

**Newton Abbot East-West Strategic Active Travel Corridor: Exeter Road and Jetty Marsh Road Toucan Crossings**

Report of the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to consideration and determination by the Committee before taking effect.

Recommendation: It is recommended that

- (a) the proposed toucan crossings and improvements shown on the plans provided in Appendices B and C are approved for construction at an estimated cost of £215,000; and
- (b) the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment be given delegated powers, in consultation with the Chair of HATOC and the local member, to make minor amendments to the scheme details.

**1. Introduction**

This report sets out a proposal for two new toucan crossings and associated shared use provision as part of the East-West Strategic Corridor in Newton Abbot. The crossings are located at Exeter Road, north of Wain Lane (shown in Appendix A, location 6), and Jetty Marsh Road, south of Westgolds roundabout (shown in Appendix A, location 7).

A separate report seeks approval for the shared use improvements between Exeter Road and Jetty Marsh Road. The measures combined in both reports form Phase 3A of the East-West Strategic Corridor. These proposals will connect the existing and planned shared use infrastructure and the populations living along it with areas of new development and amenities in the town centre.

The Government's recent announcement of the COVID-19 Emergency Active Travel Fund to support walking and cycling potentially (subject to funding approval) provides a unique opportunity to accelerate the delivery of these crossings, addressing missing gaps in the strategic corridor and tackling barriers to active travel along these busy roads.

**2. Background****Strategic Growth Context**

Newton Abbot (population 22,581) and its immediately surrounding area are set to accommodate 50% of all growth in Teignbridge to 2033, equating to 6,000 homes including those recently constructed. The Local Plan describes this level of growth as transformational. A significant amount of this housing is to the west of Newton Abbot

within the new developments of Houghton Barton, Hele Park and Whitehills (2,500 homes and 20ha of employment land).

These developments, along with the existing housing in the area, are within walking and cycling distance of the town centre and other local amenities including: railway station, Coombeshead Academy and Newton Abbot College secondary schools, Newton Abbot University Technical College, Stover Trail multi-use trail and employment sites including Heathfield, Brunel and Decoy industrial estates.

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 is a major element of this along with an emerging North-South active travel route along the A382.

#### East-West Strategic Active Travel Corridor

Devon County Council has successfully begun delivering active travel improvements to the west of Newton Abbot along the A382 Ashburton Road. The ambition of this East-West route is to link the development areas west of the town into the centre and to key local facilities through the offer of a safe, convenient and direct active travel route. Enabling more residents to walk and cycle to local destinations will help Newton Abbot become a cleaner and more vibrant community, with less congestion, reduced CO2 emissions and improved air quality.

The East-West Strategic Corridor is being delivered in the following stages:

- **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 Academy.
- **Phase 2A** improvements between Oak Park Road and Greenaway Road were completed in 2018.
- **Phase 2B** works completing the route from Oak Park Road to Mile End Road were carried out in 2019.
- **Phase 3A** is partially made up of the scheme included in this report which proposes the provision of toucan crossings on Exeter Road and on Jetty Marsh Road. A separate HATOC report seeks approval for the remainder of Phase 3A which proposes to convert the segregated foot/cycle way along Exeter Road and Jetty Marsh Road to shared use.

#### Phase 3A

The heavily trafficked A-roads of Exeter Road (AADT 18,500) and Jetty Marsh Road (AADT 17,000) currently have limited crossing opportunities, causing severance across the emerging network of strategic cycle corridors in the area and acting as a barrier to enhanced levels of active travel. The new crossings will offer pedestrians and cyclists of all ages a safe, convenient and direct route, particularly for children travelling to local schools. There is considerable potential to increase walking and cycling, particularly for short-distance local trips, helping to improve physical and mental health, connect communities and reduce emissions.

It should be noted that the remaining elements of Phase 3A are seeking separate approval. However, these additional works in combination with the toucan crossings will contribute to a high-quality strategic corridor for active travel.

### Emergency Active Travel Fund

In May 2020 the Government published new statutory guidance for highway authorities regarding the urgent need to reallocate road space towards pedestrians, cyclists and 'active travel' as part of the COVID-19 recovery. The government announced a national Emergency Active Travel Fund of £250m to enable these changes to be implemented, split into two tranches with the first focused on temporary measures and the second on converting these temporary measures to permanent.

Tranche 1 of the fund was allocated in June 2020 with Devon County Council receiving 100% of their indicative £338k allocation. This funding is being used to introduce temporary, pop-up walking and cycling measures to support active travel in the pandemic recovery phase. Devon's allocation includes the provision of temporary signalised toucan crossings currently in place on Exeter Road and Jetty Marsh Road to address these key barriers to accessing the existing strategic infrastructure available.

In July 2020, the DfT issued an invitation for tranche 2 bids to be submitted. This second tranche is focused on permanent schemes to support the continual uptake of walking and cycling. Devon County Council's tranche 2 bid focuses on the regional centres of Exeter, Barnstaple and Newton Abbot. It is proposed that the temporary crossings are constructed permanently as per plans for phase 3A of the East-West Strategic Corridor.

### **3. Proposal**

It is proposed to construct two new permanent toucan crossings and sections of shared use path on the Newton Abbot East-West Strategic Corridor, at the following locations:

- Exeter Road, north of Dyrans Roundabout and Wain Lane (location 6 on Appendix A);
- Jetty Marsh Road, south of Westgolds Roundabout (location 7 on Appendix A).

An overview of the crossing locations is shown in Figure 1 below and detailed design drawings for both crossings are contained in Appendices B and C.

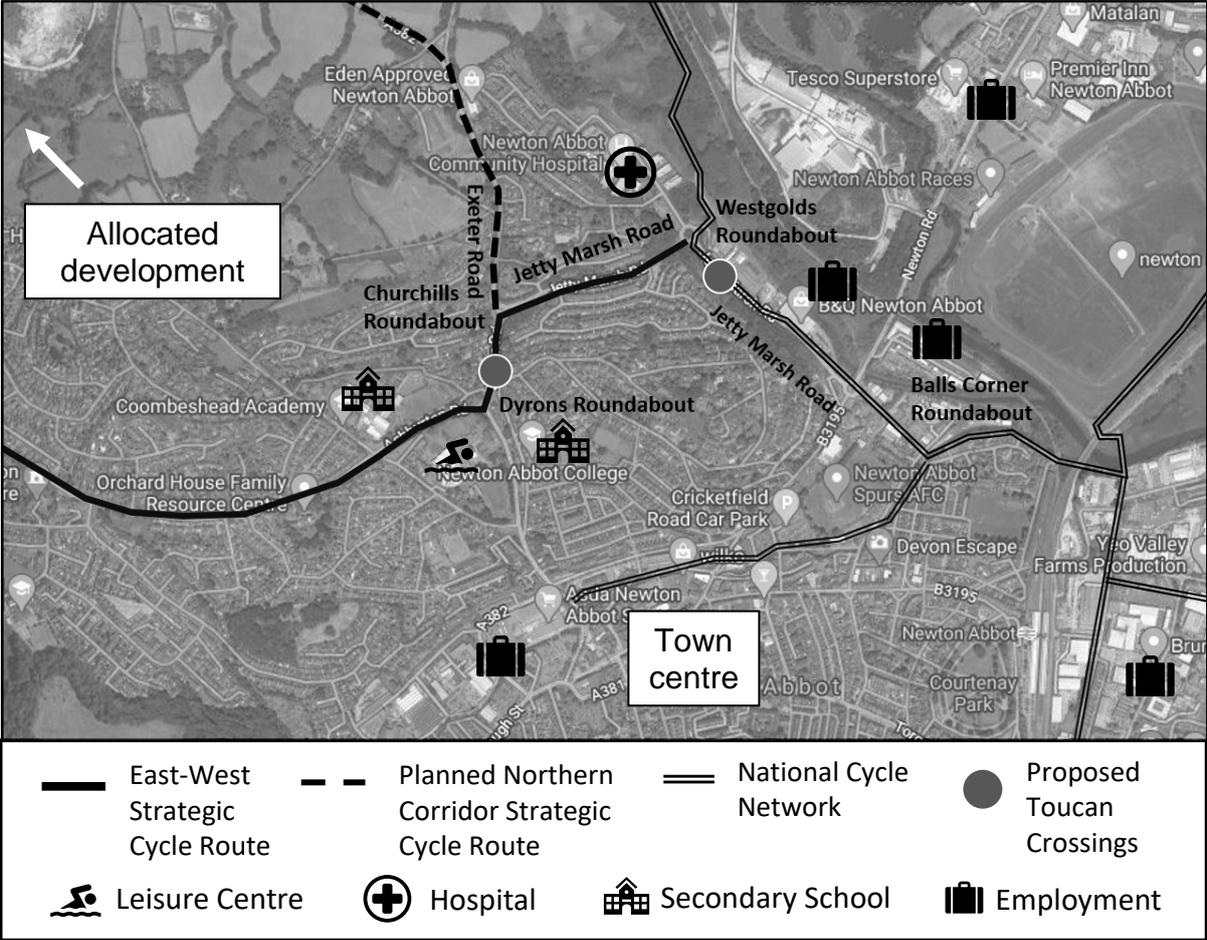


Figure 1 Location map of proposed toucan crossings

**Exeter Road (location 6, Appendix A & Appendix B)**

The proposed toucan crossing at Exeter Road will link shared-use active travel provision on both sides of the road. On the western side of Exeter Road, the existing footway will be widened to create a shared use path as part of the works associated with the toucan crossing. This will enable pedestrians and cyclists travelling from the west (Wain Lane/Ashburton Road) to safely and conveniently cross the heavily trafficked Exeter Road (average annual daily traffic 18,500). Users will be able to continue along the traffic free East-West Strategic Corridor, as well as the emerging North-South active travel route. Residents travelling from Knowles Hill Road will also be able to safely cross to access the west of Newton Abbot.

The proximity of the Exeter Road crossing to the Newton Abbot secondary schools is of particular importance, enabling an increased accessibility to education via active travel.

Note that on the south-eastern side of Exeter Road, the conversion of the existing segregated footway/cycle way to shared-use is not part of the scheme included in this HATOC report, although it is set to be delivered alongside this scheme as part of a coherent package of local improvements.

The crossing is appropriately set back from Dyrons Roundabout without significantly deviating from the natural desire lines. There are challenges associated with the scheme design due to the geometry of the carriageway and proximity of the crossing to the bus lay-bys. Any design amendments to those shown in Appendix B will be subject to a Road Safety Audit process.

### **Jetty Marsh Road (location 7, Appendix A & Appendix C)**

The proposed toucan crossing at Jetty Marsh Road will provide a link across the busy road to the National Cycle Network. The shared use path on the eastern side of Jetty Marsh Road and adjacent to Westgolds Roundabout is to be constructed as part of the toucan crossing works, and the provision on the west and southern sides delivered separately, subject to securing appropriate funding and approvals.

This cohesive route will provide users travelling between Exeter Road and the National Cycle Network with a safe and convenient crossing, across a highly trafficked road (average annual daily traffic 17,000). Pedestrians and cyclists will be able to join both the East-West Strategic Corridor and the emerging North-South active travel network from Exeter Road.

## **4. Options/Alternatives**

### Do Nothing

At present there is an emerging strategic network of shared use in Newton Abbot, however, missing gaps exist at critical crossing points of the heavily trafficked Exeter Road and Jetty Marsh Road. Pedestrians and cyclists must make use of informal crossings, which present barriers to inclusive active travel opportunities and a higher perception of risk. These provide no priority over cars and minimal protection from motorised traffic. To keep the status quo would devalue current and planned active travel infrastructure. It's important that residents have access to safe, convenient crossings whilst using the East-West Strategic Cycle Corridor, National Cycle Network and emerging North-South active travel network. These crossings are particularly important to vulnerable road users, including school children who use the route to access local secondary schools.

### Parallel Crossings

This option provides the greatest priority for pedestrians and cyclists over motor vehicles. However, a road safety audit raised concerns over the suitability of these locations for parallel crossings due to the high traffic flows and their tidal nature. It is advised this option does not adequately protect active travel users.

### Siting at Existing Crossings

As noted, both Exeter Road and Jetty Marsh Road have informal crossing locations and through consultation, these have been suggested as alternatives. The installation of toucan crossings in these locations has been considered:

- **Exeter Road (South of Wain Lane):** This option is sited on the desire line between Ashburton Road and Knowle Hill Road. However, it is not possible to site a Toucan crossing this close to a roundabout. With only ten metres between the

roundabout and crossing, there is an insufficient distance for forward visibility and consequently, insufficient distance for motorists to stop in time.

- **Exeter Road (Bus Stop):** It is not feasible to site a toucan crossing across most of a bus lay-by. There would likely be difficulties in accommodating a bus lay-by elsewhere due to the availability of width along Exeter Road.
- **Jetty Marsh Road:** The proximity to Westgolds Roundabout would result in drivers exiting the roundabout having inadequate stopping distance and visibility. Currently, there is insufficient space to stand with a bicycle or pram between the splitter islands.

#### Proposed Locations

These are considered to be the most suitable from a deliverability perspective as well as being located conveniently for active travel users. They provide users with suitable priority over motorised traffic and safe passage for both pedestrians and cyclists.

### 5. Consultations

There is a publicly available website for the Newton Abbot East-West Strategic Corridor which provides details of the measures proposed:

<https://www.devon.gov.uk/roadsandtransport/traffic-information/transport-planning/newton-abbot-east-west-shared-use-path/>

Local residents should be familiar with the proposals to improve the strategic corridor through its ongoing delivery. However, approximately 135 residents/businesses in the immediate vicinity of the proposals were sent a letter in July 2020 containing details of the signalised crossings. Comments to the Transport Planning team and local councillor were invited during a 2-week consultation period (31 July – 13 August 2020). Local Councillors also shared proposals on social media to a local resident group. Additionally, Newton Abbot Town Council's views were sought.

A total of 18 responses were received (7 Exeter Road, 11 Jetty Marsh Road). There were 11 responses expressing a positive or negative preference for the permanent proposals (Table 1). Whilst the responses demonstrate some concerns relating to the Exeter Road crossing, the Jetty Marsh Road intervention was largely welcomed. However, the low response rate should be noted. In addition, the installation of the temporary crossings via tranche 1 of the Emergency Active Travel Fund caused some confusion.

Response	Exeter Road		Jetty Marsh Road	
	Number	Split	Number	Split
Positive	1	33%	6	60%
Negative	2	67%	2	20%
Neutral	0	0%	2	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 1: Consultation Responses

Comments noted that scheme benefits include safer/easier crossing opportunities and one respondent noted that the Jetty Marsh Road intervention would encourage them to cycle. Concerns largely focused on road safety related design issues and positioning, as well as driver behaviour and impacts on congestion.

Any amendments arising as a result of the consultation comments will be agreed through delegated authority with the local member.

## **6. Financial Considerations**

The scheme is estimated to cost approximately £215,000. It is planned to be funded as follows:

- Emergency Active Travel Fund (Tranche 2): £185,205
- Local Transport Plan: £29,795

The County Council has an indicative allocation of £1.3m for tranche 2 of the Emergency Active Travel Fund and would seek £185,205 of this towards the crossings.

In the event that Devon County Council does not secure sufficient levels of tranche 2 funds, any shortfall of funding would have to be met from the Local Transport Plan grant to ensure scheme delivery. However, failure to secure tranche 2 funding is considered to be a low risk, having been successful in securing 100% of the tranche 1 funding.

## **7. Legal Considerations**

To introduce the toucan crossings, the Council will be required to issue a public notice in accordance with Section 23 of The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

When introducing new traffic schemes 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.

## **8. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)**

Construction of the toucan crossings will increase the safety, convenience and accessibility of active travel for short-distance trips to local retail, employment, education and for leisure. The scheme will improve walking and cycling opportunities, reducing car use, promoting low carbon travel modes and improving people's health and fitness.

The red time needed to accommodate the cycling and pedestrian crossing phase will have a slight negative impact on the delays and emissions of some vehicular journeys. Nevertheless, the proposal is felt to provide an appropriate balance which supports the County Council's commitment to increase active travel and reducing carbon emissions.

## **9. 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.

The proposed crossings and associated shared use path improvements would enable pedestrians and cyclists of a wider range of abilities and confidence levels to access a range of services in Newton Abbot via active and sustainable modes. An Impact Assessment has been completed for the scheme which will be published on Devon County Council's website.

## **10. Risk Management Considerations**

In a location of high pedestrian and vehicular demand, the provision of a formal pedestrian and cyclist facility, instead of users having to judge gaps in traffic, is expected to improve safety for vulnerable road users.

A Stage 2 Road Safety Audit of the detailed design of the proposed crossings has been undertaken with issues addressed. Further changes to the designs will be subject to a revised Road Safety Audit and could be agreed through delegated powers.

The funding for the scheme is dependent on a successful outcome of the bid to the second tranche of the Emergency Active Travel Fund. In the event that Devon County Council does not secure sufficient tranche 2 funds, the delivery of the scheme would be subject to the increased allocation of Local Transport Plan funding.

## **11. Public Health Impact**

The proposed crossings will improve cycle and pedestrian safety, encouraging greater utilisation of the strategic walking and cycling infrastructure, increasing physical activity and boosting health and wellbeing.

The proposed improvements will expand connectivity within communities for employment, education and leisure, improving social cohesion and reducing inequalities.

## **12. Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations**

The proposal addresses the requirement for safe and high-quality pedestrian and cycle crossings of the heavily trafficked Exeter Road and Jetty Marsh Road in line with

the rest of the Newton Abbot East-West Strategic Corridor. The proposals address significant missing links and remove barriers in the emerging Newton Abbot active travel network. Along with the separate scheme converting the segregated cycleway/footway along Jetty Marsh Road to shared use, this scheme will complete Phase 3A and provide a coherent, consistent route and crossings at the important axis of the East-West Strategic Corridor, National Cycle Network and emerging North-South Strategic Corridor along the A382.

The improvements are identified as long-term strategic ambitions for Newton Abbot and are key to encouraging active travel from new development areas into the employment, retail and education facilities of the town. Although the provision of the new crossings will result in a slight reduction of vehicle capacity, it will increase safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

Taking the opportunity to accelerate the delivery of the scheme this financial year by utilising the Government's Emergency Active Travel Fund will support the County Council's encouragement of active travel in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the County Council's commitment to reducing carbon emissions.

Dave Black  
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

**Electoral Division: Newton Abbot North**

**Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers**

Contact for Enquiries: Hannah Clark

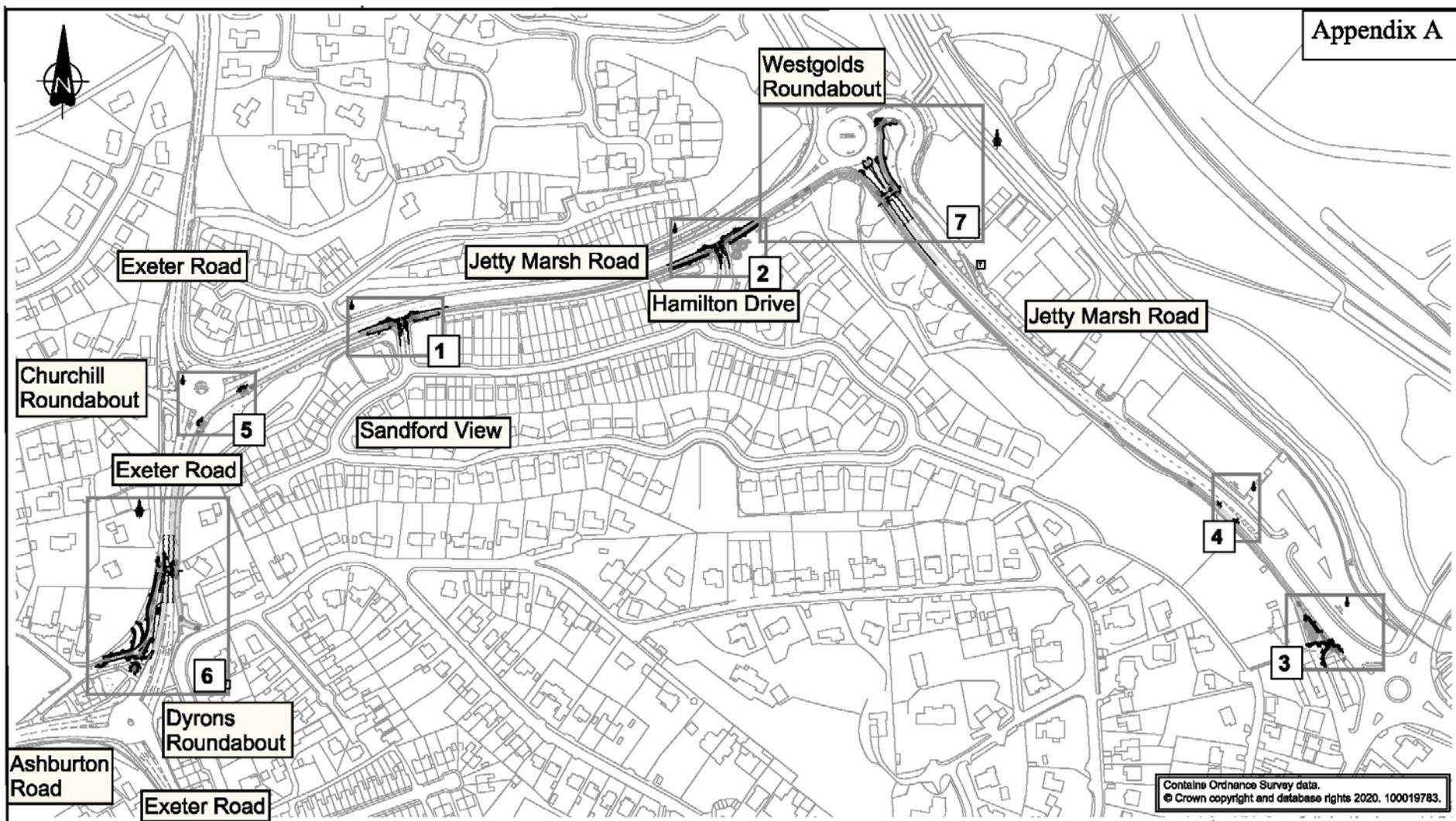
Tel No: 01392 383000      Room: Lucombe House, AB2

<b>Background Paper</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>File Reference</b>
-------------------------	-------------	-----------------------

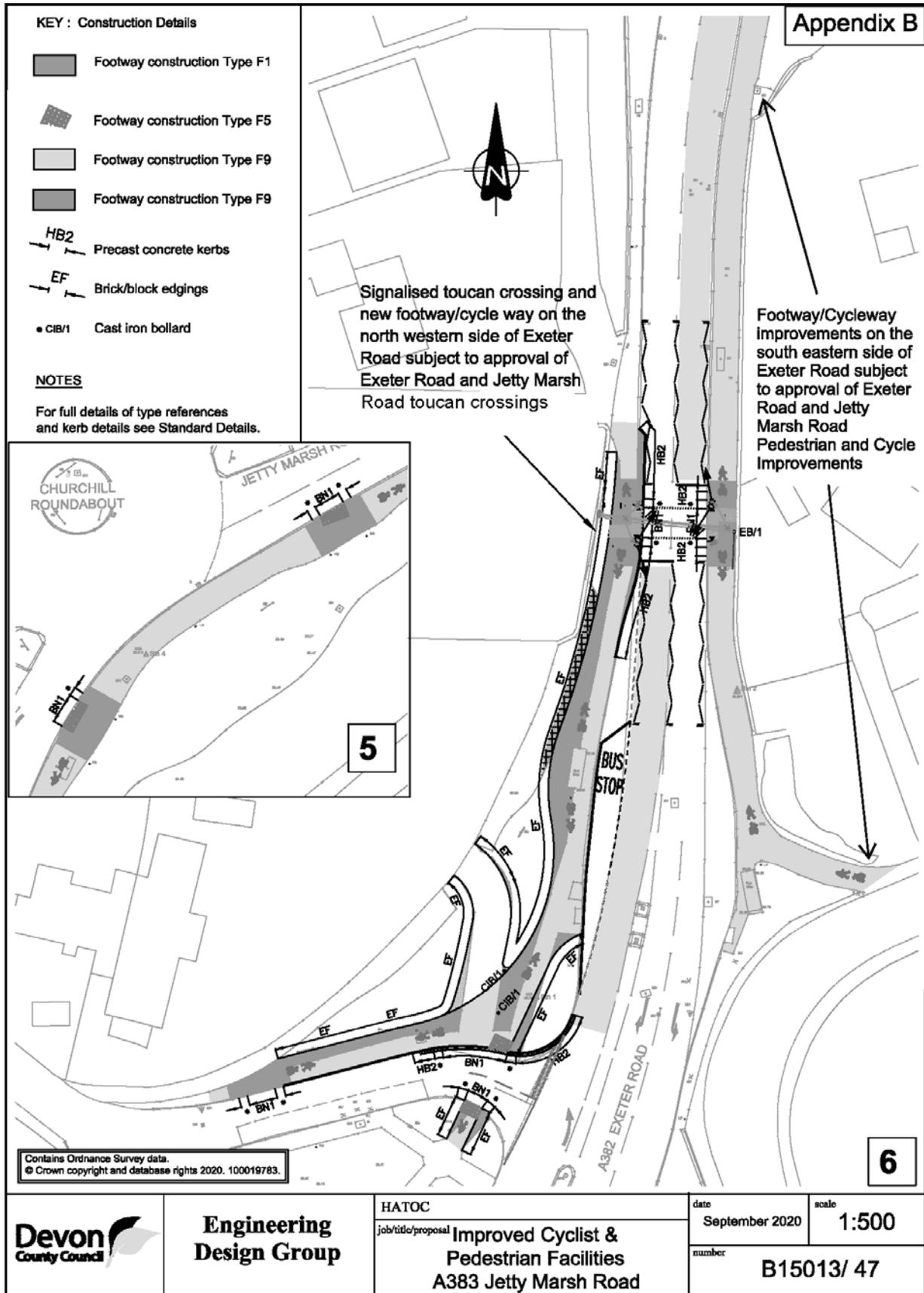
Nil		
-----	--	--

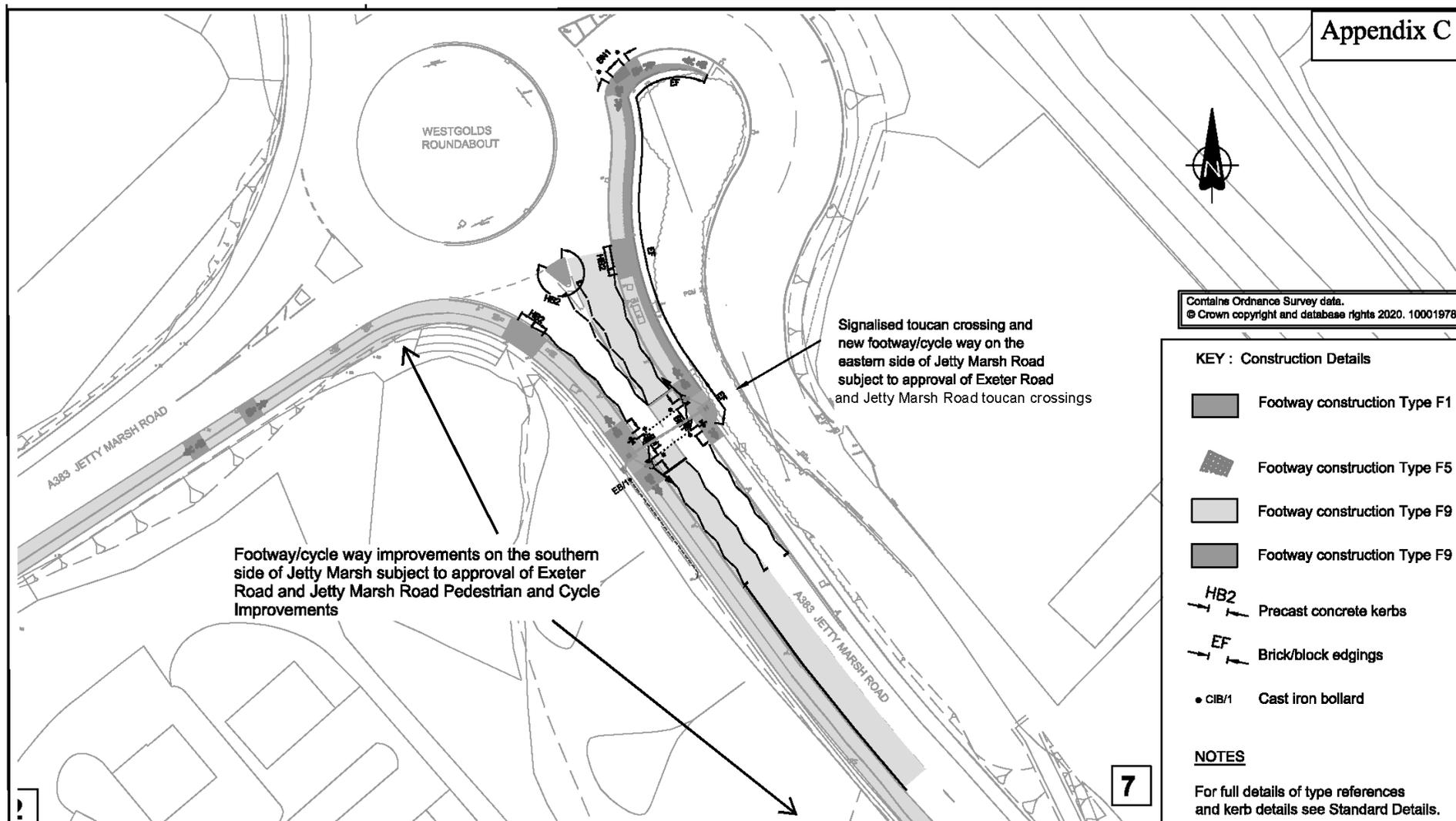
hc080920teinh  
sc/cr/Newton Abbot East-West Strategic Active Travel Corridor Exeter Road and Jetty Marsh Road Toucan Crossings

Appendix A



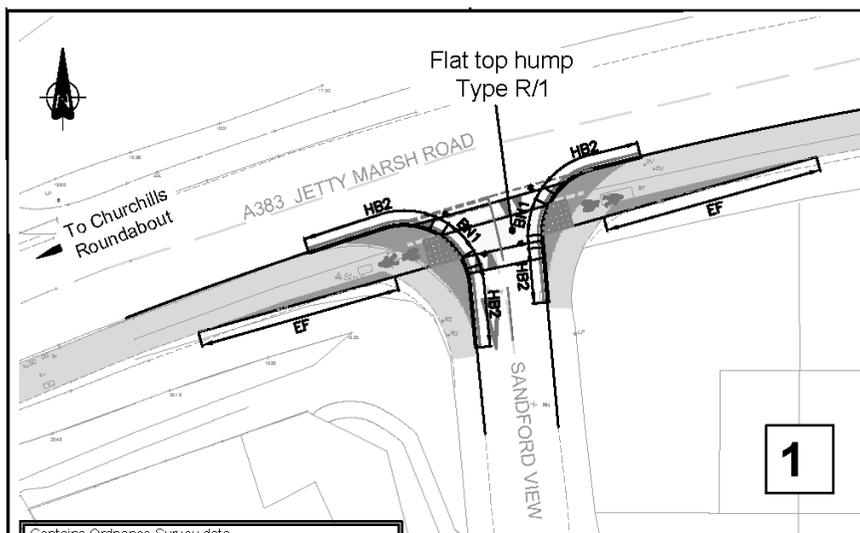
	<b>Engineering Design Group</b>	HATOC <small>job/title/proposal</small>	<small>date</small> September 2020	<small>scale</small> Not to scale
			Exeter Road, Jetty Marsh Toucan Crossings & Cyclist/Pedestrian Improvements Location Plan	





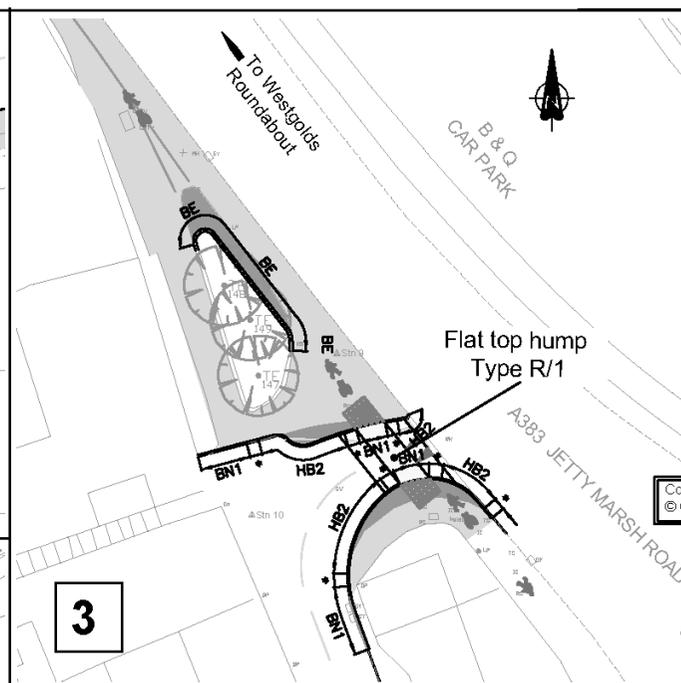
**Appendix D  
To PTE/20/17**

Appendix D



1

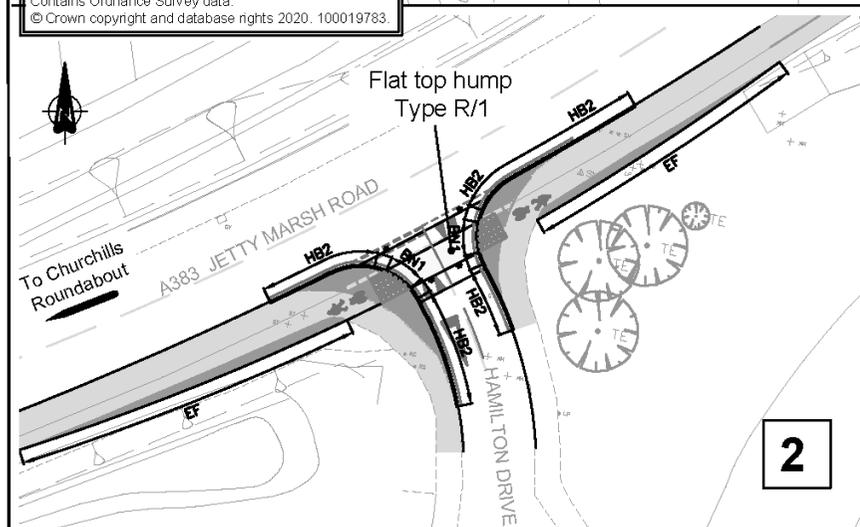
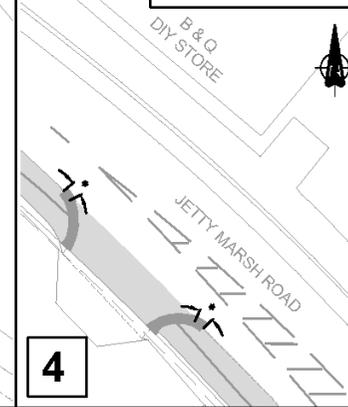
Contains Ordnance Survey data.  
© Crown copyright and database rights 2020. 100019783.



3

Contains Ordnance Survey data.  
© Crown copyright and database rights 2020. 100019783.

4



2

**KEY : Construction Details**

-  Footway construction Type F1
-  Footway construction Type F5
-  Footway construction Type F9
-  Footway construction Type F9

-  HB2 Precast concrete kerbs
-  EF Brick/block edgings
-  CIB/1 Cast iron bollard

**NOTES**

For full details of type references and kerb details see Standard Details.



**Engineering  
Design Group**

HATOC

job/title/proposal

Improved Cyclist and Pedestrian Facilities  
Jetty Marsh Road

date  
September 2020

scale  
1:500

number  
B15013/ 44