

## **Report on Safe Cycle and Pedestrian Access from Strawberry Lane**

### **Background**

At the EDDC Strategic Planning Committee meeting on 22nd November, during the afternoon session, the issue of ensuring safe cycle and pedestrian access from Strawberry Lane was discussed. This matter, which affects both current residents and future inhabitants of the proposed developments at Otry\_09 and Otry\_10, highlights the necessity of collaborative action between stakeholders to provide a viable and safe solution.

A recording of the meeting, available on YouTube ([link to recording](#)), shows that at approximately 29 minutes into the session, EDDC suggested that the Town Council could act as a negotiator to facilitate discussions regarding the provision of safe access for pedestrians and cyclists.

### **Key Points**

- The landowner has confirmed that a footpath could be created by removing a hedge.
- This footpath would need to cross land leased by the Bowling Club and land owned by the Cricket Club.
- Fiona Baggott of Devon County Council (DCC) has indicated that such an arrangement could provide the necessary safe access, provided agreement is reached between the landowner and other interested parties.

### **Strategic Context**

The inclusion of sites Otry\_09 and Otry\_10 in the Draft EDDC Local Plan, as resolved by the EDDC Strategic Planning Committee, highlights the importance of addressing access issues. The proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework emphasise the role of Town and Parish Councils in "shaping development, not blocking it". This places a clear responsibility on the Town Council to take a proactive stance in ensuring developments are supported by appropriate infrastructure that benefits both existing and new residents.

### **Considerations for the Town Council**

- 1. Negotiation and Collaboration:**  
The Town Council should consider engaging with the leaseholder, the Bowling Club, and landowner, and the Cricket Club to negotiate an agreement. Acting as a facilitator, the Council can help ensure all parties' concerns are addressed while prioritising the provision of safe access.
- 2. Resident Welfare:**  
The Council needs to consider the interests of existing Strawberry Lane residents and those of future occupants of the new developments. The provision of safe access routes for pedestrians and cyclists is crucial to enhance connectivity and ensure safety.
- 3. Infrastructure Improvements:**  
Exploring funding opportunities for the development of this footpath,

potentially through DCC or developer contributions, could help bring the project to fruition without placing any financial strain on the Council.

**4. Alignment with Policy Goals:**

By taking a leadership role in resolving this issue, the Town Council would align with the proposed National Planning Policy Framework, demonstrating a commitment to shaping sustainable and inclusive development.

**Recommendations**

- The Town Council should formally establish a working group to engage with stakeholders, including the landowner, the Bowling Club, and the Cricket Club, to negotiate terms for the access path.
- The Council should liaise with DCC and EDDC to explore funding avenues and ensure compliance with planning regulations.
- A public consultation could be held to gauge residents' opinions on the proposed access path and ensure their concerns are addressed in the planning process.

**Conclusion**

The Town Council has a pivotal role to play in shaping safe and sustainable access from Strawberry Lane. By acting decisively and collaboratively, the Council can help secure a solution that benefits both current and future residents, aligns with policy directives, and supports the broader aims of the Draft EDDC Local Plan.