

Newton Abbot National Cycle Network Route 2 Improvements

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 National Cycle Network Route 2 improvements shown on the plans provided in Appendix I are approved for construction at an estimated cost of £134,000.
- (b) the traffic regulation order to reduce in length existing on-street parking and extend existing no waiting at any time restriction on Marsh Road, be advertised and consulted upon; and
- (c) 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/Background

This report sets out a package of proposals for improvements to the National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 2 in Newton Abbot.

Proposals seek to improve approximately 900m of east-west cycling provision within Newton Abbot town centre, connecting the top of The Avenue to Highweek Street (ASDA). Designs represent a package of relatively small-scale improvement works, including new signage, a short length of two-way segregated cycle track through Cricketfield Road car park and junction improvements at the Marsh Road/The Avenue. An overview of the improvement works is shown in Figure 1 below.

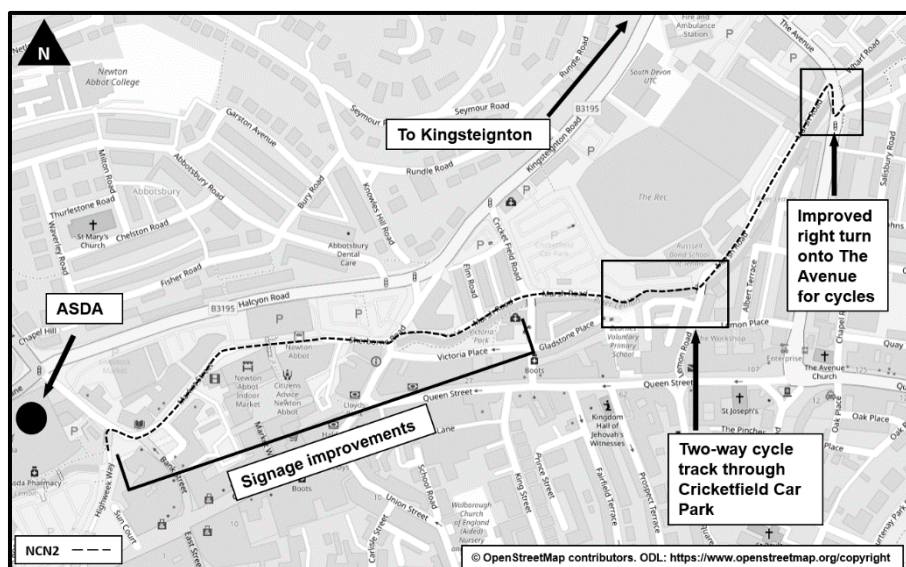


Figure 1: Map showing location of key improvement works

Improving town centre active travel provision will help to support public health and wellbeing, reduce transport emissions, improve access to employment, education and services, support Newton Abbot's economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic and help the local transport network accommodate planned growth.

The scheme is proposed to be delivered through the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Future High Street Fund. Teignbridge District Council (TDC) secured funding through the fund in May 2021 to deliver a range of schemes in Newton Abbot town centre. As the highway authority, Devon County Council (DCC) is committed to enabling the walking and cycling elements of the funding package to be realised. These proposals form part of those elements.

2. Proposal

It is proposed to deliver a package of improvements to NCN Route 2 from The Avenue to Highweek Street (ASDA) in Newton Abbot town centre. Design drawings are provided in Appendix I.

The Avenue/Marsh Road Junction Improvements

Proposals seek to improve cycle safety for movements between Marsh Road and the existing off-road walking and cycling path on the west side of The Avenue. This is achieved through a short kerbed build out on the south side of Marsh Road, providing protection for cycles joining the off-road path and narrowing Marsh Road at the junction mouth. The build out cycle intervention creates an informal give-take arrangement for vehicles at a single pinch point on Marsh Road, where the highway narrows to approximately 4.8m, although vehicle tracking analysis confirms this will not be an issue for refuse vehicles. The existing white line segregated walking and cycling path on The Avenue will be converted to a shared use path, linking into the existing toucan crossing south of Templers Road.

Marsh Road

Marsh Road is limited in width with on-street and private car park accesses on both sides of the road. It is proposed to explore opportunities to raise the profile of the route and increase awareness to other road users of the potential for active travel on the road. This may include cycle symbols on the road surface, as shown in Appendix I and will be confirmed at a later date.

Cricketfield Road Car Park

The NCN route runs along the south eastern extreme of the TDC owned and operated Cricketfield Road car park. Present provision includes a kerbed pavement for pedestrians next to a single track lined cycleway which is level with nearby car park spaces. This arrangement makes it difficult for cycles travelling in opposite directions to pass each other and also provides no protection from manoeuvring motor vehicles in the car park.

Proposals address these issues through the provision of a two-way cycle track with light segregation using kerbed bolt-down segregation units. To accommodate the increased land take necessary to deliver two-way cycle track provision, a complementary car park

relining scheme will be undertaken by TDC. This will ensure that there is no net loss of parking within the Cricketfield Road car park.

Additionally, it is proposed to provide an automatic traffic counter to record and monitor scheme usage in both directions.

Cricketfield Road Car Park Exit to Kingsteignton Road

To improve visibility at the Cricketfield Road car park exit it is proposed to remove two on-street parking bays on Marsh Road. This intervention will improve safety for cycle and pedestrians emerging from the southern end of the car park and continuing their journey along the NCN Route 2 parallel to the River Lemon. As with proposals on Marsh Road, it is proposed to explore opportunities to install cycle symbols on the road surface near the Albany Street junction and along the bottom of Sherborne Road House. This will both raise the profile of the route, improve wayfinding and increase awareness to other road users of the potential for active travel on the road.

Tactile paving and associated shared use path symbology is proposed to be installed between the Kingsteignton Road junction and Elm Road. This will be complemented by two new Sheffield cycle stands next to existing provision.

Signage

To improve route legibility and wayfinding, it is proposed to provide new signage highlighting that the route is part of NCN Route 2. This signage will be delivered from The Avenue to Kingsteignton Road, alongside the proposals set out above. Additionally, new signage will extend along the remainder of the route along Sherborne Road, Market Street and Highweek Street, improving onward connectivity.

Subject to proposals gaining approval, it is programmed that the scheme would be delivered in first half of 2022.

3. Options/Alternatives

Do Nothing – To keep the status quo would be detrimental to DCC's strategic vision for active travel in Newton Abbot, as set out in the draft Heart of Teignbridge Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. Ensuring there are high-quality alternatives to the private vehicle for short trips is central to encouraging all ages and abilities to cycle more often, contributing to improved public health and wellbeing, the reduction of transport emissions and supporting Newton Abbot's economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Avenue/Marsh Road Junction – An alternative arrangement that maintained the existing highway width on Marsh Road was considered during the design process. This sought to enhance cycle movements from Marsh Road to The Avenue off-road path through the provision of right-turn kerbed island on the location of the existing road hatchings. This proposal was rejected due swept analysis for larger vehicles highlighting incompatibility with the island and a risk of HGV overrun for large vehicles reversing into Wharf Road, creating road safety concerns.

Marsh Road – A 20mph zone was considered along Marsh Road, however, this was omitted in light of the upcoming 20mph pilot scheme in Newton Abbot. Complementary traffic calming measures and/or segregated cycle infrastructure were also considered,

however, due to limited highway width these not considered feasible. It is also noted that existing traffic speeds are likely to be low along Marsh Road due to existing constraints along the route.

Cricketfield Road Car Park – A number of different types of segregation were considered to provide protection to cycles. Fully kerbed hard segregation was not selected due to drainage concerns and a lining only solution was rejected in favour of enhanced cycle safety.

Albany Street Junction – An on-street cycle lane option across Albany Street and a complementary stop sign were considered, however, it was considered that such interventions risked creating confusion for road users and/or were undeliverable.

4. Consultations

Public consultation was conducted by TDC in June 2020, as part of a wider Future High Street Fund bid consultation. The opportunity to comment was advertised through a TDC press release, newsletters, social media and emails to local businesses. Consultation materials included preliminary design plans and illustrations.

There were approximately 65 respondents to questions relating to NCN improvement proposals. Whilst this consultation presented scheme plans that were at an earlier stage of design to those set out in this report, designs have progressed and developed utilising the feedback received.

Overall, approximately 70% of respondents agreed with the need to improve the quality of the NCN Route 2 within Newton Abbot town centre. Further questions relating to specific elements of the proposals also received strong support:

- Cricketfield Road Car Park – Over 65% of respondents supported widening and improving cycle provision at the southern end of the site.
- Signage – Over 70% supported new signage at Sherborne Road to make clear it's use of local bus services and cycles only and a similar number supported better NCN route signage between Sherborne Road and ASDA.
- Marsh Road – Over 65% agreed there is a need to improve active travel provision on Marsh Road. As discussed above, the 20mph pilot will complement proposals and on-road cycle symbols, or a similar intervention, will raise the profile of the route to all road users.
- Albany Street Junction – Over 65% supported new surface marks and a stop sign at Albany Street junction. Whilst these scheme elements have been omitted as a result of further design work, the Albany Street junction still receives some uplift in provision.

A separate meeting with Newton Abbot Town Council was also held in September 2021.

5. Financial Considerations

Proposals are estimated to cost approximately £134,000 and will be delivered using the Minor Works Framework. Approximately, 20% project risk has been included for the main construction elements of the project. A £5,000 allowance has been made for the

automatic cycle counter. This cost estimate do not include any allowance for the relining of Cricketfield Road car park, which will be paid for and undertaken separately by Teignbridge District Council.

The proposal's value for money have been assessed using the Department for Transport's Active Mode Appraisal Toolkit. This process indicates that the scheme represents high value for money, delivering a benefit-cost-ratio (BCR) of 2.1.

DCC have committed to contributing £200,000 Local Transport Plan (LTP) to the walking and cycling elements of the Future High Street Fund package, as set out in the Transport Capital Programme update approved by Cabinet in September 2021. This contribution is independent of the estimate cost of these proposals and will contribute to the wider active travel package. It is not exclusively linked to the NCN2 improvements and may be used as contribution towards other transport elements of the Future High Street Fund delivery.

TDC will fund all of the remaining Future High Street Fund costs, including the construction of the NCN Route 2 improvements, through their award of the Government's Future High Street Fund. This arrangement is subject to a funding agreement between DCC and TDC. An order has been received from TDC to cover £18,106 of design. No further commitments will be made by DCC, until the funding agreement has been signed.

6. Legal Considerations

A traffic regulation order will be required to reduce in length existing on-street parking and extend existing no waiting at any time restriction on Marsh Road. This will enable visibility to be improved at the exit of Cricketfield Road car park.

It has been verbally been agreed with TDC that DCC will maintain the short section of two-way segregated cycle track through Cricketfield Road car park. A deed of dedication will be arranged to progress this matter.

7. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

Improvements to active travel infrastructure, including cycle provision, are considered central to encouraging modal shift from private cars to sustainable travel options. It is therefore considered that these proposals will help to increase cycle uptake and reduce transport emissions, helping to tackle climate change.

Modal shift towards active travel will also deliver air quality benefits, benefitting towards the Newton Abbot and Kingsteignton Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), which includes the entire scheme extent.

8. 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.

In progressing this proposal, an Impact Assessment has been prepared and has been published at: <https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/>.

9. Risk Management Considerations

A combined stage 1 and 2 road safety audit (RSA) has been undertaken and a response document is currently being progressed. The majority of problems raised are minor and will be addressed at the detail design phase of the scheme. The audit did highlight issues relating to the proposed narrower highway width on Marsh Road at its junction with The Avenue. It is anticipated that highway width will be increased slightly at the detail design stage, although this will result in a slightly reduced width of the cycle ramp on Marsh Road. Depending on the nature of the RSA response document, there may be small increase in scheme cost.

Further changes to the design will be subject to a revised Road Safety Audit and could be agreed through delegated powers.

10. Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

This proposal represents a cost-effective intervention to improve the quality of cycling provision in Newton Abbot town centre as part of TDC's Future High Street Fund proposals. This aligns well with DCC's wider aspirations to improve active travel infrastructure and encourage modal shift away from private vehicles for short journeys. It is recommended that the scheme be approved for construction and the associated traffic regulation orders be progressed.

Dave Black
Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment

Electoral Division: Newton Abbot North

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

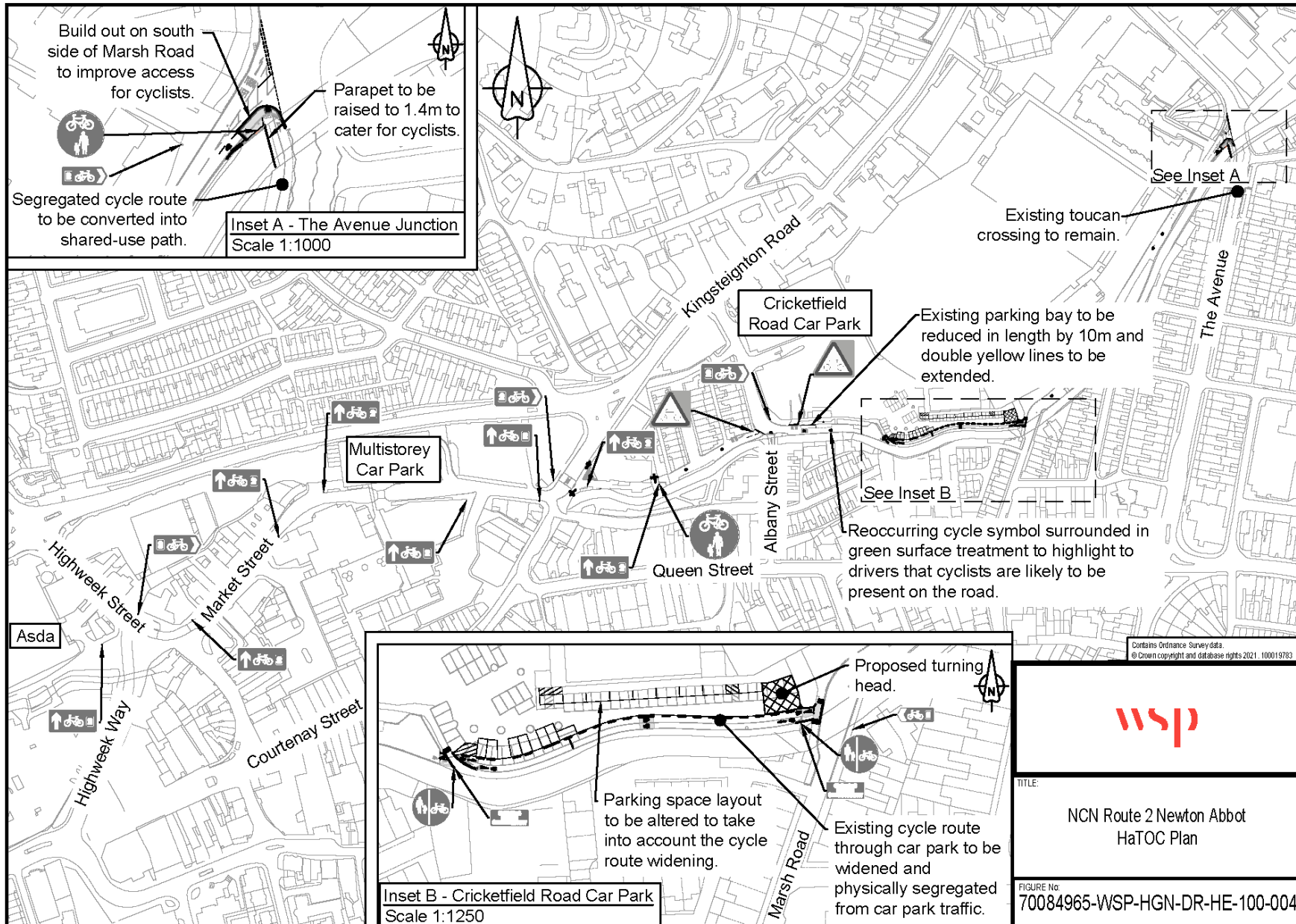
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Background Paper	Date	File Reference
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Nil

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NCN Route 2 Newton Abbot
HaTOC Plan

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