

Tarka Trail Willingcott Holiday Village to Buttercombe Lane

Report of the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

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

Recommendations: It is recommended that:

- (a) subject to a final detailed design and stage two Road Safety Audit, the proposed multiuse path on plans 10310/08 and 10310/09 in Appendix 2 is approved for construction at an estimated cost of £220,000 and;**
- (b) powers are delegated to the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport in consultation with the Chair of HATOC and local member, to make minor amendments to the scheme as required.**

1. Summary

Approval is sought to construct the next section of the Tarka Trail in North Devon, between Willingcott and Buttercombe Lane. This would enable 0.6 km of the missing 6.4 km gap between Knowle and Willingcott to be completed and connecting the major North Devon towns of Ilfracombe and Barnstaple.

2. Introduction

The County Council continues to make progress with delivering cycling and walking improvements in accordance with the [Cycling and Multi Use Trail Network Strategy](#), which was approved by Cabinet in 2015.

The Tarka Trail connecting Willingcott to Knowle is one of Devon's top priorities as it would go towards completing the Coast to Coast cycle network between Ilfracombe and Plymouth. The County Council are working hard to progress this link as quickly as possible, however delivery of rural trails has been constrained by the limited external funding available. We were unsuccessful with a recent Active Travel Fund bid and so we continue to make progress with Local Transport Plan funds. The current plan is to deliver the remaining sections incrementally over the years when funding becomes available.

The Tarka Trail section through Willingcott Holiday Village (the former golf course) will be constructed as part of a 3rd party-led development. Under the land agreement with Willingcott Holiday Village, a compound area and access road has been agreed through Willingcott Holiday Village which would simplify construction. This access will be available between the months of November 2022 and March 2023 which is why the section from Willingcott Holiday Village to Buttercombe Lane has come forward to construct at the present time.

This is a 0.6 km section, which will be implemented across financial years 2022/2023 and 2023/2024.

3. Proposal

The proposal is to construct a 0.6 km section of 3.5-metre-wide path along a former railway line (see Appendix 2). The design has been carried out in accordance with LTN1/20 (geometry including width, gradients and construction materials). The path will be accessible for multiuse, which includes walking, cycling and equestrian use.

As can be seen in Appendix 1, this section of the path will connect to the north with the path through Willingcott Holiday Village, which is being privately constructed by a developer. To the south it will continue as far as Buttercombe Lane. The section from the Holiday Village to Buttercombe Lane would not be opened to the public until the path can be extended further to the south and therefore is proposed to be temporarily fenced off at Willingcott.

4. Options/Alternatives

The construction of the Willingcott Holiday Village to Buttercombe Lane section is dependent on the available access which has been negotiated with the developer between November 2022 and March 2023.

If this window of opportunity is missed and access is not possible via Willingcott Holiday Village, then the construction will have to commence after the sections between Buttercombe Lane and Foxhunters are completed, delaying the construction of this section of the route by at least one year. It would also result in additional construction costs due to the necessary multiple handling of materials and extended construction period.

5. Consultations/Technical Data

Ecological surveys have been previously carried out between Willingcott Village and Foxhunters in 2014 and 2021. Further site clearance is needed, and a walkover site visit will be carried out by a qualified ecologist before this work is started.

A Road Safety Audit Stage 2 has been commissioned on the proposals and the report is expected to be completed in June. It is expected that there are low risks associated with the section between Willingcott to Buttercombe.

A DCC Maintenance Audit has also been commissioned to ensure we minimise ongoing maintenance costs through the choice of materials.

6. Strategic Plan

The scheme is considered to be well aligned with several of the actions within the Strategic Plan:

-the scheme responds to the climate emergency by prioritising sustainable travel and transport and encouraging sustainable lifestyles,

- invests in Devon's economic recovery by maintaining and where necessary improving our highway network and sustainable transport options,
- improves health and wellbeing by giving people greater opportunities for walking and cycling to increase their physical activity.

The scheme also supports the decarbonisation agenda by encouraging modal shift for leisure journeys and ultimately (when the scheme is completed until Knowle) may encourage modal shift for some commuter journeys.

7. Financial Considerations

The construction of the scheme is expected to cost £220,000 funded by the Local Transport Plan 2022/2023 funding.

8. Legal Considerations

Devon County Council have acquired all necessary land on this section.

The route will become a permissive bridleway with DCC as the landowner. When the section is complete to the nearest Highway, DCC will look at dedicating this as a formal bridleway.

9. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

As the route follows the track bed of the disused railway line, the environmental impacts are reduced compared with the construction of a trail on an entirely new alignment. Due to the stone bed (i.e. ballast) along the track, there is mainly low growing vegetation. There are trees situated adjacent to the track, and a small number of these will need felling. A qualified ecologist will carry out a walkthrough survey prior to any site clearance, which will be carried out at an appropriate time of year to minimise any disturbance to wildlife.

Greenhouse gases will arise from the construction phase where the main contributors will be the production of trail surfacing material and the movement of material and equipment to and from the site. This will be mitigated by using materials with high recycled content and superior durability, sourcing materials and waste facilities as local to the site as possible, and electrically powered plant where it may be feasible.

As part of the design stage a carbon calculator will be used to minimise the scheme's carbon footprint.

The new path will be constructed on the former railway line, which for the most part has its base construction still intact; this material will be left undisturbed and form the base for the new path construction. This will result in reduced excavation and waste disposal operations. Warm asphalt will also be used to surface the new path as opposed to hot asphalt, therefore reducing greenhouse emissions.

There could be a positive impact on public engagement with the historic environment setting. Reopening the track as a cycle route may provide opportunities to highlight the history of the railway line.

Once the trail is open for use it will result in a permanent reduction in greenhouse gas and pollutant emissions from people who switch from car use to walking and cycling for commuting or leisure journeys.

10. 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 scheme could enhance equality of opportunity by providing additional traffic free paths which may be more attractive to families, young children, elderly people or people with disabilities who may feel safer partaking in outdoor exercise. It may also enable people without access to a car (i.e. young people) to access jobs or leisure opportunities more easily.

11. Risk Management Considerations

A Construction Management Plan with method statements and risks assessments will be agreed with the appointed contractor prior to the start of the construction phase. If we miss the window to construct or if the developer does not allow us access, we will need to access via Foxhunters, which will mean we will have to construct Buttercombe to Foxhunters first. For this section, no funding has been identified.

12. Public Health Impact

The scheme will likely have a positive public health impact by providing attractive and accessible walking and cycling routes, thus helping tackle health issues associated with physical inactivity (e.g. obesity).

13. Summary

The completion of this 0.6km section of the route will go some way in completing the missing gaps in the Tarka Trail between Willingcott and Knowle and ultimately connecting the north coast in Ilfracombe with Barnstaple and the remainder of the route linking to other market towns in West Devon and Torridge. It supports the aims in the County Council's multiuse trail strategy and complements the County Council's Devon Carbon Plan, and Devon County Council Strategic Plan, promoting more opportunities for active travel.

Constructing the section of Tarka Trail between Willingcott Holiday Village and Buttercombe Lane also takes advantage of the opportunity to utilise the access provided through the construction of Willingcott Holiday Village development. This will allow the scheme to be constructed in the most time and cost effective way.

Meg Booth
Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Electoral Division: Combe Martin Rural

Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers

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Background Paper	Date	File Reference
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Nil

lh150622ndh
sc/cr/Tarka Trail Willingcott Holiday Village to Buttercombe Lane
02 170622



Contains Ordnance Survey data.
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The position of the 'Statutory Undertakers' plant shown on the drawings must be regarded as approximate only.

KEY

- New 3.5m wide shared use path comprising type F1 footway construction to standard detail S1104
- New 1.0m wide verge to be constructed using site material as fill and dressed with class 5B topsoil
- Cutting/embankment (1 in 2 gradient)
- New timber post and 4 rail fence as HCD drawing H3 type 4

- NOTES:**
1. The proposed multi-use path through Willingcott Village is being designed and constructed by a developer in advance of DCC work starting.
 2. Phase 1 of DCC work will be carried out between Willingcott Village and Buttercombe Lane (Ch 0.00 to Ch 525.00), with phase 2 (Buttercombe Lane to Foxhunters) being carried out at a later date.
 3. The new multi-use path shall be 3.5m wide and have a type F1 footway construction comprising of:
20mm layer of AC 6mm dense surface course with a PSV of 50 and 100/150 pen WMA.
50mm layer of AC 20 binder course with 100/150 pen WMA.
100mm layer of type 1 sub base.
 4. A layer of geotextile Terram 1000, or similar approved, will be laid at formation level. Formation level shall be on average 100mm below existing track levels.
 5. Between Chainage 0.000 and 520.000 the new track shall have a balanced cross-fall of 1 in 40. From Chainage 520.000 the cross-fall will transition to tie in with Buttercombe Lane.
 6. Any tree within 1 metre of the edge of the new path will be marked out and felled.
 7. Verge areas to be dressed with 100mm layer of class 5B topsoil and grass seed. Existing site material shall be used as fill where new verge depths exceed 100mm.
 8. The contractor's compound area will be situated in Willingcott Village, adjacent to Bradwell Road. The compound will be shared with the Developer's contractor. All materials deliveries must access the site via Bradwell Road through a temporary entrance constructed by the developer. All imported materials will need to be double handled by the contractor using dumpers.
 9. Access/egress from the compound to the working area shall be via a newly constructed track carried out by the Willingcott Village Developer. This track will be based but not surfaced until the DCC works are completed between Willingcott and Buttercombe Lane.

	Engineering Design Group	JOB	DRAWING TITLE	Rev	Date	Drawn	Revisions	Ck'd	Do not scale from this drawing in either hard 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.	
	Taw View, Barnstaple, EX31 1EE	Tel. 0345 155 1004	NATIONAL CYCLE NETWORK KNOWLE TO WILLINGCOTT	WILLINGCOTT TO BUTTERCOMBE LANE SCHEME PLAN	0	20-5-2022	JRM	Original issue		SH
	customer@devon.gov.uk www.devon.gov.uk									