Impact Assessment



Assessment of: Seaton to Colyford Multi-Use Trail

Service: Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Head of Service: Jamie Hulland

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Assessment carried out by (job title): Lucy Martin (Transport Planning Officer)

1. Description of project / service / activity / policy under review

Devon County Council is committed to promoting walking and cycling by investing in new routes for leisure and commuter trips. The 2021 census data showed only 2% of people living in Seaton currently commute by bicycle.

The Seaton to Colyford Multi-Use Trail proposes to link the communities of Seaton and Colyford with a safe, direct and attractive path which is accessible for all. The route between the settlements is designated as part of the National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 2, which includes the Exe Estuary Trail and connects the East Devon market and coastal towns of Exmouth, Budleigh Salterton, Sidmouth, Seaton and Axminster through to the Dorset border and onwards to Portsmouth. Whilst the majority of the existing NCN2 between Seaton and Colyford consists of high-quality offroad provision, there is a missing gap in the middle which currently diverts users onto a section of road, unsuitable for families and less confident cyclists. This scheme proposes to complete this section of the route with a parallel and off-road shared use path, consistent with the standard of

route running north of Seaton. In doing so this would deliver approximately 2 miles of high-quality, safe and attractive cycle route suitable for all ages between the communities of Seaton and Colyford, improving access to the Seaton Wetlands and beyond on low traffic lanes to Axminster.

The route is supported in the Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 3, 2011-2026 and in the Cycling and Multi-Use Trail Network Strategy April 2015. The route objectives also align with the vision of the future for Seaton, as set out in the adopted East Devon Local Plan 2013 - 2031.

A planning application for improvements to this section of the Seaton to Colyford Multi-Use Trail was approved in September 2011.

2. Reason for change / review

Reason for update

The council is now in a position to be able to construct the route in the summer of 2023, following successfully securing the required land through the Compulsory Purchase Order process in 2021 and subject to Cabinet approval in March 2023.

The CPO process has fairly demonstrated that there is no alternative route, and no suitable existing interim route. The character of the most direct road route, Seaton/Colyford Road, is not suitable for cyclists or pedestrians. The traffic volume and speed combined with the narrow carriageway (minimum width of approximately 5 metres) and limited infrastructure for non-motorised users leads to concerns regarding their safety.

Reason for scheme

The Seaton and Black Hole Marsh Nature Reserves offer a number of benefits for this kind of project, in particular the shallow gradients are of special value to the young, the elderly and the less able. The Seaton to Colyford multi-use path would promote inclusivity and accessibility, being suitable for wheelchair users and families using pushchairs, and would allow people to enjoy the Devon countryside in an environmentally friendly and sustainable way.

The route will help to encourage sustainable tourism, bringing additional visitor spending to the area. Development of the National Cycle Network in Devon has a successful track record of this, seen for example in the creation of jobs and tangible improvements to the local economy along the Exe Estuary Trail and the Tarka Trail.

Removing this remaining gap in the walking and cycling network between Seaton and Colyford will bring further benefit to the existing route and enable it to reach its full potential.

3. Aims / objectives, limitations and options going forwards (summary) Aims/Objectives

Scheme Objectives

The Seaton to Colyford Multi-Use Trail intends to:

o Provide a multi-use trail between Seaton and Colyford addressing the missing off-road link of the National Cycle Network Route 2.

The wider objectives of the Seaton to Colyford Multi-Use Trail are to:

- o Reduce transport related greenhouse gas emissions to tackle the Climate Emergency by increasing the number of non-motorised journeys between Seaton and Colyford, and longer journeys on the wider NCN2, including north to the town of Axminster.
- o Improve the safety of non-motorised users travelling between Seaton and Colyford.
- o Improve access to employment, education, and services, and thus deliver economic benefits such as increased spending in local shops and boosting local tourism.
- Contribute to Devon County Council's strategy to develop a high-quality multi-use network of trails and paths that provide access to all and promote healthy active lifestyles in Devon.
- o Connect local populations to areas of nature and improving wellbeing.

4. People affected and their diversity profile

The people potentially affected by the Seaton to Colyford Multi-Use Trail are principally those living or working in the immediate vicinity. This area sits in the East Devon District and the diversity profile for each of these areas is presented below with Devon and England overall used as comparators.

Age

As shown below in Table 1, the population of East Devon were somewhat older than the national average at the 2021 Census, with the proportions aged 0-16 and 20-64 below the national average, and the proportions age 65+ being above the national average.

Geography	% Age 0-15	% Age 16-64	% Age 65+
East Devon	15.5	54.5	30
Devon	15.6	57.7	26.8
England	18.6	63	18.4

Table 1 Age (Census 2021)

Younger people (aged 0-10) tend to be more reliant on walking and cycling than those aged 21-59 and older people (aged 60+). Under 20s make 40% of their journeys by foot or by cycle, compared to 33% for those aged 21-59, and 31% for those 65+ (National Travel Survey, 2020).

Data from the National Travel Survey in 2020 highlighted that young children aged 5 to 10 years old have the highest rates of cycle access (88%), while only 25% of those aged 60+ owns or has access to a bicycle.

Ethnicity

East Devon, as with Devon as a whole, is lower in ethnic diversity than the national average with 97% of the population classing themselves as white compared to an average across the whole of England of 81%. (Table 2). The population of ethnic minorities (excluding white minorities) in East Devon are predominantly from mixed/multiple ethnic groups (1.1%) and Asian/Asian British (1%).

			% Mixed/multiple ethnic	% Asian/Asian	% Black/African/Caribbean/Black	% Other
Geography	Total	% White	groups	British	British	Ethnic Group
East Devon	150,823	97	1.1	1.0	0.2	0.3
Devon	811,642	96	1.4	1.5	0.3	0.5
England	56,490,048	81	3	10	4	2

Table 2 Ethnicity (Census 2021)

The 2019 National Travel Survey indicated that White people tend to make 2% of trips by cycle and Asian or Black people cycle for 1% of trips. However, Asian and Black people and people from mixed/other ethnic groups make a greater proportion of trips on foot, a greater proportion of trips by 'active travel' (i.e. walking and cycling combined) than White people¹.

¹ Travel by distance, trips, type of transport and purpose - GOV.UK Ethnicity facts and figures (ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk)

Health and disability

The proportions of people describing themselves as being in bad health or being limited in their day-to-day activities by disability within East Devon were overall slightly lower than the Devon and England averages (Table 3).

Geography	% Activities limited a little by disability	% Activities limited a lot by disability	% Very good and good health	% Fair Health	% Very bad and bad health
East Devon	10.8	6.3	84.7	11.3	Jad Health 4
Devon	11.1	6.9	83.4	12	4.6
England	10.2	7.5	81.7	13	5.3

Table 3 Health and Disability (Census 2021)

Disabled people and people with long-term illnesses tend to make fewer trips by all modes than non-disabled people. The disparity is particularly stark amongst those whose condition(s)/illness(es) reduce their ability to carry out day-to-day activities 'a lot', these people make an average of just 594 trips annually, compared to 1,014 among non-disabled people. Additionally, whilst the proportion of trips made by walking is similar amongst both disabled people and non-disabled people, the proportion of trips by cycle is considerably lower for disabled people (1.1%) than non-disabled people (2.0%). Access to nature also has positive impacts on those who live with long-term disabilities and can improve health promotion and wellbeing.²

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² Zhang G, Poulsen DV, Lygum VL, Corazon SS, Gramkow MC, Stigsdotter UK. Health-Promoting Nature Access for People with Mobility Impairments: A Systematic Review. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2017 Jun 29;14(7):703. doi: 10.3390/ijerph14070703. PMID: 28661433; PMCID: PMC5551141.

Gender

Table 4 shows that there were slightly more females than males recorded as resident in East Devon at the 2021 Census, whereas there were slightly more males than females recorded in Devon and England.

Geography	Male %	Female %
East Devon	48.1	51.9
Devon	51.5	48.5
England	51	49

Table 4 Sex (Census 2021)

According to the 2019 National Travel Survey, on average, females make slightly more trips in total than males, at 990 per person per year versus 915 per person per year. Females make a greater proportion of trips on foot, but a lower proportion by cycle – with males taking on average 24 trips by cycle per year compared to 8 trips for women³. The National Travel Survey 2019 did not explore the breakdown of trips by different gender identities.

Socio-economic status

East Devon ranks 238th (out of 317) on the Local Authority Indices of Multiple Deprivation Rank⁴ comparing all local authorities across England. This means the district is less deprived than its neighbouring districts in the county, as seen in Table 5 below.

District	Local Authority Indices of Multiple Deprivation Rank (out of 317)
East Devon	238

³ 2018 National Travel Survey Factsheets (publishing.service.gov.uk)

⁴ English indices of deprivation 2019 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Mid Devon	162
Exeter	193

Table 5 Indices of Multiple Deprivation Rank by Local Authority Area

The index encompasses a wide range of aspects of an individual's living conditions, including income, education, employment and health to produce a relative measure of deprivation, which is ranked by local authority, with 1 being the most deprived and 317 being the least deprived. It is important to recognise that relative deprivation varies within Local Authority Areas, for example areas of Seaton fall into national IMD decile 5 (where 1 is most deprived and 10 is least deprived), and are ranked as the 8th and 9th most deprived within East Devon (out of 81).

The proportion of trips made on foot decline from an average of 37% among people in the lowest income quintile, to 34% among those in the highest income quintile. The proportion of trips made by cycle is approximately the same (2%) for all income quintiles.

Landowners and Residents

Sections of the route required third party land and a comprehensive CPO process is underway.

In the short term, during construction work, it is anticipated that some negative impact on nearby residents and landowners may be experienced. This would be managed and monitored as far as possible.

5. Stakeholders, their interest and potential impacts

Stakeholders within the transport industry include:

- Sustrans a cycling and walking charity, and custodians of the National Cycle Network. The provision of a new multi-use trail is considered
 to align with the charity's aim of "creating streets that make walking, wheeling and cycling safer for everyone".
- o Shared cycle operators, who may seek to introduce shared cycle schemes in the Seaton area if the proposed multi-use trail increases cycling levels.

Political stakeholders include:

- Devon County Council the local transport authority and project manager for the proposed multi-use trail. The delivery of the Seaton to Colyford Multi-Use Trail would be aligned with various objectives of the Council's Strategic Plan including responding to the climate emergency through prioritising and encouraging sustainable lifestyles and supporting a green recovery from COVID-19.
- East Devon District Council the local planning authority for the scheme area. The delivery of the proposed multi-use trail would positively impact the leisure and active travel provision for residents, which could also help reduce the impact of development on the local road network and aligns with the East Devon Local Plan.

6. Research used to inform this assessment

Demographic data for the geographies affected by the proposal has been sourced from the 2021 Census using the Nomis website⁵, whilst data on the demographics of users of individual modes of transport was sourced from the 2019 National Travel Survey⁶. Deprivation data was taken from the English Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2019)⁷.

7. Description of consultation process and outcomes

The Council as Planning Authority approved a full planning application, with conditions, for the Seaton to Colyford Multi-Use Trail in September 2011. The scheme has been advertised through the processes involved in gaining planning permission and consultation responses regarding the scheme have largely been positive. A consultation on the preliminary design was held during February 2011, with exhibitions held at three separate locations – Seaton, Colyford and Axminster. Approximately 450 visitors attended the public exhibitions over the three days.

East Devon District Council support the application and consider that the multi-use path will provide support and stimulus for further tourism growth alongside the regeneration programme in Seaton and fit well alongside the recent extension to the nature reserves in this part of the lower Axe Valley.

⁵ Nomis - Official Labour Market Statistics (nomisweb.co.uk)

⁶ National Travel Survey: 2019 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

⁷ English indices of deprivation 2019 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

8. Equality analysis

Giving Due Regard to Equality and Human Rights

The local authority must consider how people will be affected by the service, policy or practice. In so doing we must give due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Where relevant, we must take into account the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, race, and religion and belief. This means considering how people with different needs get the different services they require and are not disadvantaged, and facilities are available to them on an equal basis in order to meet their needs; advancing equality of opportunity by recognising the disadvantages to which protected groups are subject and considering how they can be overcome.

We also need to ensure that human rights are protected. In particular, that people have:

- A reasonable level of choice in where and how they live their life and interact with others (this is an aspect of the human right to 'private and family life').
- An appropriate level of care which results in dignity and respect (the protection to a private and family life, protection from torture and the freedom of thought, belief and religion within the Human Rights Act and elimination of discrimination and the promotion of good relations under the Equality Act 2010).
- A right to life (ensuring that nothing we do results in unlawful or unnecessary/avoidable death).
- The Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation does not prevent the Council from taking difficult decisions which result in service reductions or closures for example, it does however require the Council to ensure that such decisions are:
 - o Informed and properly considered with a rigorous, conscious approach and open mind, taking due regard of the effects on the protected characteristics and the general duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations.
 - o Proportionate (negative impacts are proportionate to the aims of the policy decision)
 - o Fair
 - Necessary
 - o Reasonable, and

o Those affected have been adequately consulted.

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group. [Please refer to the <u>Diversity Guide</u> and <u>See RED</u>]	 In what way will you: eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage, where necessary. advance equality (to meet needs/ensure access, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'), if possible. foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promoted understanding), if relevant? In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim? Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy?
All residents (include generic equality provisions)	Construction works to deliver the multi-use trail may generate noise and cause some traffic disruption, negatively impacting local residents and businesses.	All residents will benefit from the improved multi-use trail leisure facilities including linking to employment, education and services. This should enable them to better meet their needs and participate more fully in society, advancing equality and improving their health and wellbeing. The multi-use trail will be designed according to latest standards and guidance, such as Local Transport Note 1/20: Cycle Infrastructure Design ⁸ . This will ensure the infrastructure best meets the needs of all residents and will reduce as far as practicable the potential for disadvantage. The potential impacts on all users will be considered further when a final detailed design is developed for the proposed multi-use trail. This will include impacts and
	Proposals have resulted in the loss of private land for specific landowners.	mitigation, such as encouraging modal shift to tackle the climate emergency and minimising impacts during construction. This has been resolved through the CPO process.

⁸ Cycle infrastructure design (LTN 1/20) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group. [Please refer to the <u>Diversity Guide</u> and <u>See RED</u>]	 In what way will you: eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage, where necessary. advance equality (to meet needs/ensure access, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'), if possible. foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promoted understanding), if relevant? In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim? Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy?
Age	Older people (aged 60+) make a lower proportion of trips by walking and cycling than those aged less than 60, meaning older people may receive a smaller share of the proposals' benefits than their proportion of the overall population.	Younger people (aged 20 and under) make a large proportion (36%) of trips by active travel, so younger people will likely particularly benefit from the proposals. However, the design of individual proposals will be in accordance with the latest standards and guidance, such as Local Transport Note 1/20: Cycle Infrastructure Design. Therefore, it will cater for users of all ages and confidence levels; for instance, it will cater for younger/older/ inexperienced people walking, wheeling and cycling who may be less confident. The segregated, high quality multi-use trail will aim to provide access and promote healthy lifestyles for all ages, especially important considering Devon's ageing population. This should help enable people of all ages to better meet their needs and participate more fully in society, advancing equality and benefitting everyone.

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group. [Please refer to the <u>Diversity Guide</u> and <u>See RED</u>]	 In what way will you: eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage, where necessary. advance equality (to meet needs/ensure access, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'), if possible. foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promoted understanding), if relevant? In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim? Are you complying with the <u>DCC Equality Policy</u>?
Disability (incl. sensory, mobility, mental health, learning disability, neurodiversity, long term ill health) and carers of disabled people	Disabled people make a lower proportion of trips by cycle than non-disabled people, meaning disabled people may receive a smaller share of the proposals' benefits than their proportion of the overall population.	The infrastructure will be designed according to latest standards and guidance, such as Local Transport Note 1/20: Cycle Infrastructure Design, and the needs of disabled people will be considered throughout the development of each of the proposals. For example, segregation between different user types will be provided where appropriate and practicable, enabling deaf and blind people to use the infrastructure as easily and safely as possible. This will help to remove barriers disabled people may face when using existing infrastructure, thus improving access to opportunities and encouraging participation. The infrastructure will be suitable for walking, wheeling and cycling, including inclusive cycles, e.g. handcycles, bicycles, tricycles and recumbent tricycling to maximise accessibility for all.
Culture and ethnicity: nationality/national origin, ethnic origin/race, skin colour, religion and belief	It is not considered that there is the potential for any adverse impacts on the basis of culture and ethnicity.	Black and Asian people, people from mixed/multiple ethnic groups and people of other ethnicities make a greater proportion of trips by walking and cycling than White people; however generally participate less in cycling. The multi-use trail infrastructure is designed to enable access for all and aims to attract a more diverse range of people participating in active travel.

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group. [Please refer to the <u>Diversity Guide</u> and <u>See RED</u>]	 In what way will you: eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage, where necessary. advance equality (to meet needs/ensure access, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'), if possible. foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promoted understanding), if relevant? In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim? Are you complying with the <u>DCC Equality Policy</u>?
Sex, gender and gender identity (including men, women, non-binary and transgender people), and pregnancy and maternity (including women's right to breastfeed)	Women make a smaller proportion of trips by cycle than men, meaning women may receive a smaller share of the benefits of the multi-use trail as cyclists than their proportion of the overall population.	The infrastructure will be designed according to latest standards and guidance, such as Local Transport Note 1/20: Cycle Infrastructure Design. This may help eliminate some of the barriers to cycling women currently experience, such as safety concerns, and thus enable them to cycle more frequently, redressing the current gender imbalance in cycling levels. Consequently, this should enable women to better meet their needs and participate more fully in society, advancing equality.
Sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership	It is not considered that there is the potential for any adverse impacts on the basis of sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership.	The multi-use trail infrastructure will create a safe and attractive environment to enable access for all and attract a more diverse range of people participating in active travel.

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group. [Please refer to the <u>Diversity Guide</u> and <u>See RED</u>]	 In what way will you: eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage, where necessary. advance equality (to meet needs/ensure access, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'), if possible. foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promoted understanding), if relevant? In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim? Are you complying with the <u>DCC Equality Policy</u>?
Other relevant socio- economic factors such as family size/single people/lone parents, income/deprivation, housing, education and skills, literacy, sub-cultures, 'digital exclusion', access to transport options, rural/urban	It is not considered that there is the potential for any adverse impacts. on the basis of other socioeconomic factors.	People in lower income groups in general make a greater proportion of trips by walking and cycling than those in higher income groups, so people in lower income groups may particularly benefit from the proposals. This should enable them to better meet their needs and participate more fully in society, advancing equality. This trail will connect into the existing multi-use network, as well as improving connectivity between settlements. This will help people better connect with their communities and engage with social activities. In alignment with Devon County Council's equality policy, this will help foster better relations between diverse groups in Devon.

9. Human rights considerations:

It is not considered that there are any relevant human rights considerations

10. Supporting independence, wellbeing and resilience. Give consideration to the groups listed above and how they may have different needs:

In what way can you support and create opportunities for people and communities (of place and interest) to be independent, empowered and resourceful?

The proposals support a low cost means of leisure activity and sustainable transport that is easily accessible. The proposed multi-use trail will likely improve the ease with which people can access opportunities, education and leisure destinations enabling them to become more empowered while also supporting local businesses.

In what way can you help people to be safe, protected from harm, and with good health and wellbeing? This proposal should encourage greater levels of many types of activity (i.e. walking, wheeling and cycling), improving public health and wellbeing by increasing accessibility to leisure trail facilities and removing barriers to active travel. Furthermore, by providing some segregated facilities, these proposals will reduce the need for vulnerable users (to share road space with motor vehicles, increasing their safety levels.

In what way can you help people to be connected, and involved in community activities?

The multi-use trail extension will provide a new community shared asset and will likely improve the ease with which people can visit friends, family and access community activities, enabling them to become more connected with others.

11. Environmental analysis

An impact assessment should give due regard to the following activities in order to ensure we meet a range of environmental legal duties. The policy or practice does not require the identification of environmental impacts using this Impact Assessment process because it is subject to (please mark X in the relevant box below and proceed to the 4c, otherwise complete the environmental analysis table):

Devon County Council's Environmental Review Process	
Planning Permission	Χ
Environmental Impact Assessment	
Strategic Environmental Assessment	

	Describe any actual or potential negative consequences. (Consider how to mitigate against these).	Describe any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes. (Consider how to improve as far as possible).
Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost:		
Conserve and enhance wildlife:		
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of Devon's landscape:		
Conserve and enhance Devon's cultural and historic heritage:		
Minimise greenhouse gas emissions:		
Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise):		
Contribute to reducing water consumption:		
Ensure resilience to the future effects of climate change (warmer, wetter winters; drier, hotter summers; more intense storms; and rising sea level):		
Other (please state below):		

12. Economic analysis

	Describe any actual or potential negative consequences.	Describe any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes.
	(Consider how to mitigate against these).	(Consider how to improve as far as possible).
Impact on knowledge and skills:		
Impact on employment levels:		Other multi use trails, e.g. Wray Valley Trail have generated new tourism opportunities, e.g. cafes, cycle repair shops which can boost local employment opportunities.
Impact on local business:		Increased use of the trail will increase footfall and visitor numbers to Seaton, benefitting local business

13. Describe and linkages or conflicts between social, environmental and economic impacts (Combined Impacts):

The proposals should deliver social, environmental and economic benefits, by enabling people to more easily access education, employment and services, using sustainable modes of transport. Therefore, they would be expected to reduce transport-related greenhouse gas emissions, improve employment levels, and increase revenues for local businesses.

14. How will the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area be improved through what is being proposed? And how, in conducting the process of procurement, might that improvement be secured?

As mentioned above, the proposals should enable people to participate more fully in society, by removing transport-related barriers to various opportunities. Consequently, the social wellbeing of the area should be improved, and the modal shift from car to cycling (and walking) should improve environmental wellbeing. Similarly, the proposal should provide a boost to the local economy through uplift in visitor numbers to Colyford and Seaton.

15. How will impacts and actions be monitored?

The impact of the Seaton to Colyford Multi-Use Trail will be monitored through cycle counts.