

**Langaton Lane Green 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.

**Recommendation: It is recommended that:**

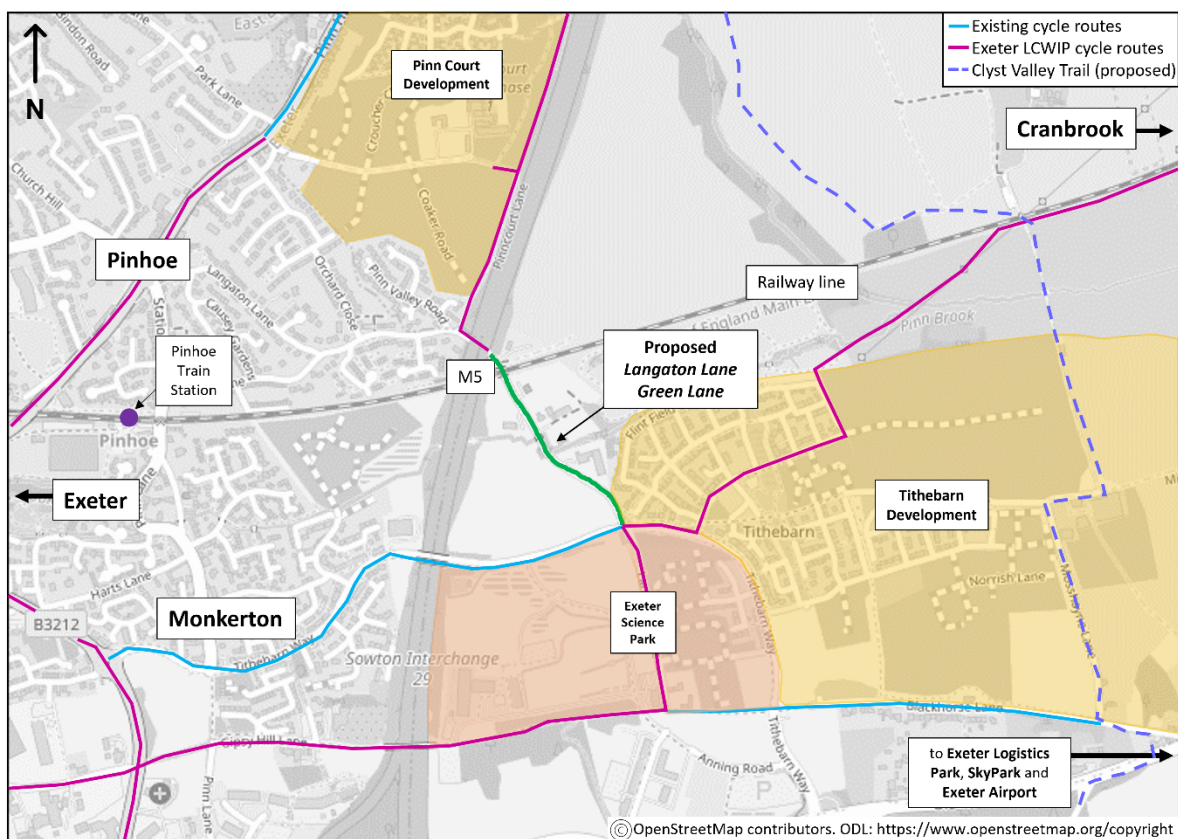
- (a) the Experimental Traffic Regulation Order, to prohibit vehicles along Langaton Lane, as shown in Appendix 1, be made permanent;**
- (b) the proposed improvements shown on the overview plan included in Appendix 1 is approved for construction at an estimated cost of £70,000;**
- (c) approval be given to advertise a traffic regulation order to introduce No Waiting At Any Time as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report, and to make and seal the order if no objections are received; and**
- (d) the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport be given delegated powers, in consultation with the Chair of HATOC and the local members, to make minor amendments to the scheme details.**

**1. Introduction**

Langaton Lane is situated in East Devon, connecting the Pinhoe area to the new Tithebarn/Mosshayne residential developments on the eastern edge of Exeter Science Park. It is a relatively narrow road, passing under the M5 motorway and railway line. Two-way traffic is limited in places with no footways east of the motorway bridge. The lane is surrounded by planned residential and employment development and there are onward high quality cycle links from Exeter Science Park also extending to Exeter Logistics Park (Lidl/Amazon), SkyPark and Exeter Airport.

As the lane provides a connection between the expanding Pinhoe residential areas and jobs east of Exeter, there is potential for it to attract additional traffic. In its current form, Langaton Lane is unsuitable to cope with such traffic. Initial plans included widening the Langaton Lane carriageway to enable two-way traffic, which would have required separate pedestrian and cycle facilities and increased landtake. With the narrow road width and constraints under the railway line there were limited options to progress this. In addition, it was identified that the proposals would be likely to increase traffic on the narrow residential roads in Pinhoe village including Langaton Lane west of the motorway, Parker's Cross Lane and Causey Lane.

This report proposes the creation of a 'green lane', that removes through traffic on Langaton Lane, by use of a modal filter, in order to encourage walking and cycling as the natural first choice for travel for people who live and work in the Exeter and East Devon growth area.



**Figure 1: Langaton Lane Location map**

## 2. Proposal

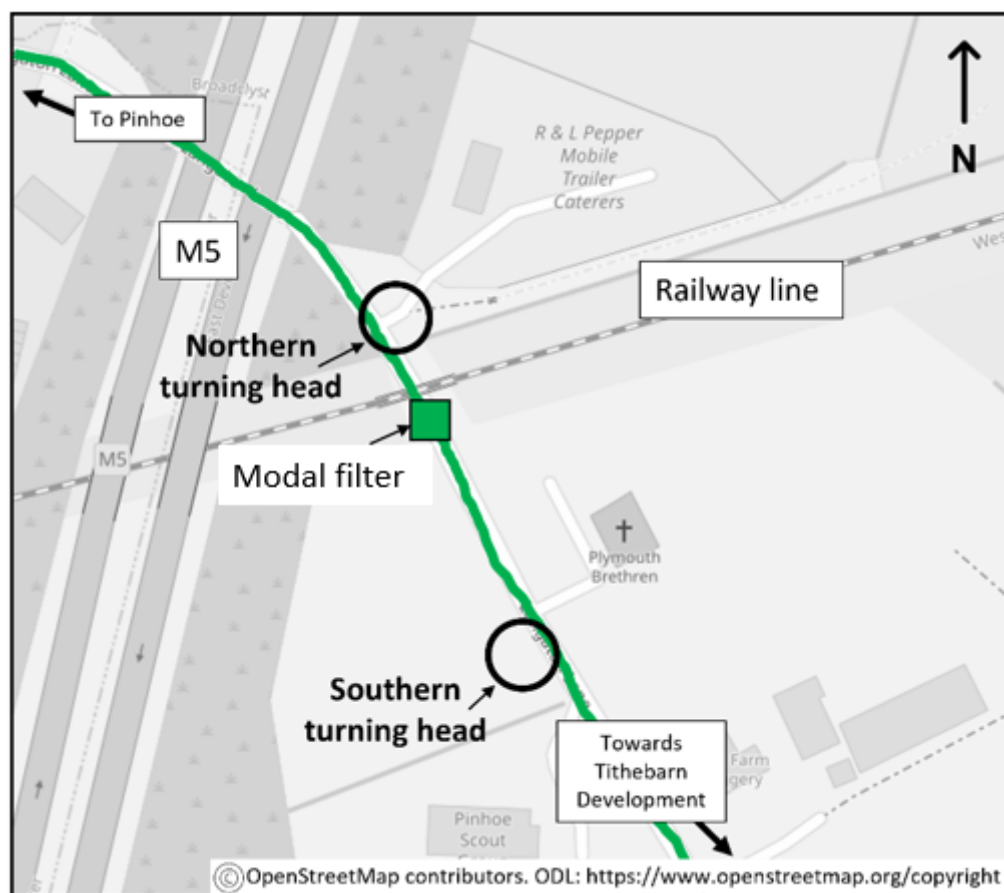
As part of the County Council's commitment to decarbonise transport, the creation of 'green lanes' lanes, including Langaton Lane, was recommended for inclusion in the Exeter Transport Strategy by Scrutiny Committee members. This was further endorsed by Cabinet in January 2021. A green lane allows walking and cycling but prevents motorised through traffic.

The proposed 'green lane' on Langaton Lane would be achieved through the use of a modal filter preventing vehicular through traffic but permitting people walking and cycling. Vehicle access to properties and land would still be retained, but from one end of Langaton Lane only. The green lane will create a pleasant environment for people walking and cycling and provide an attractive alternative to the car for short to medium distance journeys. It would connect new developments on the east and west of the motorway via Langaton Lane into Exeter's high quality cycling network and help prioritise walking and cycling as a first choice of travel. There are better quality alternative road routes for crossing the motorway, either via Cumberland Way and Honiton Road/A30 or via the Tithebarn Way link road recently delivered by Devon County Council and designed to cater for development traffic crossing the M5.

In June 2021, Langaton Lane was closed to motor vehicles via a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) to enable delivery of a low carbon district heat network to serve new developments. On the back of this temporary closure, requests were made by members of the public for a permanent closure of the lane.

When the TTRO expired on 11 March 2022, an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) introduced a prohibition of motor vehicles that was implemented with a physical modal filter to restrict motorised traffic whilst permitting walking, cycling and horse riding. The restrictions were implemented on 17 March 2022, to be in place for a maximum of 18 months. The restriction has been introduced on an experimental basis to allow the impact to be monitored and consulted on for at least 6 months, with the option of making minor changes if considered necessary. As the first 6-month window has now passed, a number of responses have been received during the statutory consultation period and these are considered in Appendix 3.

After considering the comments, the proposal is to make the experimental changes permanent. The permanent modal filter on Langaton Lane is proposed at the same location as was put in place for the ETRO, situated south of the railway line. (see scheme plan Appendix 1).



**Figure 2: Location map of modal filter and turning heads**

The modal filter will be in the form of two concrete blocks, with a 1.5 metre gap between them. The existing concrete blocks, used for the ETRO, will remain, with reflective strips added to increase visibility. Surface mounted kerbs will be installed on each side of the concrete blocks, to prevent movement of the blocks.

A turning head will be constructed on either side of the modal filter so that vehicles unaware of the restrictions or delivering to properties are able to manoeuvre easily to make a return journey. For the turning head at the northern side, all current kerbs will remain, but an existing dropped kerb will be widened to 2 metres and tactile paving installed. On the southern side of the modal filter, a new turning head will be

constructed in a field entrance. The turning head will include a concrete kerb with a timber-rail post fence. This turning head be situated 0.5 metres below the ground level of adjacent land and, as such, grading out will be necessary. Double yellow lines will be applied around the turning head.

It is proposed to advertise an additional traffic regulation order to introduce No Waiting At Any time (Double Yellow Lines) around both modal filter areas and the dropped kerb on the northern side.

The existing street lighting along Langaton Lane will be upgraded to ensure good visibility and that people feel safe travelling at night. Investigations are underway to see whether innovative motion-activated lighting be used to minimise the environmental impact, including avoiding disruption to wildlife and light pollution.

Highway signage was introduced at either end of Langaton Lane as part of the ETRO. Following consultation feedback and a signing review, one additional sign will be placed near the motorway bridge, and a modification will be made to another sign at that location. Signage plans can be seen in Appendix 2.

### **3. Options/Alternatives**

Alternative options included:

#### Road Widening

Originally, proposals were investigated for Langaton Lane to be widened for motor vehicles, with the provision of a footway and cycleway. However, with limited road width available, space constraints under the railway line and the likely impact of additional traffic on residential roads in Pinhoe, this option was not considered suitable. The County Council has in recent years delivered the Tithebarn Way link road providing a suitable vehicular route for connecting residents in the Pinhoe and wider Exeter area across the motorway. Road widening in this location would not support the efforts to decarbonise transport and respond to the climate emergency, which the Council is committed to.

#### Reopening the Road

The modal filter could be removed, and the road reopened to all traffic, either immediately or once the ETRO expires in September 2023. This would reverse the benefits delivered by the experimental measures, making the route less attractive for people walking, cycling, and horse riding.

This would slow progress towards the Council's active travel targets and carbon reduction commitments and would be contrary to the preferences expressed by residents in the consultation.

With the completion of residential development in the area and growth in employment in areas such as Science Park, it would be likely that Langaton Lane would become a popular short cut. The current highway design is not suitable to accommodate any increase in vehicular traffic.

#### **4. Consultations/Representations**

A consultation has been carried out on the ETRO, and whether it should become permanent. The consultation received 70 responses, 71% of which were from the same postcode sector as Langaton Lane (EX1 3).

71% of responses were in support of the scheme. The main reasons for support, given by 31 respondents, was that this would improve the safety of Langaton Lane. Of these 31 respondents, 21 specifically said this would improve the safety for pedestrians and 15 people commented that cycling was much safer with vehicle traffic restricted.

Of those who did not support the ETRO being made permanent, the most common reason was that the diversion will increase traffic elsewhere and the diversion is lengthy and increases journey times, expense in petrol and an increase in carbon emissions for the diverted journey.

Some of the comments received also included suggestions for making improvements to the scheme. These are detailed, along with the County Council's response in Appendix 3, and where appropriate have been accommodated in the final scheme design.

A traffic count conducted in July 2022, found that 107 pedestrians and 27 cyclists used Langaton Lane between 7am and 7pm. In this same time period it was found that 40 vehicles entered Langaton Lane from the Pinhoe area and 69 from the Tithebarn area; it can be assumed these vehicles were accessing sites located off Langaton Lane, or were dropping off/picking up (for example, dropping children at the Scout HQ). The count figures demonstrates that the balance of usage of Langaton Lane now favours people walking and cycling and this is expected to increase as development expands in Pinhoe and the wider East Devon growth point.

#### **5. Strategic Plan**

The scheme is considered to be well aligned with several of the priorities within the Strategic Plan. By improving environments that enable more walking and cycling, the scheme will help contribute towards:

- Responding to the climate emergency
- Making a child friendly Devon
- Improving health and wellbeing
- Helping communities be safe, connected and resilient

Creating a 'green lane' on Langaton Lane (allowing walking and cycling but no through traffic) is identified in the Exeter Transport Strategy, following a recommendation to include 'green lanes' as agreed at the Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet meetings which were held in June 2020 and November 2020 respectively. This would provide an attractive walking and cycling link for Pinhoe residents to access employment at Exeter Science Park, Exeter Logistics Park, SkyPark and Cranbrook and also connect with the future planned Clyst Valley Trail.

## **6. Financial Considerations**

The scheme is estimated to cost £70,000, which incorporates a 10% risk contingency. The lighting fee included is subject to change based on whether a motion detection lighting system is implemented (if this was included the cost may increase).

Expenditure of £39,019 in 2021/22, was funded by developer contributions and Local Transport Plan grant. Projected spend to complete the scheme of £30,981, will be funded from developer contributions.

## **7. Legal Considerations**

The lawful implications of the proposal have been considered in the preparation of this report.

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 practicable, to secure the expeditious, convenient, and safe movement of traffic and provision of parking facilities. This includes provisions for pedestrians and cyclists. The statutory consultation on the proposed vehicle prohibition has been carried out in line with the Local Authorities' Traffic Order (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996.

All land required to accommodate the northern turning head is HMPE (*Highway Maintainable at Public Expense*) and therefore no land exchange is necessary.

The southern turning head requires the purchase of some land. Negotiations are underway, with Heads of Terms currently being finalised.

## **8. Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)**

The measures proposed in this report will improve walking and cycling, encouraging reduced car use and boosting people's health and fitness. The environmental impacts arising from the proposals are therefore expected to be positive.

There may be slight negative impacts at certain locations due to the traffic being displaced and increasing distance travelled on some car journeys. However, by creating better conditions for walking and cycling, and supporting the aims of the Exeter Transport Strategy for 50% of trips originating in Exeter to be by walking and cycling, it is expected that some people will choose to switch modes rather than simply changing their driving route. This would mean a minor reduction of traffic on the road network as a result of the scheme. It is therefore expected that the scheme will deliver positive environmental benefits and contribute to the County Council's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Langaton Lane is rich in wildlife and to minimise disruption to this sensitive habitat, motion-activated lighting systems are proposed. This approach will also limit light pollution.

## **9. 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.

Decision makers will take account of protected characteristics in coming to a decision.

The proposed measures would enable more people to choose to walk, cycle or use wheelchairs and other mobility aids to explore the area. This will enable greater participation amongst younger people, older people and people with disabilities. Previous research and feedback has indicated that these groups feel less confident in cycling on busy roads and may feel excluded from participating in active travel. Additionally, it could enable those reliant on walking and cycling to more easily access certain opportunities, such as jobs, education and social activities. Furthermore, the scheme may reduce risks to people with sensory impairments, who may have difficulties perceiving the approach of vehicular traffic.

It is acknowledged that this proposal may make some vehicular journeys slightly longer. However, as the proposal supports walking and cycling, it is expected to reduce traffic volumes and its associated impact in the area.

Where vehicle access is restricted, this may negatively impact on those drivers who require a car to access facilities, however, all properties and services will remain accessible by motor vehicles and therefore, overall, the proposals are expected to advance equality of opportunities.

## **10. Risk Management Considerations**

This proposal has been assessed and all necessary safeguards or action have been included to safeguard the Council's position.

A MSSA (Minor Schemes Safety Audit) has been undertaken for the ETRO stage, with the only concerns raised being a turning head was required at the southern end. This is being rectified in this design, and once complete it will satisfy the MSSA concerns and should be approved for the final scheme design.

Through traffic, except for cycles, pedestrians, and horse-riders, has been prohibited along Langaton Lane since June 2021 – first due to the TTRO for works and then due to the ETRO. No collisions/incidents have been recorded during that time. It is therefore considered that there are low risks associated with this scheme.

## 11. Conclusions

In its current form, Langaton Lane is unsuitable for a significant amount of additional vehicular traffic that would be generated by new development in the area. This traffic would also have a negative impact on residents living in the immediate Pinhoe area.

There are limited opportunities for active travel in this area and turning Langaton Lane into a Green Lane will enable people to walk and cycle between residential development and local employment areas.

Delivering a permanent closure of the lane to through traffic has been tested under the ETRO and is supported by a significant majority of consultation respondents. It is also notable that the balance of usage on the lane has changed, with the majority of users now walking and cycling.

The scheme fits in with a number of the County Council's strategic objectives, and it is therefore recommended that the road closure to prohibit vehicles along Langaton Lane is made permanent, and that approval be given to advertise a traffic regulation order to introduce No Waiting At Any Time at the locations as detailed in Appendix 1 of this report, and to make and seal the order if no objections are received.

Meg Booth  
Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

### **Electoral Division: Broadclyst**

### **Local Government Act 1972: List of Background Papers**

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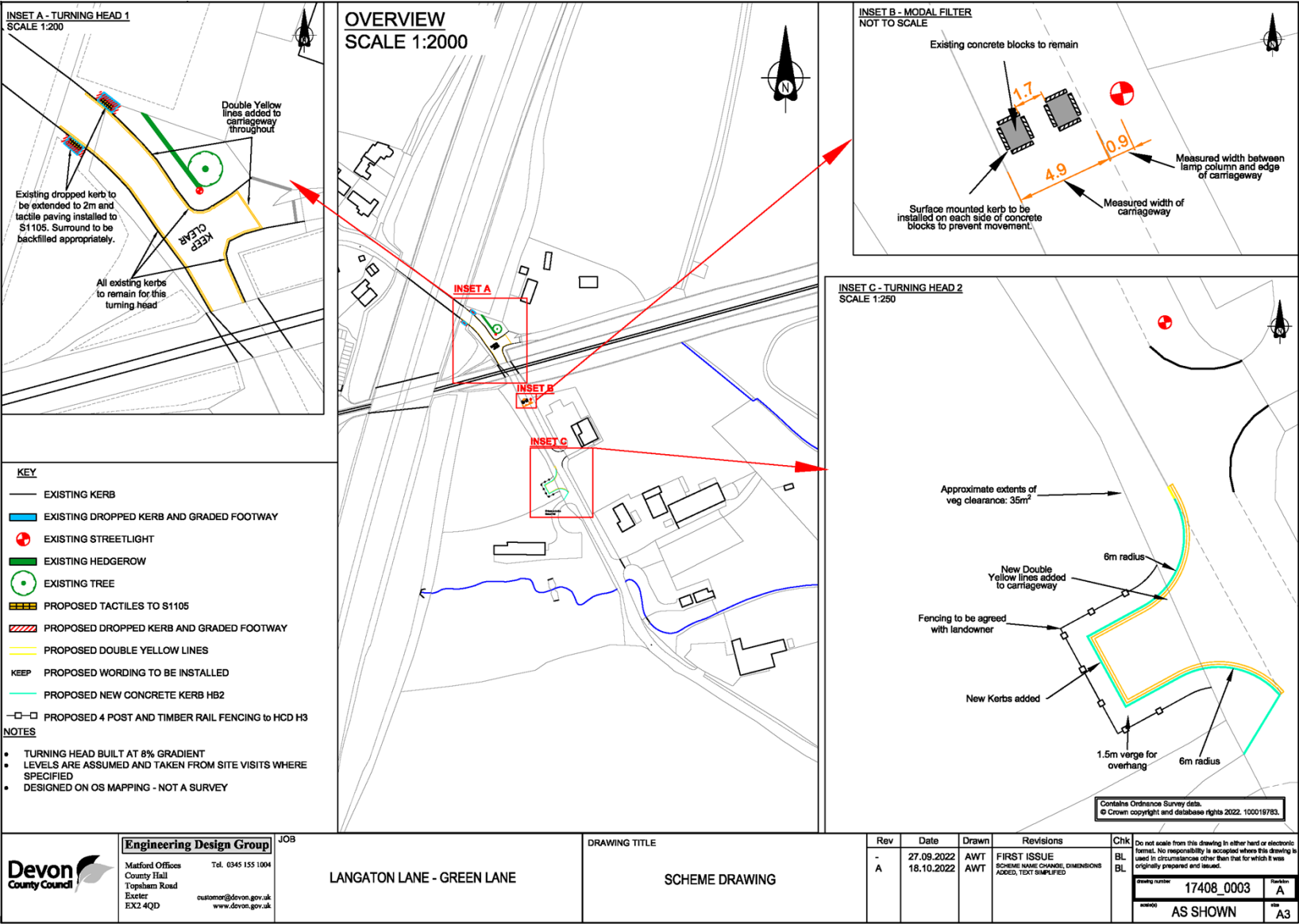
Background Paper	Date	File Ref.
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Nil

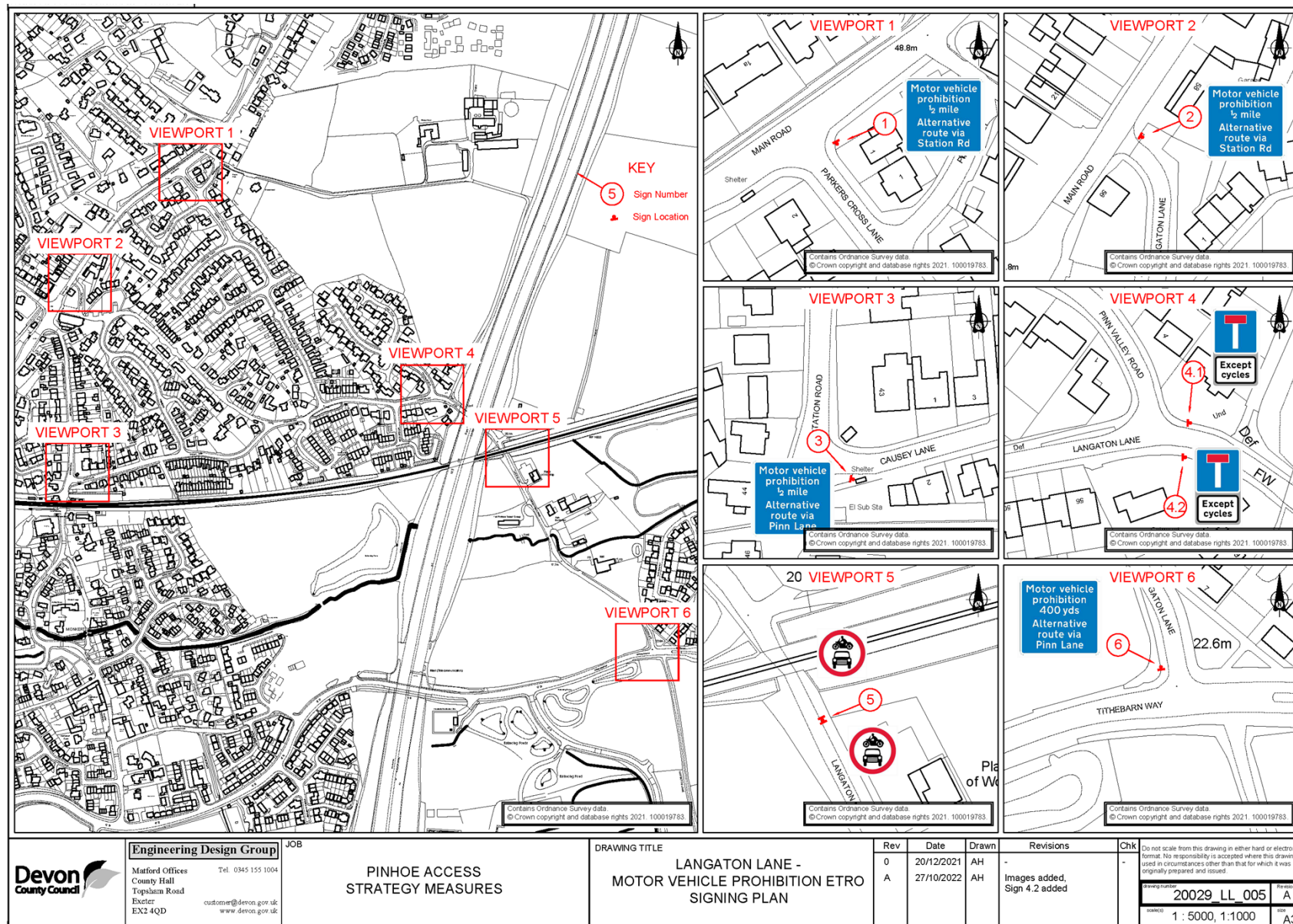
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Overview Plan



# Signage Plan



## Summary of TRO representations

Comment	Responses	DCC response
Improves Safety	31	Noted.
Lengthy diversion will increase journey times, expense and carbon emissions. This is inconvenient for locals.	14	There are better quality alternative road routes for crossing the motorway, either via Cumberland Way and Honiton Road/A30 or via the Tithebarn Way link road. In addition, the scheme increases opportunities for people to partake in walking and cycling, people who would have driven these short distances using Langaton Lane can now opt for walking or cycling the same journey, thus resulting in reduced carbon emissions.
Diversion will cause traffic to increase elsewhere.	11	While traffic diversions may cause increased traffic elsewhere on the road network, it is expected that overall traffic volumes will reduce in the area due to increases in people choosing to walk and cycle. The Tithebarn Way link road has been purposefully built to accommodate higher traffic volumes.
Scheme should be made permanent.	10	Noted.
Scheme increases active travel.	10	Noted.
Road needs widening, with pavement added, and surface needs upgrading and maintaining.	7	Due to space constraints, it is not possible to widen Langaton Lane, and provide pedestrian and cycle facilities alongside. Within the current scheme plans, pedestrian safety has been improved due to the provision of dropped crossings.
Similar closures should be implemented elsewhere.	3	Noted.
This should be just for pedestrians, with cyclists and motorcyclists banned.	2	Government guidance suggests that green lanes should be inclusive to all (this includes pedestrians, cycles and where possible equestrians). Access to field entrances and properties on Langaton Lane is maintained for motorised vehicles.
Closure point should be on the south side of the Scout HQ.	2	A turning head is required either side of the closure point to ensure safe passage of vehicles along Langaton Lane. It would not be possible to create a turning head for vehicles if the modal filter was moved south of the Scout HQ.

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>DCC response</b>
Instead of closing the road to vehicles, other forms of traffic calming should be used, or the road should be made one-way.	2	Experience elsewhere suggests that alternative traffic management, such as one-way systems, chicanes or speed humps, are less effective in reducing traffic volumes and encouraging walking and cycling. In addition, there is not enough space to create a pedestrian path as well as a contraflow cycle lane if the road was changed to a one-way system.
Signage of closed road needs improving.	1	Signage is to be reviewed after 6 months of the scheme being permanent.
Street lighting needs improving.	1	The lighting along Langaton Lane is going to be improved, with work on lighting design underway.
Drainage works needed to reduce flooding along the lane.	1	Drainage works are outside of the scope of this project.
New developments should have specific link roads.	1	Every development is subject to a Transport Assessment to consider its impact on the road network.
Closure is encouraging parking underneath the motorway bridge.	1	Double yellow lines will be implemented and extended as far as is possible within the scope of this project.
Bad public transport alternatives.	1	Pinhoe station has recently been improved, and it will be easier to walk and cycle to the station with Langaton Lane being a Green Lane. There are no bus services that are affected by the closure of the lane.