

Starcross Enhancement Scheme

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) a traffic regulation order for new double yellow lines and single yellow lines on the Strand, and banning of the right turn out of New Road be advertised and, if no significant objections received, be made and sealed; and
- (b) the proposed footway widening on the A379 shown in Appendix II are trialled and if successful included as part of the works in (c)
- (c) the proposed improvements shown plan J19020_010 included in Appendix I, is approved for construction at an estimated cost of £70,000; and
- (d) 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. Background/Introduction

The section of the A379 through Starcross is a well known pinch-point. The narrow sections of road near the pillars and adjacent to the Spar can restrict traffic flow and the narrow footways along The Strand, between New Road and the Spar, can be unattractive to some pedestrians.

The constraints within Starcross limit the scope of any major works along the A379. Instead, a number of modest enhancements to footways, restriction of some turning movements and parking are proposed to improve the pedestrian environment for local residents and vehicle flow on the A379 have been developed.

The proposals were broadly supported at public consultation undertaken in early 2020 and amendments made in response to the feedback received.

Resurfacing of the A379 is also planned for this 2021/22 financial year, providing an opportunity to align improvements with planned maintenance. A focus on improving pedestrian facilities also aligns with the governments increased focus on Active Travel.

2. Proposal

This report seeks approval for construction of enhancement in Starcross, comprising (from south to north):

- Build out on the northbound entry to Starcross to narrow the vehicle carriageway and provide protected on street parking spaces. This will reinforce the entry into a settlement to reduce approach speeds into Starcross.

- Priority to traffic exiting the narrow section of The Strand (southbound), to help clear traffic out of the narrow part of the A379 in vicinity of the convenience store.
- Prohibiting motor vehicles from Church Street onto The Strand.
- Provision of continuous footway across Church Street and localised footway widening to improve pedestrian facilities on the Strand.
- Widening some sections of footway on The Strand.
- New stretch of footway on New Road to fill in gap in footway between southern side of New Road and the Strand.
- Banning of right turn out of New Road, which will help to reduce movements and friction at a junction in close proximity to the pinch point at the Pillars.
- Changes to bus shelter on the west of The Strand, including change of end panel from advertising to see through panel, improving visibility between bus stop users and cyclists. Subject to owner permission.
- Single yellow lines outside the Atmospheric Railway pub. This will restrict parking through busiest times of the day to help improve traffic flow exiting the narrow section, but still allow parking adjacent to the pub in the evenings.
- Additional double yellow lines north of the pillars, to provide additional area for large vehicles to pass and help traffic flow exiting the narrow section.

Plans of the proposed improvements are included in the plan in Appendix I.

The proposed prohibition of some turning movements will reduce vehicle movements onto the most constrained section of The Strand. The simplification of movements will benefit vehicle flow and pedestrian movements on the A379.

Improvements to footway facilities at key locations will also improve access for local residents, particularly for those that use New Road or Church Street to walk to local amenities such as the pub and convenience store.

The locations of widening footway on the A379 have been identified from on site observation as those locations which are both narrow (below 1.5m) and would not be expected to impact on traffic capacity. For example, widening of footway adjacent the pillars may help as currently some drivers, particularly unfamiliar users, can mistakenly believe there is room for two vehicles to pass and then stop closer to the pillars where there is less room for two vehicles to pass. Widening of the footway here to narrow the carriageway is expected to improve this.

It is recognised that in an already constrained highway environment there is possible risk narrowing the carriageway could impact traffic flow. The locations have been identified through on site observations to mitigate this. In addition, it is proposed that some of the measures could be introduced as a trial with the impact monitored. The sections of trial are shown in Appendix II.

If approved the construction of the proposals can be delivered alongside planned maintenance in 2021/22 financial year.

3. Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

A public consultation on proposals for Starcross and Mamhead ran for 3 weeks from Wednesday 15 January 2020 until Wednesday 5 February 2020.

There was a well attended public exhibition event in Starcross on Wednesday 15 January 2020 and the proposals and consultation questionnaire was also available online on the Devon County Council 'Have Your Say' website. A total of 148 responses were received and a number also submitted on behalf of organisations.

Starcross Parish Council supported the changes to the A379. They also requested restricting access to/from Church Street to enable further pedestrian improvements. They suggested a kerbside bus shelter should be investigated.

A summary of the responses from other organisations are set out below.

- The Starcross Fishing and Cruising Club supported changes to the bus stop provided any changes did not impact the visibility of their car park access. They did not have a view on the other sections within Starcross.
- Mamhead Parish generally supported proposals for Starcross.
- Kenton Parish Council raised concern that footway widening would worsen the situation for vehicles on the A379 and instead suggested a traffic light system, similar to South Town, Kenton.
- Cycling UK suggested the shelter should be moved further back to increase room for cyclists and reduce conflict.

A summary of public responses is given below.

- There were equal levels of support and opposition for the proposed footway widening on The Strand. The proposals were typically supported by Starcross residents, with those from outside Starcross more likely to be against.
- 60% supported the banning of the right turn out of New Road compared to 20% against.
- 75% were in favour of additional double yellow lines on The Strand, compared to 15% against. Some suggested the northern set could be longer, as adjacent properties have rear parking and that the ones near the pub should be time based restrictions.
- Proposed changes to the bus stop to reduce conflict were also broadly supported, although feedback suggested either moving the shelter further back or to the kerbside.
- In favour of the proposed changes in the vicinity of Royal Way.

In the open responses, the most commonly raised point was for the introduction of traffic signals in the centre of Starcross. Reasons for not pursuing this are set out in section 10.

Other commonly raised points included request for further traffic calming, additional road markings to formalise traffic priority through the narrow section or for a bypass of Starcross.

Following consultation, the proposals have been refined to account for comments received. In addition to the public consultation undertaken to date, Statutory consultation will have to take place for changes to loading (double/single yellow lines), right turn out of New Road and restrictions on Church Street.

4. Financial Considerations

It is estimated that the works would cost £70,000 which would be funded from Local Transport Plan.

The resurfacing of the A379 is part of the maintenance capital program, and not included in the cost of works. Undertaking maintenance and improvement works simultaneously will reduce costs to the council and disruption to residents and users.

The cost estimate does not include any allowance for extra costs that could arise (i.e. supplier or utility delays) should there be a further lockdowns due to changes in COVID-19 restrictions.

5. Environmental Impact Considerations

Changes that help to reduce instances of stationary traffic on the A379 will also help to reduce emissions. Improvements to footways will improve pedestrian facilities, boosting people's health and wellbeing.

There may be some slight negative impacts, due to some vehicle journeys that would have exited via Church Street or made the right turn out of New Road being made longer. However, the additional journey lengths are small.

On balance, the environmental impacts arising from the proposals are expected to be slightly positive.

6. Equality Considerations

Improvements to footways will provide benefit to pedestrians of a wide range of abilities and confidence levels, and in particular vulnerable road users, including young people, older people and people with disabilities.

Although some vehicle journeys maybe made slightly longer, all properties would still be accessible by motor vehicles.

7. Legal Considerations

The changes to double yellow lines on the Strand, restricting right turns out of New Road and change of access at Church Street will require a statutory consultation in accordance with The Highways Act 1980 and The Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

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 is practicable, to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic and provision of parking facilities.

8. Risk Management Considerations

As discussed in section 7, multiple elements of the scheme include legal considerations and consultations. The progression of the scheme to construction will be subject to the approval of the statutory and public consultations.

A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit has been undertaken and comments from the Road Safety Auditors have been addressed in the design. A Stage 2 Audit has been commissioned and will be required prior to construction. It is however that any further changes would be minor and could therefore be agreed through delegated powers.

It is recognised that there is possible risk of impacting traffic flow by narrowing the carriageway. These could initially be provided as a trial using surface mounted kerbs, monitored and then a decision on whether to pursue these as permanent changes made under delegated authority.

9. Public Health Impact

The proposed upgrades will encourage sustainable travel, enabling a moderate increase in activity levels and contribute positively to general health and wellbeing.

The changes to the A379 carriageway are expected to reduce the instances of traffic queuing occurring in the narrow sections of The Strand, helping to reduce emissions.

10. Options/Alternatives

A number of options have been considered for Starcross over the years, but like many Devon settlements with constrained highway layouts it is challenging to find a suitable solution for all users within the constraints on the A379 through Starcross.

A number of consultation responses requested traffic signals through Starcross, citing the success of the recent scheme in Kenton. However, to provide a suitable facility where vehicles can pass outside the signalised area (and prevent blocking back) signal heads would need to be over 200 metres apart. This is about 3 times the distance between the signals at Kenton. This would introduce queuing throughout the day, worsening traffic flow, pollution and air quality for dwellings in vicinity of the signals and therefore not considered a suitable option. The access to the Cruising club car park would also be within the signalised area, which would also be a safety concern.

It is not possible to widen the A379 between the pillars and convenience store. To widen the road would require removal of the wall of the Starcross Fishing & Cruising club car park. Furthermore, the wall is adjacent to the chambers of Brunel's Atmospheric railway, which are listed, and removal of the wall would risk damaging the chambers.

The Mamhead route provides an alternative to the A379 through Starcross for vehicles heading to and from the A380. However, the consultation showed there was limited support for improvements to the Mamhead Route and this scheme is not being progressed.

The proposals in this report provide a set of deliverable improvements that will help to improve transport conditions on the A379 through Starcross.

11. Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

The recommendation supports enhancements to active travel and improving traffic flow in Starcross. The proposals have been consulted on and can be delivered alongside proposed maintenance works providing a cost effective improvement to The Strand.

Dave Black
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Electoral Division: Exminster & Haldon

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

Contact for enquiries: Will Pratt

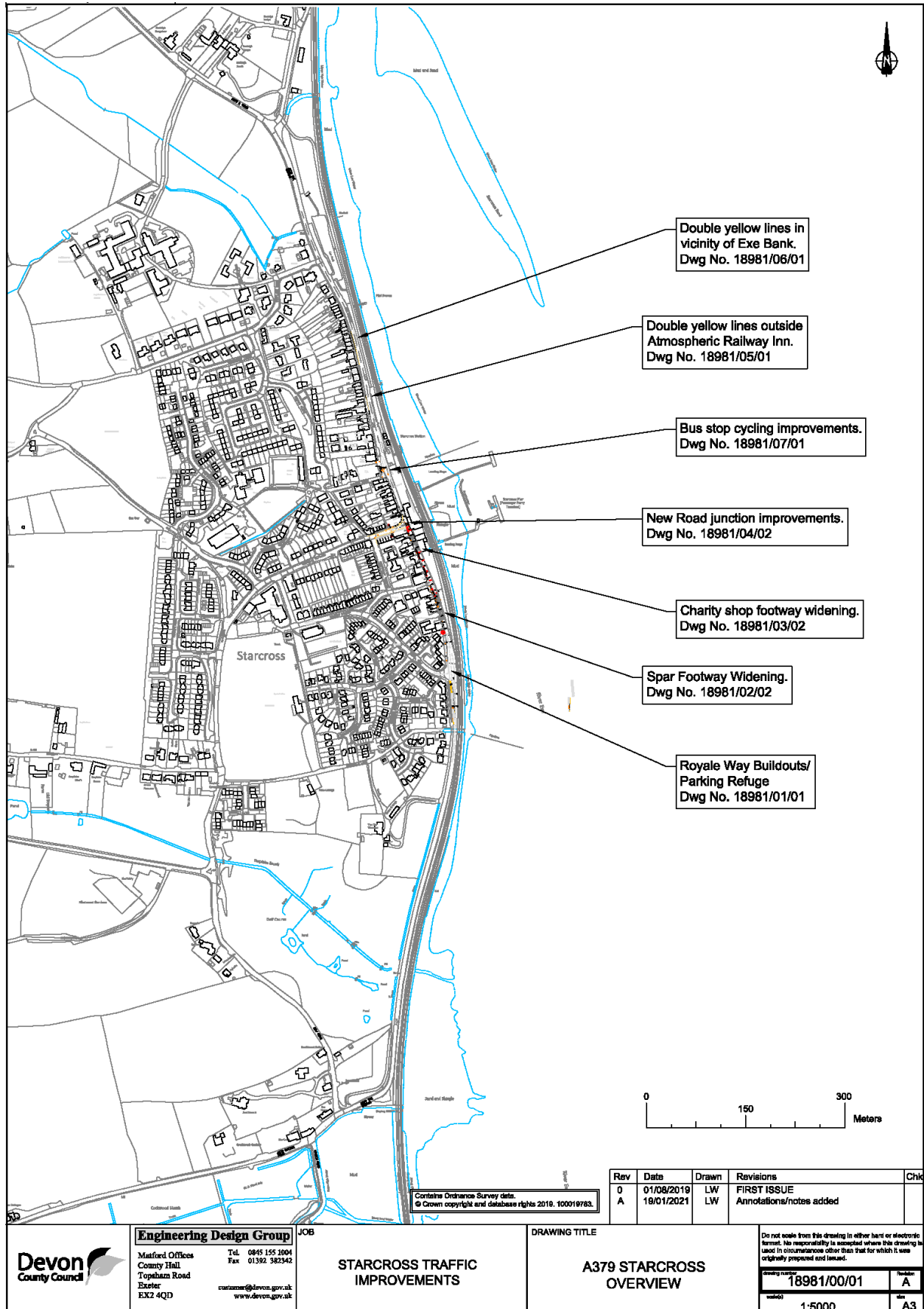
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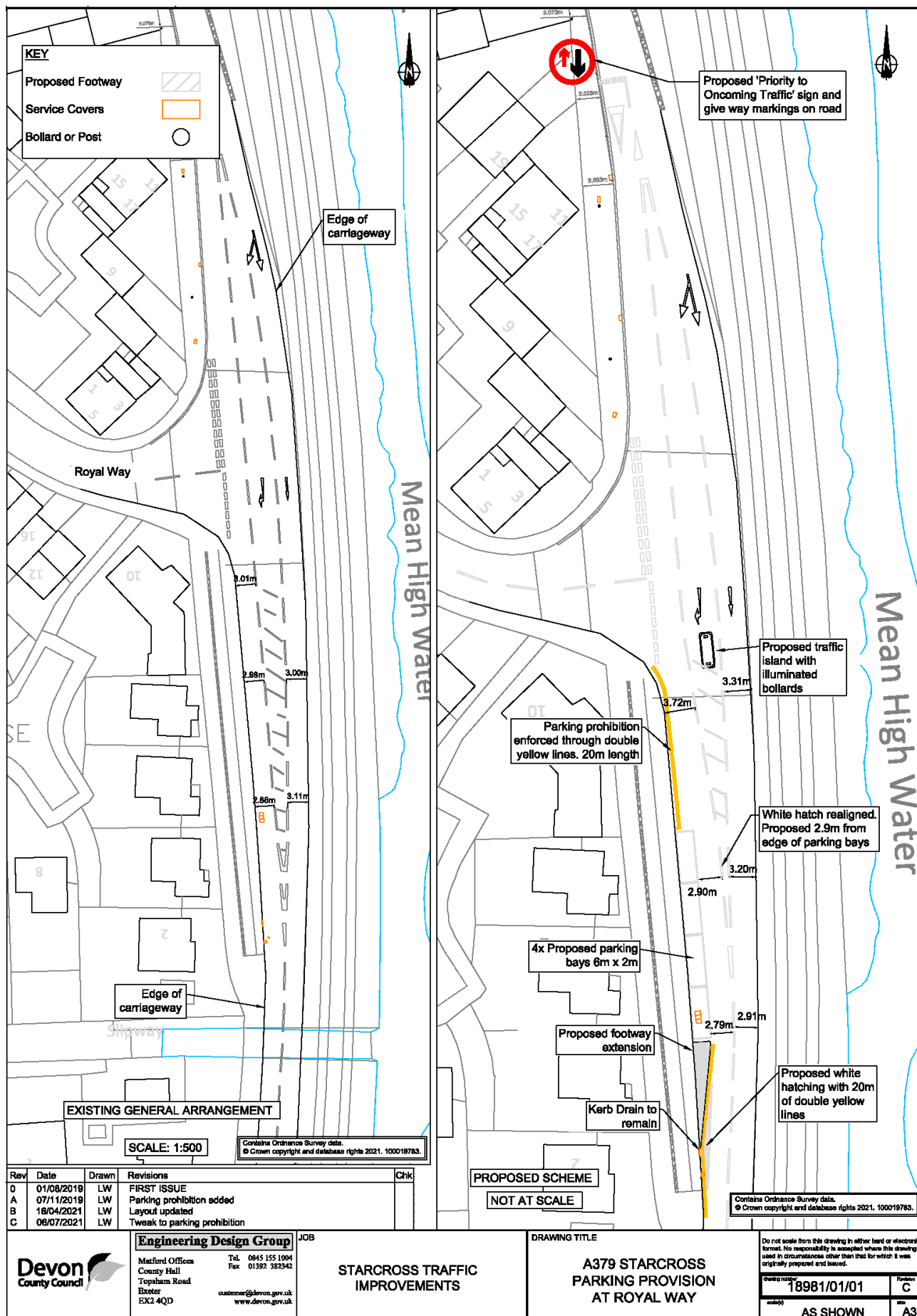
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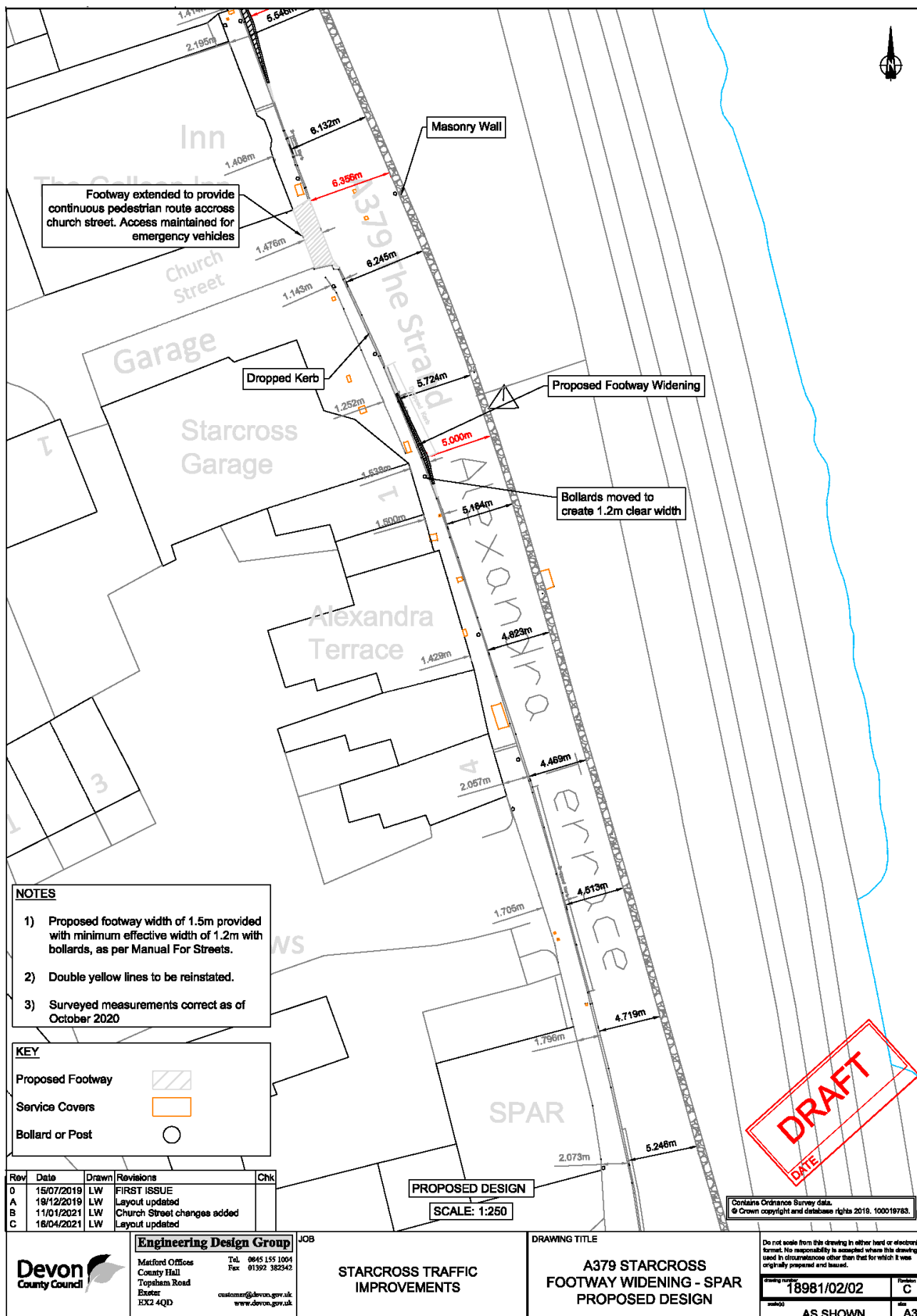
Background Paper	Date	File Reference
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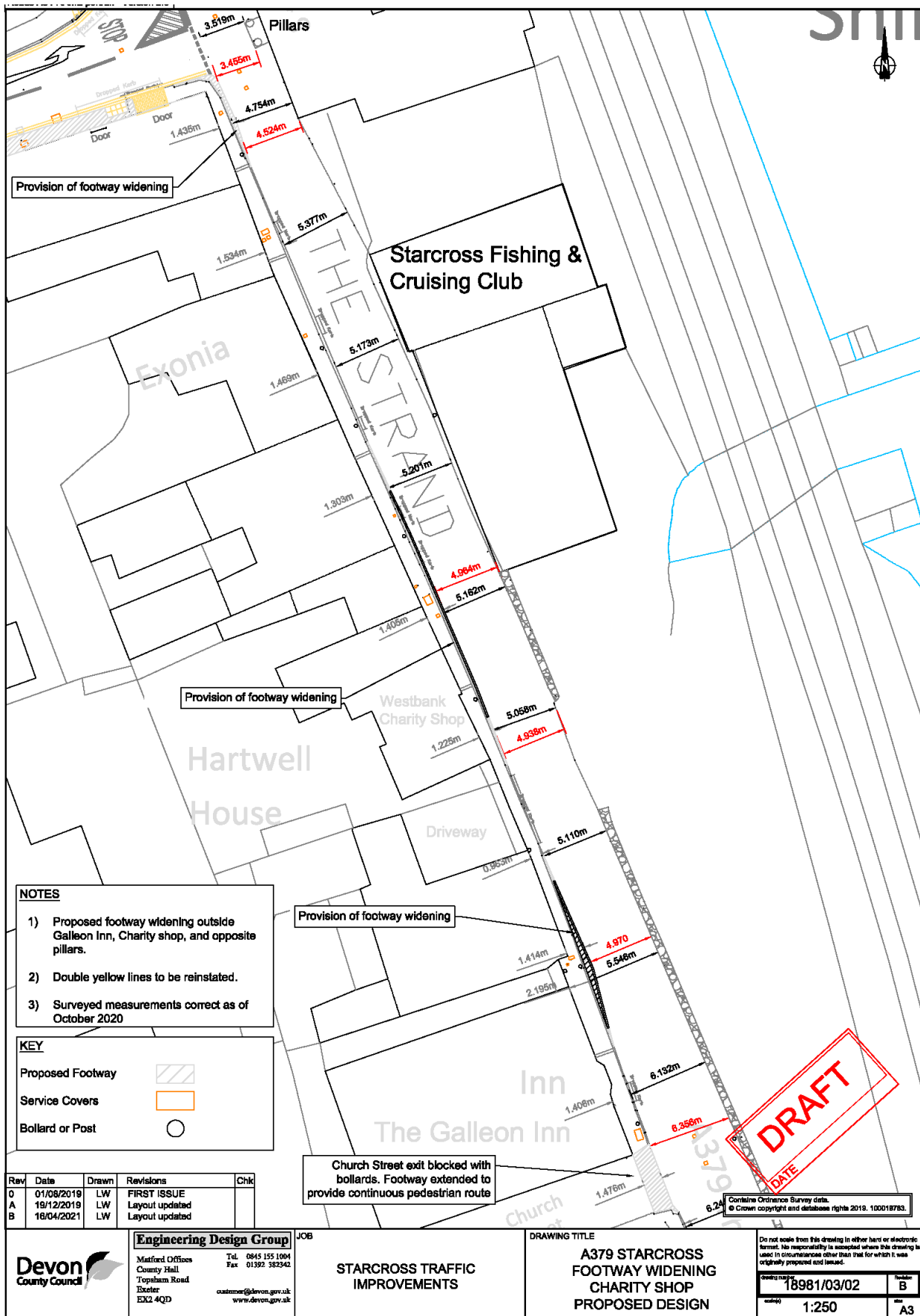
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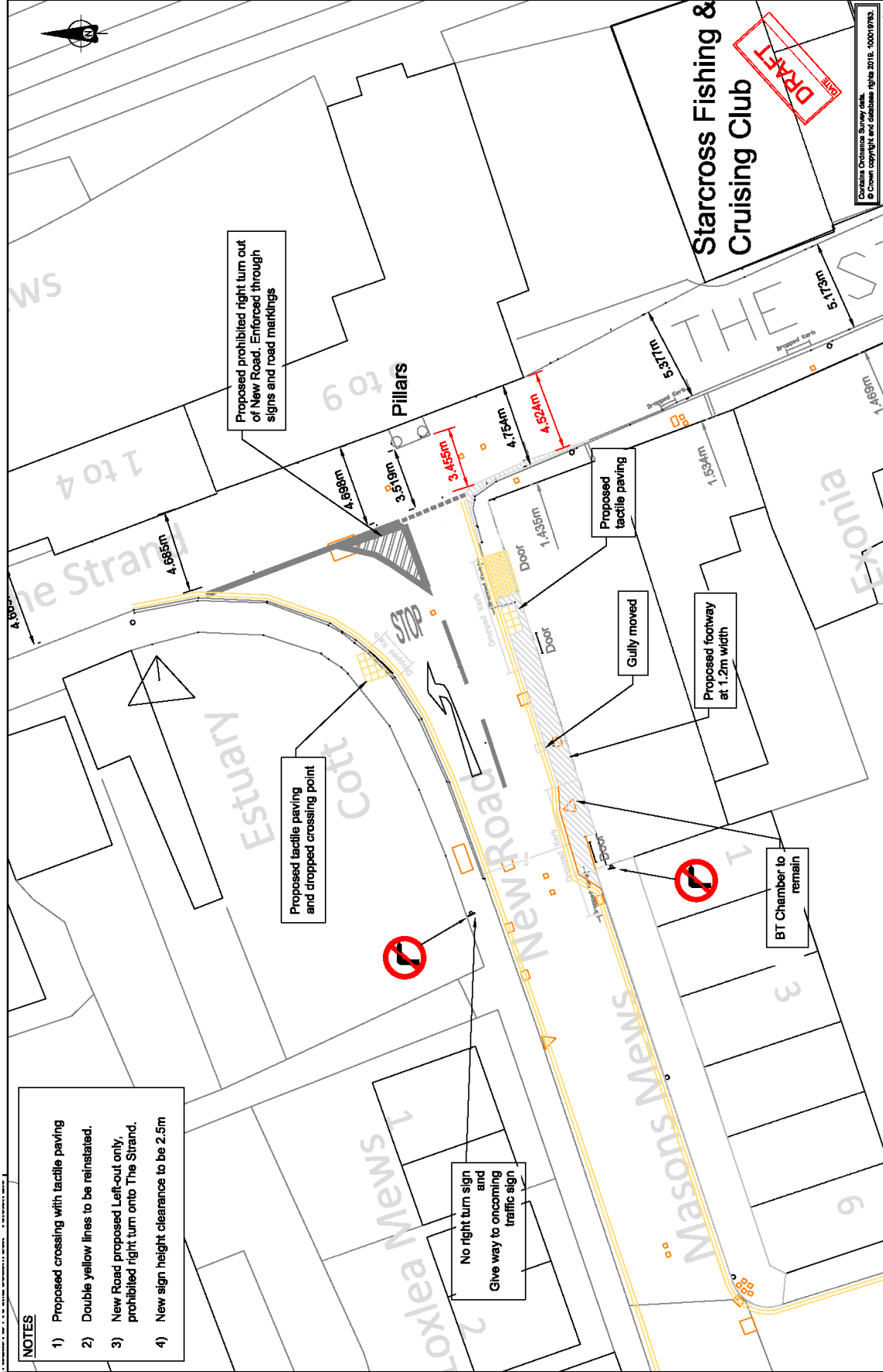
Appendix I To PTE/21/30









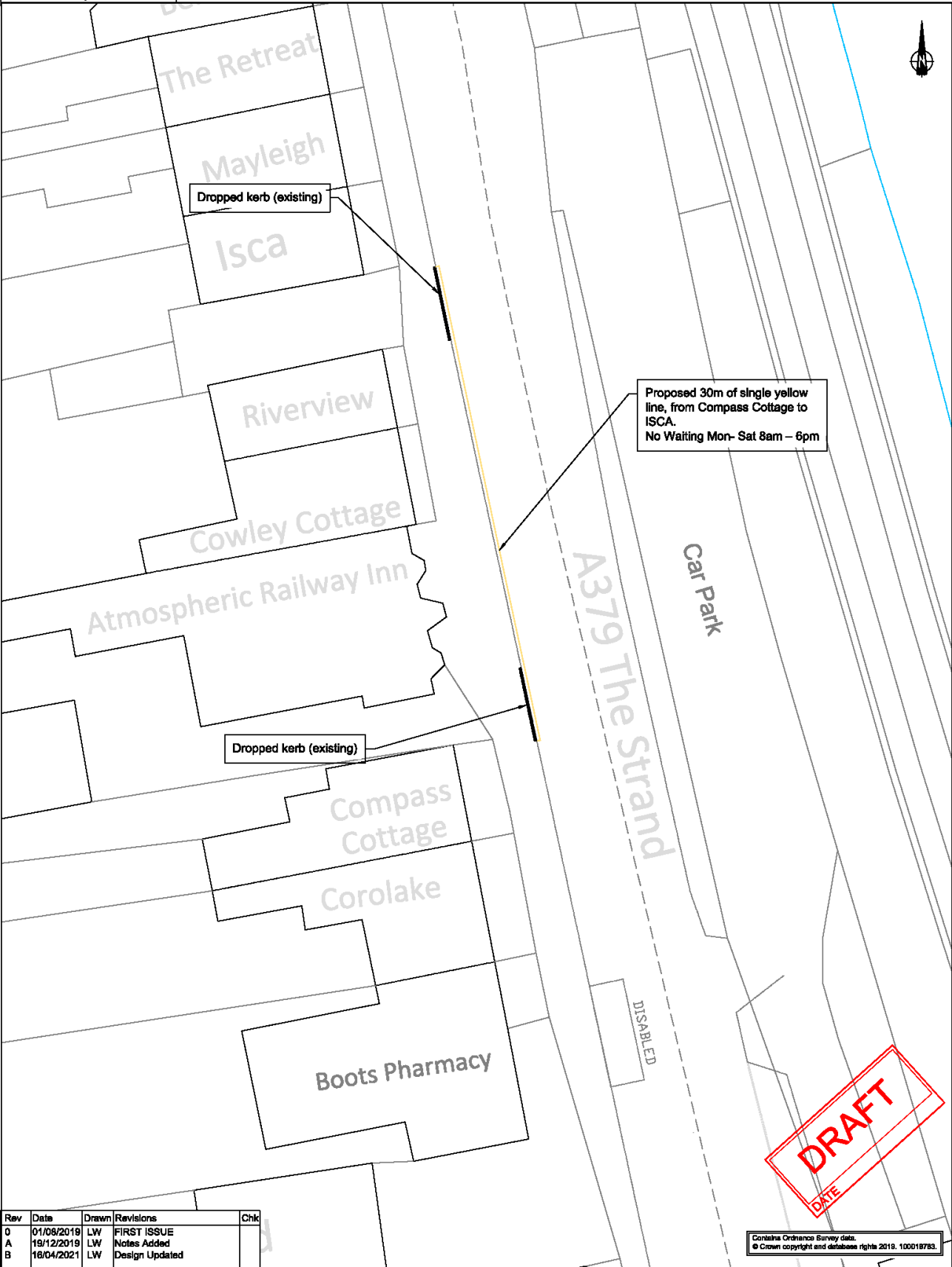


- NOTES**
- 1) Proposed crossing with tactile paving
 - 2) Double yellow lines to be reinstated.
 - 3) New Road proposed Left-out only, prohibited right turn onto The Strand.
 - 4) New sign height clearance to be 2.5m

 <div>Devon County Council</div>	<div>Engineering Design Group</div> <div>Technical Office 0845 155 1000 01392 362342 Tregenna Road Exeter EX2 4QD exdes@devon.gov.uk www.devon.gov.uk</div>	<div>JOB</div> <div>STARCROSS TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS</div>	<div>DRAWING TITLE</div> <div>A379 STARCROSS NEW ROAD JUNCTION PROPOSED DESIGN</div>	<div>Rev</div> <div>0</div>	<div>Date</div> <div>18/12/2019</div>	<div>Drawn</div> <div>LW</div>	<div>Revisions</div> <div>FIRST ISSUE</div>	<div>CHG</div> <div>18981/04/02</div> <div>1:200</div> <div>A3</div>
				<div>A</div>	<div>11/01/2021</div>	<div>LW</div>	<div>Design update</div>	
				<div>B</div>		<div>LW</div>	<div>Crossing updated</div>	
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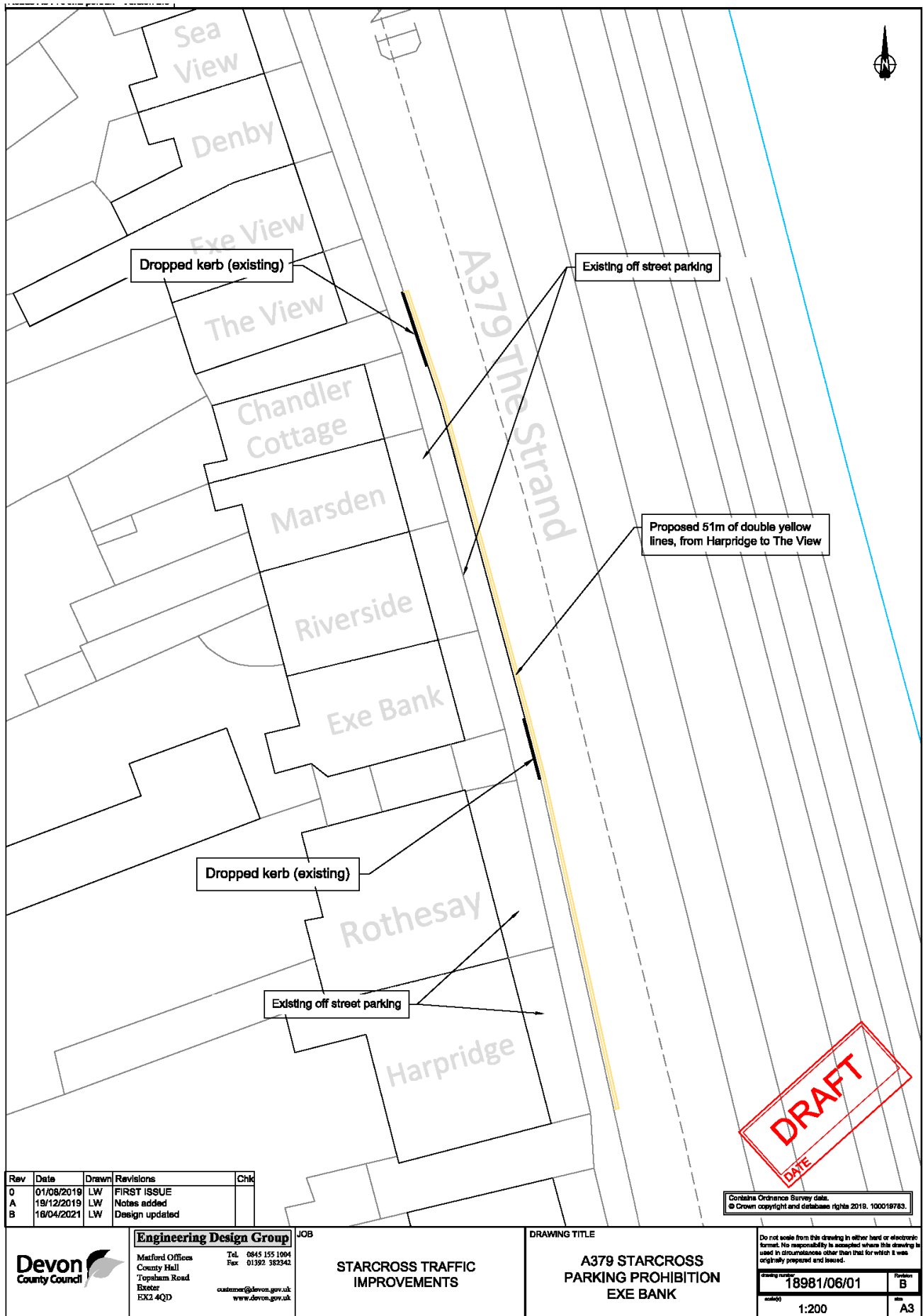


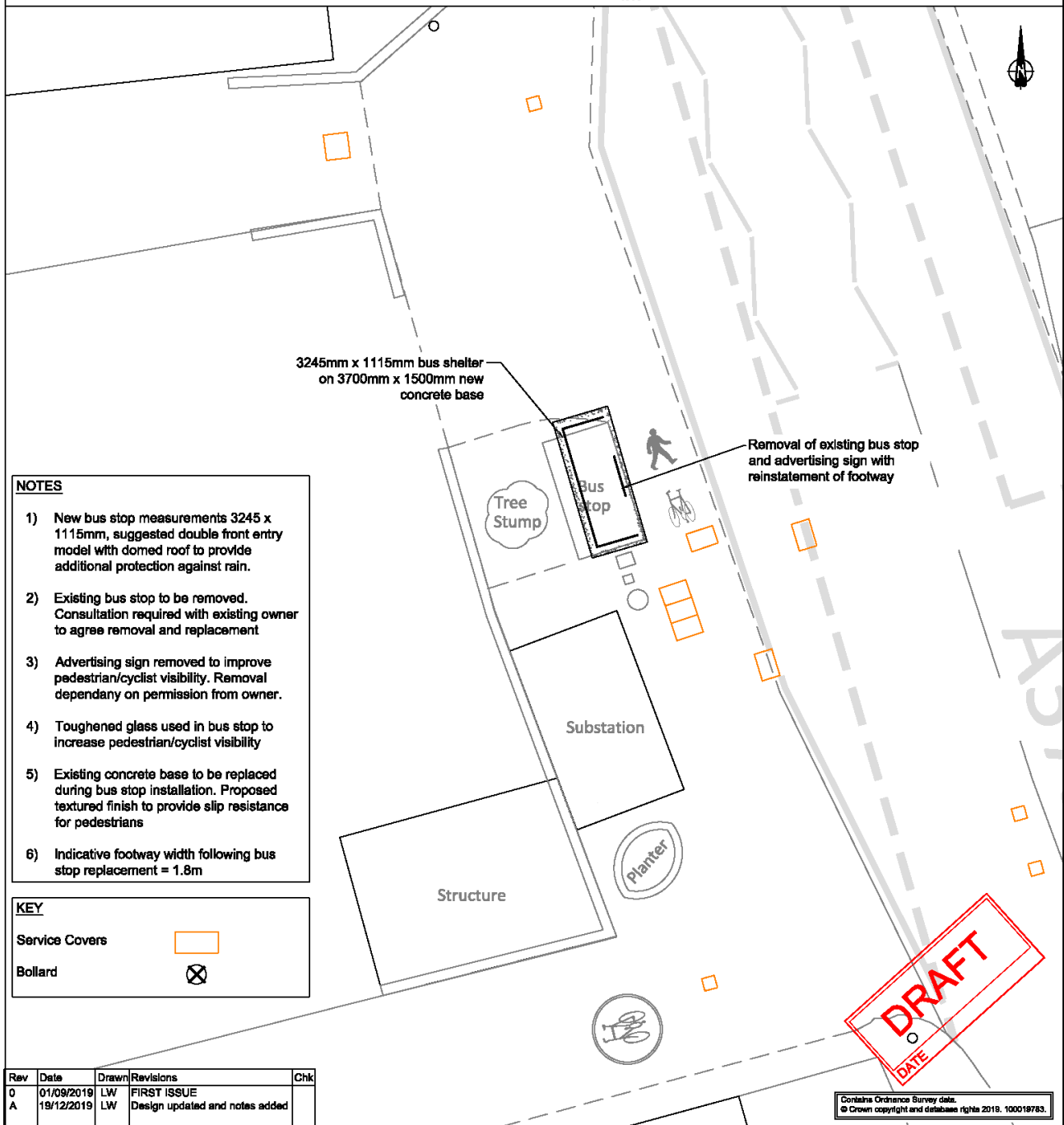
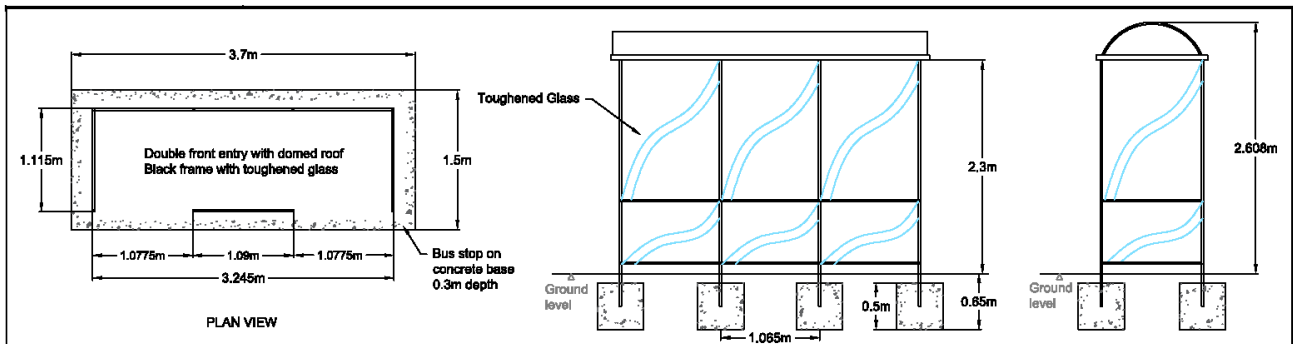
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DATE

Rev	Date	Drawn	Revisions	Chk
0	01/08/2019	LW	FIRST ISSUE	
A	19/12/2019	LW	Notes Added	
B	16/04/2021	LW	Design Updated	

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	Engineering Design Group	JOB	DRAWING TITLE A379 STARCROSS PARKING PROHIBITION ATMOSPHERIC RAILWAY INN	Do not scale from this drawing in either hand or electronic format. No responsibility is accepted where this drawing is used in circumstances other than that for which it was originally prepared and issued.	
	Matford Offices County Hall Topham Road Exeter EX2 4QD	Tel. 0845 155 1004 Fax 01392 382342 customers@devon.gov.uk www.devon.gov.uk			STARCROSS TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS
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Rev	Date	Drawn	Revisions	Chk
0	01/09/2019	LW	FIRST ISSUE	
A	19/12/2019	LW	Design updated and notes added	

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JOB

STARCROSS TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS

DRAWING TITLE

**A379 STARCROSS
BUS STOP CYCLING IMPROVEMENTS
PROPOSED DESIGN**

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Revision A

Site A3

