

Cycle South Dartmoor

Proposed Safe Cycle Route linking Ashburton, Buckfastleigh, Dean Prior and South Brent

Response to Feasibility Study

Present: Andy Stokes, Kathryn Hughes and Kathy Taylor, from Buckfastleigh, Inge Page from Ashburton, and John Rawlinson from South Brent and Neil Rutley from Dean Prior

The group met on 8th August to discuss the first draft of the feasibility study. Before looking at the document in detail there were a few queries.

1. There has been a misunderstanding in the remit of the study, as we had always asked that the route would continue through to South Dartmoor School in Ashburton, rather than finish at the town centre. This had always been included in the plan. By taking the route north eastwards from Ashburton town centre, as well as creating a safe route for cyclists to get to Ashburton School, the route could link into an existing cycle path going on up for a short way from the north of Ashburton beside the A38, then onto the A383 turning left on the old A38 towards Bickington and Exeter. This would also link into the Stover Cycle Path at Heathfield. The report states that continuing the route can be part of a subsequent study. We would like to request that this extension to the route study be a part of any proposal.

We then looked at the document in sections:-

2. Page 6, under Background, mention of NCN standard – please could there be a web link to this document to ascertain what the NCN standard is.
3. Page 7, 2.01, St Lawrence Lane, Ashburton was not typical of the usual traffic due to the main street being closed at the time of the ride. It was felt important that this route was seen on a typical day when it is much busier and often congested.
4. 2.05.1 All present agreed that a new path out of Ashburton through Chuley Road and the park, as recommended, would be excellent.
5. 2.06 Crossing of B3352. It was felt this needed further clarification. This could be very helpful for all users of the path, and we thought it would be best placed between the A38 slip road and the main turning into Ashburton town (opposite Pear Tree Garage) where the visibility is the greatest.
6. 2.07 The group looked in detail at these recommendations and agreed that 2.07.3 was the most straightforward and probably the quickest and easiest to implement. Our concern is that the purchasing of land may not be straightforward and it would take years for this to be realised. However we wish Sustrans to advise on this regarding potential cost and time implications for this option.
7. 2.08 There was much discussion on about the junction of B3357 and Dartbridge Road. The Salmon's Leap café opposite the turning has plans for a bike hub and there were concerns about the dangers of people crossing the road there. However, the group welcomed the proposal to site the cycle route on the right-hand side of the road coming from Ashburton by widening the existing path, and then going right into the Dartbridge Road. The crossing as sited in 2.08.2 on Buckfast Road was also very much welcomed. However, given the narrowness of the path at the point where the mini-roundabout it currently sited, and then heading towards Buckfastleigh on the path, we questioned whether there would actually be room for both walkers and cyclists going on up the hill into Buckfastleigh. There is also a bus stop in this narrow section.
8. With the much-welcomed proposal for a reduction in speed limits we understood that as the traffic would be going slower people cycling towards Ashburton would be on the road would feel safer. However, further clarification on this section is needed. We did not understand how the

reconfiguration of the roundabout would work and request a diagram of cyclists going in each direction.

- 2.08.01 – We were unclear how the Ashburton to Buckfastleigh cycle traffic negotiates from the crossing in Buckfast Road to get to the left lane (east side) cycle path suggested. It seems they would have to cross the road again. It was suggested that there be another crossing *before* (to the East of) Dart Bridge with a westbound cycle lane across the bridge and round towards Buckfastleigh. This would also enable access to the cafe (and would be good for pedestrians too – at the moment they have to make a dash for it!

See route in red below...



- A speed reduction of the entire stretch is welcomed, from 40mph to 30mph, from the mini roundabout at the bottom of the hill near Buckfast, going up the hill onto Dartbridge Road, which when carrying on changes to Strode Road, and to Plymouth Road until Dean Prior is reached. Both Buckfastleigh Town Council and Dean Prior Parish Council would support this.
- 2.10.1 The group welcomed the proposal to introduce two way cycling on Station Road and Fore Street, but given the narrowness of the one way road asked how this could work in practice. At present those doing this often have to go up onto the pavements if a car is travelling down the road.
- 2.10.2 Again provision of cycle parking was welcomed but the challenge comes in working out where to site the parking given the lack of space in the town centre.
- The routes out of Buckfastleigh westwards were discussed in detail.

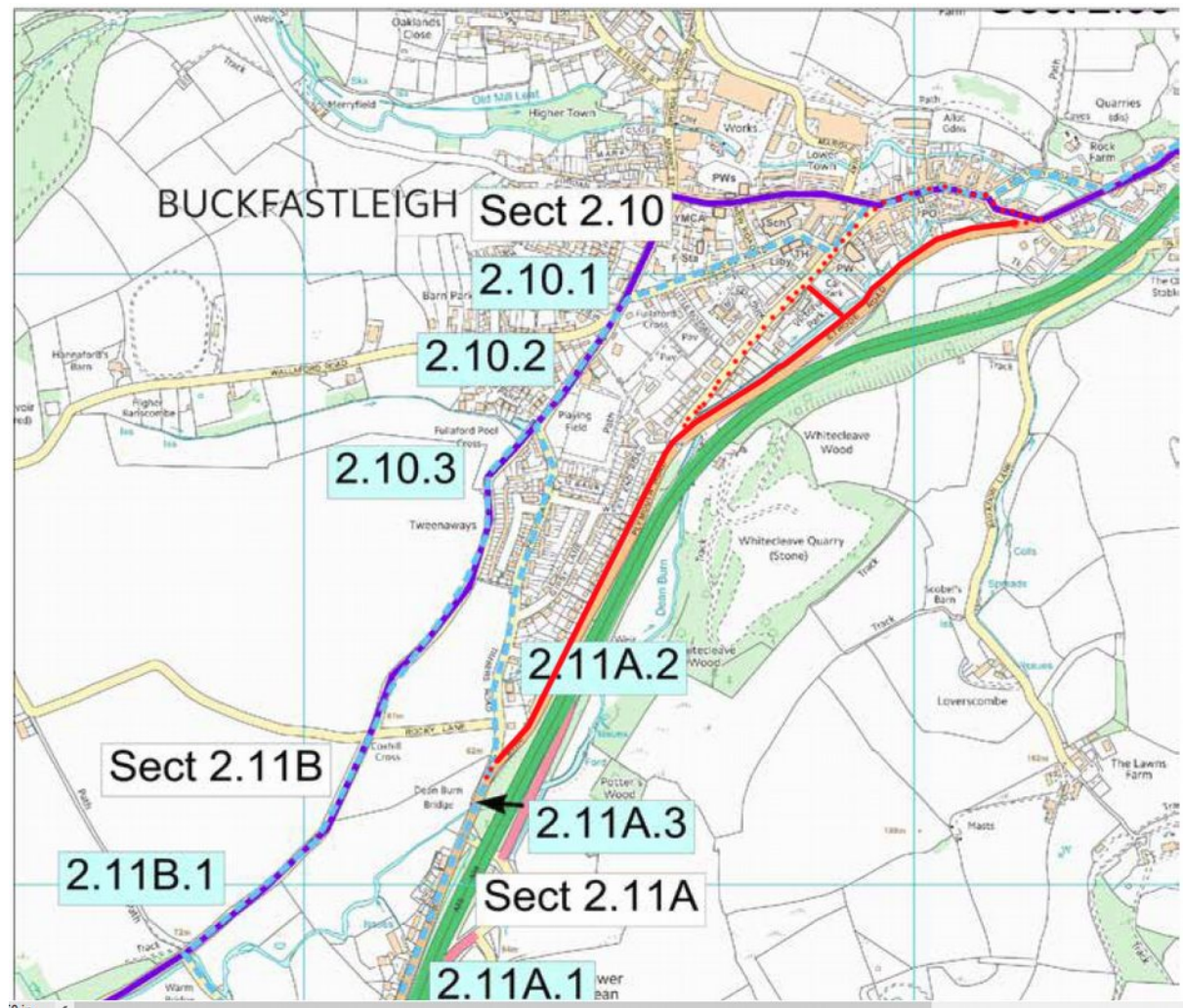
2.11.A1. The recommendation of a cycle path alongside the Plymouth Road was very much welcomed, though concerns were raised about the resultant problems for residents parking their cars.

2.10-2.11 Access to Buckfastleigh Town Centre

a) The most direct route for cyclists travelling from/to Ashburton to South Brent and beyond is along Plymouth Road and Strode Road (though this does effectively bypass the Town Centre).

b) As a through route, access through the Town centre as proposed, though desirable, has many problems due to road width and pavement parking (due to the lack of parking provision in the town) and hilly detours on the West side.

b) Strode Rd on the other hand (which bypasses the town centre) has a natural space along the North side on the footpath for a two-way cycle route which would just need improvements and separation from traffic. It is therefore our concern that many cyclists would just not use the proposed route either for commuting in and out of Buckfastleigh (especially to the West), or would ignore it anyway if travelling through because it is awkward and indirect and utilise Strode Road/Plymouth Road instead.



2.11A The group had serious concerns about the proposals of the route via Timbers Road, that it be closed to traffic, and felt that this was a “no goer”. This would cause considerable inconvenience to the residents of the western side of Buckfastleigh.

2.11B1 As mentioned above, we considered that moving the route out of Buckfastleigh to the lanes would not work either in practice because they are indirect (even though they would link into

Dartmoor Way), and gave more thought to how the safe cycle route could be achieved. The idea of there being a link into Strode Road (which leads into the Plymouth Road) from the Woodholme Car Park (the main car park for the town centre) via a bridge over Dean Burn could work really well. A bridge would avoid the challenges of the Old Plymouth Road coming out of the town centre where cars are parked on both sides of the road and there is heavy traffic. We considered that if the cycle path coming from Ashburton along Dart Bridge Road could be extended along Strode Road, there could then be two access points into Buckfastleigh town centre; one in Station Road and one via the bridge and Woodholme Car Park where cycle racks could be sited.

No mention has been made of the narrow section of the road at Dean Prior. This occurs just after the A38 slip road coming from Plymouth joins the B3357, heading towards South Brent. The road then narrows and bends round to the right and then left into the village of Dean Prior where it becomes much narrower, and visibility is limited. Some form of provision to make this safer for cyclists is requested.

2.12.1 The lowering of the speed limit from Dean Prior to South Brent is welcomed.

2.12.2 Additional signage for cyclists is also welcomed.