

E4 Cycle Route (Phase 2) – Cycle and Pedestrian improvements on Pinhoe Road and Exhibition Way, Exeter: Approval to Construct

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: It is recommended that:

- (a) Cabinet approves the construction of an improved pedestrian/cycle route on Pinhoe Road and Exhibition Way, as outlined in Appendices 2A, 2B and 2C, at an estimated cost of £1,544,338;
- (b) any Traffic Regulation Orders required be advertised and, if no objections are received, be made and sealed;
- (c) the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment be given delegated powers, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highway Management and relevant local Members, to make minor amendments to the scheme details;
- (d) the 2019/20 Planning, Transportation and Environment capital programme be increased by £70,000, funded by developer contributions.

1. Summary

The principle of a strategic cycle network for Exeter was endorsed by Cabinet on 8 June 2016. It was also agreed by Cabinet that work should continue with the development of the Network, giving priority to E4 cycle route (see Appendix 1) between Monkerton and the City Centre.

This report seeks approval to construct an improved pedestrian and cycle route on Pinhoe Road and Exhibition Way, which in combination with other Cabinet-approved cycle schemes would complete approximately 2 miles of the E4 route between Redhayes bridge and Beacon Lane.

2. Background/Introduction

The County has a strong record of delivering pedestrian and cycle infrastructure. These high-quality routes in Exeter are particularly well used by a range of users and cycle counters show that this continues to increase. See Appendix 1 for an overview of Exeter's strategic cycle routes.

The E4 route between Redhayes Bridge (Monkerton) and the City Centre and the University's Streatham Campus is designed to deliver a high-quality route for all users. The E4 route has been divided up in four phases to enable earlier progress on less complicated parts of the scheme, which also helps with demonstrating progress to the Department for Transport on this grant-funded project.

In July 2018, Phase 1 of the E4 cycle route was completed along Cumberland Way and Pinhoe Road. This section provided a step-change in cycling and walking facilities with a high-quality bi-directional cycle track segregated from vehicles and pedestrians.

In January 2019, Cabinet approval was given for Phase 3 to construct a pedestrian and cycle bridge across Summer Lane. Construction of this bridge is scheduled to take place in autumn 2019, subject to planning approval (expected March/ April 2019).

Planning permission for Phase 2a for path widening improvements along Exhibition Fields has also been granted and works are currently underway.

This report seeks approval for Phase 2b, which is a 530-metre section from the junction with Pilton Lane on Pinhoe Road up to the railway bridge on the northern end of Exhibition Way. At present, the existing cycle route is a shared use path and includes narrow sections, wide crossing points on side roads and the need to cross both Pinhoe Road and Exhibition Way.

Completion of the above would enable cyclists to have 2 miles of high-quality cycle route between Redhayes Bridge and the entrance to Betty's Mead playing fields on Beacon Lane. Work is ongoing for the last section of route to the city centre.

3. Proposal

An overview of the design for the cycle and pedestrian route on Pinhoe Road and Exhibition Way is shown in Appendices 2A, 2B and 2C.

Pinhoe Road (Appendix 2A)

Continuing from Pilton Lane, the segregated path becomes a wide shared use path, due to the limited land available for additional widening. The transition between shared and segregated use is made obvious through signing and tactile paving.

The crossing of Bakers Way will be a blended crossing which will be a shared-use path priority crossing for cyclists and pedestrians. This type of crossing is considered appropriate where two-way daily traffic into the side road is less than 2,000 vehicles per day, which is the case on this road. To create this priority crossing for cyclists, the radius of the junction itself will be reduced to 6m, with a carriageway width on Bakers Way of 7m. Taking on board feedback following the public consultation and Road Safety Audit a coloured surface will also be applied to the path surface on the crossing.

A new shared signalled crossing (Toucan), better fitting the desire line for cyclists is proposed over Pinhoe Road. The shared use path on Pinhoe Road will have to be narrowed to 3m in width, in order to realign the carriageway and allow for a larger refuge island.

Southern End of Exhibition Way (Appendix 2B)

On the southern end of Exhibition Way up until Pinbrook Road, a two-way segregated cycle track is proposed which would be entirely constructed in the existing carriageway and would be comparable to the Phase 1 section constructed on Cumberland Way. The only difference is that buried services means that on the section between Pinhoe Road and the Aldi side road the pedestrians and cyclists will be segregated on a flush surface (separated by a raised trapezoidal channel block), compared to a kerbed segregation with a level difference between the Aldi and Pinbrook Road section.

At the Aldi and the Pinbrook Road crossings, cyclists and pedestrians will be given priority via a raised table crossing. Due to the volume and type of vehicles at these crossings an impregnated coloured imprint surfacing will be provided on the path surface, with give-way road markings and illuminated signage, and high friction surface on the approaches. This is

comparable to the side road crossings on Cumberland Way and gives clarity as to who has priority in line with latest best practice design guidance.

One tree (London Plane) would be removed from the eastern side of Exhibition Way (nearest Aldi) and one small tree from the western side. Mitigation for this loss of habitat will be undertaken by replanting trees and vegetation in the area.

Northern end of Exhibition Way (Appendix 2C)

The original intention was to create a two-way, segregated cycle route across the entire length of Exhibition Way, which would have meant building out the path 3.5m into the carriageway. Following the public consultation, businesses at the northern end of Exhibition Way expressed their concerns about how this would impact on their operational requirements (involving unusual HGV manoeuvres) as well as issues with loss of parking.

In consultation with the local Member, a compromise to the scheme was put forward, which retains and widens the existing shared-use path north of Pinbrook Road as far as the bridge over the railway.

- This would provide a high quality, segregated, route for most of Exhibition Way with priority crossings for pedestrians and cyclists at side roads.
- Carriageway space north of Pinbrook Road would not be reduced, as the wide shared use path would be provided within the existing verge. This would not disadvantage current businesses.
- The width of the shared use path would be maximised along this section by removing the grass verge.

There are two mature trees along this section of route (one London Plane and one Norway Maple), which will be retained, creating two pinch points for pedestrians and cyclists along the route. Consideration will be given to extending the kerb line around the trees to provide more space for cyclists and pedestrians.

4. Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

Consultation for the Exeter cycle routes began in early 2015 and involved discussions with Local Members, Exeter City Council, cycling groups, Cabinet and the wider public. Through this process, the routes were agreed and prioritised and the approval to undertake design was granted by Cabinet in 2016.

Outline proposals for Pinhoe Road and Exhibition Way were presented together with the proposals for the bridge over Summer Lane as part of a public consultation between 15 October and 19 November 2018. The consultation was posted on the Council's Have Your Say website. Local residents, nearby businesses, stakeholders and a number of community groups were contacted separately as part of this consultation. Proposals were also presented to Exeter HATOC where Members commented on the scheme, noting the provisions for people with disabilities and efforts to remove obstacles as far as practicable. The outcomes of the public consultation have been published on the following website: www.devon.gov.uk/e4/.

For the Pinhoe Road and Exhibition Way element, the responses to the proposals have been mixed. Supporting comments were received on the sections of segregated cycle and pedestrian paths and although some views questioned why this could not be achieved along the whole route, rather than having sections of shared-use path, this was not possible due to the limited land available. Concerns were also received over the clarity on who has priority at the crossings, however, since the consultation phase, vertical signage and coloured

surfacing have been added to the design to provide greater clarity to drivers that pedestrians and cyclists have priority across the side roads. Furthermore, the initial proposal to introduce a cycle only crossing across Pinhoe Road has been changed to a toucan crossing to provide a facility for both cyclists and pedestrians.

Modifications to, and installation of, pedestrian and cycle crossings and one flat top road hump also require advertisement and a statutory consultation period. Any valid objections will be dealt with in consultation with the HATOC Chair and Local Member or by the HATOC.

Following the consultation, further liaison with businesses at the northern end of Exhibition Way has taken place, which has resulted in the design for approval.

5. Financial Considerations

The overall construction cost of the proposal is estimated to be £1,544,338. It forms part of the National Productivity Investment Fund (NPIF) Government Grant package, which has funded other parts of the E4 route in the past 12 months. The total package, which will also see delivery of a new Park and Change near Exeter Science Park and improvements at Moor Lane roundabout, is now estimated at £9.039m, comprising £4.155m grant and £4.884m match funding. This element of the package will be funded £170,797 from NPIF grant and the balance from section 106 contributions received or due, from various developments including Hill Barton Road and Ibstock Brickworks.

6. Environmental Impact Considerations

The scheme will increase the attractiveness of cycling, walking and provide facilities for a range of other users. This will allow better access to the parks in the area and reduce the growths of car use, reduce carbon emissions and limit reduction of air quality.

Ecological surveys have been undertaken for areas where trees are to be removed and vegetation clearance is required. No other protected species are to be affected by the works. Trees will be removed outside of the bird nesting season which is from March to September. If trees are to be removed inside the bird nesting season, then the works need to be undertaken under the supervision of a qualified ecologist.

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.

In progressing this particular scheme element, 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://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/published/>, which Members will need to consider for the purposes of this item.

The proposals meet equality requirements in numerous ways, for example, they will:

- Provide improved routes 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 around the city.
- The route will serve several schools 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.

8. Legal Considerations

The lawful implications/consequences of the proposals/recommendations/proposed course of action have been considered and taken into account in the preparation of this report and formulation of the recommendations set out above.

Statutory consultation is required for the flat-top road hump at the side road crossings. Any valid objections will be dealt with in consultation with the HATOC Chair and Local Member or by the HATOC.

When making a Traffic Regulation Order it is the County Council 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, to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic and provision of parking facilities.

It is considered that the proposals comply with section 122 of the Act as they seek to encourage sustainable modes of travel which will reduce CO2 emissions and improve air quality.

9. Risk Management Considerations

In the development of the project, a series of project risk assessments have been carried out.

A detailed estimate is in place which makes allowance for 20% contingency. There have been productive discussions regarding traffic management, phasing of the works and replacement of signals and streetlighting. There have also with C3 estimates received. South West Water been positive discussions with Statutory Undertakers and we expect the risks to be managed within the total cost of the project.

Small strips of land are required from the Pinhoe Hoard and McCarthy and Stone developments on Pinhoe Road and from Exeter City Council on Exhibition Way. Discussions are at an advanced stage and the extent of land required for highway has been agreed with the landowners, ensuring that it does not impact on their ability to operate their businesses. Budget has been made available and it is expected that deals will be concluded soon and so are not anticipated to present a significant risk to delivery of the scheme.

Construction will be over winter which could delay progress through poor weather. The highest risk activities will be programmed where possible for the optimal weather months in the proposed construction period.

The contract will be sent out to a mini tender between the contractors on the Framework for Minor Engineering Works and a suitable contractor will be selected.

10. Public Health Impact

There are several academic papers and research that demonstrate the clear links between increased cycling and improved public health, including lower death rates and lower risk of heart problems and depression.

Offsetting cars journeys and reducing congestion will contribute to reducing air pollution which is better for cyclists, residents and pedestrians.

11. Discussion

The construction of the proposed walking and cycling route on Pinhoe Road and Exhibition Way supports economic growth, public health and sustainable transport targets. It reflects previous cabinet decisions and is set to provide an improved standard of cycle facility in Exeter and Devon.

12. Options/Alternatives

Several alternatives were considered in the early design stages relating to the type and location of the proposed facility and the state of the existing facilities.

Crossing of Pinhoe Road

Different options for crossing Pinhoe Road into Exhibition Way were considered. One option considered a dedicated, cycle only 'straight across' crossing on the east side of the junction. Pedestrians would need to instead use the existing crossing west of the junction; however, given that it would be on a more direct desire line, many pedestrians would be expected to favour use of the cycle crossing. This would create safety concerns as it would involve people needing to cross the equivalent of approximately 6 lanes of traffic in one go. This may be suitable for faster-moving cyclists but it would not be for slower-moving pedestrians, particularly in an area which may have a higher proportion of elderly people crossing due to the nearby Pinnoc Mews retirement village. The proposed design enables both pedestrians and cyclists to cross safely on the desire line, also minimising impact on capacity of Pinhoe Road, which is a key radial route into the city.

Exhibition Way route

Providing the cycle route along the west side of Exhibition Way was discounted due to the extent of the highway boundary and requirement for 3rd party land.

Constructing a shared-use path along Exhibition Way was ruled out because of the excessive loss of trees and the cost of relocating services but primarily because it did not achieve the segregation of pedestrians and cyclists we were aiming for.

13. Reason for Recommendation/Conclusion

There is a need to encourage more people to take up cycling and walking to support increased physical activity and the continued growth of the city. The proposals offer all user

groups better quality facilities, segregated from traffic and provide linkages between densely populated residential areas and key work, education and leisure destinations.

Progression of this cycle and pedestrian route as part of the E4 route is key to seamlessly joining together other County Council approved sections of the strategic cycle route. It will take advantage of available National Productivity Investment Fund funding and will continue the momentum built with the other sections of the route. The scheme, when completed, could be used as a showcase route to attract further funding, and further underline the Council's proactive approach to enabling and promoting cycling and walking as a key mode of transport.

Dave Black
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Electoral Divisions: All in Exeter

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

Contact for enquiries: Liz Holloway

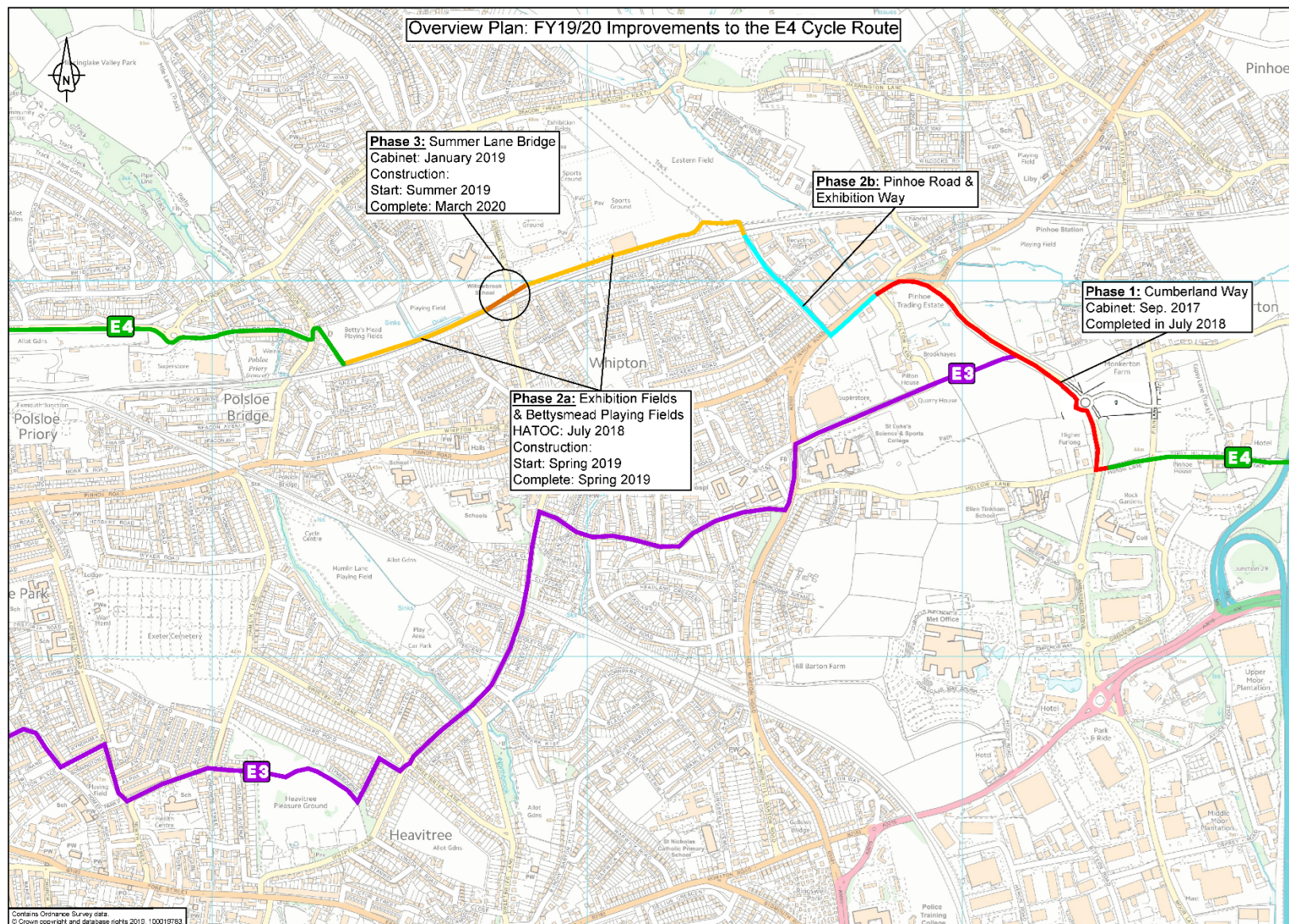
Room No. Lucombe House, County Hall, Exeter, EX2 4QD

Tel No: (01392) 383000

Background Paper	Date	File Reference
Impact Assessment	March 2019	https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/published/

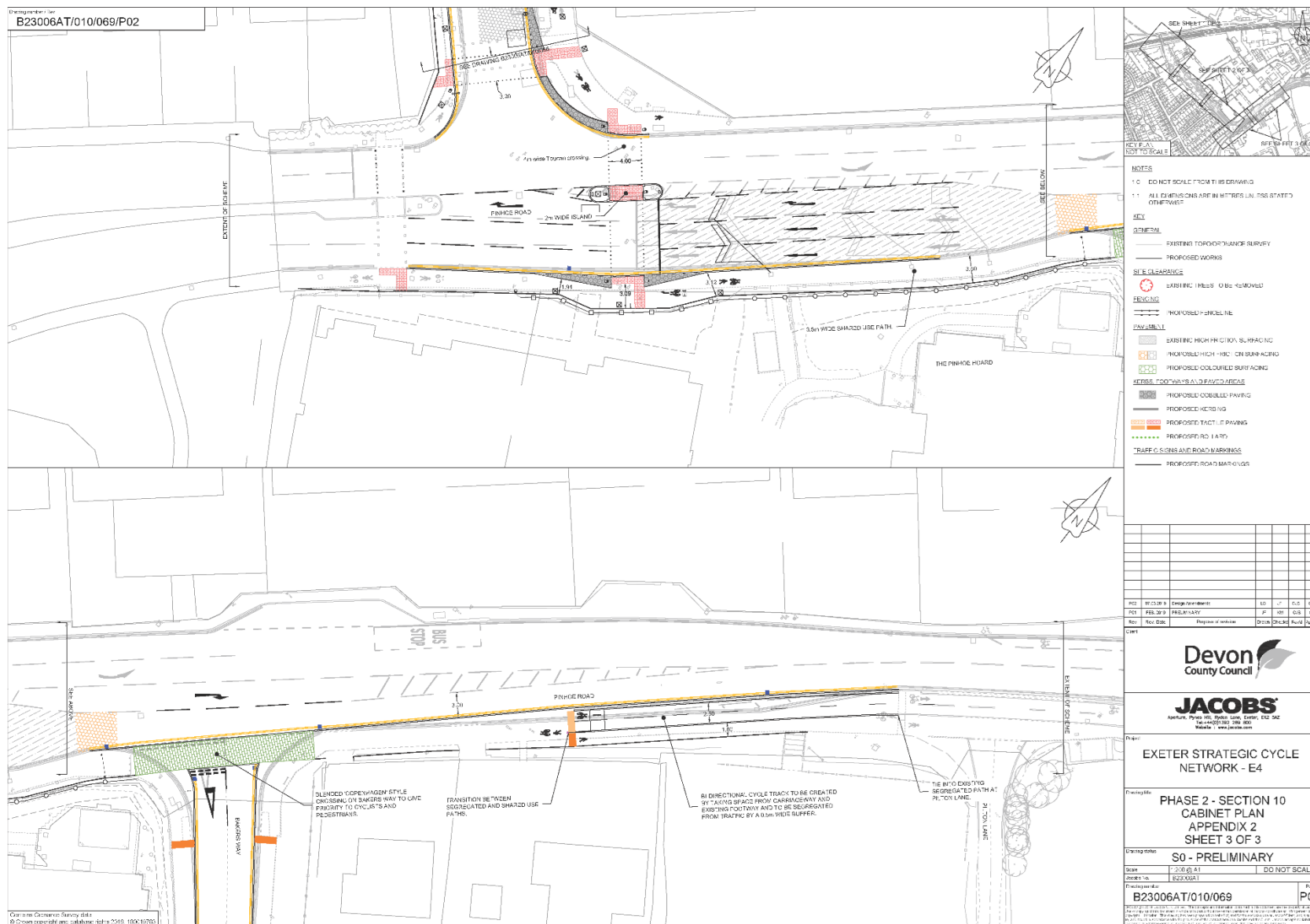
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Appendix 1: Overview of E4 cycle route

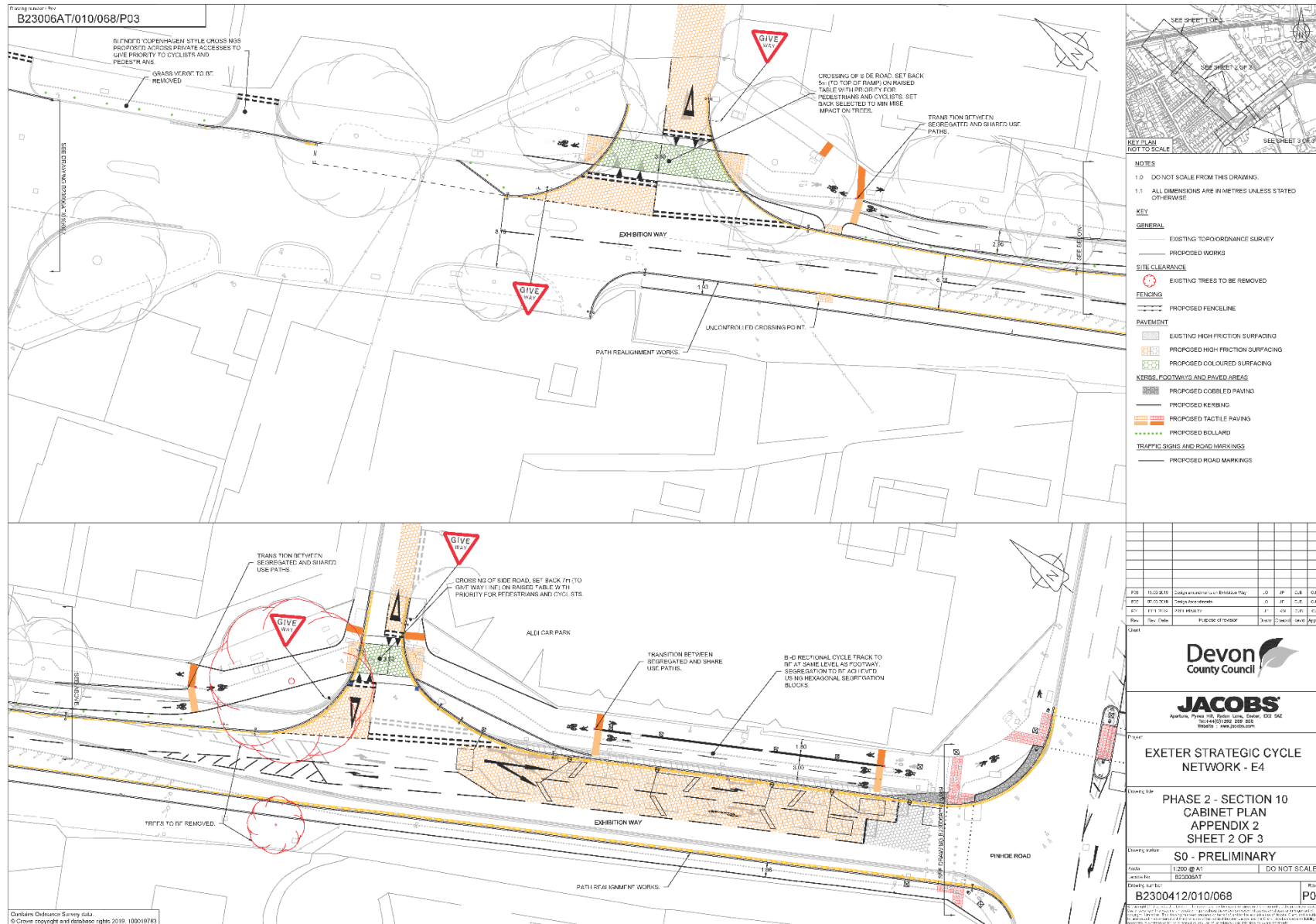


Appendix 2A To PTE/19/18

Appendix 2A: E4 – Pinhoe Road section of route



Appendix 2B: E4 – Exhibition Way section of route (Pinhoe Road to Pinbrook Road)



Appendix 2C To PTE/19/18

Appendix 2C: E4- Exhibition Way section of route (Pinbrook Road to railway bridge)

