



Devon Countryside Access Forum
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Ms H Stokes
Senior Planning Officer
Devon County Council
County Hall
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7 July 2021

Dear Ms Stokes

Teign Estuary Trail. Planning application number DCC/4238/2021

The Devon Countryside Access Forum (DCAF) is a local access forum under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (CRoW Act). Its statutory remit is to give independent advice “as to the improvement of public access to land in the area for the purposes of open-air recreation and the enjoyment of the area...” Section 94(4) of the Act specifies bodies to whom the Forum has a statutory function to give advice and this list includes county councils.

The DCAF currently has fifteen members, appointed by Devon County Council, who represent the interests of landowners/managers, access users and other relevant areas of expertise such as conservation and tourism.

This response has been agreed by Forum members and expands on comments made during the earlier consultation in December 2020. It will be put on the agenda for formal approval at the next meeting in September 2021.

Support

The Devon Countryside Access Forum wishes to re-emphasise its strong support for the development of the Teign Estuary Trail. The project will have significant health

The Devon Countryside Access Forum is a local access forum. It is required, in accordance with Sections 94 and 95 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, to provide advice as to the improvement of public access to land for the purposes of open-air recreation and enjoyment.

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and economic benefits by providing opportunities for recreational access, sustainable transport and tourism. The application builds on public consultation, background work and detail that has already been carried out.

In 4.2.17 of the Public Consultation Report there is a statement that DCAF would prefer a route to the south of the railway line. There is now an overwhelming rationale, and degree of planning, for the trail to be located to the north of the railway line, and the DCAF would endorse this route.

Multi-use

The particular factors which mean that the design of the Trail from Passage House Inn to Bishopsteignton and onwards to the A381 will not include facilities for horse-riders are reasonable and appropriate. Whilst this does not reflect the intention for planning of multi-use trails in general, a policy the DCAF supports, the response given to the Road Safety Audit makes the rationale clear.

The DCAF welcomes design features and chicanes allowing full use by mobility scooters and wheelchair users.

Interpretation and Street Furniture Strategy

The DCAF welcomes the Interpretation and Street Furniture Strategy. Within that strategy, there is reference to a long-term maintenance and management plan to cover these aspects (1.3). As the DCAF has previously stated, it is hoped that this commitment is extended to the on-going maintenance and management of the Trail as a whole, to ensure its longevity, as referenced within 3.11.1 of the Design and Access Statement.

The DCAF is pleased to see that viewing areas and seating will be included in the design.

Safety matters associated with the planning application

Whilst the section of the Trail from La Roche Maurice Way east to Morrisons and west to Bishopsteignton is covered by permitted development, it is hoped, primarily for reasons of health and safety, that engineering work subsequently takes place within a similar timeframe to the section of the Trail from Passage House Inn to Bishopsteignton and which is the main focus of the planning application.

The Road Safety Audit does not make reference to the current safety concerns for pedestrians and cyclists walking along any part of the A381 between Metro Motors in Bishopsteignton and the A380 at Kingsteignton. The potential safety benefits of the scheme are clear, as well as those which relate more widely to mental and physical health.

The plan refers to upgrading Footpath 13 to provide a link to Bishopsteignton. Whilst potentially covered by permitted development, the DCAF advises that it would be helpful to include reference within the plan to the short, 100m, section of footpath running along the south side of the A381 from Footpath 13 to the pedestrian crossing at Michael's Field, which is just to the east of Metro Motors. This short section of

path should be of the same design standards as other parts of the scheme. This would improve safety and enable better access to the Trail from the pedestrian crossing and to the substantial public car park at Michael's Field.

Landowners' concerns

The DCAF notes that some provision has been made to address landowners' concerns about land management and access and trusts that on-going negotiations will seek to address any outstanding matters.

Car parking

The Forum notes no new parking areas are planned in association with the Trail and that visitors arriving by car are encouraged to park in the nearest designated carpark locations.

The DCAF hopes that discussions have taken place with Morrisons and Jack's Patch Garden Centre to ensure Trail users parking at their sites are welcome.

The Forum would appreciate feedback on its comments.

Yours sincerely



Hilary Winter
Forum Officer

Letter sent on behalf of the Devon Countryside Access Forum.

Chair: Sarah Slade

Vice-Chair: Chris Cole