

Exeter Cycling Campaign response to the Clyst Valley Trail Consultation



Dear Liz Holloway and team,

Exeter Cycling Campaign welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Clyst Valley Trail consultation. Thank you for your willingness to receive our response via email as we found the form to be a little too restrictive to fully explain our points, particularly where imagery can be helpful (see end of this document for figures).

Following closure of this consultation, we would really welcome the opportunity to work further with you on the parts of the route highlighted in this response. We are passionate about making this trail as useful and usable as possible and would be delighted to put our time and energy into helping you make this a reality. Please get in touch by reply and we thank you in advance for the opportunity.

Yours sincerely

Helen Mako-Yule for and on behalf of:
EXETER CYCLING CAMPAIGN

exetercyclingcampaign.org.uk | Twitter: @ExeterCycling | Facebook: ExeterCyclingCampaign

Do you support the proposed route for the Clyst Valley Trail in its entirety?

Later questions will be asking about individual sections.

No

Please explain your answer to Question 1:

We note that the consultation states this is a “proposal for a multiuse trail linking Exeter, and towns and villages to the east of the city, with the Exe Estuary Trail.” as well as “It also delivers on Strategy 10 (Green Infrastructure in East Devon’s West End) in the East Devon Local Plan, and the Climate Action plans of both Councils. The route will significantly contribute to an increase in walking and cycling levels which will reduce our carbon footprint and help enable households to rely less on cars for short distance journeys.”

We applaud and wholeheartedly support these objectives. However we believe that the proposal as it currently stands lacks the connections and directness required to achieve these ambitions. In order to “reduce our carbon footprint and help enable households to rely less on cars for short distance journeys” it is vital that a route connects places where people live to places where people work or go to school/college/nursery etc. In this we believe the route is severely lacking, particularly in the northern section. By concentrating only on the East of the city, there is a huge missed opportunity to connect major settlements to the North-East of the city to this valuable route. For example Cullompton has a population of over 8500 people and could be a major source of users for the route, particularly for commuting into Exeter, removing car traffic from the M5 and Junction 29 pressure. This especially so given the huge rise in electric bike usage over the last few years. Studies have

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shown that electric bike use significantly increases the distance users are willing to cycle and results in more car journeys transferred to bicycle¹. Cullompton and Broadclyst also contain major schools.

Furthermore, the route in certain places could not be described as direct (one of the aims given). This is explored more in the individual sections. A lack of direct, coherent routes and connection with where people live will reduce the usefulness of the trail, particularly for commuting. It will also result in many accessing the trail using private cars. Combined together this will vastly reduce the positive impact that this could have on the local population's travel options, travel habits and impact on the climate crisis, limiting the achievement of the objectives stated and the expected benefits.

We are concerned about how hazards and conflict between the multi-users will be prevented. For example, many walkers are often accompanied by dogs which can make the route difficult for people cycling, particularly if dogs are let off the lead or on extendable leads. Additionally, it states that in some sections "walkers and horse-riders would be accommodated on a 2m grass strip alongside the new 3m wide surfaced trail". We believe that a grass strip will never be as attractive for walkers and dog walkers, particularly in winter when it might become unusable, as the surfaced trail and thus all users will default to the surfaced trail. We suggest that instead the surfaced area be made as wide as possible in all areas.

We are concerned that the trail route as given has a large reliance on on-road sections. Routes that are more lightly used may often be described as quiet lanes, however they tend to still be used by farm traffic, local drivers and delivery drivers, often at great speed. To expect these to be sufficient for people including families to cycle on without any further action being taken is naive at best and negligent at worst. The road surfaces are usually of poor quality, poorly maintained, narrow and with very little visibility, creating hazardous conditions. Such routes also disproportionately discourage use by women and those with children, making them discriminatory. If "quiet lanes" must be utilised it should be a last resort and those lanes, as with all parts of the route, should adhere to the government's cycling infrastructure design standards (LTN 1/20). This should include plans to maintain the entire route so that it is usable at all times of the year and in all weather conditions.

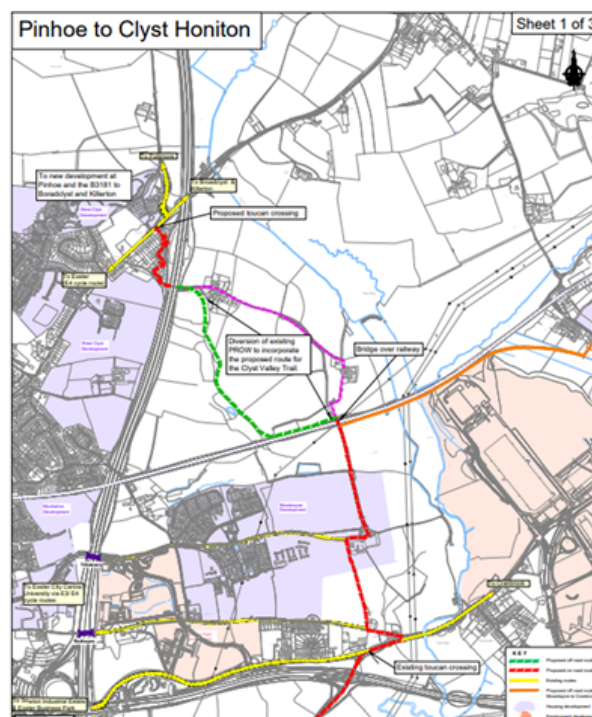
Finally we recognise that some sections of the trail are rather remote. We would be interested to better understand how the route will be made safe for vulnerable users, particularly women, travelling alone.

Do you support the proposed route for **Section 1** of the Clyst Valley Trail?
(This section starts in Pinhoe (B3181) and links up to the old London Road/Blackhorse Lane near Clyst Honiton)

Full details of this, and a high resolution plan, can be seen on our webpage.

¹ [Do people who buy e-bikes cycle more? - ScienceDirect](#) - One of several studies on ebike use

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No

Please explain your answer to Question 3.

The design principles shared state that routes should be direct, however section 1 is anything but direct when considering where people want to cycle from and to. In the North, the sources of users would be Pinhoe/Westclyst, Broadclyst and Cranbrook. In fact, the consultation states "The 13 km (8 mile) route will link Pinhoe in Exeter with the Exe Estuary Trail." however, Pinhoe is one of the places which is unfortunately not connected with the trail in any way (as is Broadclyst). Figure A shows a journey from the proposed toucan crossing at the Poltimore turning in Westclyst to the East of Exeter Business Park (EDF, Oxygen House etc.) using the proposed Clyst Valley Trail route. Figure B shows that the same route using the road is just over half the distance of this proposed route with slightly more elevation gain.

We could potentially see some benefit in the current route only if the proposed route to Broadclyst Station was included and it also progressed onward to the railway station side of Cranbrook.

However, we propose that a far more useful and usable route to connect Westclyst to the rest of the trail would be utilising the Eastern Westclyst development (the development containing Co-op) to connect the Poltimore crossing directly to Langaton Lane. Ideally this would be via creating an entry from Mosshayne Lane, or if not then via Tuckwell Grove. This could then connect with the rest of the trail via the existing Tithebarn Lane cycle route as indicated in yellow on the section 1 map. Figure 3 demonstrates the same journey as earlier used is only 0.3 miles longer than the road route but crucially reduces the elevation gain and the gradient and avoids the busy and narrow Pinn Hill. As well as the benefit of this route being more direct and more desirable there are 2 additional benefits to this proposal. 1) this opens up access to the Langaton Lane green lane and provides an excellent commuter

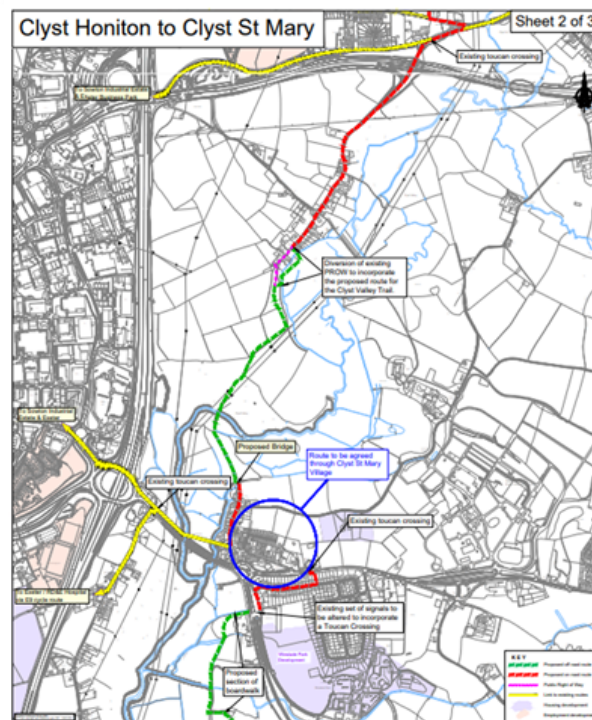
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route to the Science Park as well as the East of Exeter Business Park employment areas. 2) Provided a safe segregated connection was provided between the Poltmore crossing and the entry to this route this would avoid utilising Poltmore Way.

Do you support the proposed route for **Section 2** of the Clyst Valley Trail?
(This section links Blackhorse Lane near Clyst Honiton to Clyst St Mary)

Full details of this, and a high resolution plan, can be seen on our webpage.



Unsure

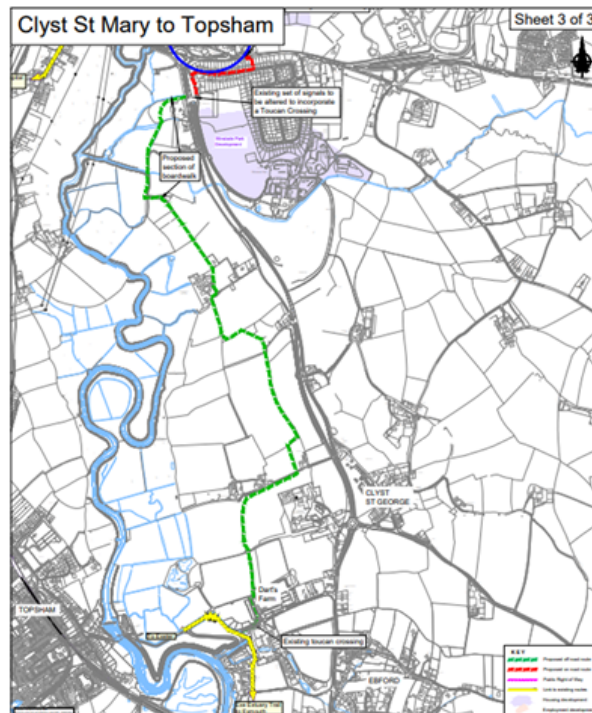
Please explain your answer to Question 5:

We recognise that the route through Clyst St Mary is yet to be decided, however the entry and exit routes shown here suggest that there is no plan to make this section direct. Any route should be direct and coherent as stated in the design principles and if needed a priority toucan crossing created across the A3052.

Do you support the proposed route for **Section 3** of the Clyst Valley Trail?
(This section links Clyst St Mary to Topsham/ the Exe Estuary Trail)

Full details of this, and a high resolution plan, can be seen on our webpage.

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No

Please explain your answer to Question 7:

Despite its close proximity to the trail, there are no current or proposed crossings or links to Clyst St George, leaving this village isolated from the trail and the network it attempts to connect. Furthermore there is a need to ensure there are safe crossings of the A376 to open up and connect with routes to Woodbury

Would you use the Cyst Valley Trail route?

Yes - see next question.

For what purpose would you (or anyone in your family) intend to use this route for?

Please select all that apply.

Leisure - Yes: we believe members of the Exeter Cycling Campaign and those we represent will use the Cyst Valley Trail for leisure subject to it feeling safe and conflict with other users being avoided or minimised.

Commuting (to work) - Limited: we believe that due to the aforementioned limitations, in particular the lack of directness in section 1, the trail will be underutilised for commuting. This will have a major impact on the ability of the trail to meet its stated objectives and we urge a rethink of some sections.

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Travelling to education - Limited: there are a lack of connections to major educational establishments, particularly Broadclyst and to some extent Cranbrook. In particular there is a real need to improve the provision between Westclyst and Broadclyst. The current shared use path is inadequate. It is too narrow for all users to use safely and is not well maintained, particularly the vegetation alongside it. The narrow width sections completely excludes use by parents using trailers and some bike seats as well as anyone using slightly wider cycles including disabled cyclists and many current e-bikes. In short it's exclusionary and does not meet LTN 1/20 standards. There is a great opportunity here to extend the Clyst Valley Trail to connect with the improvements planned in the Killerton Vision and we would hope that a joined up approach will be taken to maximise the benefits of both.

Which mode of transport would you (or anyone in your family) intend to use along this route?

Please select all that apply.

We are responding on behalf of the Exeter Cycling Campaign so have focussed this response on the use of:

Cycle

If you selected 'horse-riding' in Question 11, can you be specific about which sections you would intend to use, and what your onward route would be?

Not applicable

Are you answering on behalf of an organisation?

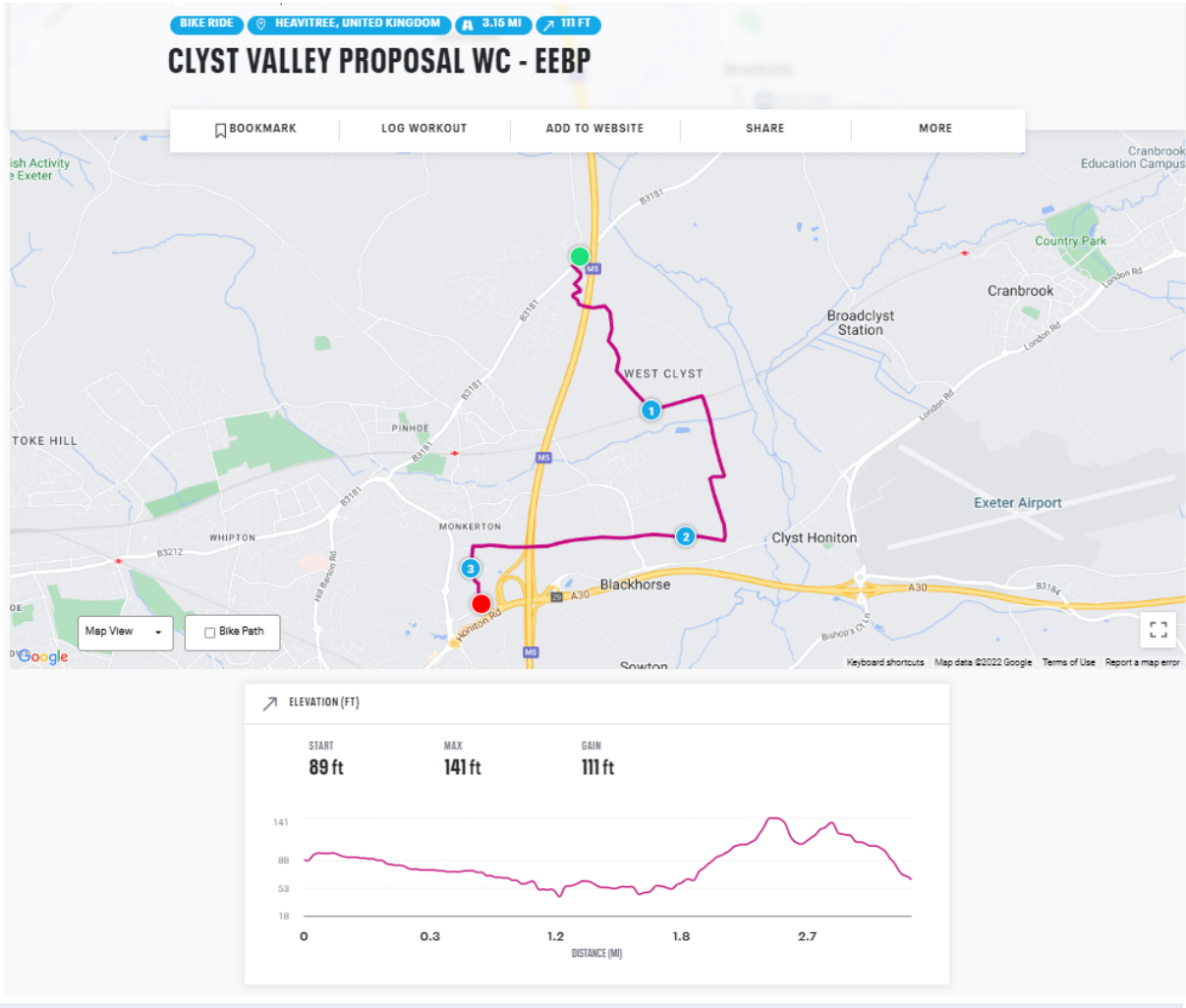
Yes: Exeter Cycling Campaign

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Figures

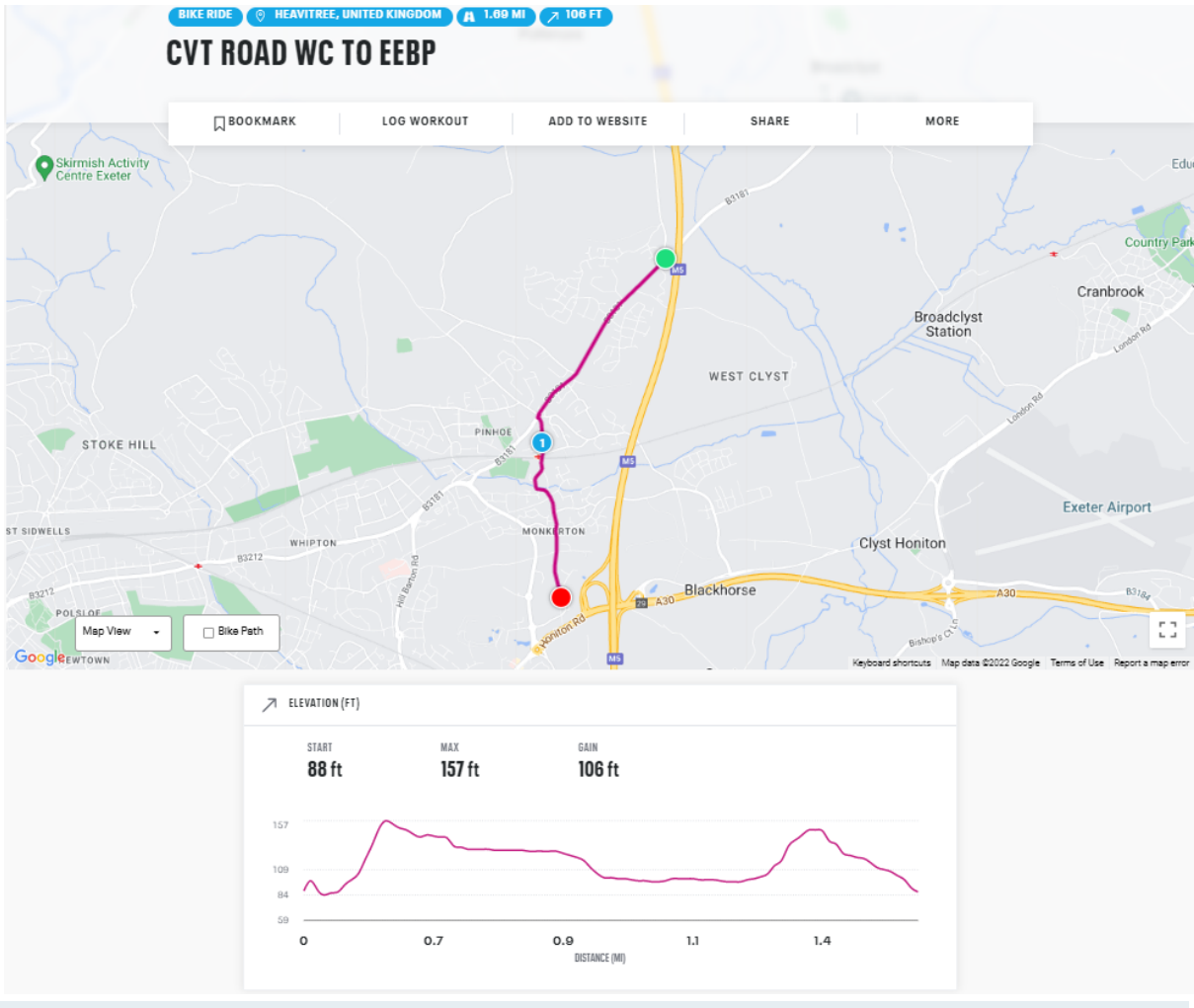
Figure A:



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Figure B:



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Figure 3:

