



2nd February 2024

Devon Highways
Devon County Council
County Hall
Exeter
EX2 4QD

ATTN Ms Meg Booth – Director of Climate Change, Environment and Transport

Dear Madam

Re: TTRO2453882 – Temporary Restriction Heanton Punchardon Footpath 18 and Braunton Footpath 36 Temporary Prohibition of Pedestrians

We noted with concern the notice dated 29/01/24 in respect of the temporary closure of the above footpaths known locally as the Old Mill Lane.

The notice states that “footpath improvements including vegetation clearance, hedge and fence works drainage and surfacing” will be done from 5/2/24 for a maximum of 18 months.

Our concern is not just the length of time but the proposed period. The clearance will be done during nesting season as well as potential impact on bats and small mammals / reptiles which will certainly be in the middle section of the old lane. The part of the lane that runs from Lower Park Road has been identified as a bat foraging route as evidenced by previous planning applications for development either side of the footpath.

Those familiar with the footpath know that it still retains the feel of the old lane it once was.

There does not appear to have been any survey of the ecology in the lane and its surrounds. We draw your attention to Braunton Parish Neighbourhood Plan policies – in particular NE2 Protection of the Caen Valley Bats SSSI and the Parish Bat Population, NE3 Protecting and Increasing the Parish’s Biodiversity, NE4 Protecting Devon Banks, Hedgerows and Trees and NE5 Protecting the Footpath, Bridlepath and Cycle Path Networks.

Whilst we recognize that footpaths need to be maintained we ask that the “improvements” being undertaken will comply with the relevant policies and not harm the old lane’s character or reduce the biodiversity that it supports.

Love Braunton

Cc Braunton Parish Council
Heanton Punchardon Parish Council
NDC Planning