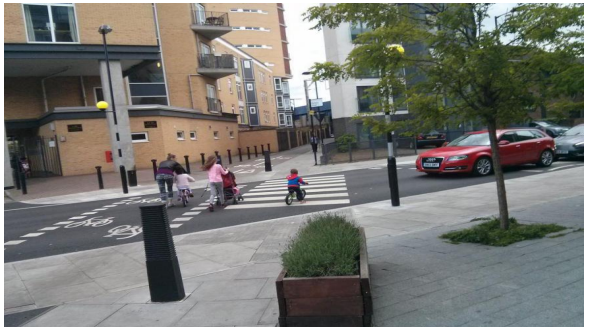
Workshop:

Responding to Planning Applications

November 2017

What are we aiming for?



What are we aiming for?

- A better city for all
- Comprehensive, convenient and connected cycling infrastructure, with every street safe to cycle for all ages and abilities (AAA)
- Cycling the safe, natural choice for a large proportion of everyday journeys.
- Cycling as part of the response to congestion, pollution, physical inactivity and population challenges.

Why we respond to planning applications

Exeter Cycling Campaign scrutinises planning applications to see if the proposed development:

- Provides a safe environment for people walking and cycling;
- Uses good urban design to make walking and cycling the most convenient and attractive way to travel;
- Provides essential infrastructure like cycle parking;
- Allows for growth in the number of people walking and cycling so the development will stand the test of time;
- Conforms to adopted plans and strategies on sustainable transport and cycle infrastructure

The Planning System - What We'll Cover

- Exeter City Council & Devon County Council roles
- The Planning Process
- How to respond to a planning application
- Case Studies
- Helpful Resources

Who is responsible for what?

- **Exeter City Council -** The 'Local Planning Authority' (LPA). Responsible for looking at all aspects of a proposal and deciding whether permission should be granted.

- **Devon County Council -** The 'Local Highway Authority' (LHA). Responsible for looking at only the highways and transport elements of a proposal and making a recommendation to the LPA.

The planning process in 4 simple steps

- **Pre-Application -** The developer (or 'applicant', to use the jargon) approaches Exeter City Council (ECC) to discuss their proposals. ECC advise the developer of any concerns, suggestions or requirements they have. Discussions may also be held with Devon County Council (DCC) highways team.

- **Submission -** The developer submits a planning application to ECC, which checks the paperwork is correct ('validation') and assigns a dedicated 'Case Officer'.

- **Consultation -** The Case Officer invites the public and consultees (including DCC) to comment on the proposals for a period of 21 days (3 weeks) from the date a valid application was received.

- **Determination -** The Case Officer assesses the application against the Local Plan, taking into account consultee comments, national policy and any amendments proposed by the developer. The application is either decided by the Case Officer ('delegated decision'), or by ECC's elected planning committee, based on the Case Officer's recommendation.

How do you find a planning application?

To find an application on Exeter City Council's website, you have two options:

- The Weekly List (updated every Thursday) - https://exeter.gov.uk/planning-services/permissions-and-applications/weekly-planning-list/

- The Search Page (search anytime by Map, address or application number) - http://publicaccess.exeter.gov.uk/online-applications/

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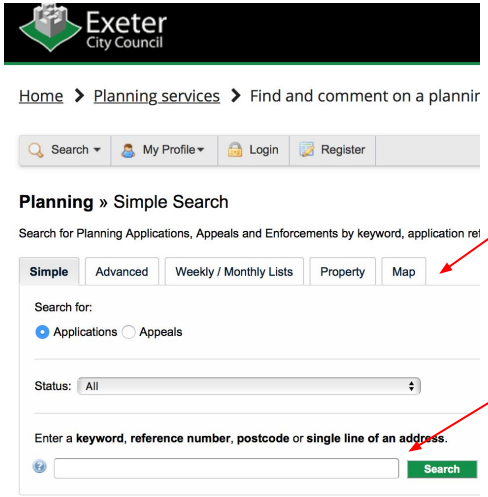
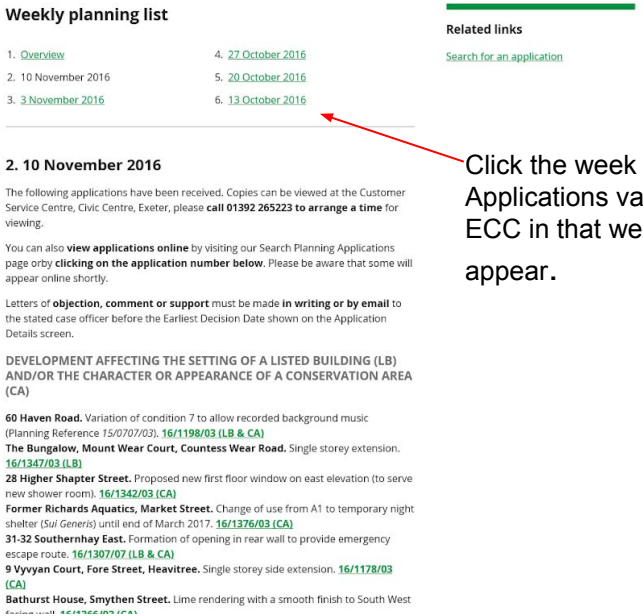


Click here to search by map. When the map opens, you have to zoom in quite close for the applications to appear (in red).

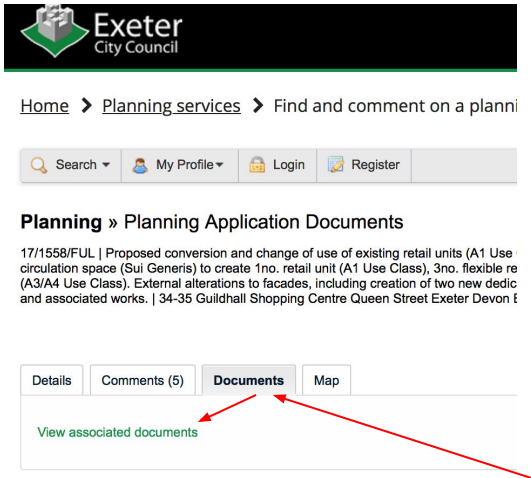
Search by address, e.g. 'EX4 4LP', or 'Howell Road', or the Application Reference number (if you know it).

https://exeter.gov.uk/planning-services/permissions-and-applications/weekly-planning-list/10-november-2016/

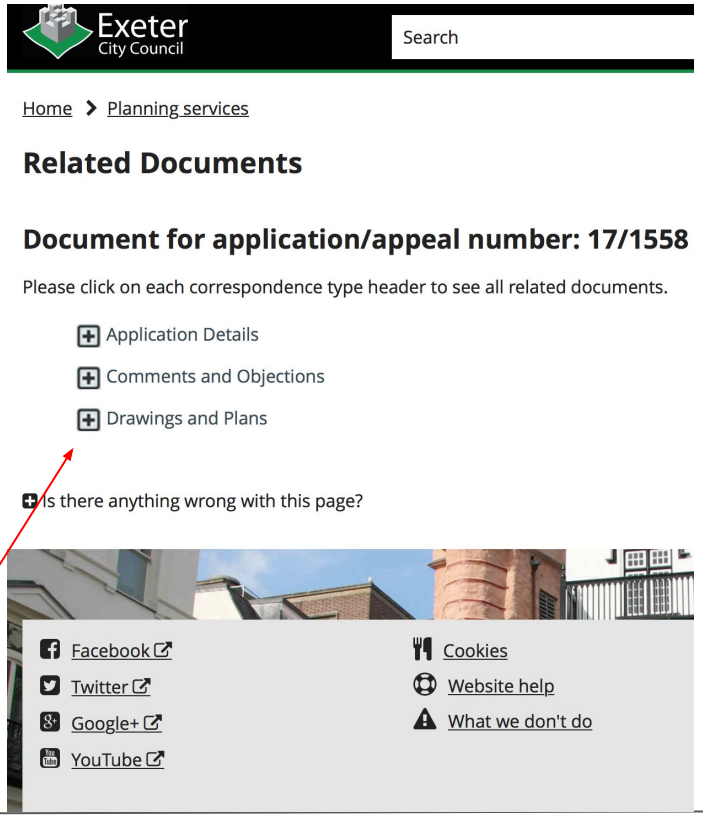


Click the week you want. Applications validated by ECC in that week will appear.

How do you find the relevant documents?



Click the 'Documents' tab to access the documents submitted with the planning application. The list may take a little while to load. A Screenshot of how it should look is to the right. The relevant bits are generally (but not always) within 'Drawings and Plans'.



Responding to applications

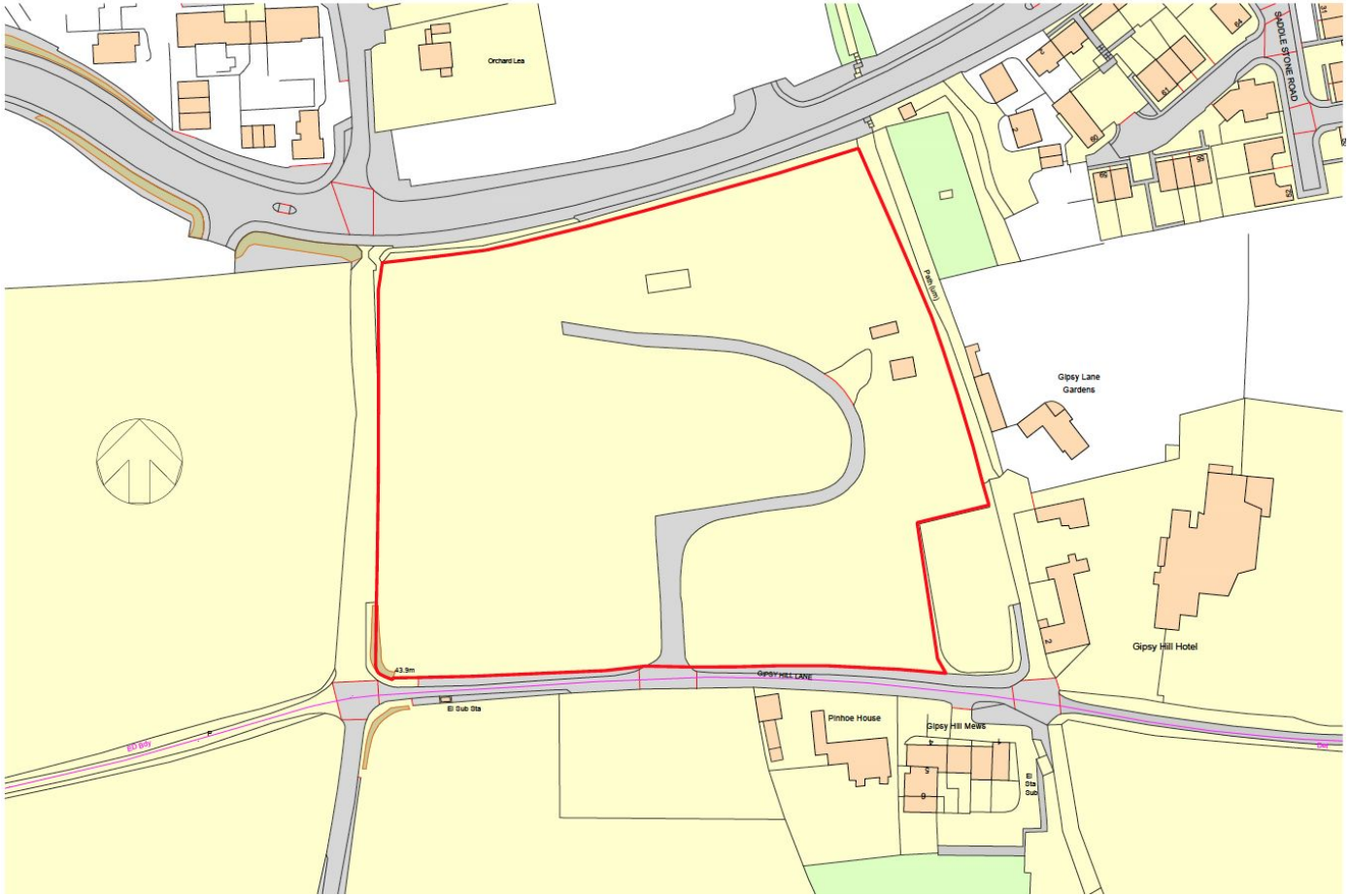
Start with the big picture. Think about:

- Where the development is;
- What the existing roads, footpaths are cycle routes are like;
- Who uses these routes, and how many (i.e. a lot, or not very many?
- Who is going to use these routes once the development is built?
- Where are all these people going?
- What impact (positive or negative) will the proposed development have?
- How could the proposed development be improved?

You don't need to include all of these in your response! They are just to help you identify the key issues. Once you have identified the 'big picture' issues, pick a few to elaborate on. Set out the issue, and if possible, suggest how the proposals could be improved to address the issue. Being **positive** and **constructive** usually yields better results.

Case Study 1: Sandrock, Gipsy Hill Lane, Exeter

- 61 homes;
- Main site access from Pinn Lane;
- A pedestrian and cycle access from Tithebarn Way;



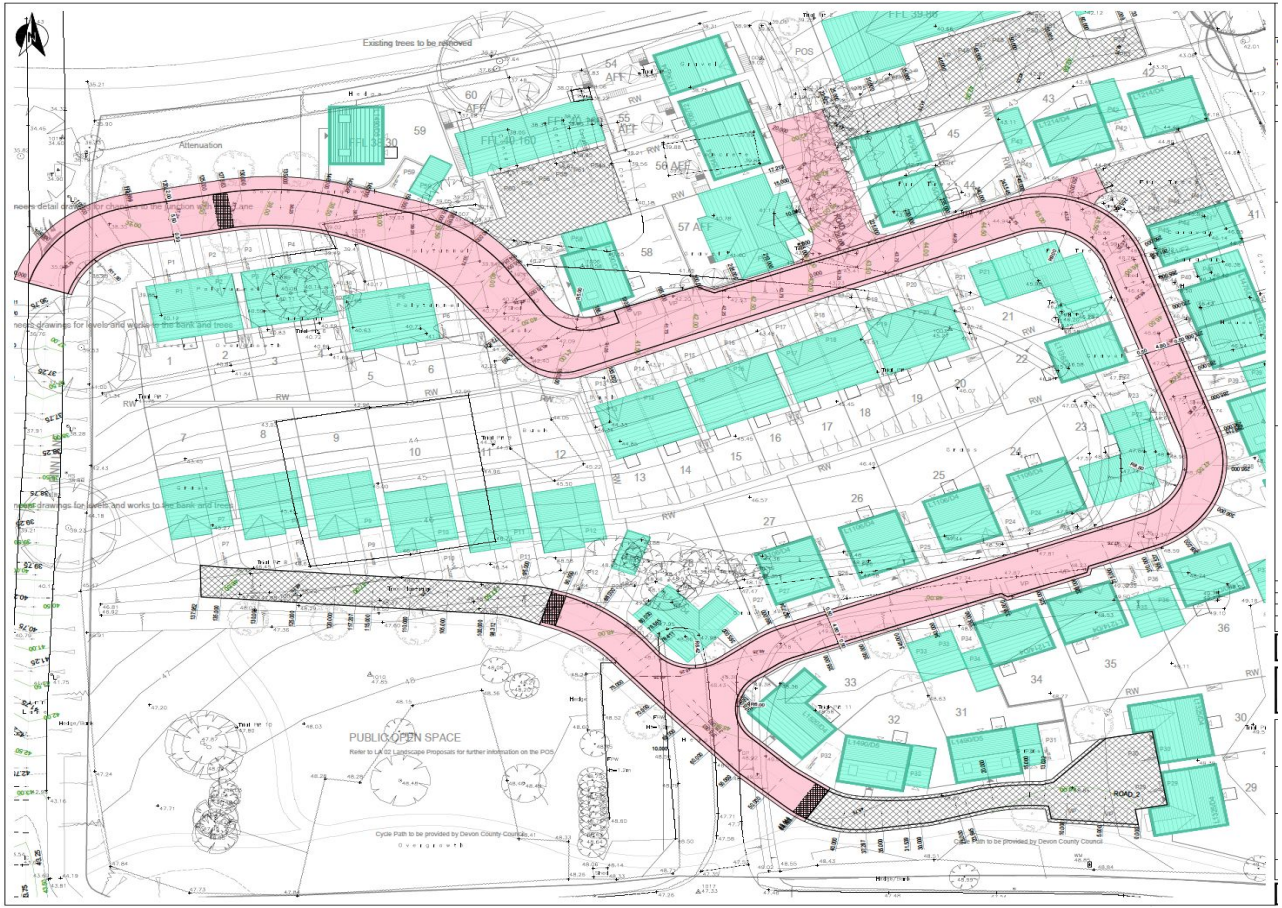
61 homes proposed within the red line.

- Devon County Council closed Pinn Lane to traffic at the junction with Tithebarn Way in 2014. This was to reduce traffic on the lane and its junction with Gipsy Hill Lane and Hollow Lane;
- Pinn Lane is used by commuters walking to work from Pinhoe;
- Gipsy Hill Lane and Hollow Lane are part of the E3 and E4 ‘Strategic Cycle Routes;
- The new ‘two way’ section of the E4 route is under construction on Cumberland Way;

Above: Junction of Pinn Lane, Gipsy Hill Lane and Hollow Lane (key node on E3/E4 cycle route)

Left: Pinn Lane, looking south towards the junction

Left: The junction of Pinn Lane and Tithebarn Way, with access for people walking and cycling only.



This is the proposed layout and design. Look for:

- **Footways** (i.e.pavement) and **cycleways**. Are there any? Or is there one path to be 'shared' by pedestrians and cyclists? If so, try to see if they meet these minimum Department for Transport standards:
  - Footway - 2 metres wide
  - 'Shared path' - 3 metres wide

If not, they should! Otherwise the space cannot be shared safely.

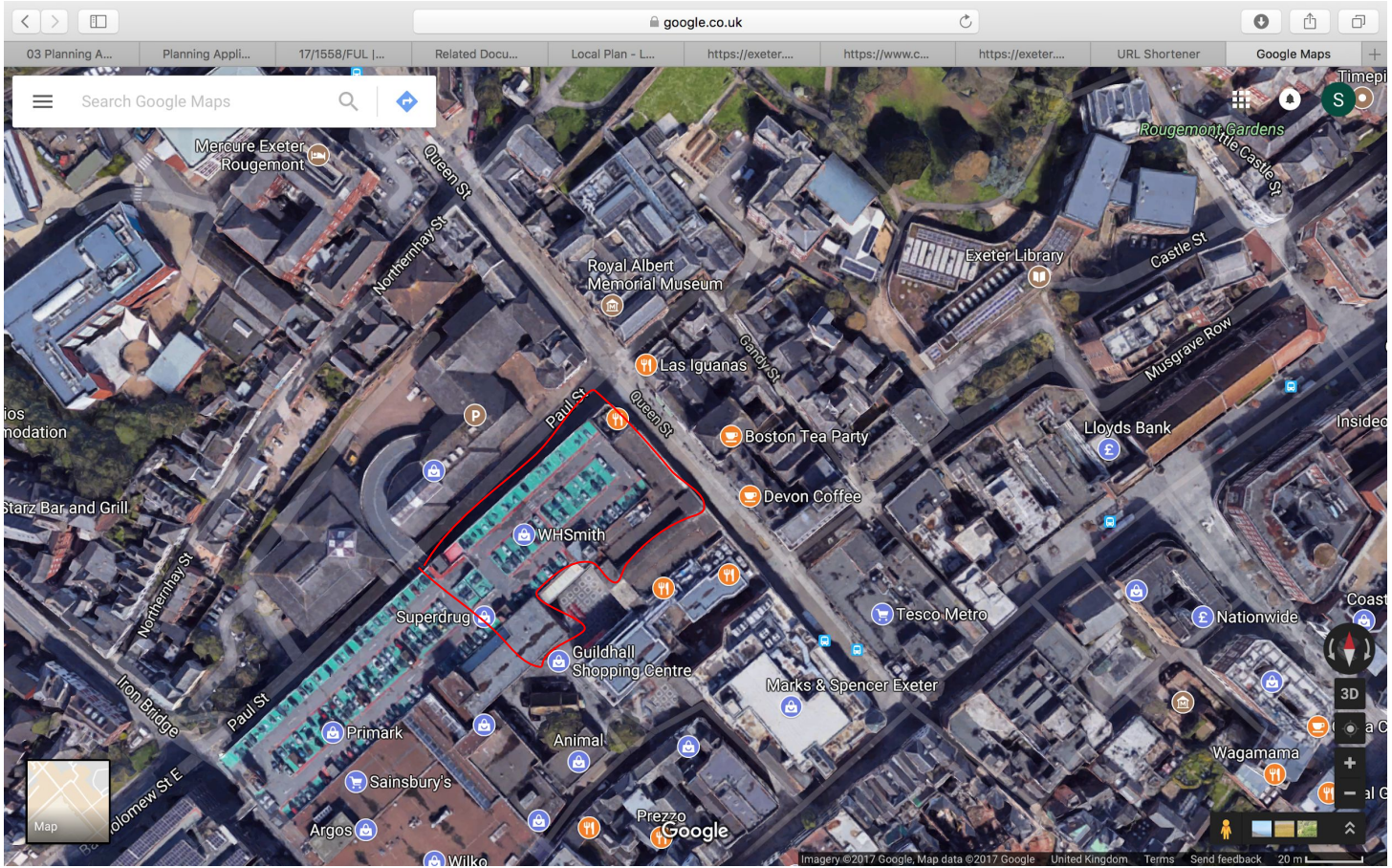
The Campaign's Response:

- Negative Safety Impact on Pinn Lane;
- Likely to discourage people from walking and cycling due to the increase in traffic on designated routes;
- Poor quality layout, with cars give priority over people walking and cycling at junctions.
- Alternative vehicle access via Tithebarn Way would be acceptable.

Full response here: https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bzjw-8v0RlH_aGFzbEJPUVF1RG8/view?usp=sharing

Case Study 2 Guildhall Shopping Centre Phase 2 Exeter

- Remodelling of WH Smith, the Coffee Pot and service areas with new shops, bars and a bowling alley;
- No changes to access arrangements;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Castle St
Rougemont Gardens
Musgrave Row
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Candy St
Paul St
Boston Tea Party
Lloyds Bank
Devon Coffee
WHSmith
Superdrug
Tesco Metro
Nationwide
Guildhall Shopping Centre
Marks & Spencer Exeter
Iron Bridge
Primark
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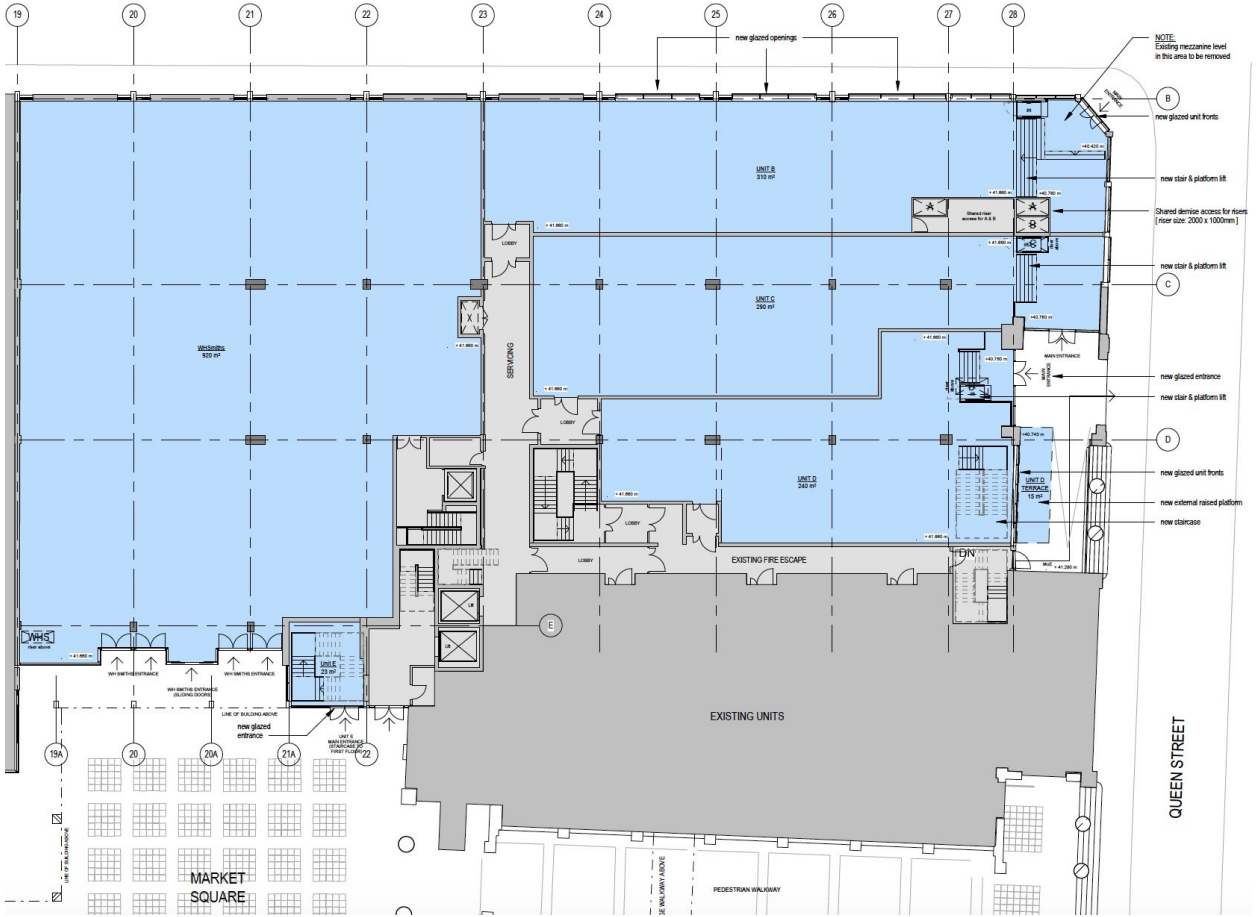


Proposed Site Plan. Look for:

- **Cycle parking**. Is there any? If so, is there enough? If in doubt, refer to Table 2 of the Exeter Sustainable Transport SPD (or the rather wordy 'Supplementary Planning Document')

https://exeter.gov.uk/media/1666/sustainable-transport-spd.pdf

Is the **cycle parking** well located and of a high quality? Think about:

- Safety - is it in an area that is well overlooked? Hidden cycle parking increases risk of theft and is less likely to be used.
- Convenience - is it located as close as possible to where people are going?
- Shelter - if people are going to spend a while somewhere, they are more likely to use cycle parking that protects their bike from the rain.

If in doubt, refer to DCC Cycle Parking Design Guidance: https://www.traveldevontoolkit.info/resources/Cycle%20parking%20design%20guidance.pdf

Think about **junctions** (where two thirds of all accidents happen - ROSPA, 2017).

- Do people walking and cycling have priority over cars?
- Are there safe and convenient crossings?
- Can people get from A to B easily, or do they have to take a detour?

The Campaign's Response:

- Loss of cycle parking installed as part of Phase 1 unacceptable ;
- No extra cycle parking is being proposed;
- No consideration of the narrow pavements which will become even busier once the development is complete.

Full response: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1yO-815mih1micZfQvHtTTezr7y_lEAiV/view?usp=sharing

Case Study 3: Clyst Road, Topsham

- 155 homes
- 64 bed care home

The Campaign's response:
https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1U8ETzpWByVcWdaWGQ0RThSM2c/view?usp=sharing

Helpful Resources: Planning Policy

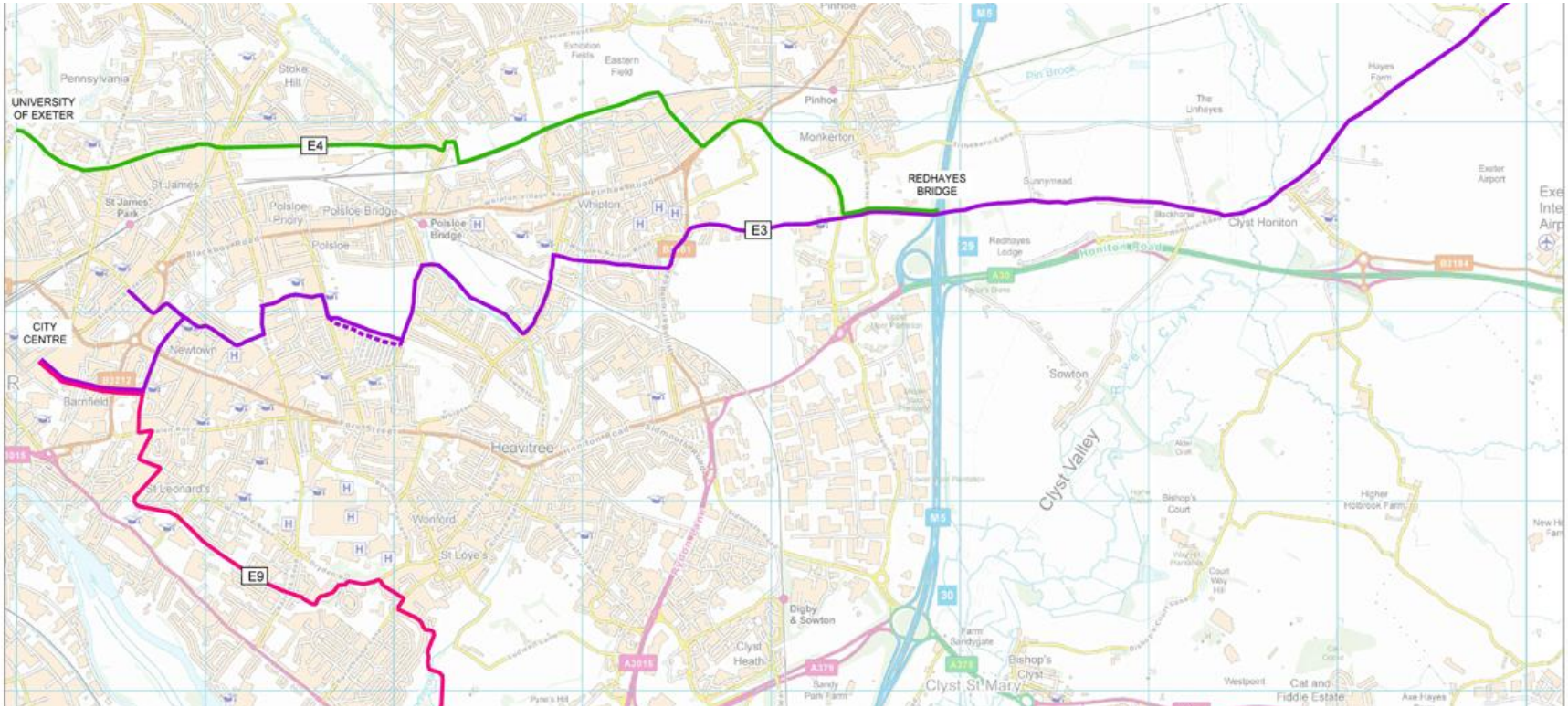
- Exeter Core Strategy (2012) - https://goo.gl/2CRZ7a
  - Chapter 8 - Transport
  - Policy CP9 - Transport
  - Policy CP17 - Design

- Exeter Local Plan First Review (1995 - 2011) - https://goo.gl/YWLAFU
  - T1 - Hierarchy of Modes
  - T3 - Encouraging Use of Sustainable Modes

- Exeter Sustainable Transport SPD (2013) - https://goo.gl/kLvKgQ

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - Chapter 7 https://goo.gl/QZ2HZt

Helpful Resources: DCC Exeter Strategic Cycle Network Map



Helpful Resources: Design Guidance

- Space for Cycling (good to understand basic principles) - https://www.cyclinguk.org/sites/default/files/document/2017/10/space_for_cycling_guide_for_decision_makers.pdf

- London Cycling Design Standards (endorsed by the Department for Transport, the standards the Campaign is working to) - https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/streets-toolkit#on-this-page-2

Helpful Resources: Design Guidance

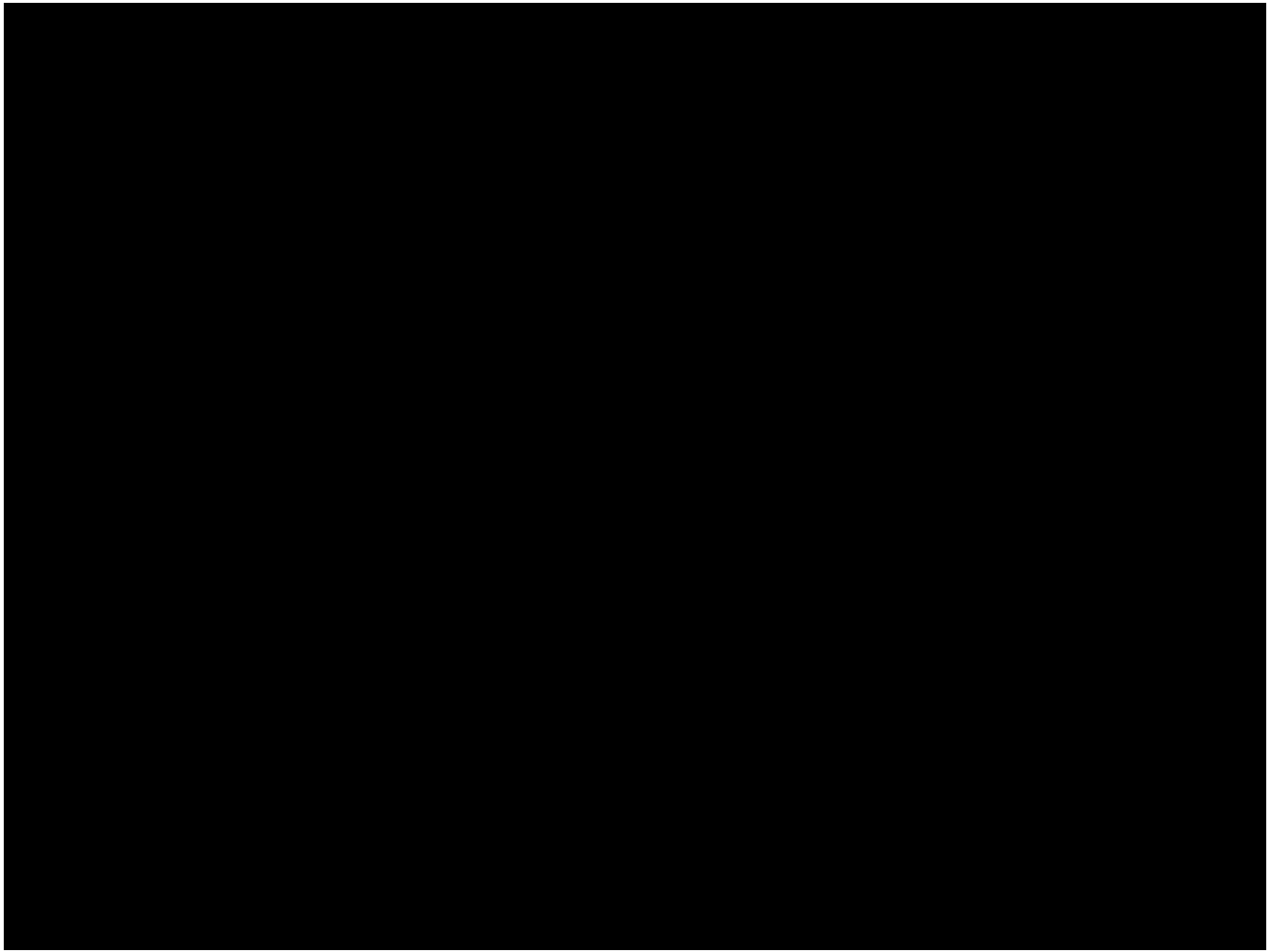
London Cycling Design Standards (LCDS)

Comprehensively revised and updated in 2014, LCDS sets out requirements and advice for cycle network planning and for the design of dedicated cycle infrastructure, cycle-friendly streets and cycle parking. This guidance applies to all streets in London and must be adhered to for relevant funding programmes. In October 2016, minor updates were made to the document, for consistency with the revised Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions (2016).

Chapter 1: Design requirements PDF 1.74MB	
Chapter 2: Tools and techniques PDF 1.57MB	
Chapter 3: Cycle-friendly streets and spaces PDF 4.80MB	
Chapter 4: Cycle lanes and tracks PDF 9.42MB	

Remember - you don’t need to to get too technical (the Campaign’s got that covered). Personal experience, insights and suggestions are valuable. Just stay calm, concise and constructive.

Finger pointing, profit bashing and excessive use of **Bold**, CAPS-LOCK and !!!!!!!! will detract from the one argument that matters: the need for development to deliver the best environment possible for people walking and cycling.



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