

Cabinet
13 September 2017

Newton Abbot East-West Cycle Route Phase 2

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: It is recommended that:

- (a) the scheme shown on Plan number BB2300384 REV1 in Appendix I is approved for construction at an estimated cost of £1.45m;
- (b) delegated authority is given to the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment, in consultation with relevant Cabinet Member and Local Member, to approve minor changes to the scheme design.

1. Summary

This report seeks approval to construct a shared use path to provide a high quality walking and cycling route along Ashburton Road, Newton Abbot. This will form a sustainable transport corridor connecting existing and planned housing developments to the secondary schools, railway station, local amenities, town centre and the rest of the town's cycle network.

2. Background/Introduction

Newton Abbot is expanding, with more than 4,000 new homes planned for the next 20 years, including those recently constructed. A significant number of these are to the west of Newton Abbot (existing development is on the A383 Ashburton Road corridor), including the new developments of Houghton Barton and Hele Park. These are within walking and / or cycling distance of key traffic generating facilities such as the secondary schools, employment areas (e.g. Brunel Industrial Estate) as well as the railway station for onward services to Exeter, Torbay and Plymouth. The station will benefit from improved Devon Metro services to Exeter and Torbay from December 2018 and it is important to ensure that there are good local connections to it.

The significant levels of growth planned for the town will place further pressure on the already busy local roads, particularly in peak periods. Walking and cycling will therefore need to play an increasingly important part, whether as the whole trip or a link to public transport, in accommodating this growth in trips on the network. The County Council is developing a network of cycle routes across the town to provide links to all the key destinations. The East-West route connecting development on the A383 Ashburton Road with the rest of the network is a major element of this. This busy corridor will need to accommodate a high level of additional peak trips from the new developments and it is essential that as many as possible of the shorter trips are made by non-car modes, particularly those to and from the secondary schools on the route.

Phase 1 improvements on Ashburton Road between Greenaway Road and Exeter Road in Newton Abbot were constructed in 2015, building on previous improvements around Coombeshead College. The scheme included in this report (Phase 2) will complete the

route between Greenaway Road and Mile End Road. A further report will be brought to Cabinet or Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC) for the remaining improvements between Coombeshead College and the Jetty Marsh roundabout (Phase 3). The proposed shared path and crossings will offer pedestrians and cyclists of all ages a safe, segregated, convenient and direct route, particularly for children travelling to local schools.

3. Proposal

It is proposed to construct 1.2km of pathway improvements along Ashburton Road, between Greenaway Road and Mile End Road. The existing footway would be widened to a minimum of 3m to provide sufficient space for pedestrians and cyclists to use the space safely together.

An overview of the design is shown in Appendix I in four A4 plans.

The works are known as Phase 2 and will be constructed in two stages; Phase 2A and Phase 2B. Phase 2A is approximately 200m in length and will include the section between Greenaway Road and Oak Park Road, and is planned to be constructed before March 2018. Phase 2B will cover the remaining extent, approximately 1km, with the programme for delivery likely to follow in 2018/19 subject to further consideration of traffic management options.

As part of Phase 2A, junction improvements will be made at Greenaway Road and Mapleton Close, in the form of raised crossings, and a new puffin crossing provided on Ashburton Road near to Broadlands Avenue to replace the existing uncontrolled crossing with refuge island. Parking restrictions are also proposed within 10m of the Greenaway Road junction to reduce the conflict between motorists and pedestrians, and to make it safer for pedestrian and cyclists to cross the road. An overview of the scheme layout and proposals are shown in Appendix I, drawing Sheet 4.

Phase 2B, as shown in Appendix I Sheets 2, 3 and 4 will include junction improvements at Oak Park Road, Laurie Lane and Elmwood Avenue, in the form of raised crossings, removal of bus lay-bys, installation of an uncontrolled crossing with refuge island to better connect with Barton Drive and road widening located between Barton Drive and Elmwood Avenue to enable a minimum 3m shared path for the full length of the scheme.

4. Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

Meetings with Teignbridge District Council and local County Council members have taken place. A leaflet (dated June 2017) providing information on the East West Cycle Route was produced and distributed to residents and businesses within 50m of Ashburton Road for the length of the scheme. In addition to this, a website has been set up containing this information and will provide any future updates. The website address is <https://new.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/traffic-information/transport-planning/newton-abbot-east-west-shared-use-path/>.

There has been, and will continue to be, close interaction with the Neighbourhood and Street Lighting teams in DCC to co-ordinate other maintenance activities with the cycle route works. Opportunities are being explored to combine upgrades to street lighting, drainage improvements and carriageway resurfacing along the route.

Certain residents living along the route have also been contacted directly by letter to explain specific issues that may affect them including vegetation clearance.

A number of flat top road humps are proposed at side roads to Ashburton Road which require advertisement and a statutory consultation period. Modifications to, and installations of, pedestrian and cycle crossings also require advertisement.

As part of the Phase 2A improvements, approval was given by Teignbridge Highways and Traffic Orders Committee (HATOC) on 13th July 2017 to advertise the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) to restrict parking at the junction with Greenaway Road, the raised crossings at Greenaway Road and Mapleton Close, and the new puffin crossing of Ashburton Road. These were advertised to the public on 4 August 2017. Any valid objections will be dealt with at HATOC in November 2017, or by the HATOC Chair and local Member.

During the detailed design of Phase 2B approval will be sought from HATOC for the TROs, the raised crossings on Oak Park Road, Laurie Lane and Elmwood Avenue before construction of this section can commence.

5. Financial Considerations

The overall construction cost of Phase 2 is estimated to be £1.45m.

The funding will come from a number of sources, as summarised in the table below:

Funding Source:	Contribution (£)
Local Transport Plan	790,930
National Productivity Investment Fund (2017/18)	300,000
Teignbridge District Council CIL	180,000
S106 Agreements	179,070

6. Environmental Impact Considerations

Proposals that increase the attractiveness of cycling and walking compared to other modes are likely to help reduce the growth of car use, reduce carbon emissions and improve air quality.

Shared use paths encourage and empower less confident cyclists to travel by bicycle and, compared to cycling on the road, it is usually safer, especially for children. The provision of improved walking and cycle routes to help reduce dependence on private car use is a key element of the County Council's transport policy as set out in the 'Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2026'.

In order to widen part of the footway, it will be necessary to realign the carriageway over a length of approximately 100m. This will require the regrading of an established bank and the removal of trees on the southern side of Ashburton Road. Investigations have identified that the existing trees are planted in two rows, a number of which are in poor condition, and only the trees nearest the road will be removed. This means that the row of trees furthest from the road will be retained, which will be managed and pruned. Along with some infill planting, this will ensure that the screen is strengthened and enhanced. Once the road has been realigned and the bank regraded, it will be replanted with trees to offset those that have been lost.

A further area of vegetation is designated for removal, by the western entrance to Applegarth Close, to allow widening of the existing footway. To minimise the impact of this work, a number of tree pits are planned in what will be a wide shared path area to allow the planting of suitable replacements in keeping with the area which can be easily maintained.

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.

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: <https://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/cycle-route-newton-abbot-east-to-west-phase-2/>, which Members will need to consider for the purposes of this item.

The proposal meets equality requirements in numerous ways, for example, it will:

- Provide an improved route not just for cyclists, but also other non-motorised users.
- Allow people who use wheelchairs or people pushing prams to have easier access across side roads, which may improve their experiences of travelling to access the local amenities.
- Serve a number of schools/college and community centres and will thereby offer safer routes for young people.
- Enable disadvantaged groups to gain access to training and employment opportunities.
- Enable people of all ages to enjoy being active for leisure and sport.
- Improve access to help people better connect with their communities and engage in social activities.
- Contribute to physical and mental health and wellbeing among the older population by providing an active means of independent mobility.
- Help to tackle health problems, such as those associated with obesity.
- Promote sustainable transport to have a positive effect on air quality for all.
- Improved access to bus stops.

8. Legal Considerations

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

When making a Traffic Regulation Order it is the County Council's responsibility to ensure that all relevant legislation is complied with. This includes Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 that states that it is the duty of a local authority, so far as practicable, secures the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic and provision of parking facilities.

It is considered that the shared path construction and road narrowing proposals comply with Section 122 of the Act as they will seek to encourage sustainable modes of travel and expected to reduce vehicle speeds respectively which will reduce CO2 emissions and improve air quality.

9. Risk Management Considerations

No risks have been identified.

10. Public Health Impact

There is clear evidence that demonstrates the clear links between increased cycling and improved public health, including lower death rates and lower risk of heart problems and depression. The proposal will have a positive impact by encouraging more people to walk and cycle, both as a standalone trip and as part of a longer public transport trip. It will also have a positive effect in reducing CO2 and other airborne pollutants. The support of active travel, such as walking and cycling, is identified in the Devon 'Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016–19' as one of the achievements from the 2013-16 strategy and so play a part to enable people to stay healthy for longer and reduce the long term burden on the NHS.

The scheme is subject to Road Safety Auditing. A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been undertaken and a Stage 2 Audit will be undertaken for the detailed designs and any items raised will be addressed before construction. Following construction, a Stage 3 Audit will be undertaken to assess the completed scheme and its impact on users from a safety perspective.

11. Options/Alternatives

Cyclists are currently required to cycle in the road with no separate marked lanes for the majority of the route, and without these improvements sustainable travel is not increased, particularly for school children. There is insufficient width along the majority of the route to implement on road cycle lanes of a suitable width.

If improvements were not to go ahead, there would likely be increases in the number of short vehicle trips on corridors such as Ashburton Road which are a particular cause of congestion in peak periods.

Alternative cycle routes through parallel residential areas were investigated but were not considered suitable due to the lack of a direct and attractive route including steepness of paths.

The option of not removing the trees on the southern side of Ashburton Road was considered. This in turn would mean not realigning the carriageway and removing the ability to widen the footpath to a sufficient width to allow cycling. This would leave an approx. 100m gap requiring cyclists to dismount and push their cycles. This may not be well observed and cause conflict and potential safety concerns between pedestrians and cyclists as well as making the total route less attractive and usable. It is considered that the planting mitigation measures adequately compensate for the planting that is removed.

12. Reason for Recommendation/Conclusion

The scheme provides a cost effective means of minimising the future number of short distance car trips along the Ashburton Road corridor associated with current and future development as well as supporting higher levels of physical activity. The proposals offer all user groups better quality cycling routes and crossing points for an increasingly important corridor, providing connections between densely populated residential areas and key work, education and leisure destinations in the town as well as the railway station to connect with the Devon Metro network.

Dave Black
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Electoral Division: Newton Abbot North, Bovey Rural, and Newton Abbot South

Cabinet Member for Highway Management: Councillor Stuart Hughes

Chief Officer for Communities, Public Health, Environment and Prosperity, Dr Virginia Pearson

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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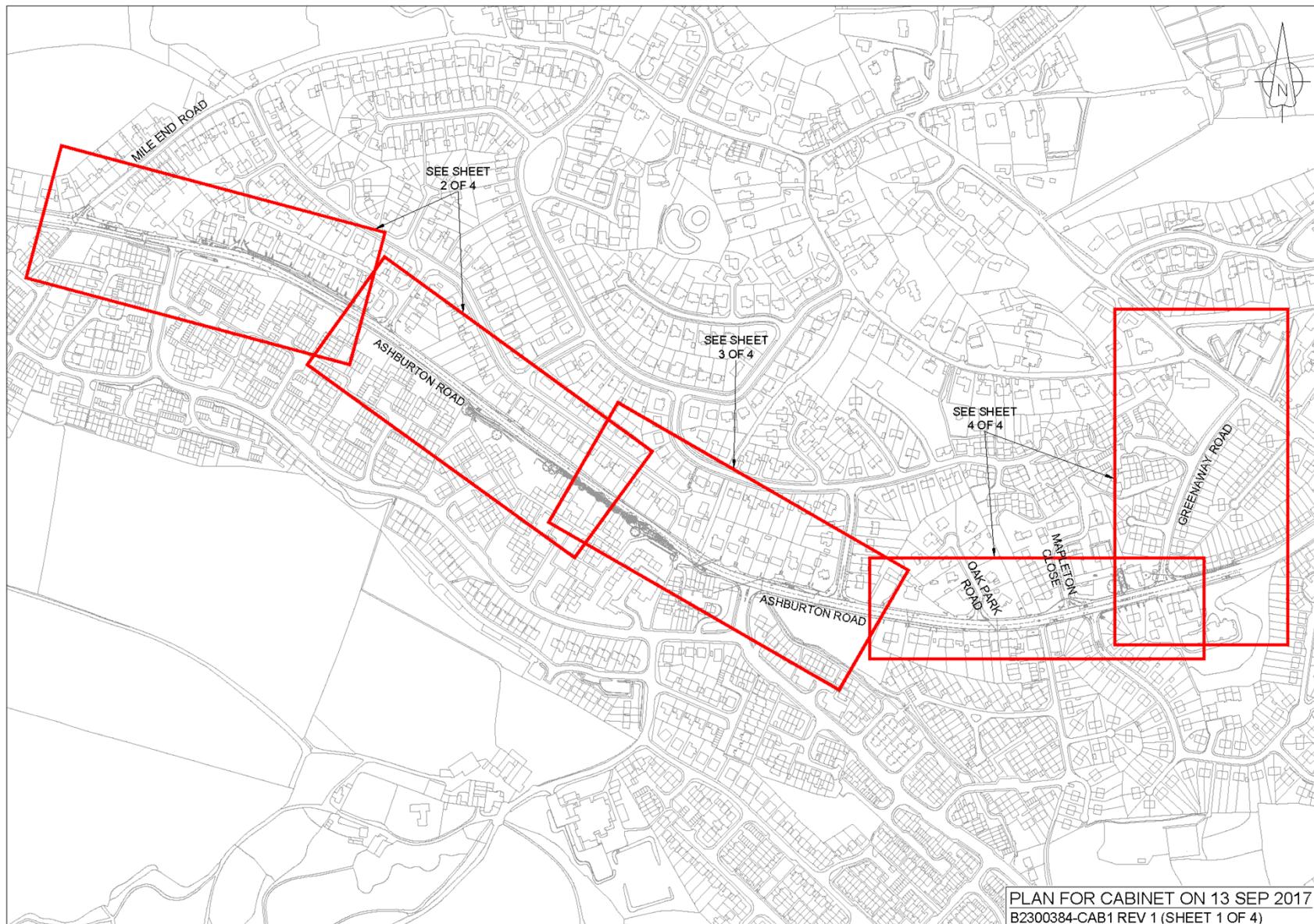
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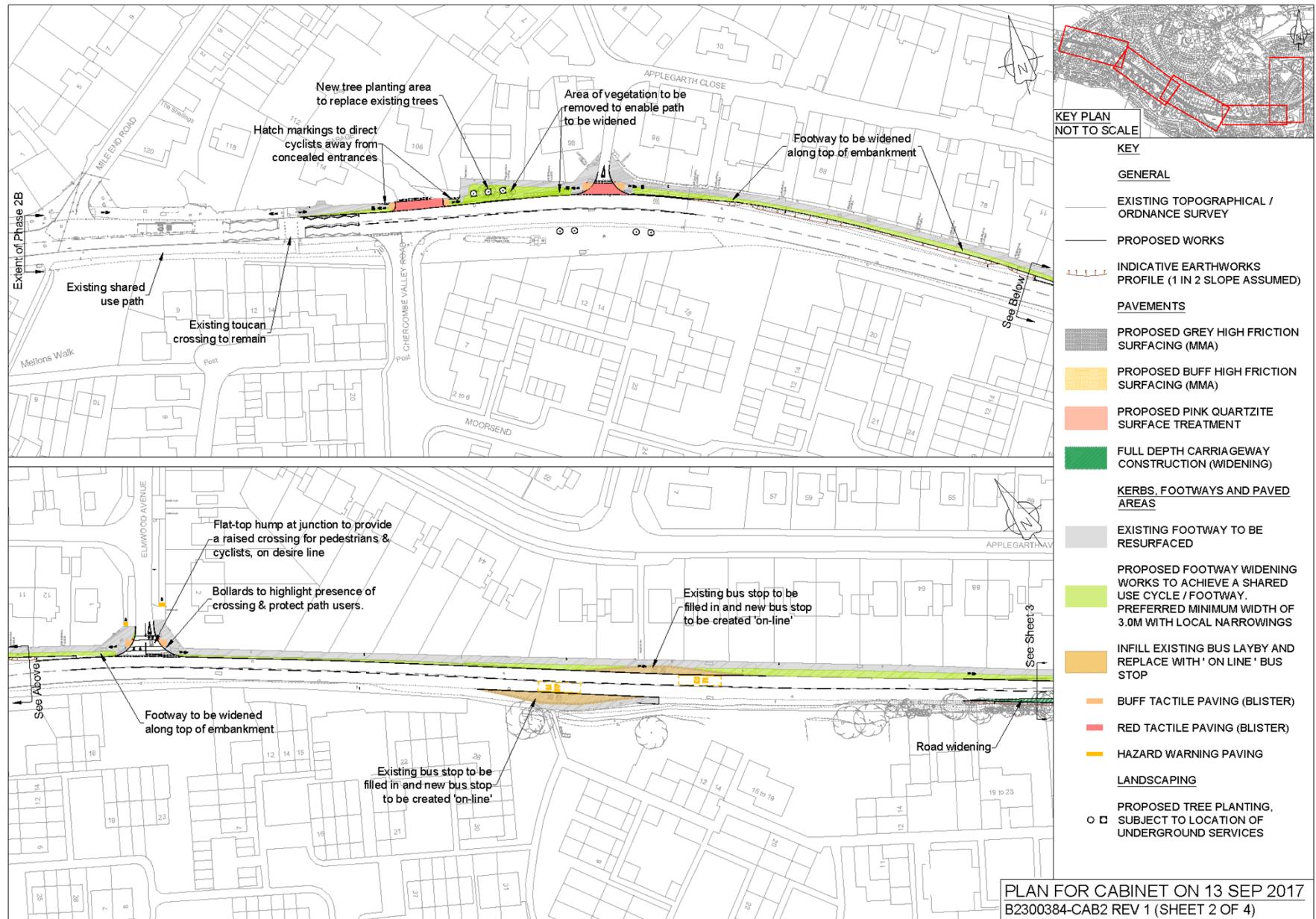
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Background Paper	Date	File Reference
1. Impact Assessment	August 2017	https://new.devon.gov.uk/impact/cycle-route-newton-abbot-east-to-west-phase-2/

aa140817cab Newton Abbot East-West Cycle Route Phase 2
hk 07 290817

Appendix I
To PTE/17/46





PLAN FOR CABINET ON 13 SEP 2017
B2300384-CAB2 REV 1 (SHEET 2 OF 4)

