

Honiton Road/Tithebarn Way Junction Signalisation

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.

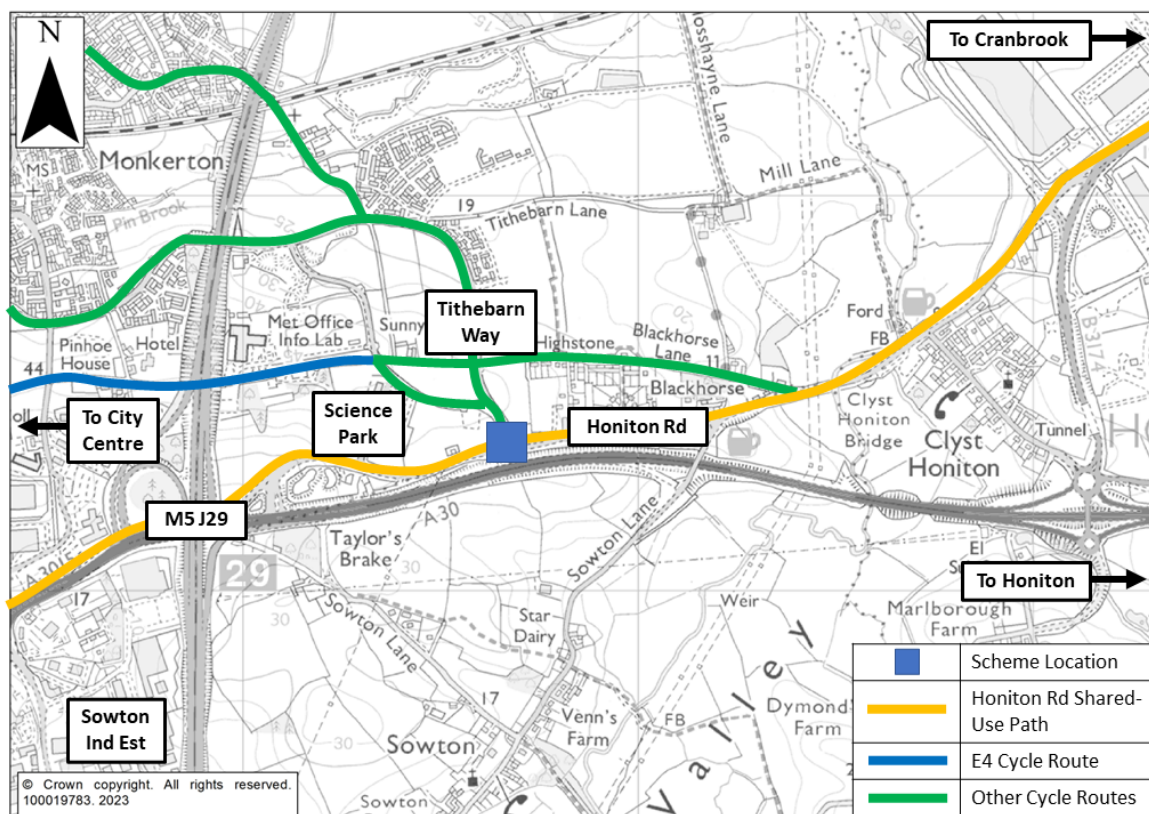
1) Recommendation

It is recommended that the Committee be asked to:

- (a) approve the signalisation of the junction of Honiton Road and Tithebarn Way, as shown in Appendix I, at an estimated cost of £165,000; and
- (b) give delegated authority to the Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport, in consultation with relevant HATOC Chair and Local County Councillors, to approve minor changes to the scheme design.

2) Background/Introduction

As shown on the map below, the junction of Honiton Road and Tithebarn Way is located between Blackhorse and Junction 29 of the M5 on the C832 Honiton Road, which runs approximately parallel to the modern A30 dual carriageway.



The junction provides access to housing at Tithebarn Green and the Park and Change at Exeter Science Park. A shared-use path runs along the northern side of Honiton Road, crossing Tithebarn Way at this junction, and another shared-use path runs along the western side of Tithebarn Way.

The junction was initially constructed as a priority junction, with the major arm being Honiton Road and the minor arm being Tithebarn Way. However, passive provision was made for the subsequent installation of traffic signals at the junction.

Given increases in traffic flows through the junction, and a number of recent collisions, it is now proposed to signalise this junction. As part of the proposed scheme, signalised pedestrian/cycle crossings would be provided across Honiton Road and Tithebarn Way.

3) Proposal

This report seeks approval to signalise the existing junction of the C832 Honiton Road with the C836 Tithebarn Way. This would separate conflicting movements into different signal stages, reducing the likelihood of collisions. It will also likely improve the efficiency of the junction, particularly in relation to facilitating right-turns from Honiton Road East to Tithebarn Way and facilitating turns out of Tithebarn Way.

As part of the scheme, it is proposed to install two staggered signalised pedestrian/cycle crossings, across Tithebarn Way and Honiton Road West. The former would benefit people walking and cycling on the shared-use path between M5 J29 and Cranbrook (via Blackhorse and Clyst Honiton), whilst the latter would provide access to the bus stop on the southern side of Honiton Road. These crossings will feature rotating tactile cones, for the benefit of blind/partially-sighted people. However, they will not make a beeping noise when green, as a person waiting to cross at one crossing may otherwise be misled by beeping at another crossing. An existing informal crossing point to the west of the junction is proposed to be grassed over, to encourage use of the signalised crossing.

It is also proposed to install directional signage at the junction, to aid road users navigating the junction.

During the works to deliver this scheme, it is proposed that bus shelters be installed at the existing bus stops to the west of the junction. This would benefit users of these bus stops, including people switching to bus from the nearby Park and Change.

The bus stop on the northern side of Honiton Road will be relocated slightly, using a short section of new footway in the existing verge, to maximise the residual footway/cycleway space available.

It is not proposed to vary the existing speed limits as part of this scheme.

4) Options/Alternatives

Other options for this junction include:

- Retaining the existing junction arrangements
- Signalising the junction without providing signalised crossings
- Converting the junction to a roundabout

Retaining the existing junction arrangements would be the cheapest option. However, it would not enable changes to improve road safety, or to support people walking and cycling.

Signalising the junction without providing signalised crossings would be a lower-cost option, and would remove conflicts between vehicular traffic. However, this would not support people walking and cycling to the same extent as the recommended option.

Converting the junction to a roundabout would likely have an increased cost and would have a greater impact on road users and the environment, as it would require more significant construction works. This may also adversely impact people cycling, who would likely find the junction more difficult to negotiate.

There is also the option to reduce the speed limit on Honiton Road from its current 40mph. However, there is not a history of speed-related collisions on this road, so it is unclear that this would have a significant safety benefit. Additionally, in order to bring actual vehicle speeds in line with the signed speed limit, physical changes on Honiton Road would be required, which are not proposed at this time.

Therefore, the recommended option is to:

- Signalise the junction and provide signalised crossings
- Retain the existing speed limit on Honiton Road

5) Consultations/Representations/Technical Data

The proposed scheme has been developed in consultation with the local County Councillors for Broadclyst.

Whilst no formal public consultation has been undertaken, the councillors have received representations from local residents and a Broadclyst Parish Councillor in support of changes to improve road safety at this location. Some of these representations have made specific suggestions, including reducing the speed limit at the junction, and converting the junction to a roundabout.

4 injury-causing collisions were recorded at the junction in the 5-year period 2017-2021, 1 of which was classed as 'Serious' and 3 of which were classed as 'Slight'. The Serious collision involved a person cycling across Tithebarne Way (travelling east-west) and a car turning left from Honiton Road West into Tithebarne Way, with the person cycling being seriously injured. The most common contributory factor to collisions, in the subjective opinion of police officers, was a failure to look properly.

A September 2022 traffic count at the junction recorded approximately 10,000 vehicles on Honiton Road East over a 12-hour period, 9,400 vehicles on Honiton Road West and 6,100 vehicles on Tithebarn Way. This was an increase on the equivalent figures recorded in May 2018 – 8,900 on Honiton Road East, 7,200 on Honiton Road West and 4,100 on Tithebarn Way. This increase is likely associated with local development, including at Tithebarn Green and at Cranbrook.

On the same date in September 2022, counts were also undertaken of people walking and cycling across Tithebarn Way and Honiton Road at the location of the proposed signalised crossings. The results of these counts are given in the table below:

| | People walking | People cycling |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Tithebarn Way crossing | 25 | 57 |
| Honiton Road crossing | 15 | 0 |

Honiton Road forms part of a key bus corridor linking Exeter and East Devon, with a combined weekday service frequency of 7-8 buses per hour in each direction.

These include:

- 3 buses per hour on Stagecoach route 4 (Cranbrook – Exeter City Centre – Exeter St Davids)
- 3 buses per hour on Stagecoach route 4A (Exeter Airport – Exeter City Centre – Exeter St Davids)
- 1 bus per hour on Stagecoach route 44 (Honiton – Ottery St Mary – Exeter City Centre)
- 1 bus per 2 hours on Stagecoach route 44A (Axminster – Honiton – Ottery St Mary – Exeter City Centre)

In addition, Stagecoach route 43 (Pinhoe Station – Exeter Airport) operates via Tithebarn Way and Honiton Road East, with approximately 1 bus per hour in the AM and PM Peaks and no service in the Inter-Peak.

6) Strategic Plan

The scheme is aligned with a range of actions within the Strategic Plan, as it will ‘improve [Devon’s] highway network’ by improving road safety at this location. It will also support people walking and cycling to cross the road, which may encourage more people to walk or cycle, thus increasing physical activity levels. Additionally, it will ‘secure investment in transport infrastructure’ by leveraging financial contributions associated with local development.

The table below summarises how the proposals would impact achievement of relevant Strategic Plan actions according to a seven-point scale, whereby -3 represents a large negative impact and +3 represents a large positive impact.

| Strategic Plan priority | Strategic Plan action | Alignment |
|-------------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Responding to the climate emergency | Prioritise sustainable travel and transport | +1 (Slight positive) |

| Strategic Plan priority | Strategic Plan action | Alignment |
|---|--|------------------------|
| Responding to the climate emergency | Encourage sustainable lifestyles | +1 (Slight positive) |
| Investing in Devon's economic recovery | Secure investment in transport infrastructure | +2 (Moderate positive) |
| Investing in Devon's economic recovery | Maintain and, where necessary, improve our highway network and improve sustainable transport options | +2 (Moderate positive) |
| Improving health and wellbeing | Give people greater opportunities for walking and cycling to increase their physical activity | +1 (Slight positive) |
| Helping communities to be safe, connected and resilient | Enable a range of transport options, including public transport | +1 (Slight positive) |

The scheme is considered to contribute to the aim of creating a 'Child-Friendly Devon', as children should be able to cross the road more easily and safely following the installation of the signalised crossings.

7) Financial Considerations

The estimated scheme cost, including design, supervision and construction, is £165,000. This will be funded using S106 contributions from local development already received by Devon County Council.

8) Legal Considerations

Section 122 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 states that it is the duty of a local authority, so far as is practicable, to secure the expeditious, convenient and safe movement of traffic.

There are no specific legal considerations relevant to this proposal.

9) Environmental Impact Considerations (Including Climate Change)

An Environmental Audit has been undertaken for this scheme, and no issues have been identified.

The environmental impacts of this scheme are expected to be minimal, as it will be constructed within the existing highway. The introduction of signals may lead to a slight increase in pollution and traffic noise, as they will require some vehicles going straight ahead to decelerate/stop and then accelerate, rather than continuing through the junction (as under the existing arrangements). However, the introduction of the signalised crossings may encourage some people to walk or cycle instead of drive, reducing emissions from transport.

10) Equality Considerations

Where relevant, in coming to a 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

in relation to the protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership (for employment), pregnancy and maternity, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation).

A decision maker may also consider other relevant factors such as caring responsibilities, rural isolation or socio-economic disadvantage.

In progressing this particular scheme, an Impact Assessment has been prepared which is available on the Council's website at <https://www.devon.gov.uk/impact/published>

Members will need to consider the Impact Assessment for the purposes of this item.

11) Risk Management Considerations

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

A Stage 1/2 Road Safety Audit has been undertaken for this scheme, the recommendations of which will inform the final scheme design.

The principal risks associated with the scheme and their mitigation are summarised below:

| Risk | Mitigation |
|---|---|
| Inflation could result in an increase in scheme costs | 10% inflation allowed for in 2023/24 financial year |
| Depending on contractor availability, construction costs may change | Estimate based on mid-range contractor under Minor Works Framework rates. Contingency included in cost estimate |

12) Summary/Conclusions/Reasons for Recommendations

The recommended scheme would signalise the junction of Honiton Road and Tithebarn Way, and provide signalised crossings for people walking and cycling. This is recommended in order to improve road safety, by removing conflicts between road users.

The scheme will make efficient use of the existing junction configuration, so the impacts of the construction works are expected to be minimal. The scheme will be entirely funded by S106 contributions associated with local development, so will not require any funding from the County Council.

Meg Booth

Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

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/23/25

