

30 April 2025

RE: Questions for Clarification Clyst St Mary and Sowton Neighbourhood Development Plan

Dear Ms McCann,

Stantec UK Ltd are providing highways consultancy support on behalf of the landowners for the promotion of land east of Clyst St Mary, Exeter (allocation **BisC12** in the draft **Clyst St Mary and Sowton Neighbourhood Plan** (CSMSNP)). In this connection, we have undertaken a considerable amount of work to consider the potential for providing a road, cycle, and pedestrian link across the land as part of any residential development. Amongst other things, this has involved traffic surveys and capacity analysis for Bishop's Court Lane, technical design work on the junctions which would be needed on the A3052 and on Bishop's Court Lane and input into the ongoing work on the comprehensive masterplan which is being prepared for the land. We have also had a number of meetings with Devon County Council officers (DCC) and with officers at East Devon District Council (EDDC) in connection with the proposals. We are therefore very familiar with the transport issues affecting the area.

Given our work to-date, we felt it would be useful to provide you with some further information in response to your letter seeking clarification on the following policies, resulting from responses received from DCC and in connection with the following neighbourhood plan policies:

Policy BisC11 – Clyst St Mary Settlement Boundary

Policy BisC12 – Land East of Clyst St Mary

We are aware of your query dated 8th of April 2025 requesting further clarification on highway safety with respect to the BisC12 Site. We understand DCC's concerns regarding a possible increase in traffic along Bishops Court Lane. However, we want to provide you with comfort that these issues are not significant, are not fully considered and can be overcome. Further emerging design work which has been discussed with DCC should resolve these issues.

Highway Safety Concerns

In principle, we do believe that the broader considerations and benefits of the proposal may not have been fully acknowledged by DCC. The new link road through the site connecting the A3052 with Bishops Court Lane will significantly reduce the volume of traffic currently passing through the centre of Clyst St Mary by providing a more direct access to the existing business park and Courtway Farm Equestrian Centre (both of which are located to the north further along Bishop's Court Lane). This is a significant highway safety benefit and a priority of the Parish Council and Neighbourhood Planning Team. The centre of Clyst St Mary, which is narrow and is heavily parked, with congestion arising from passing vehicles using the village retail and leisure services. Our emerging proposals represent a balance between providing an appropriate access to relieve the centre of Clyst St Mary whilst not making the route too attractive to encourage traffic to reassign to the new link road. As well as providing a more direct route onto the main road network for the equestrian and business park users, our proposals would make Bishops Court Lane less appealing through the application of several restrictive measures designed to slow vehicles, increase journey times, and make this cut-through more arduous and less attractive.

We do not believe that a link from the A3052 to Bishops Court Lane would encourage additional users routing between the A30 and A3052 if these wider measures were included. This is because there are already better links nearby connecting these roads located to the east via the B3184 and B3180. The

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link we have proposed, supplemented with the additional measures outlined, would not make it more attractive than these existing alternatives.

Its attractiveness would further be managed by the specific design of the access from the A3052 which would be designed as a low-grade access, the narrowness of Bishops Court Lane, and the nature of the route through the new residential layout. The new layout is still being defined but is likely to consist of vertical or horizontal deflection through road narrowing / pinch points / chicanes or raised speed cushions, gateway and entry treatments and short straight sections enabling a 20mph design speed. These are accepted measures in DCC's Highways in Residential and Commercial Estates Design Guide, with these measures also extending to Bishops Court Lane. Furthermore, to prevent through traffic through Clyst St Mary modal filters on Bishops Court Lane / Frog Lane, designed in keeping with the rural setting can be an appropriate measure. We have attached a series of examples of the types of measures that could be provided as well as a preliminary layout showing where these works could be established on Bishops Court Lane.

Evidence from traffic count surveys suggests that Bishops Court Lane currently has a low two-way daily flow of around 1,000 vehicles, with 75% of peak hour traffic accessing the Business Park. The proposal is not anticipated to result in any material increase in traffic flow on Bishops Court Lane; instead, it is expected to reduce these levels further.

Since the comments referred to you in your query were made, further engagement with Devon County Council Transport Planners, Highway Development Management, and Road Safety officers, as well as East Devon District Council Planning officers, has been undertaken to discuss the proposal. We understand one of the most significant concerns relates to the access to the A3052.

Our current proposals to provide this access again represent a balance between providing an appropriate access whilst constraining its attractiveness to through traffic. DCC's response is understandable as any additional junction is theoretically increasing the number of conflict points on the highway network and therefore has the potential to be a highway safety concern. However, in practice, any increase in traffic movements at this point is likely to be minimal due to the low volumes of traffic. Any such impact needs to be balanced against the other benefits released through its provision in terms of the ability to move traffic from the highly constrained centre of Clyst St Mary and provision for non-car modes of transport.

In discussion with DCC, we are in the process of designing the access, the internal road layout through the development site, and wider traffic calming measures along Bishops Court Lane. DCC have accepted this approach, in principle, and stated that they would not have grounds to raise objections should a planning proposal be submitted. The overall weight of highway safety improvements flowing from the proposals would be significant and would outweigh any perceived risk issue brought about by the new junction onto the A3052. Discussions with the lead DCC officer have now confirmed that they would not object to the proposals, and we understand that they have updated their CSMSNP representations. DCC officers will be able to confirm their updated position.

Contribution to Strategic Cycle Route Provision

A further benefit of these proposals is that they will complement existing cycle provision in the area by facilitating the delivery of a key part of the Clyst Valley Trail (CVT). The Clyst Valley Trail (CVT) is a long-standing ambition of Devon County and East Devon District Councils to provide an active travel link from Pinhoe (to the north) to Topsham (to the south), a circa 13km route. The CVT has the potential to connect with wider existing and emerging active travel routes linking Cranbrook, Killerton Estate, and Cullompton to the north. It will be noted that the BisC12 proposals include provision for a cycle crossing over the A3052 which will help facilitate connections to the existing employment area, Winslade Park and beyond that to the south.

The measures proposed along Bishops Court Lane and across the site will reduce vehicle speeds, make the route less attractive for traffic, and create an environment conducive to cycling (and pedestrian) use which will additionally support the delivery of the wider Clyst Valley Trail active travel ambition.

As well as providing leisure benefits, delivery of the CVT in this area will improve opportunities to commute by bicycle and benefit local communities and by providing an affordable alternative to the private car in terms of accessing goods, services, education, and employment, encouraging mode shift and further reducing car trips.

The currently proposed CVT route runs to the west of Bishops Court Lane across agricultural land which is subject to several landownership and environmental constraints with the land liable to flood and significant questions persist about the deliverability of this part of the trail. By contrast, use of Bishops Court Lane and the link through the BisC12 development site can provide a much more viable and deliverable alternative route alignment to help progress early delivery of this important DCC and EDDC ambition. For these reasons and following discussions with the relevant officers at East Devon DC, we expect that our proposals will become the preferred alignment of the CVT.

Deliverability

We appreciate that changes in access proposals and provisions for active travel in the wider area, referred to in DCC's comments, may arise from the new community proposals. However, the plans for this will not be resolved quickly and will not be delivered for several years at least. As well as housing, the highway and cycle benefits which would flow from the BisC12 proposals could be quickly and swiftly delivered. Furthermore, the delivery of the Clyst Valley Trail does not prejudice the possibility for it to be incorporated into the wider new community plans thereby making a positive contribution to this ambition as well.

Summary

When considering the acceptability of the scheme, it is necessary to take a balanced view of the benefits and disbenefits, which need to be weighed against what development can feasibly deliver. Removing traffic from the centre of Clyst St Mary is a significant highway safety benefit which represents a core objective of the draft neighbourhood plan. Any perceived disbenefit in road safety from mixing cycling with cars is likely to be extremely modest because of the low traffic flow and speeds and needs to be considered in a broader context. The allocation and development of the **BisC12** site can also deliver a key missing link in a strategic cycle route and unlock the impasse that currently exists in its delivery, without materially increasing the number of vehicles turning right from the A3052.

We believe that the representations received from Devon County Council have not fully acknowledged the broader benefits of the proposal or the work undertaken to date to demonstrate deliverability, and the evidenced strategic benefits the proposal offers. Furthermore, they do not acknowledge that they would be unlikely to raise an objection should a planning application be submitted. Nonetheless, work is ongoing, in discussion with DCC, to develop a detailed scheme that will provide confidence that the proposed development is viable and deliverable.

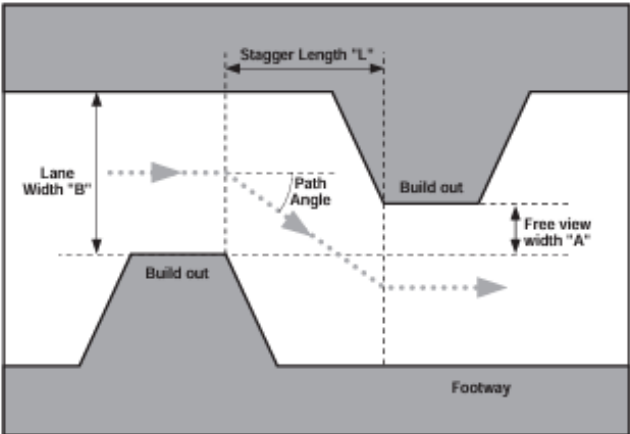

We appreciate your consideration of this matter and remain committed to working collaboratively to ensure the viability and success of this development.

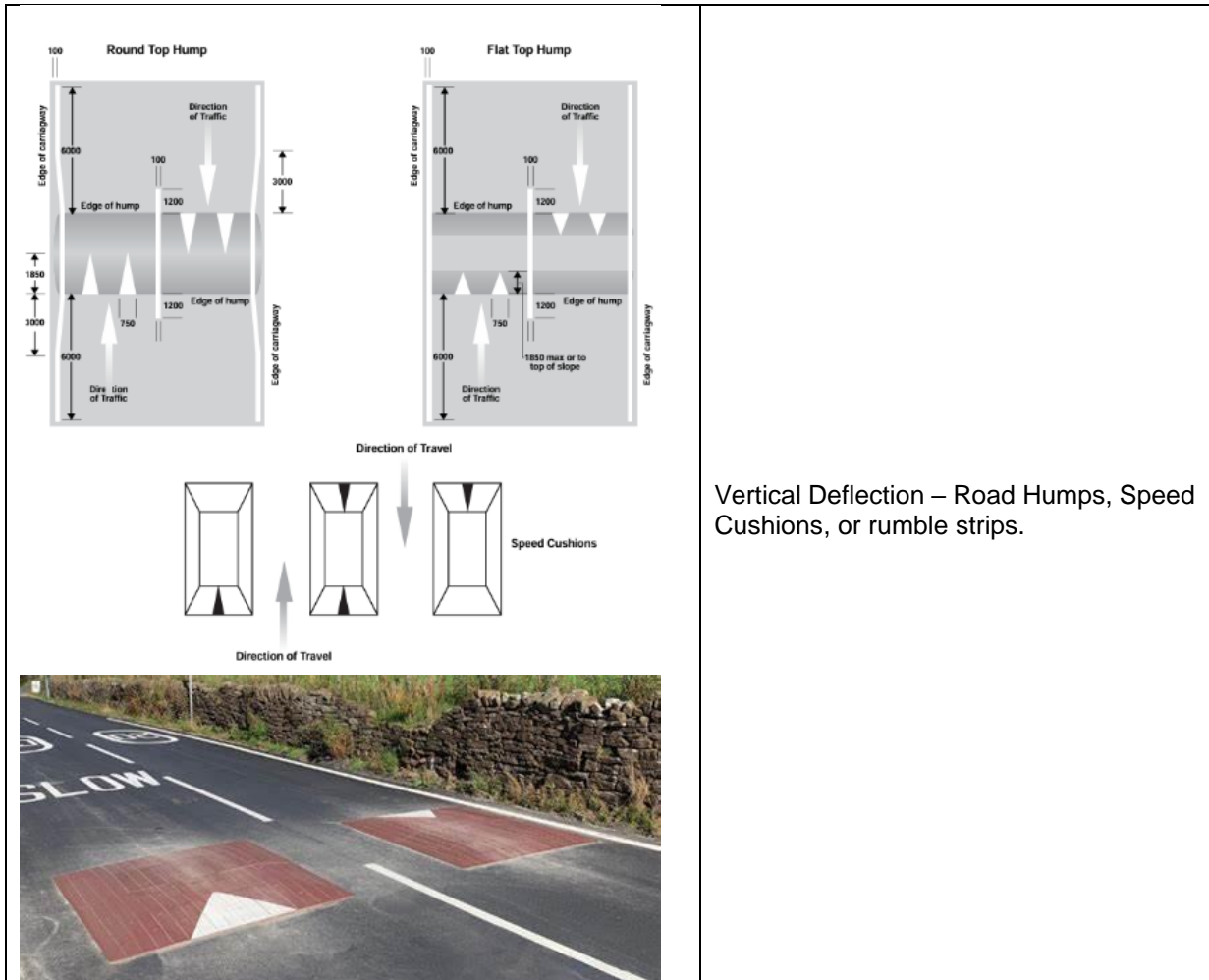
Yours sincerely,

Dave Simmons
Associate Transport Planner

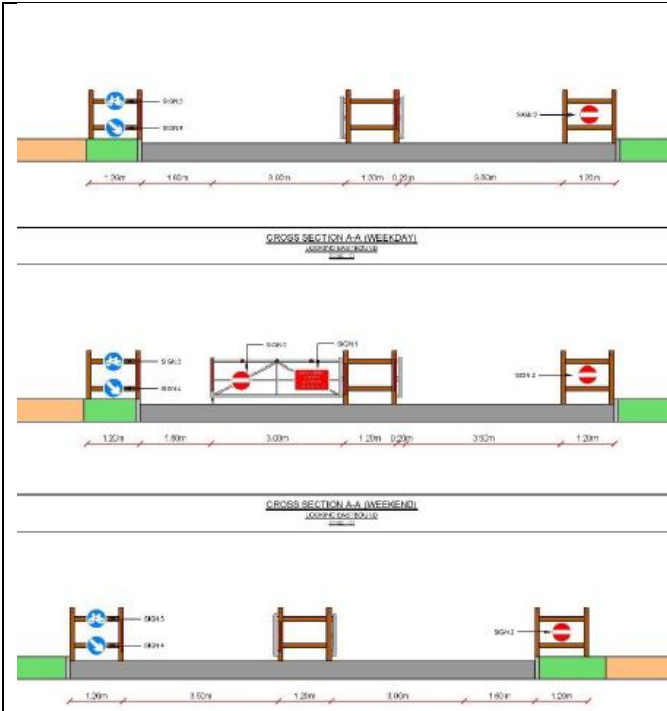
on behalf of Stantec UK Ltd

Examples of Traffic Management Measures which could be installed on Bishops Court Lane

	<p>Horizontal Deflection – Build outs, Chicanes, Carriageway narrowing.</p>
	



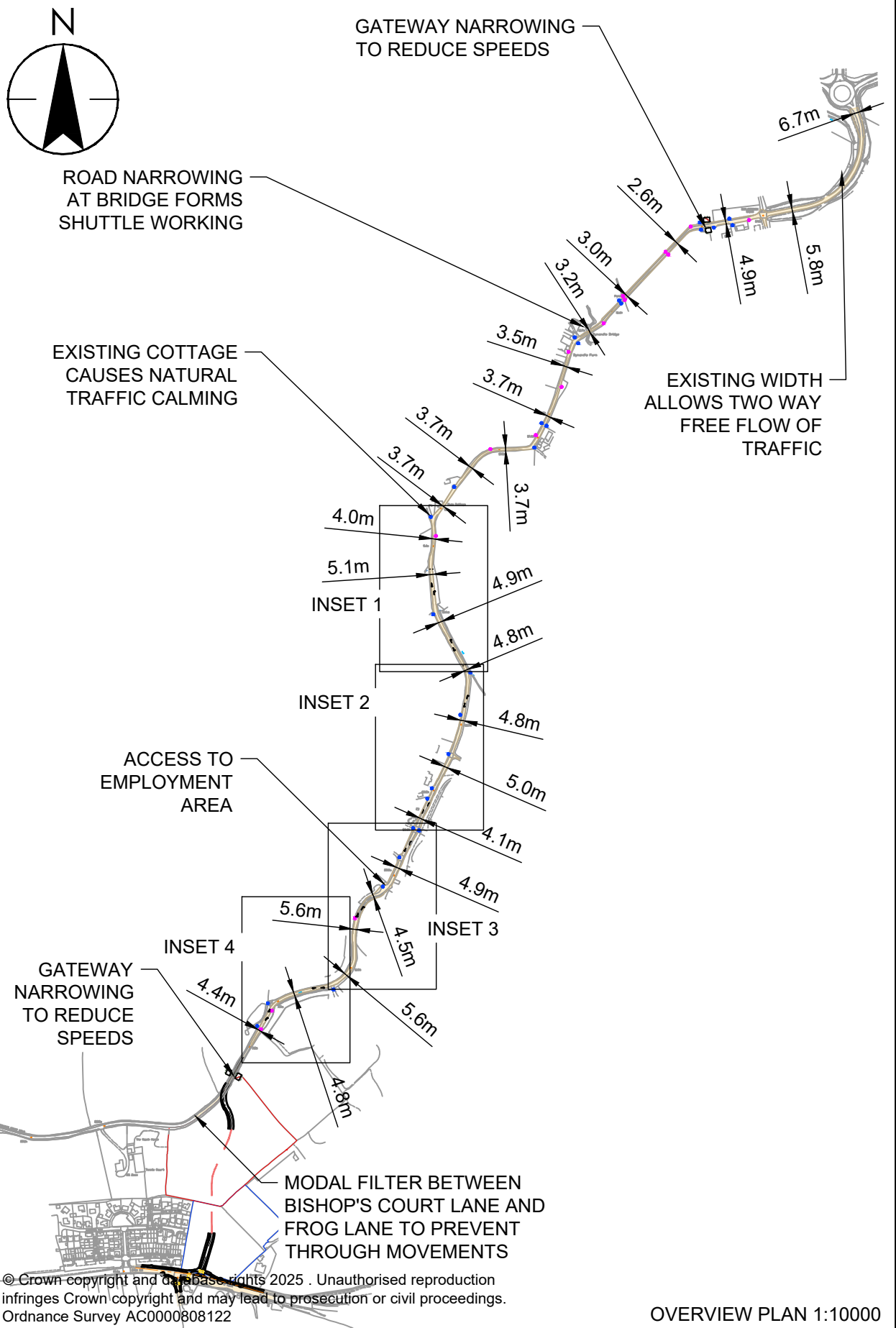
Vertical Deflection – Road Humps, Speed Cushions, or rumble strips.



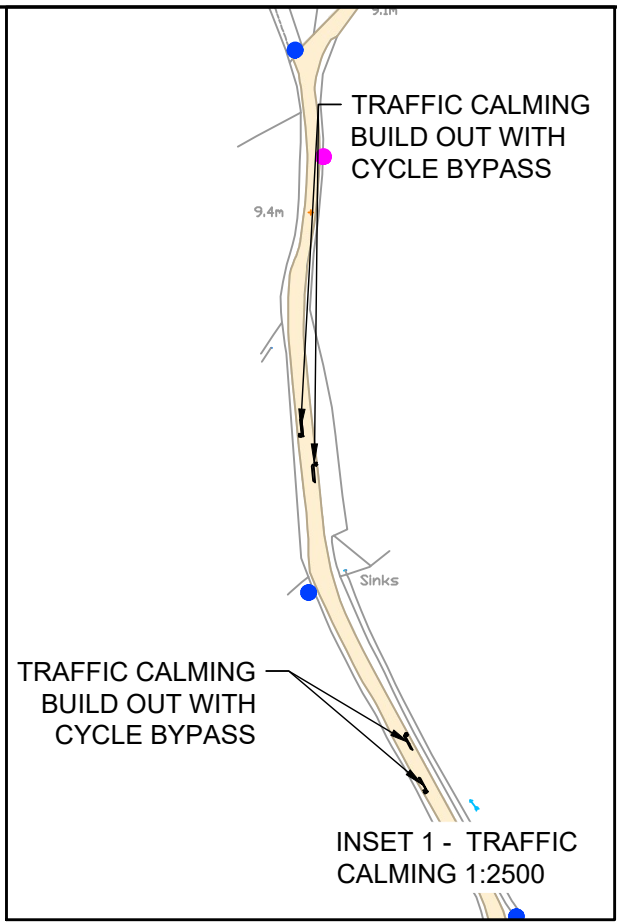
Modal filters to control traffic movements. These can be designed to be in keeping with the local landscape / townscape character and nature.



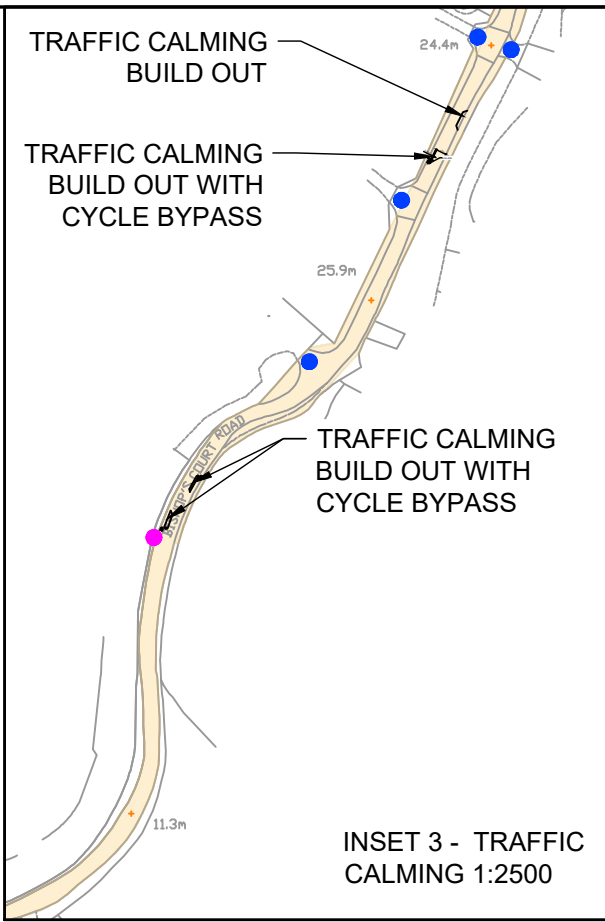
Gateway or entry treatments can be used to signify a transition to a residential area and help reduce vehicle speeds.



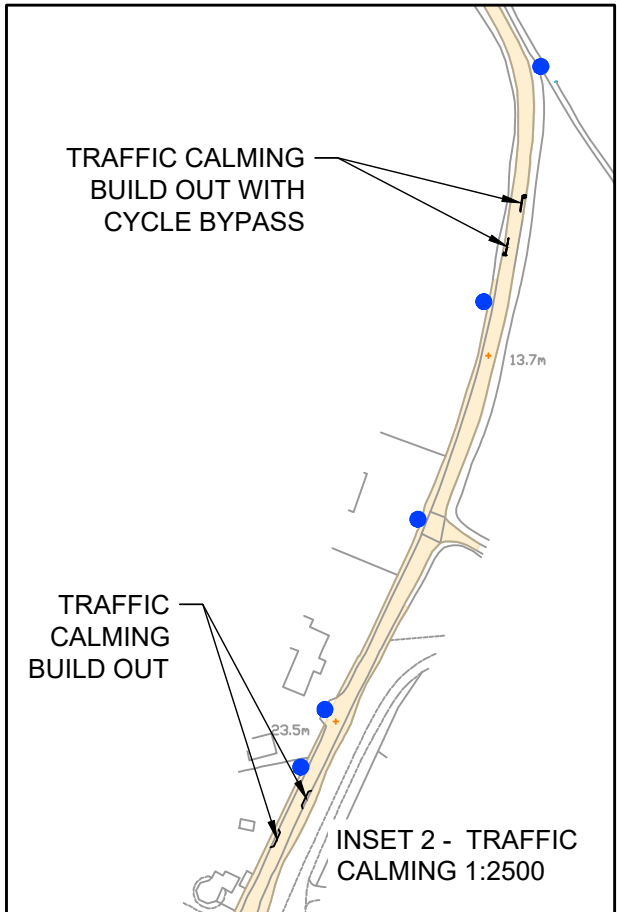
OVERVIEW PLAN 1:10000



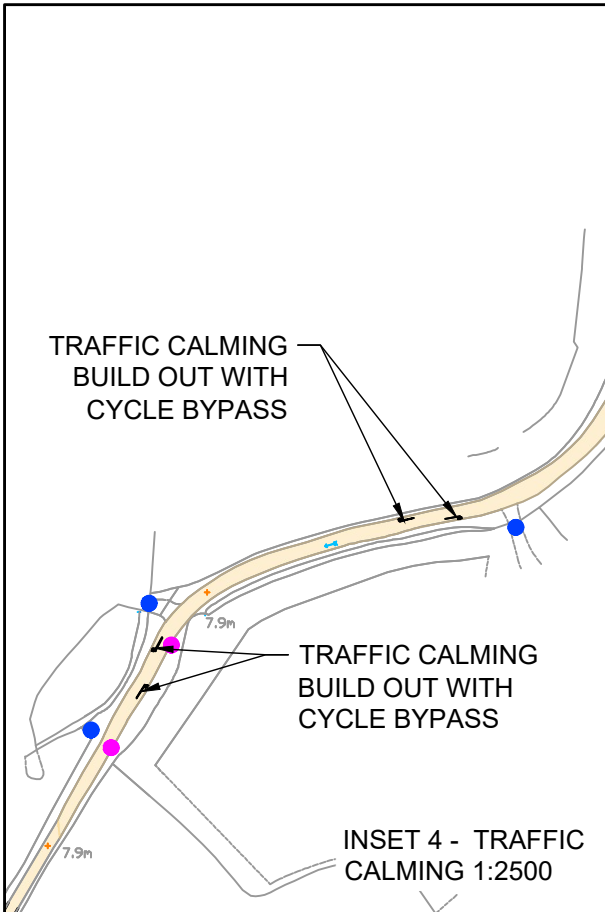
INSET 1 - TRAFFIC CALMING 1:2500



INSET 3 - TRAFFIC CALMING 1:2500



INSET 2 - TRAFFIC CALMING 1:2500



INSET 4 - TRAFFIC CALMING 1:2500

NOTES:

1. THE LAYOUT IS SUBJECT TO DETAILED DESIGN, CAPACITY TESTING, GROUND INVESTIGATIONS RESULTS & EARTHWORKS MODELING, UTILITIES & SERVICES AND CONFIRMATION OF LAND OWNERSHIP.
2. THE DETAILED DESIGN LAYOUT WILL BE DESIGNED IN ACCORDANCE WITH ALL RELEVANT DESIGN GUIDANCE AND STANDARDS.
3. THE LAYOUT HAS BEEN BASED ON THE APPROPRIATE DESIGN SPEED FOR OUR CURRENT PROPOSALS.
4. THIS DRAWING SHOULD BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL RELEVANT ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS.
5. THE USE OF THE DRAWING DOES NOT ABSOLVE THE CLIENT FROM THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES IN REGARDS TO HEALTH & SAFETY AND CDM REGULATIONS.

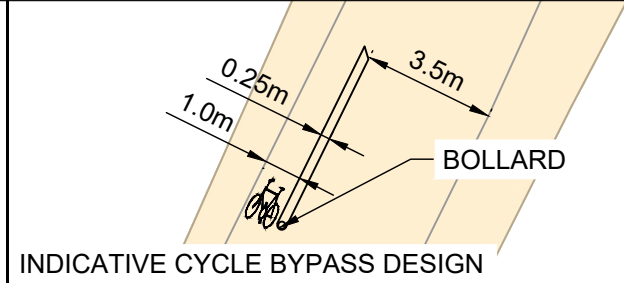
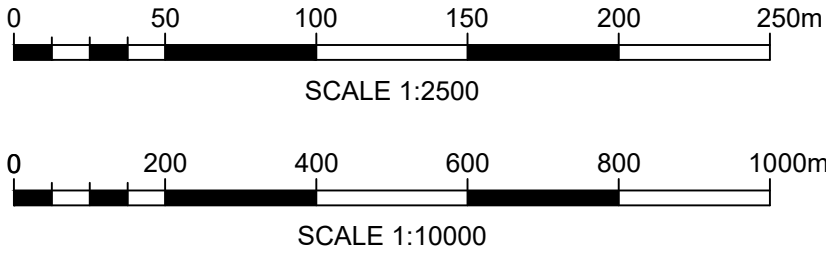
KEY:

- HIGHWAY BOUNDARY DATA FROM DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL PORTAL
- INDICATIVE SITE BOUNDARY
- INDICATIVE SITE BOUNDARY - BISHOP'S COURT LANE SITE
- AGRICULTURAL/ PRIVATE ACCESS
- POTENTIAL TRAFFIC CALMING FEATURE

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INDICATIVE CYCLE BYPASS DESIGN

Client/Project:
 CLYST ST MARY DART'S LAND
 DARTS PROPERTIES

Project No.:
 332611780

Title
 BISHOP'S COURT LANE
 POTENTIAL TRAFFIC
 MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL

DRAFT

Revision: _____ Date: 2025.05.07 Drawing No. STN-HGN-XX-DR-H-5503