

B3181 Moonhill Copse Pedestrian Crossing

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.

1) Recommendation

It is recommended that:

- (a) the proposed puffin crossing of the B3181 at Moonhill Copse, shown in the plans provided in Appendix 1, is approved for construction at an estimated cost of £101,000; and**
- (b) 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.**

2) Background/Introduction

This report sets out proposals for a signalised pedestrian 'puffin' crossing on the B3181, at Poltimore Way on the corner of Moonhill Copse. The B3181 is an arterial route linking Broadclyst to Pinhoe, and onward to Exeter, which has around 8,000 vehicles travelling along it every day but it does not have adequate crossing facilities for pedestrians. There is currently a shared pedestrian and cycle path along the northern edge of the B3181 in this location, and a short pedestrian link to the Poltimore Gate bus stop on the southern edge. Pedestrians wishing to cross at this point – either to continue their onward journey or to reach the bus stop – must do so using a dropped kerb (uncontrolled) crossing. With the high volumes of traffic using this road and significant housing growth in the area, this presents a significant barrier to people using sustainable transport, which has an attractive 20 minute service frequency on this corridor.

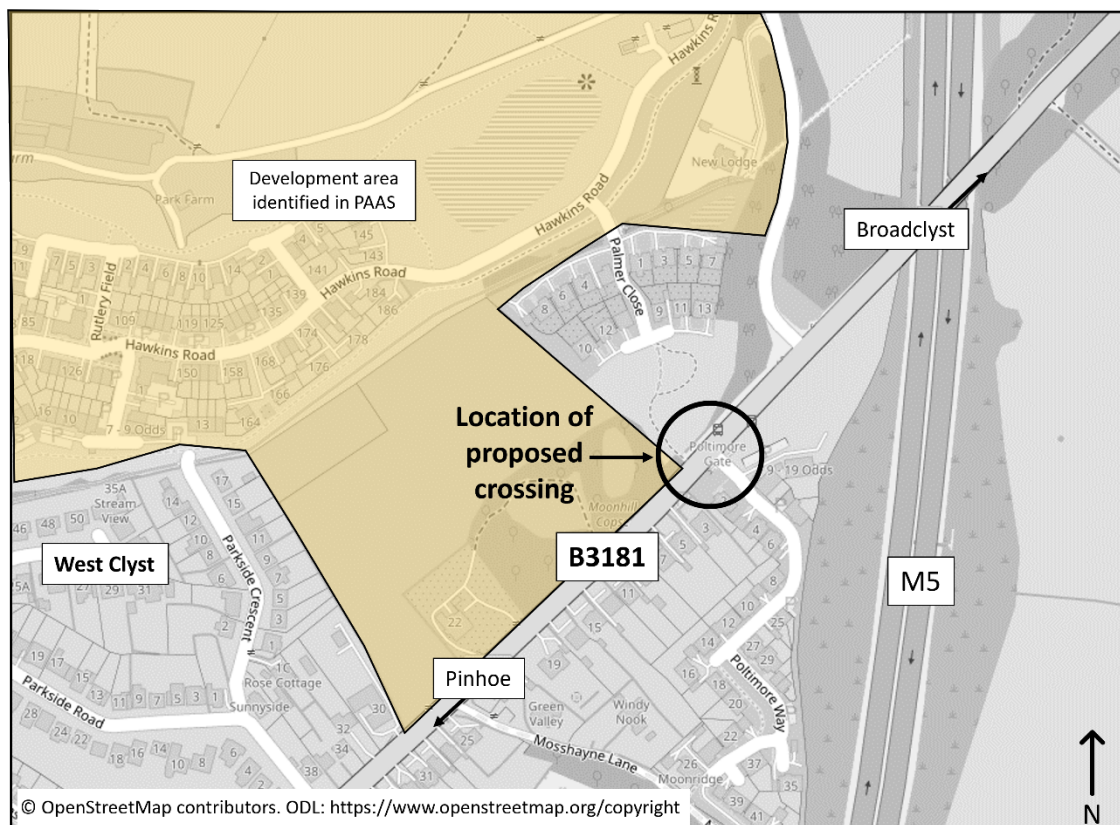


Figure 1: Moonhill Copse Puffin Crossing Location

Crossings across the B3181, such as what is proposed here, are identified as necessary in the Pinhoe Area Access Strategy (PAAS), which was created to support the Exeter and East Devon Local Plans. The PAAS ensures that planned development in the Pinhoe area would be supported with appropriate and effective transport infrastructure measures to minimise car use and promote sustainable travel.

3) Proposal

It is proposed to construct a puffin crossing across the B3181, southwest of the entrance to Poltimore Way. A detailed design drawing of this can be seen in Appendix 1. Guidance states that crossing types should be decided based on the context of other infrastructure in the area; as there are signalised crossings further along the B3181, this was deemed appropriate here. The dropped kerb (uncontrolled) crossings will be retained alongside this crossing, providing a clear pedestrian route from the northern B3181 footway to the southbound Poltimore Gate bus stop. This will improve the coherence and accessibility of the walking network in the area, not just connecting new housing development with local bus stops but also onward connections to other attractions, including Poltimore House and wider public rights of way network.

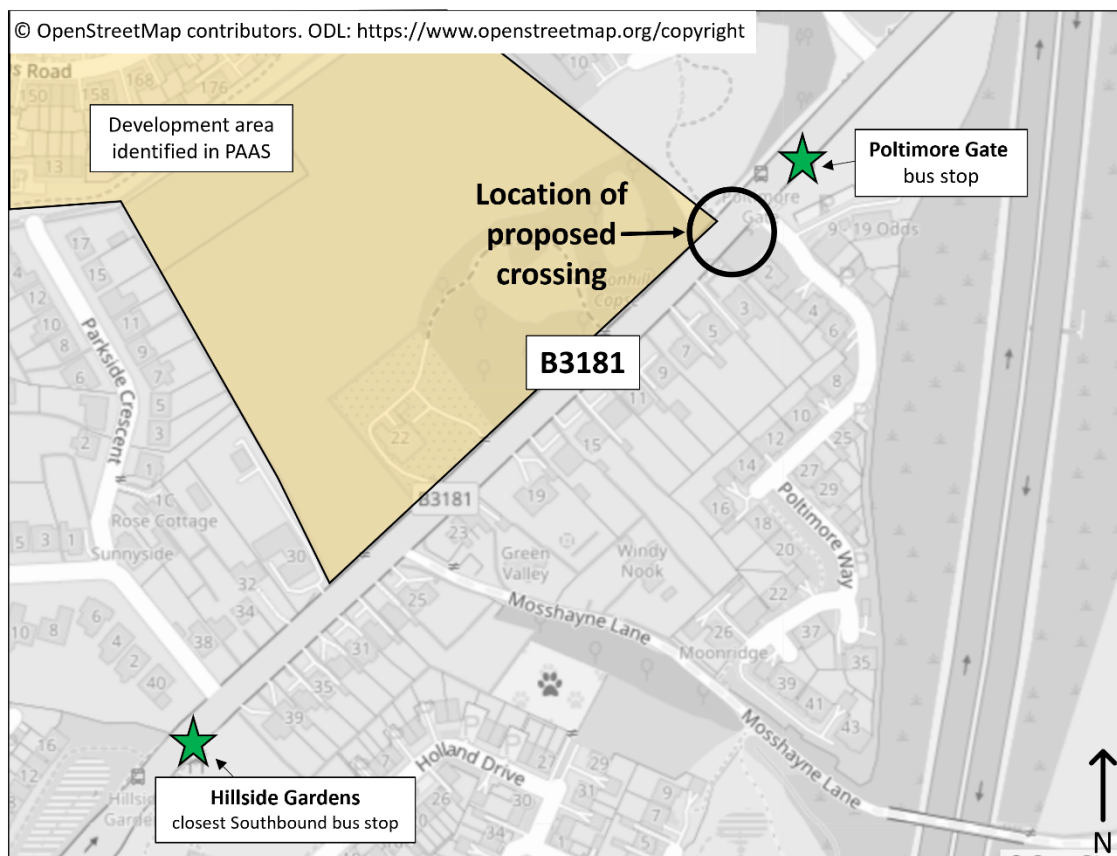


Figure 2: Bus Stop Provision close to proposed crossing

To accommodate this crossing, the kerb line on the southern side of the crossing will be built out and the junction mouth of Poltimore Way narrowed. This will achieve the necessary visibility for vehicles and provide enough space for a vehicle coming out of Poltimore Way to stop at the crossing. The extended pavement will be partially grassed and will also create a wider path for pedestrians.

On the northern side of the crossing a small triangle of the existing vegetation will be turned into footpath to allow better access to the shared path into Palmer Close serving new development on the north side of the B3181.

An existing VAS (vehicle activated sign) will be removed, and new signage will be employed to warn vehicles of the new signalised crossing ahead.

These changes support the target in the Exeter Transport Strategy for 50% of work trips to be made by active and sustainable travel, as they will provide a safer and more convenient walking route and crossing facility for residents walking in the area or accessing the bus stops at Poltimore Way, which has an attractive 20-minute frequency service along the B3181 corridor.

4) Options/Alternatives

The crossing provision in the area could be retained as it is. Whilst uncontrolled crossings do allow pedestrians to access the bus stop, the high traffic levels make this an unattractive crossing point, which may deter people from crossing the road and using conveniently located bus services.

Other types of crossings, such as non-signalised (zebra) crossings, were not considered appropriate due to road safety concerns relating to queuing traffic and subsequent poor visibility of pedestrians.

5) Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

There is no statutory consultation required for this scheme.

The location of the signal connection was designed with, and approved by, National Grid.

The removal of the VAS, which is in poor condition, has been agreed with the relevant teams.

An automatic traffic counter in place between the motorway bridge and the proposed crossing found that this section of road had an average of 8,043 vehicle trips a day. This showed peaks between 8am and 9am, and 3pm – 6pm. This demonstrates the high number of vehicles using this road and that it is busiest in the peak hours when pedestrians are most likely trying to cross to reach the bus stop for education and commuting purposes.

6) Strategic Plan

The scheme is well aligned with several of the priorities within the Strategic Plan. By improving the environment to enable more walking and improved access to public transport, 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

7) Financial Considerations

The scheme is estimated to cost £101,000, which includes a risk contingency and the connection costs associated with a signalised crossing.

Funding for this scheme will be through Section 106 contributions from Pinn Court Farm development.

8) Legal Considerations

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

The land required to accommodate this crossing is in DCC ownership and therefore no land acquisition is necessary.

To introduce the puffin crossing, the Council will be required to issue a public notice in accordance with Section 23 of The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984.

9) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

The crossing will improve walking facilities in the area, encouraging reduced car use and boosting people's health and fitness. It will also improve access to the local bus stop and encourage increased use of public transport, which should have an overall positive environmental impact.

A very small amount of vegetation will have to be removed on the northern footway, to connect the crossing to the existing footway towards Palmers Close. To reduce the impact of this, new grass will be added to the extended footway on the southern side. The overall minor loss of grass is proportional to the benefits of the scheme which is expected to increase physical activity and reduce reliance on the private car.

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 protected characteristics in coming to a decision.

The proposed crossing would enable pedestrians of a wide range of ages and abilities to cross the carriageway more safely and access the bus stop, encouraging more people to choose to walk and use public transport. This will particularly benefit younger people, older people, and people with disabilities. It would enable people reliant on walking and public transport to more easily access jobs, education facilities, retail and leisure/social activities. The scheme will reduce risks to people with sensory impairments, who may have difficulties crossing a road with high levels of vehicular traffic.

11) Risk Management Considerations

A Stage 1 and Stage 2 Road Safety Audit has been undertaken and comments have been addressed in the design, including additional signage and the inclusion of corduroy paving to improve accessibility for the visually impaired. A further Stage 3 Road Safety Audit will be undertaken once construction is complete.

12) Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

The proposal represents a proportional and cost-effective solution to improve pedestrian crossing facilities of the B3181 at Poltimore Way/Moonhill Copse. This developer-funded scheme will improve the ease and safety of pedestrians crossing the busy road, which reduces barriers to active travel and helps create a more cohesive and inclusive walking network, including links between new development in

the area and local attractions. It improves access to good frequency public transport services and fits well with several of the County Council's Strategic Plan aims and objectives. It is recommended that the scheme be approved for construction.

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Electoral Division: Broadclyst

Local Government Act 1972: List of background papers

Background Paper Nil

Date

File Reference

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Appendix 1 to CET/23/24

Overview Plan

