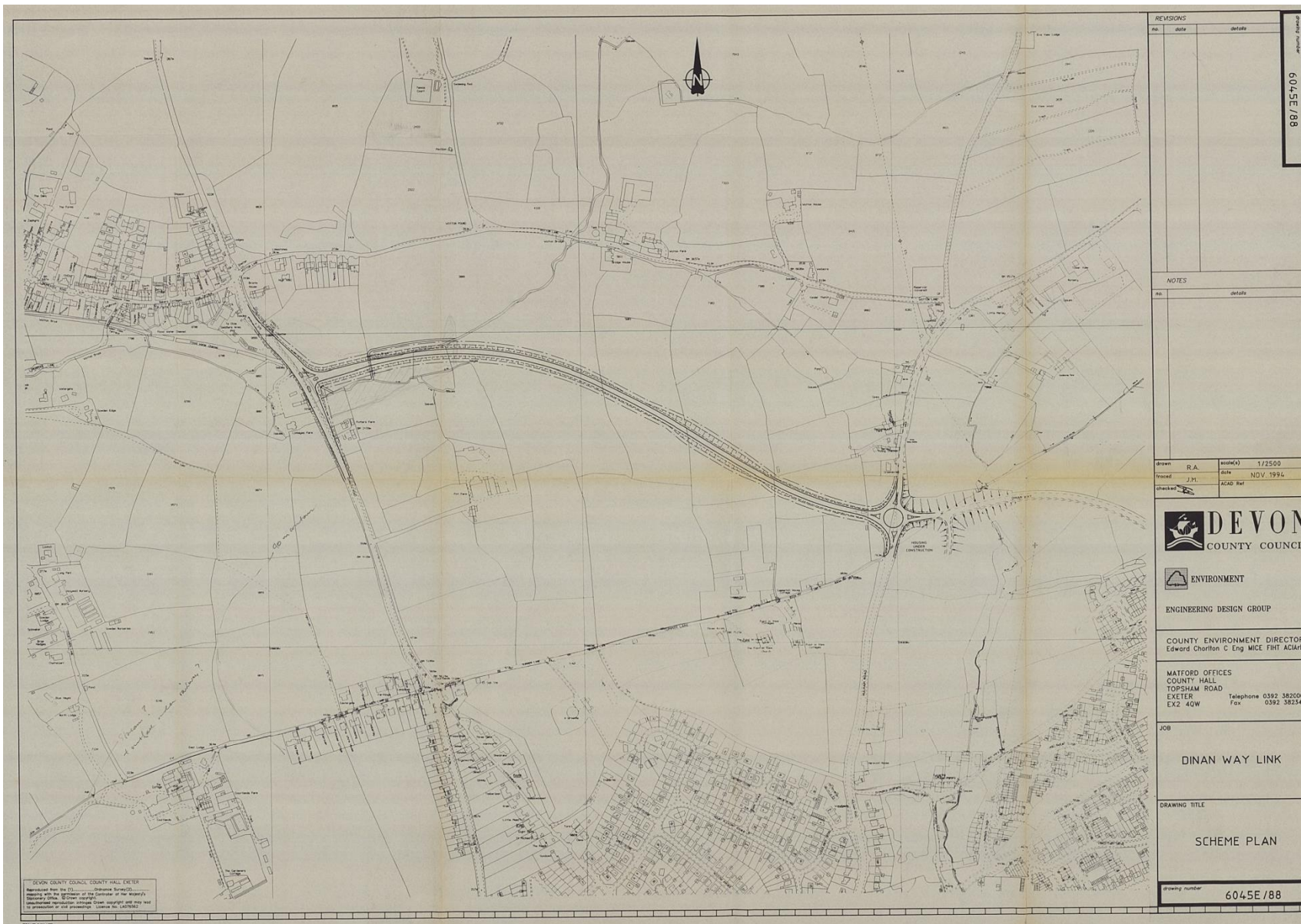
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A10020/22

Appendix 5 To HCW/16/2



REVISIONS		
no.	date	details

6045E/88

NOTES		
no.	details	

Drawn	R.A.	scale(s)	1:2500
Traced	J.M.	date	NOV. 1994
Checked	ACAD	Ref	

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DINAN WAY LINK

DRAWING TITLE

SCHEME PLAN

Drawing number 6045E/88

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