

Devon Countryside Access Forum response
Teign Estuary Trail – Devon County Council consultation
Submitted to online survey – December 2020

1. Do you support the construction of the Teign Estuary Trail?

Yes

2. Please explain your answer to Question 1

The Devon Countryside Access Forum welcomes this extension to the shared-use trail network in the County and the benefits it will bring to sustainable transport and health and well-being. However, the Forum would like to raise a number of matters for consideration related to the construction of the trail.

- a. The Forum strongly advises that the whole route (from The Passage House Inn to Morrison's, Teignmouth) is done at the same time. If the road section along the A381 is a separate project, many people could come out onto the footpath and main road which would be unsuitable and potentially dangerous.
- b. In exploring and applying for funding for this route, the Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that long term maintenance considerations must be borne in mind and costed, particularly for vegetation trimming, bound surface maintenance, boardwalks and interpretation boards. It is often the revenue sum which is lacking in project management. The route should be enjoyable and consistently maintained to a good standard throughout. Similarly, responsibilities for these important areas of work must be identified.
- c. As a result of the current emphasis on health improvement and wellbeing and the increase in use of such trails during coronavirus, the Devon Countryside Access Forum advises that a warden for this trail, or a number of trails, who could liaise with individuals or groups would greatly assist in encouraging responsible use of the trail.
- d. The Devon Countryside Access Forum strongly advises that Devon County Council should take account of landowners' concerns and seek to reach agreement rather than going through the Compulsory Purchase Order route.
- e. The inclusion of design features to ensure accessibility is integral to the scheme, for example a gradient of 1 in 12 and appropriate ramps and manoeuvring space on corners. The Forum welcomes good practice from other successful schemes such as near Powderham on the Exe Estuary Trail.
- f. The height and appearance of the proposed Network Rail fencing (1.8m weldmesh fence) is not aesthetic and options to reduce the height or limit the impact would be appreciated.
- g. The inclusion of raised seating and viewing areas would contribute to people's enjoyment of estuary views.

- h. Given the likely use of the route and its popularity, the Devon Countryside Access Forum is concerned about limited dedicated parking, noting the available parking at Michael's Field in Bishopsteignton. If the Passage House Inn or Morrisons do not permit non-customers to park, there could be parking issues on nearby lanes. It is imperative to address this at the outset.
 - i. Lack of disabled toilet facilities is an issue on some trails. The Forum would encourage Devon County Council to ensure that provision is made for public use through discussions with the Passage House Inn, Morrisons and, potentially, Otter Jack's Patch Nursery.
 - j. The improvements to the A381 to facilitate safer use of the route are welcome as this is a very unsafe route for cyclists and pedestrians currently. The widened footway, narrowed carriageway and reduced speed limit will facilitate this. The Forum advises that similar improvements are made to the A381 going west towards Bishopsteignton from La Roche Maurice Way to encourage safe use of the trail by people from that community. It is important that the chicanes meeting the road, including those adjacent to the proposed toucan Crossing, allow for easy access by mobility scooters.
 - k. The Forum recommends full shared-use and road safety audits to ensure no problems are overlooked.
3. Do you support this proposed route for the Teign Estuary Trail between Passage House Inn and Morrisons' junction, Teignmouth?

Yes

4. Please explain your answer to Question 3

Whilst a route south of the railway would have had uninterrupted views of the estuary, the Devon Countryside Access Forum recognises the cost and landowner and ecological considerations that have not made this possible. Achieving a route to the north of the railway will at least allow this long-anticipated trail to be realised.

The Devon Countryside Access Forum would like to see an additional exit/access point on the route and, ideally, a route through Otter Jack's Patch Nursery would offer huge benefits and allow more options. This would also provide a circular route via the Luxton Steps trail access point. While recognising the ecological and safety reasons for preventing access onto or off the trail from Flow Lane, some pedestrians may try to find a way on to the trail at this point and this is a concern.

Where it is suggested that Bishopsteignton FP 13 allows an access to the trail to the west of Bishopsteignton from/to Luxton Steps, this should be legally upgraded to allow cycle use and be of the appropriate width and surface. The short footpath alongside the A381 to the current controlled crossing point should meet the same 3m trail specifications.

As a medium to long term intention the Forum would like to see a safe and easy to use extension of the trail into Teignmouth itself and beyond. Many potential users on the trail are likely to wish to go on further.