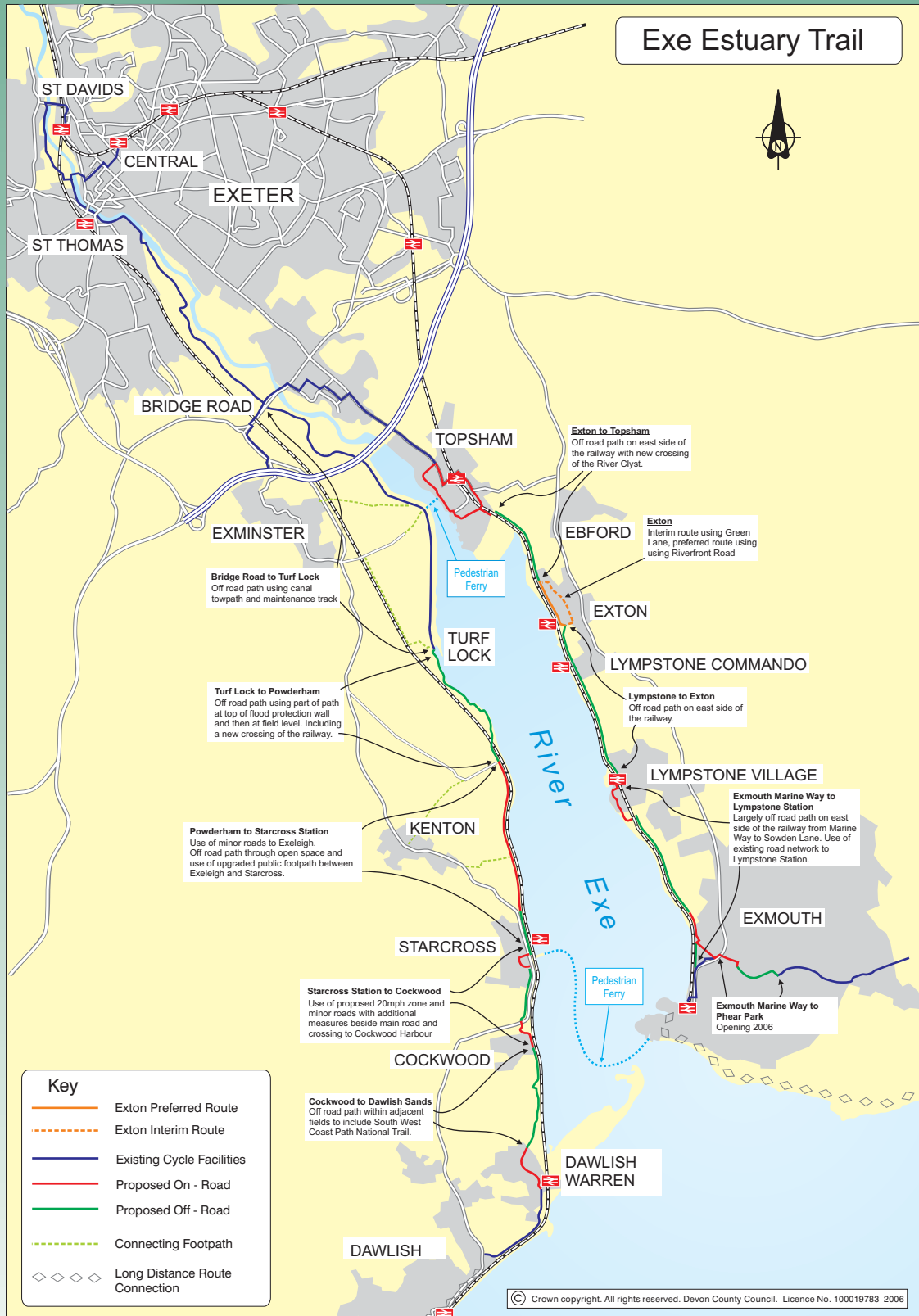


The Exe Estuary Trail



Extons's Tale to Tell along the Exe Estuary Trail

History of the Exe Estuary Trail



The development of the Exe Estuary Trail is an important element of the County Council's aspirations to encourage more sustainable and healthy travel by walking and cycling.

In 1998, Devon County Council commissioned a report from Sustrans covering the National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 2 for the whole of South Devon. The suggested route was shown diagrammatically in the Devon Local Transport Plan 2001-2006 published in July 2000.



The NCN Routes as published in the Devon Local Transport Plan 2006 - 2011

Subsequently, on the 6th March 2001, the County Council Executive Committee resolved that the route around the Exe Estuary should be developed.

Devon County Council has identified within its corporate plan targets relating to increasing cycling and walking and reducing the reliance on motor vehicles. The County Council is also looking to improve the health of communities by developing opportunities for physical activity.

Between 2001 and 2006 investment in the cycling infrastructure has seen cycling numbers more than double.

Exton's place along the Exe Estuary Trail

The preliminary phase of this project included a mobile public exhibition that travelled to various locations around the Exe Estuary describing the NCN Exe Estuary scheme. As well as at other villages around the Exe, a Public Exhibition was held in Exton in November 2004.



Exton will be an important aspect of the NCN Cycle/Walkway since one of the principles of this scheme is to connect centres of communities in environmentally sustainable ways. Connections to existing and future footpaths, car parks, railway stations, bus routes and ferries will be an important aspect of this. Also, having the route run through Exton will increase patronage in local establishments which would be beneficial to the local economy.



This project clearly aims to encourage fitness and well being, by providing non motorised routes between centres of population, such as Exton, that can be accessed by both pedestrians and cyclists.

Safety Considerations

Safety is paramount when considering the design of the cycle/walkway throughout the whole NCN Exe Estuary scheme.



Calming Measures

- Appropriate and visible signing for vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists
- Decreased speed limits where appropriate
- Cyclist/pedestrian right of way

Disabled Access

The design of the cycle/walkway will also take into consideration those individuals with special needs such as wheel chair access.

Connections

The route through Exton will provide an essential cycling and walking link between Exeter and Exmouth. Exton is a good connecting point for the NCN Exe Estuary cycle/walkway since various means of transportation are accessible:-

Railway connection that runs from Exeter to Exmouth

Bus routes (57)

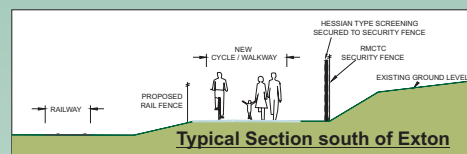
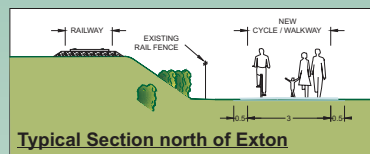
Routes through Exton

Proposed Routes through Exton. Three different options have been considered although only the first two, below, have been endorsed by the Devon County Council Executive.

- **The Interim Route.**

An alternative that would follow the existing public highways, Exton Lane and Green Lane and a short length of private track to rejoin the railway land North of Exton.

KEY
The **Interim Route** is shown in orange (dashed)
The route of the **Exe Estuary Trail** from Lympstone and Topsham are shown in green (see typical sections below)



- **The Preferred Route.**

This is the most direct route with estuary views. However, it would require several properties to give up land presently leased from Network Rail and in addition would make use of the privately owned Riverfront Road.

KEY
The **Preferred Route** is shown in orange (solid)
The route of the **Exe Estuary Trail** from Lympstone and Topsham are shown in green (see typical sections above)



Elsewhere along the route

Sections of the NCN Exe Estuary route are already completed from Exeter via the Double Locks to Bridge Road and Turf Locks. Works have already started on the first sections from Exmouth to Lympstone. Planning Applications for the Sections from Topsham to Exton and Exton to Lympstone are being prepared and are due to be submitted shortly. During the Planning Application process, members of the public will be able to submit their views for consideration by the Planning Officers and the Development Control Committee.

Why is an Estuary Route option not possible?

Special Wildlife Area

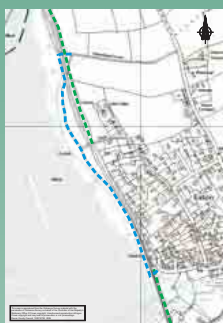
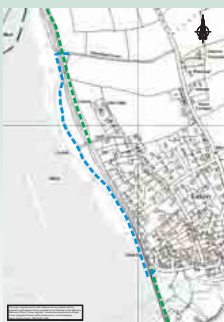
The Exe Estuary is a very special place for wildlife. The Estuary is designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar site and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The site is internationally important for wintering waterfowl and their supporting habitats. The Exe Estuary is particularly important for Avocets, Slavonian Grebes, Brent Geese and Black-tailed Godwits. The SPA / SSSI also includes Exminster Marshes which is the largest area of grazing marsh in Devon and supports the only remaining Lapwing and Redshank breeding sites in the County.

Habitat Regulations

English Nature (now known as Natural England) formally advised Devon County Council (DCC) in January 2003 that the proposed Exe Estuary Trail could have a likely significant effect on the Special Protection Area and that an Appropriate Assessment should be undertaken (as described in the Habitats Regulations). English Nature highlighted specific concerns about direct loss of habitat and increased disturbance to wintering birds.

The Appropriate Assessment was completed in June 2004. Its findings and recommendations were used to inform the route options illustrated through a Public Exhibition and Consultation in November 2004.

KEY
Estuary Route option shown in blue
The route of the Exe Estuary Trail from Lymstone and Topsham are shown in green.



KEY
Estuary Route option shown in blue
The route of the Exe Estuary Trail from Lymstone and Topsham are shown in green.



Public Consultation and Further Research

As a result of comments raised during the consultation, DCC commissioned further study work. This specifically addressed a number of alternative options for the NCN, including a third riverside/estuary route (shown in blue above) around Exton. This was followed by a comparison of the anticipated effects and acceptability of the three route options at Exton.

Research Results and The Law

In June 2005, English Nature gave its comments on the three alternative route options at Exton. This information was required to advise the County Council's Executive as part of its consideration of the NCN proposals and the various route options.

This advice is based on the legal requirements relating to developments with the potential to affect an SPA. This indicates that where there are alternative solutions to a development proposal that would have a lesser effect, or avoid an adverse effect, on the integrity of an SPA, planning permission must not be granted for the development proposal.

In the light of additional investigation into the possibility of the Estuary Route option at Exton, the views expressed by English Nature and the legal requirements of the **Habitats Regulations**, the County Council, as a responsible local authority, could not develop the Estuary Route option along the foreshore.

Cycle

Walk

Explore

Wildlife

Active

Schools

Adventure

History

Opportunities for Exton residents

Any increase in visitor numbers to the area needs to be carefully managed to ensure that any development of the Estuary is sustainable. Information on how to access the Estuary needs to be developed and disseminated to visitors.



The Estuary has fantastic public transport access including buses, trains and ferries which link to many locations around the cycle route. Public transport will also be a very important means of creating shorter walking and cycling circuits around the Estuary, enabling people to walk or cycle shorter sections.



Rail and bus operators will be valuable partners in developing sustainable tourism activity around the Estuary. Visitors to the Estuary will contribute to the local economy and provide additional opportunities for small enterprises, such as cycle hire and local shops.

The Trail will also provide a unique opportunity for Exton residents to view parts of the Estuary as never before. Topsham and the RSPB reserve at Goosemoor will be easier to access by walking or cycling and views across the Estuary and South to Lypstone and Exmouth will be better than ever.



Tell us your ideas



Do you have a Tale to Tell about Exton life - modern life or in days gone by?

As part of the interpretation along the new route, Devon County Council plans to install information panels at several locations to inform and inspire people about the Exe and its hinterland.

In August 2006, Devon County Council compiled an Interpretation and Access Strategy for the Exe Estuary Trail. The following themes were identified:

- An Important Place for Bird life
- The Estuary is Constantly Changed by the Ebb and Flow of the Tide
- Cycling and Walking opportunities
- The Estuary is Home to a Unique Fishing and Boating Heritage
- Quality Landscapes
- The Estuary Supports a Wonderful Range of Wildlife
- Brunel's Atmospheric Railway and the Avocet Line
- The Built Environment around the Estuary



Please let us know if you have any ideas or old photographs or stories about life along the route of the Exe Estuary Trail which we could possibly copy for use on our information panels.

What Happens Next?

Topsham to Exton over the River Clyst

- From Bowling Green Lane in Topsham the Trail will pass via the Goosemoor Bird Sanctuary and over the River Clyst alongside the existing railway bridge. It will then proceed towards Exton and pass through the village via Green Lane and Exton Lane to Station Road and the station car park.
- Preliminary design work is currently taking place on the bridge over the Clyst, viewing facilities at Goosemoor and the Trail to Exton.
- Environmental impacts are currently being evaluated and will be reported in an Environmental Statement. This will form part of the Planning Application for the Topsham to Exton section of the Trail which is likely to be submitted early in 2007.



Cycle

Walk

Explore

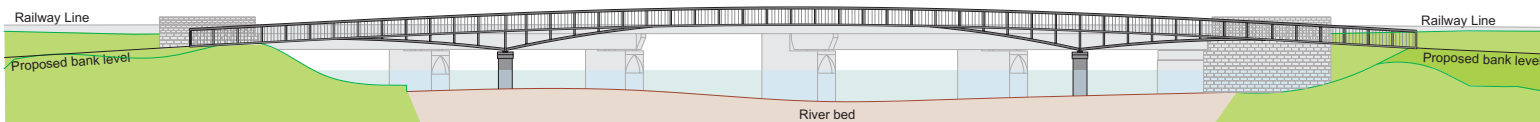
Wildlife

Active

Schools

Adventure

History



**Illustrative view of the Proposed Clyst Bridge
with the existing Railway Bridge behind**

What Happens Next?

Exton to Lypstone

- From Exton Station car park, the Trail will follow the east side of the railway line, in Network Rail land, passing Lypstone Royal Marine Commando Training Camp and Nutwell Court Estate. In the Northern part of Lypstone, the trail will cross the railway via the existing brick arch bridge near the National Trust's Cliff Field, before descending to Lypstone Station car park via a ramp.
- Preliminary design work is currently taking place on the ramp and the small bridges across existing accesses to the estuary. A Planning Application for this section of the route was originally submitted in March 2006 and a revised application is expected to be submitted shortly. The main change is a minor realignment just south of Station Road, Exton and revised details of the ramp at Lypstone.



and on.....

- Through Lypstone, the Trail will follow the existing public highway along The Strand to Sowden Lane. There, it continues on a new off-road path along the east side of the railway line past Courtlands and the National Trust land just north of Exmouth. It uses existing public highway along Mudbank Lane and then passes at the side of King George's playing field and behind the Football Club before emerging onto Marine Way to Exmouth railway and coach station.
- The Planning Application for this section of the route, submitted in March 2006, has already been approved and the first stages of work, involving site clearance and the erection of fencing, have recently commenced.

The Exe Estuary Trail



1914



1942



2007



Thank you for visiting the exhibition.

If you have any comments for us please feel free to leave them in our **Feedback Book** at the entrance or alternatively visit our website

www.devon.gov.uk/exeestuarytrail

and contact us for general inquiries through the web link.

Formal Responses to the Planning
Application need to be sent to:-

**The Planning Officer,
Lucombe House, County Hall,
Topsham Road, EXETER, EX2 4QW.**

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