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Marlcombe Transport Vision

Non-Technical Summary

East Devon New Community

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1 Non-Technical Summary

1.1 Context

1.1.1 Marlcombe presents a unique opportunity as part of the Unified Project to consider and influence extant issues, neatly summarised in DCC's Accessibility Strategy

1.1.2 This brings together known issues concerning

- access to Exeter
- deficiencies in local highways and junctions
- the local rail network
- potential improvements to active travel

1.1.3 The opportunity is further enhanced by the adjacency of the airport and technological advancements, primarily in the fields of information exchange, movement technology and influencing movement behaviour

1.1.4 Critical to the strategy is the concept of internalisation, forcing the provision of built facilities at a sufficiently early stage to avoid Marlcombe becoming a dormitory town

1.2 Introduction

1.2.1 Marlcombe will be a town of 8,000 new homes, with approximately 18,000 residents. The ambition is for it to be a place which provides for the majority of its residents' daily needs and where travelling by walking, wheeling, cycling or public transport is the logical choice for most journeys. Providing for the needs of its residents will reduce the need to travel outside the town and minimise impacts on the surrounding transport network. Decreasing reliance on private cars will allow people to live a healthier, greener lifestyles.

1.2.2 The Transport Vision sets out a framework to ensure that this ambition is realised. The roll out and ongoing management of the Transport Vision will be governed by a Transport Working Group (TWG). Although the exact management and delivery arrangements for Marlcombe are yet to be finalised, it is likely that this would come under the responsibilities of the under the overall Marlcombe Master Developer delivery body or Development Corporation (TBC).

1.2.3 Movements associated with the new town can be internal (i.e. contained within the town itself) or external (e.g. trips Exeter). In a well-planned, carefully balanced town, delivery of jobs, services and leisure facilities, etc. will keep pace with the construction and occupation of new houses. In terms of comparison towns within Devon, the long-term population of Marlcombe will fall between Brixham (16,700) and Tiverton(21,300) and would be the eight largest settlement in the county (excluding Plymouth).

1.2.4 A town of this size will have a significant degree of self-containment. For many people, their day to day needs and employment are served by the town in which they live, with less frequent trips made to other destinations. Although there is a need for people to be able to move freely around the town itself, this natural self-containment significantly limits impacts on the wider highway network. The degree of self-containment will vary by the purpose and time of the trip, as well as the mode of travel used. However, based on similar-sized towns, approximately 42% of car trips over a full day would be expected to be external, with the remaining 58% internalised.

1.2.5 The Transport Vision provides an overarching strategy allowing and encouraging people to reduce their car use, whilst still being able to travel freely and economically. Within the site, this is largely focussed around a compact, well-laid out town, with low speed limits and high quality active travel infrastructure. Mobility hubs will be distributed around the site, giving people access to electric bikes allowing them to travel to local centres or connect to frequent bus and rail services to Exeter.

1.2.6 External trips will be accommodated through a series of mitigation measures to cater for people making longer journeys. These will primarily be aimed at giving people an alternative to driving but will also include capacity improvements at key junctions. At an early stage, the development will provide Park and Ride sites adjacent to the A30 and A3052, intercepting exiting trips into Exeter and unlocking highway capacity on these routes. This approach will also allow high-frequency bus routes to be established in advance of the occupation of the new homes.

1.2.7 Marlcombe will provide a huge opportunity to improve access to Exeter from the east. The historic centre of the city has very little capacity to accommodate more traffic and over time, it will be necessary reallocate space away from low occupancy private vehicles to allow the roads to be used more efficiently. Key to this will be providing public transport and active travel improvements. Bus and rail services will need to offer time savings and bus priority measures will be required. As above, space has been allocated within the new town for two park and ride sites, intercepting existing trips. Over time, this should be accompanied by bus priority measures, particularly on the A3052. The new town will also strengthen the case for rail improvements through the Devon Metro project.

1.2.8 Moving house is a significant life event and provides an opportunity to form new habits. It is therefore vital that the appropriate transport measures are in place when people first move to Marlcombe. The delivery of the transport measures outlined below will be set over a number of phases to keep pace with the build out and occupation of the town. Given the likely timeframe to complete the town, the Transport Vision will need to remain a live, flexible strategy, able to adapt to and adopt new transport technologies as they emerge (e.g. drone deliveries, self-driving cars, etc.).

1.2.9 The proximity of Exeter Airport to Marlcombe will be attractive to businesses wishing to relocate to the new town. It will also offer new residents access to a regional airport by sustainable travel modes. In addition, the airport provides employment opportunities, particularly when combined with the adjacent Skypark business park. Sustainable transport links will be provided to facilitate this.

1.3 Key Transport Vision Measures

Internalisation

1.3.1 Marlcombe will be carefully designed and phased to ensure that as many as possible of its residents' needs (employment, retail, leisure, etc.) are provided locally. This will mean that the majority of movements take place within the town and have no impact on local or strategic roads. Similarly-sized towns generally have internalisation rates of around 58%.

High Quality Infrastructure

1.3.2 Attractive, direct and safe active travel infrastructure is more attractive to users. Marlcombe will incorporate high quality walking and cycling facilities throughout, support by a 20mph limit within the town. Off-site links to Cranbrook and Exeter will also be provided as the town expands.

Public Transport

1.3.3 People will still want to travel to Exeter and beyond. At the start of construction of the Marlcombe, park and ride sites will be delivered on the A30 and A3052, intercepting existing traffic along these routes. The high frequency park and ride services will ensure that good quality links are available to residents from day one. As the size of the town increases, bus priority measures will be delivered on routes into Exeter, improving bus journey times and reliability. There will be a circular bus route within the town itself and also to Cranbrook and local employment sites.

1.3.4 In the longer term, passing routes on the Avocet and West of England rail lines will allow service frequencies to be doubled at Cranbrook and Digby & Sowton stations.

Mobility Hubs

1.3.5 Mobility hubs incorporate facilities such as bike hire, EV charging, car club access, parcel lockers and real-time travel information. A hierarchical network of primary, secondary and mini hubs distributed through Marlcombe will support multimodal travel and reduce reliance on private vehicles.

Behavioural Change and Travel Planning

1.3.6 Schools and workplaces will implement tailored Travel Plans, supported by infrastructure and digital tools. The Travel Plan will also extend to the new homes. This is likely to be managed by the TWG. Th plan will incorporate game-like elements to maximise participation (such as points, levels, leaderboards, badges, challenges/quests, onboarding and engagement loops).

Electric Vehicles and Shared Mobility

1.3.7 EVs have significantly reduced emissions and have benefits when compared to internal combustion engine vehicles. Marlcombe will incorporate high-quality charging infrastructure, including at the park and ride sites. Car clubs will operate at the larger primary mobility hubs.

Freight and Servicing

1.3.8 Freight operations will be managed to minimise environmental and social impacts. This will include specifying routes and delivery timings.

Implementation and Monitoring

1.3.9 The TWG governance body will oversee implementation, supported by performance indicators and digital feedback mechanisms. The TWG will consult regularly with the community and other stakeholders.

Airport

1.3.10 Exeter Airport lies almost immediately north of Marlcombe and will be attractive to businesses wishing to relocate to the new town. It will also offer new residents access to a regional airport by sustainable travel modes. This will provide employment opportunities, as well as a travel facility.

Highway Network

1.3.11 The A30 Airport junction will be the main access into Marlcombe from the north. It will be expanded to allow for this. Improvements may also be required to the M5, particularly around Junctions 29 and 30. It should be noted that, even if Marlcombe were not to come forward, improvements are likely to be required in any event in order to accommodate general growth in traffic on the strategic highway network. This is currently being reviewed by National Highways.

1.3.12 On the local highway network, there will be improvements to the A3052 Clyst St Mary Junction as well as bus priority measures on key routes.

Phased Delivery

1.3.13 The introduction of transport interventions and measures will be phased and delivered as the town in built out and occupied. This is likely to be governed though the planning process, with 'trigger points' agreed for when individual measures need to be implemented.

1.4 Targets

1.4.1 In addition to the 58% internalisation of trips within the town, reductions in external Marlcombe-related car use would be achieved by the various measures set out in this Transport Vision. At the lower end (the minimal change scenario), these would equate to a further 3-4% reduction in car use, rising to an 8-11% reduction under the most ambitious scenario.

2 Transport Vision Summary

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 This section provides a high-level, non-technical summary of the elements included within the Transport Vision in order to minimise and mitigate the transport-related impacts of Marlcombe. These measures aim to reduce reliance on the private car and encourage use of active travel and public transport where possible. Appropriate mitigation will also be provided for residual car trips. The phasing of these measures is also discussed.

2.2 Internalisation

2.2.1 The town must be built-out and delivered in a way that balances occupation of new homes with creation of an appropriate amount of commercial, leisure and educational facilities. If only houses are delivered at first, then Marlcombe will initially be a 'dormitory estate' with residents travelling elsewhere for their daily needs. Education is a key driver of peak hour travel, so, as a minimum, primary school places must be available within the new town from day one. Secondary school pupils should also be provided for in order to minimise school travel costs. It is likely that the commercial, leisure and community uses will need to be managed flexibly at first, along with incentives for businesses to relocate. This could for example be incentivised rents to set up a 'pop up' shop within a community facility or visiting medical practitioners holding on-site clinics. There may also need to share some facilities with nearby Cranbrook in these early stages. Over time, as more residents populate the town, business and facilities will become viable in their own right and can relocate to bespoke new buildings.

2.3 High Quality Infrastructure

2.3.1 Marlcombe will be a compact town, no more than a 10-15 minute cycle from one-end to another. For travel within the site, active transport should be the first choice for residents who have the ability to do so. They will be supported in this choice though a blanket 20mph speed limit covering the whole town, inclusive street design and segregated walking and cycling routes where appropriate. Consistency of design and quality will be governed by a Design Code for the town. Crucially, the Transport Working Group will ensure ongoing management and maintenance of these facilities.

2.3.2 Infrastructure design will take account of all users, including older people, wheelchair and pushchair users and people with visual or cognitive impairments.

2.4 Public Transport Strategy

2.4.1 The strategy includes two new park and ride sites on the A30 and A3052 to intercept car trips into Exeter, reducing congestion and emissions. An internal circular bus service will connect residential areas with key destinations, operating at high frequency with low-emission vehicles. Bus priority measures will be provided along the A3052 to ensure that bus journey times are minimised and are as reliable as possible.

2.4.2 Integration with rail infrastructure at Cranbrook and Digby & Sowton stations ensures regional connectivity. Real-time information, contactless payment and inclusive design features will enhance user experience. Over time, through the Devon Metro project, new passing loops on the West of England and Avocet lines will double rail service frequencies and line capacities.

2.5 Mobility Hubs

2.5.1 Mobility hubs will be distributed across Marlcombe, ensuring every dwelling is within 640 meters of a hub (this is an 8 minute walk). A hierarchical network of primary, secondary and mini hubs will support multimodal travel and reduce reliance on private vehicles. Depending on their size, these hubs will offer bike hire, EV charging, car club access, parcel lockers and real-time travel information. This will help people to travel easily to local centres and facilities, as well as to high-frequency public transport services.

2.6 Behaviour Change and Travel Planning

2.6.1 Behavioural interventions will begin at the point of occupation, leveraging the 'fresh start effect' to embed sustainable habits. Community engagement will include Travel Welcome Packs, local champions, mobility forums and gamified incentives (such as points, challenges or daily travel streaks). Schools and workplaces will implement tailored Travel Plans, supported by infrastructure and digital tools. Continuous feedback and monitoring will ensure responsiveness and improvement. This will all be managed through the Transport Working Group.

2.7 Electric Vehicles and Shared Mobility

2.7.1 EV infrastructure will include residential and public charging points, integrated with mobility hubs and park and ride sites. Shared EVs and car clubs will be promoted to reduce private car ownership. Digital platforms will manage booking, payment and usage data to inform expansion and adaptation.

2.8 Freight and Servicing Strategy

2.8.1 Freight operations will be managed to minimise environmental and social impacts. Designated HGV routes, time-based restrictions and low-emission vehicles will be used. Freight hubs co-located with mobility hubs will support consolidated deliveries and last-mile logistics via cargo bikes and electric vans. Retail servicing will be coordinated to avoid disruption, with compact loading infrastructure, operational guidance and increase flexibility for small businesses.

2.9 Town Construction

2.9.1 The size of the Marlcombe will mean that construction work could extend over 15 or more years. This will mean that residents will be living alongside ongoing construction. This will need to be carefully managed in general to avoid adverse impacts such as noise and dust. In transport terms, the key impacts would be the movement of vehicles and materials to the site, particularly via HGVs. This will all be covered by a Construction Traffic Management Plan but will be managed by the Transport Working Group under the overall Transport Vision. It is critical that HGVs are safely and considerately routed in order to avoid discouraging active travel.

2.10 Implementation and Monitoring

2.10.1 Transport infrastructure will be delivered in phases aligned with development. Early delivery of park and ride services and mobility hubs will support sustainable travel from the outset. The Transport Working Group governance body will oversee implementation, supported by performance indicators and digital feedback mechanisms. Annual reviews will ensure the strategy remains responsive and aligned with community needs.

2.11 Phased Delivery

2.11.1 The transport impacts of Marlcombe will emerge over a relatively long period as construction and occupation of the new homes and businesses takes place. Devon County Council (DCC) has therefore developed a phasing plan for delivery of the mitigation measures.

Phase 0

2.11.2 Phase 0 refers to works that are currently ongoing or are delivered in parallel with the ongoing build out and occupation of Marlcombe. As a result, there are no specific triggers for this phase. It comprises electrification of the bus fleet within Devon and the existing DevonBus Enhanced Partnership between DCC and local bus operators. This provides additional control and influence over timetable, route and fares on bus services within the county.

2.11.3 In addition, Phase 0 also refers to the on-going delivery of mobility hubs and active travel infrastructure within Marlcombe. This will be managed by the Transport Working Group, with additional control provided by the Design Guide and planning process.

Phase 1 – Pre-Commencement and Initial Occupation

Triggers

Dwellings	Non-Residential
Prior to 1st dwelling occupation	Education Campus

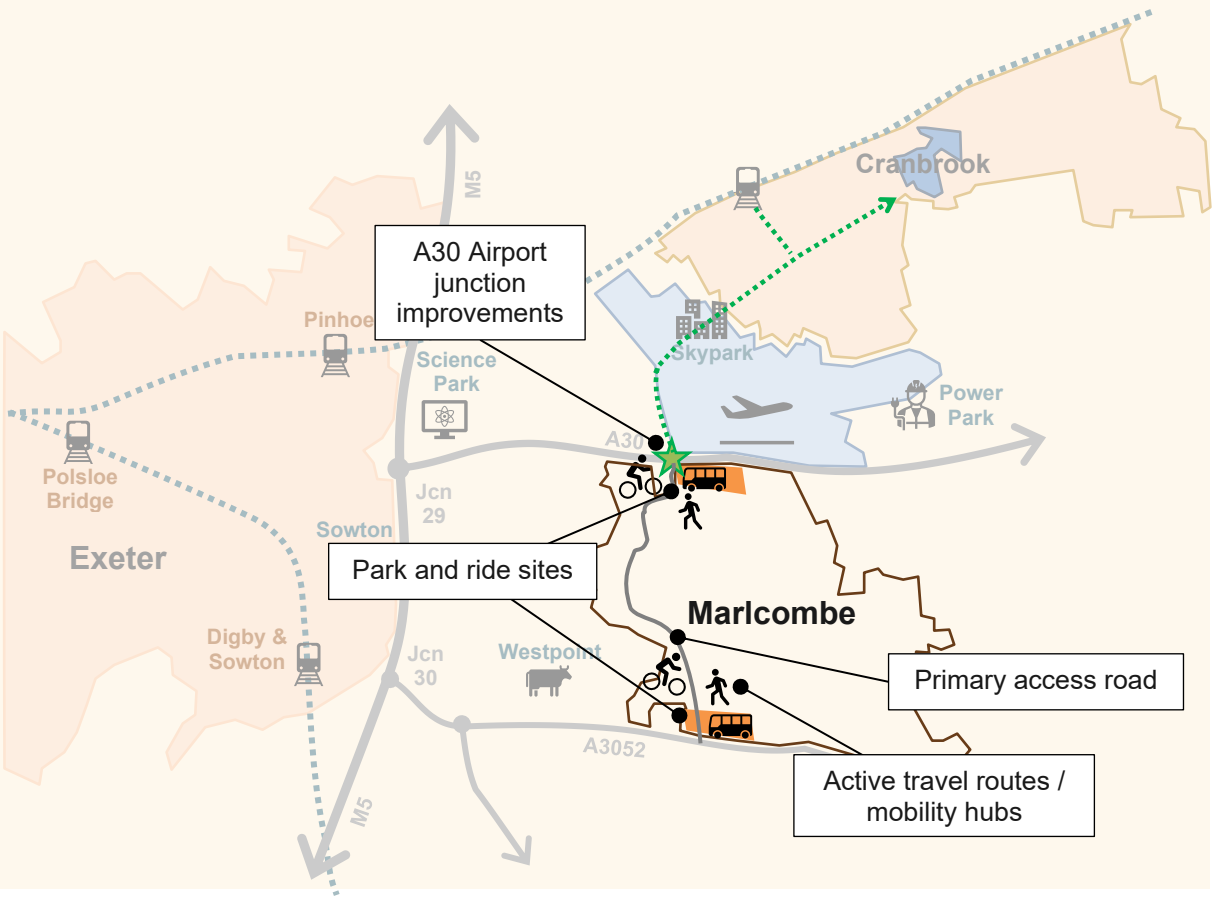
2.11.4 Phase 1 has a strong emphasis on infrastructure provision. The primary access road though the town will be constructed (including segregated cycle lanes), along with improvements to the A30 Airport junction and new junction with the A3052 to the south. The A30 junction improvements will include active travel links towards Cranbrook. The primary access road will not only provide for future residents but also create a safe route for construction traffic. The primary access road itself will require ground levelling works, as well as bridges over the watercourses running east to west through Marlcombe. It is likely that some of the landscaping along the route will also be implemented at this early stage, allowing plants and trees to become established before the majority of residents move in.

2.11.5 Once the primary access road is completed, the two park and rides sites on the A30 and A3052 will also be delivered, along with regular bus services into Exeter. These park and rides will intercept existing trips into the city, helping to relieve congestion and creating 'headroom' for vehicles from Marlcombe as occupations start to take place. Depending on the routes developed, the buses could operate as back and forth shuttle buses into the city or could operate circular routes via the new primary access road.

2.11.6 As homes and businesses start to be delivered and occupied within Marlcombe, they will initially be clustered around the southern and northern ends of the site, placing the park and ride sites within easy reach. High quality pedestrian and cycle infrastructure will be constructed alongside any new properties, along with mobility hubs, allowing new residents easy access to regular bus services into Exeter. At this early stage, there may need to be financial incentives (e.g. discounted tickets) in order to encourage bus use by residents, as bus priority measures will be delivered in later phases.

2.11.7 The Phase 1 measures are summarised in the following table and diagram:

Item	Rationale
Marlcombe primary access road (including A3052 junction)	Facilitates construction and more flexible approach to bus routing
A30 Airport junction improvements	Future proof for growth of Marlcombe, improve active travel links to Cranbrook allowing shared use of facilities and services. Connect primary access road to A30.
Park and Ride sites on A30 and A3052	Intercept existing trips to Exter , unlock capacity along A30 and A3052 and across M5. Allow frequent bus services to be established at an early stage so that they are available to Marlcombe residents as they move in.
Active travel routes and mobility hubs within site	Facilitate access to park and ride services for residents.



Phase 2

Triggers

Dwellings	Non-Residential
Pre 500 dwellings	Community centre Convenience store Market square Meanwhile uses for e.g. family hub, start-up enterprise 10,000sqm employment floorspace GI, sport and play

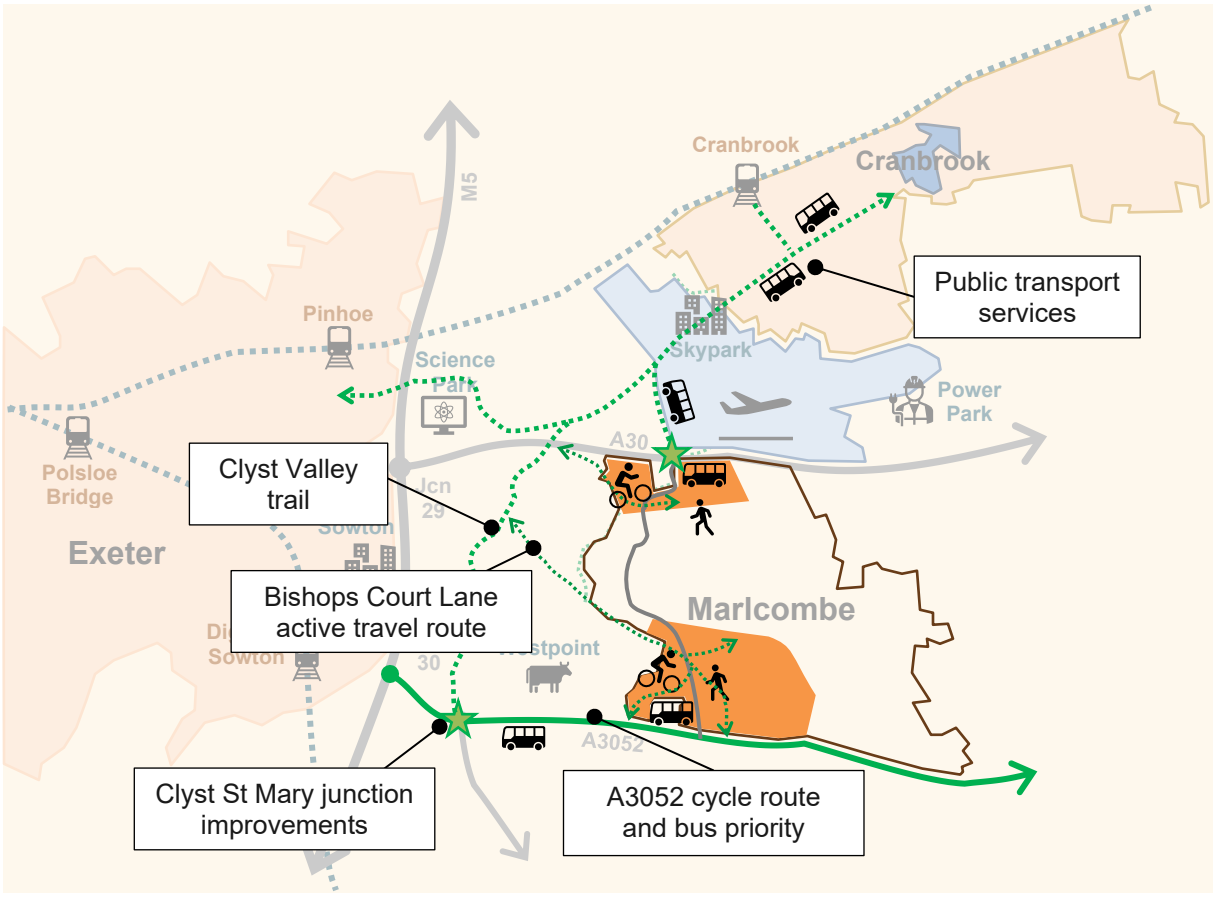
2.11.8 Phase 2 largely concentrates on off-site measures but ensures that active travel links and mobility hubs within Marlcombe continue to expand as more of the town is constructed and occupied. These will allow people to travel easily to facilities with within the town as they come forward, as well as connecting to Cranbrook and bus services to Exeter.

2.11.9 During these relatively early stages of occupation, high quality, reliable bus services to Exeter will be of fundamental importance. It will be vital that buses offer people journey time savings, making them the logical choice for travel into Exeter. This will be achieved through bus priority measures along the A3052. These priority measures will be accompanied by a segregated cycle route along the A30522, linking to Sowton and beyond into Exeter. Sowton would be a cycle ride of approximately 20 minutes via this route. The frequency of the park and ride services would be increased to every 15 minutes (if not already achieved). New residents will continue to receive discounted bus travel until bus priority measures are completed.

2.11.10 In order to further encourage active travel, the Clyst Valley Trail will be completed and Bishops Court Lane will be converted to an active travel route, with motorised vehicles removed (except for access). The Phase 2 measures are summarised in the following table and diagram:

Item	Rationale
A3052 Clyst St Mary junction improvements	Future proof for growth of Marlcombe and general growth in traffic levels on the network
A376/A3052 Bus Priority to M5 Jct 30 / Sowton Ind Estate	Ensure that park and ride and general bus services experience faster and more reliable journey times into Exeter (including Sowton), making them an attractive modal choice and reducing car use.
A3052 protected cycle path	Provide a safe cycle route into Exeter and Sowton, encouraging cycle use. Sowton would be a cycle ride of approximately 20 minutes via this route.
Clyst Valley Trail active travel route	Facilitate access to park and ride services for residents.
Bishops Court Lane active travel route	Attractive north-south active travel route
Expansion of active travel routes and mobility hubs within site	Ensure that residents can continue to access high frequency bus routes as development delivery continues.

Public transport links	Links Marlcombe to Cranbrook and employment opportunities (e.g. Skypark, Logistics Park, Sowton, City Centre)



Phase 3

Triggers

Dwellings	Non-Residential
Pre 1,000 dwellings	In addition: Health provision 10,000 sqm employment 500 sqm E class town centre space GI, sport and play

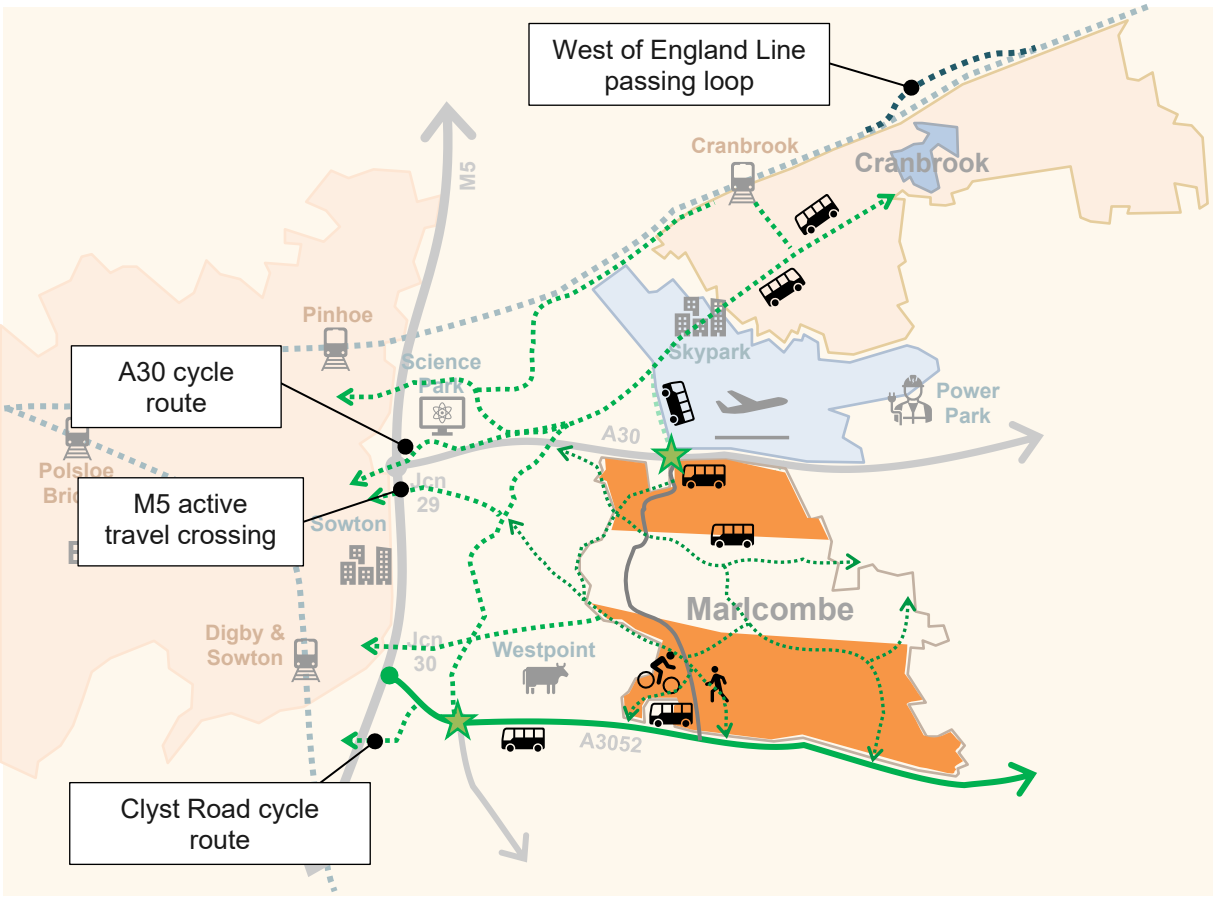
2.11.11 Phase 3 continues the expansion of facilities within Marlcombe, alongside the delivery of off - site infrastructure. Key among these will be a passing loop on the West of England rail line and a new active travel crossing of the M5 in the Sowton area.

2.11.12 The rail passing loop will allow service frequencies to be increased to two trains per hour between Exeter and Axminster. This increase in service frequency will not only reduce overall journey times, but also double the capacity of the line, making journeys more comfortable.

2.11.13 A new crossing of the M5 will provide a direct link to Sowton and beyond into Exeter. This is important for people living in the centre of Marlcombe, for whom the A3052 route would be less convenient. Again, this will offer journey times of around 20 minutes. Extension of the Clyst Valley Trail along Clyst Road will create an additional route into southern Exeter and towards Topsham.

2.11.14 The Phase 3 measures are summarised in the following table and diagram:

Item	Rationale
Devon Metro (Rail): West of England Line Passing Loop	Allows increase rail frequency (two trains per hour between Exeter and Axminster), helping to address longer distance travel.
New pedestrian/cycle crossing of M5	Providing a more direct route to Sowton and Exeter from the heart of Marlcombe, maintaining similar journey times for those living further from the southern end of the town.
A30 Honiton Road & Sowton Lane protected cycle path	Provide a safe cycle route into Exeter and Sowton for people living towards the northern end of Marlcombe. Will also provide a route for people living in Cranbrook.
E13 Clyst Road Cycle Route	Alternative connection into Exter and towards Topsham



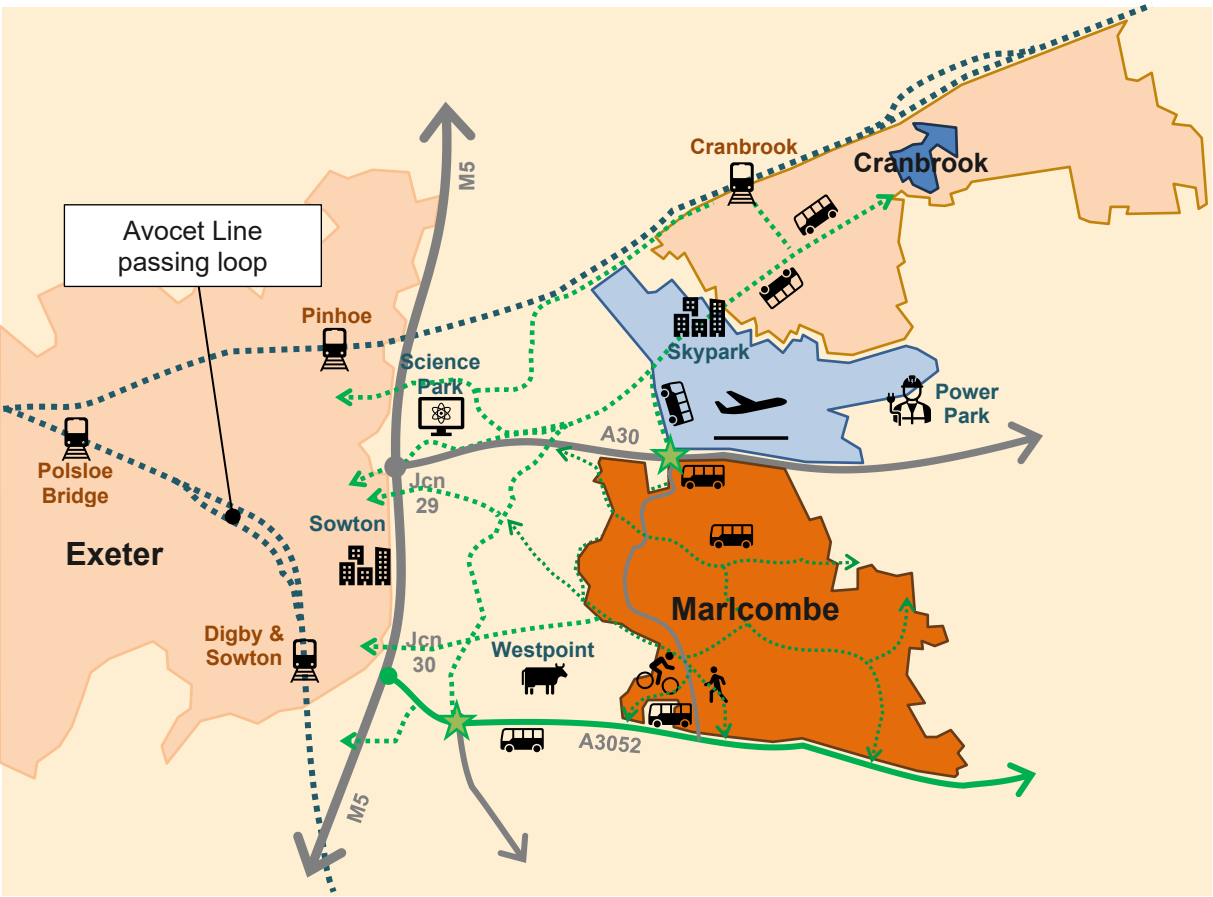
Phase 4 - – Up to 3,500 dwellings

Triggers

Dwellings	Non-Residential
Pre 3,500 dwellings	In addition: Second Primary School 40,000 sqm employment Supermarket 1000 sqm E class town centre space GI, sport and play Dry-side leisure centre

2.11.15 The final stage of mitigation will be the addition of a passing loop on the Avocret Line, which connects Exeter to Exmouth via Digby & Sowton. This allows frequencies to be doubled to four trains per hour. As with the West of England rail line improvements, this reduces overall journey times for people using the Avocet Line and doubles its capacity to carry passengers. The Phase 4 measures are summarised in the following table and diagram:

Item	Rationale
Devon Metro (Rail): Avocet Line Passing Loop	Allows increase rail frequency (two trains per hour between Exeter and Axminster), helping to address longer distance travel.



2.12 Strategic Highway Network

2.12.1 In addition to the above off-site mitigations, it is also likely that improvement measures will be required at or around Junctions 29 and 30 of the M5. Although Marlcombe will add to vehicle numbers at these junctions, the impact is relatively minor and the improvements will be needed in any event to accommodate general traffic growth on the strategic highway network managed by National Highways (in this area, the M5 and A30). The design and timing of these improvements is currently under consideration by National Highways.