

## **Extension of Exe Estuary Walking and Cycling Route through Dawlish Warren and to Dawlish Town Centre**

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.***

### **Recommendations:**

- (a) that the scheme designs shown in Appendix I as drawing numbers B15014\_12 and 13, be approved for construction at an estimated cost of £760,000;**
- (b) that the Head of Planning, Transportation and the Environment, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highway Management and Flood Prevention and the Local County Council Member, be given delegated authority to make minor amendments to the scheme design.**

### **1. Summary**

This report seeks approval for two proposed schemes in Dawlish Warren and Dawlish town centre to complete the Exe Estuary walking and cycling route from Exeter through Dawlish Warren to Dawlish town centre.

### **2. Introduction**

The Exe Estuary trail has recently been extended following the opening of the key sections between Turf Lock and Powderham, Hazelwood Drive in Dawlish Warren, and most recently Exeter Road in Dawlish. The Exeter Road improvements were part of a scheme approved by Cabinet in November 2015 including a further section at Lanherne that is currently nearing completion.

There are some existing off-road sections between Dawlish Warren and Dawlish, but there is no safe and attractive cycle link into the town centre itself. This means that Dawlish is potentially losing out on the economic benefits created by the Exe Estuary route and the many thousands of people who use the route each year. The schemes in this report complete the route between Dawlish Warren and Piermont Place in Dawlish town centre, forming part of the successful CCF (Coastal Communities Fund) bid awarded in January 2015.

The planned improvements make an important contribution to making Dawlish town centre more attractive and accessible for both local people and visitors to the town centre. They will help to encourage more local people to walk or cycle to the town centre and rail station instead of using the car. This will help to reduce the traffic impact of the significant growth in housing in the Elm Grove Road / Secmaton Lane area of Dawlish (see plan in Appendix I), linking to the existing route along Elm Grove Road and planned extensions through the Local Plan allocation.

Longer term plans to extend the route through Dawlish and on to Teignmouth will provide further opportunities to cycle from other parts of the town to the Community College, helping

to reduce the traffic impact of peak time trips as well as long term health benefits. This will link up with long term plans to complete the Teign Estuary walking and cycling route to Newton Abbot

Other elements of the CCF funded package include contributions towards a cycle hire facility including electric bikes at Dawlish Warren, additional cycle parking facilities in Dawlish town centre and a heritage interpretation trail that encourages visitors to explore the town centre including the museum once they've arrived. A CCF revenue funded element of the project includes working with local businesses to make the most of the opportunities opened up by the route, supporting local events and publicity.

### **3. Proposal**

All the works in this report are proposed to be carried out between September 2016 and January 2017. They have been programmed to deliver the schemes outside of the main tourist season to minimise disruption whilst also meeting the timescale conditions of the CCF grant.

#### **Dawlish Warren (drawing number B15014\_12)**

Within Dawlish Warren the scheme involves the creation of advisory cycle lanes on Dawlish Warren Road, a new mini roundabout at the junction of Dawlish Warren Road, Mount Pleasant Road and Beach Road and an area of shared footway cycleway in Beach Road.

This is achieved by removing the central splitter islands on Dawlish Warren Road, retaining the speed tables, removing the central hatching and marking new cycle lanes either side of the carriageway. A new speed table will be installed in Beach Road and an additional road hump on Mount Pleasant Road.

The scheme creates a continuous cycle route to standards suitable for family users and fills a missing gap in the existing off-road sections, one of which was recently extended to Hazelwood Drive using CCF funding. The scheme also improves the currently difficult and poorly signed manoeuvres for cyclists at the junction of Beach Road and Dawlish Warren Road in both directions.

#### **Dawlish Town Centre**

This final phase of the route in Dawlish town centre is aimed at improving the experience for both pedestrians and cyclists with the primary objective of easier access to town centre shops, thereby supporting local businesses. An extension to the current works adjacent to Exeter Road will bring the route to the steps leading to Richmond Place. The existing steps will be taken out and replaced with wider ones and a lower gradient. A wide wheel ramp will be installed to one side of the steps to enable cyclists to push bikes alongside the steps.

The existing pavement in Station Road, between the station and Piermont Place will be widened on the west side and along the northern side of Piermont Place in front of the cafés and amusement arcade, enabling pedestrians to have better connectivity between shops and refreshment facilities in the Strand and sea front. The additional space for the pavement in Piermont Place will be achieved by removing the underused pavement opposite side of the road to the cafés.

Cyclists and pedestrians will also be guided along a widened section of Station Road, from the junction of Station Road and Piermont Place in front of the rail viaduct, to a new Tiger crossing into Tuck's Plot. The footpath on the Tucks Plot side of the water will be widened to 4m to improve access for cyclists and pedestrians.

#### **4. Consultations**

The CCF bid was compiled in conjunction with Dawlish Town Council, Teignbridge District Council and Sustrans. Representatives from all three organisations along with Devon County Council and the Town Centre Manager form the project board for the CCF, reporting back directly to their organisations on scheme details and progress. The Sustrans officer employed as part of the project has worked closely with local businesses and other parts of the community to keep them informed about the scheme and feedback issues and concerns to the Project Board.

Local businesses in Piermont Place have been consulted extensively on the proposed changes to the loading and bus parking bays and have not indicated any significant concerns.

A presentation to Dawlish Town Council was made on the 6 July 2016 which received a positive response. The council is contributing £10,000 towards the project.

#### **5. Financial Considerations**

The total estimated cost of the scheme is £760,000, which will be funded as follows:

Section 106	£138,732
Coastal Communities Fund	£541,839
Community Infrastructure Levy	£50,000
Dawlish Town Council	£10,000
Local Transport Plan	£19,429

#### **6. Environmental Impact Considerations**

The scheme will be built predominantly within the existing highways boundary; therefore will have minimal environmental impacts.

A section of the scheme running through Lanherne will enlarge the current footprint of the highway at the steps leading into Richmond Place, remove part of an existing wall and some existing trees. A planning application has been submitted to Teignbridge District Council for the works, as shown in Appendix I on drawing no B15014\_12.

#### **7. 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.

In progressing this particular scheme, an Impact Assessment has been prepared which has been circulated separately to Cabinet Members and also is available on the Council's website at: <https://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/exe-estuary-cycle-and-walking-route-extension-dawlish/>, which Members will need to consider for the purposes of this item.

This concluded that while there are a number of challenges to delivering access for all on such a steeply graded route and local environment, the net impact was a substantial improvement and widening of access to larger groups of people. Where the route was not suitable for a user, an alternative signed option would be provided and the availability of bus services parallel to the route highlighted.

## **8. Legal Considerations**

The lawful implications and consequences of the proposals have been considered and taken into account in the preparation of this report.

Revised traffic orders have been advertised but the consultation period will not have been completed before Cabinet considers this report. Any significant objections will be considered by Teignbridge HATOC at its meeting in November 2016.

## **9. Risk Management Considerations**

Standard engineering risk allowances have been built into the cost estimates to allow for unforeseen cost risks.

## **10. Public Health Impact**

The scheme is likely to have a positive public health impact by encouraging increased levels of walking and cycling with associated health benefits. The scheme is not just aimed at bringing visitors into the town centre. It forms part of an expanding network which is planned to connect up new and existing residential areas in the town with key facilities including the rail station, town centre, primary schools and the Community College as well as enabling town residents to access the Exe Estuary Trail without needing a car. It will therefore help to improve the health of a wide range of people within the town.

The route also runs through the Dawlish Air Quality Management Area and will support the action plan to address the air quality issues which affect people's health.

## **11. Options/Alternatives**

The possible options of a completely on-road cycle lane were considered, but the recommended scheme is considered to be the best solution for the age groups and experience of cyclists likely to be using the facility.

The option of a ramp from Lanherne down to the rail station car park was considered at a very early stage. This was however rejected on the basis that Network Rail are unlikely to agree to the significant loss of station car parking spaces and the scheme costs would be unaffordable. The anticipated design would also not offer significant benefits over and above the proposed scheme and therefore would not be value for money.

## 12. Reason for Recommendations

The proposed measures will improve safety for cyclists and pedestrians using this route and will encourage more local journeys to be made by sustainable means.

The scheme will also support the local economy by encouraging more visitor trips to Dawlish town centre.

Dave Black  
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

### **Electoral Division: Dawlish**

Cabinet Member for Highway Management and Flood Prevention: Councillor Stuart Hughes

*Strategic Director, Place: Heather Barnes*

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Ref
Impact Assessment	August 2016	<a href="https://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/exe-estuary-cycle-and-walking-route-extension-dawlish/">https://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/exe-estuary-cycle-and-walking-route-extension-dawlish/</a>

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Appendix I  
To PTE/16/44







