

Notes of joint meeting of Bishopsteignton Parish Council working group and Teign Estuary Trail Campaign Group on 18 January 2022 at 7pm via Zoom

Present:

Bishopsteignton Parish Council - Cllrs Kate Benham, Jo Head, Henry Merritt (Chair)

Teign Estuary Trail Campaign Group members – Bill Bailey, Ben Northcott, Claire Quelvennec, Judith Sharples (note taker)

Devon County Council - Cllr Ron Peart, Hannah Clark, Roger North

Teignbridge District Council - Cllr Andrew MacGregor, Estelle Skinner

1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. As it was the first meeting attended by Hannah Clark, everyone introduced themselves.

2. Planning application update

Roger provided an update on developments since the last meeting on 11 May 2021 as follows:

- the planning application was submitted by the end of May 2021;
- the Development Management Committee considered the planning application on 1 December 2021 and conditional planning permission was granted;
- the planning decision notice was issued on 3 December 2021 setting out 14 conditions which constitute a 'to do' list – some of the conditions must be addressed before the commencement of the construction phase and some must be addressed during the construction phase;
- the first condition is that the work must commence within 10 years of permission being granted;
- all documentation relating to the planning application is on the DCC website under the reference DCC/4238/2021.

Henry thanked Roger and his colleagues for the massive amount of work they had undertaken to achieve this very positive outcome. Roger emphasised that a team of people had been involved led by Hannah.

3. Next steps: Passage House Inn to A381, Bishopsteignton

Roger advised that negotiations with the 8 affected landowners were continuing. John Penhaligon is the DCC agent for this.

It was noted that the Passage House Hotel is currently on the market and so there may be a change of ownership but an agreement is already in place for the section of the trail that is in the grounds of the hotel.

The next challenge will be to secure funding for undertaking the work necessary to comply with the planning conditions and for the construction of this section of the

trail. The granting of planning permission puts DCC in a much stronger position to attract funding.

4. Next steps: A381 to Morrisons

Roger advised that this section is permitted development utilising existing footpaths that would be redesignated to permit cycling. Funding would also need to be secured to enable this section of the trail to be constructed.

With the agreement of DCC Highways, BPC will shortly be having Speed Recording and Data Collection equipment installed within the 30 mph limit on the A381.

5. Next steps: Morrisons to Teignmouth town centre

Hannah advised that no work is being undertaken on this section of the trail at present and it would form a future phase of the project.

6. Next steps: Teignmouth to Dawlish

Roger advised that this section of the trail is ready to be constructed if funding is secured. The only outstanding landowner issue relates to the footpath between Cliff Road and Eastcliff Park where agreement has not yet been reached to redesignate this as a multi-use path.

Discussions with Network Rail on the plans for making the railway between Parsons Tunnel and Teignmouth more resilient are continuing.

7. Funding opportunities

Hannah advised that a lot of external funding in recent years has been linked to economic and housing growth but new funding opportunities are arising with criteria which may be a better fit with the TET. However, funding opportunities are often based on a competitive bidding process and a lot of work is involved in putting together a strong bid. Hannah is hoping that details of the next tranche of funding from the Levelling Up Fund will be announced within the next 2 months.

Estelle advised that Teignbridge District Council has identified the TET and improved active linkage to Torbay as the most likely basis for a bid from the next tranche of the Levelling Up Fund if there is a good match with the criteria for this funding. It was noted that officer capacity to work on the business case for the TET is limited but it will be treated as a priority and there will also be notable input from Devon County Council. Teignbridge is liaising with Torbay Council, to ensure their support, but there are no plans for a joint bid.

Kate asked what we could do to help secure funding. Hannah said a letter of support from the parish council and also from the Campaign group would be very helpful. It was also noted that letters of support could be requested from relevant local groups and/or businesses. Estelle added that the information that she and Judith had compiled for Sustrans providing evidence of community support could also be used.

Judith asked whether any funding from Sustrans might be forthcoming. Hannah said DCC remains in close contact with Sustrans but no funding has been identified at present.

Judith also asked whether officer work on the next steps was conditional on securing external funding. Hannah advised that existing budgets cover a lot of the officer time that is required.

Cllr Peart commented that officer capacity is a big challenge at present.

Kate suggested that links are made with the TDC group she is involved in addressing the challenges of climate change and Hannah agreed that the delivery of the TET would support climate change objectives. BPC Climate Change Working Group are developing several initiatives which will be publicised during the year.

Bill asked whether DCC had identified the businesses that had benefited most from the Exe Estuary Trail so that businesses most likely to benefit from the TET could be approached and asked for their support.

Hannah agreed to share a DCC report on the economic impact of the Exe Estuary Trail.

Henry asked whether it would be appropriate to seek support from our local MP at this stage. Hannah said MP support was vital to securing funding from the Levelling Up Fund. It was noted that members of the campaign group had met Anne-Marie Morris a few years ago and she had contacted the Secretary of State for Transport but he had referred her back to DCC on the grounds that funding for such schemes was allocated locally.

8. Arrangements following Roger's retirement

It was noted that Roger would be retiring at the end of February 2022.

Hannah offered to represent DCC at future meetings of this group from now on and also offered to be a contact point if members of the group have any questions at any stage. This offer was welcomed.

Hannah also advised that an engineer would be appointed to replace Roger and that the person appointed to this role would be introduced to the group in due course.

Henry thanked Roger on behalf of all members of the meeting for the excellent job he had done in both progressing the delivery of the trail and keeping us all informed at every stage of the process.

9. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 12th April at 7pm via Zoom