

## Melksham Bypass OBC

WC\_MBP-ATK-HGN-XX-RP-CH-000001

# GG 142 WCH Assessment Report

22/06/21

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# Notice

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This document has 57 pages including the cover.

## Document history

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Purpose

This assessment report has been produced in accordance with the requirements set out in Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (DMRB) GG 142 Walking, cycling and horse-riding assessment and review (WCHAR) to inform the design process for the Melksham Bypass Outline Business Case project for Wiltshire Council (WC).

The purpose of the report is to provide an assessment of the existing facilities and provision for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians that will help inform decision making throughout the design process. Part of the process is also to identify where latent demand may exist which could be unlocked through scheme development. Where appropriate, opportunities for improvements have been identified with the intention that these should be considered through the design process and re-visited through the production of review reports at appropriate stages.

## 1.2. Process

The designer for this scheme is Atkins Transportation. Jeevan Rana is the design team leader for the preliminary design stage of the scheme and has appointed the following Lead Assessor to undertake the WCHAR process:

### **Rob Hunt**

Managing Consultant, Atkins Transportation

BEng, MSc (Eng), CertHE, CEng, MICE, MCIHT, FSoRSA

In accordance with GG 142, Rob has determined the scheme to be a 'large scheme' in relation to the potential impact on walking, cycling and horse-riding facilities given the significance of the new road construction. The Lead Assessor has appointed Jozef Denby as an additional Assessor, having judged that Jozef has the appropriate previous experience to undertake the tasks delegated to him.

Whilst the scheme is not associated with a trunk road and therefore GG 142 is not mandatory, as this is a major scheme on a primary route Wiltshire Council has decided to utilise the GG 142 process due to it being viewed by many as UK-wide best practice. This assessment is being carried out at the options stage of the scheme which is in accordance with GG 142.

## 1.3. Scheme background

The A350 is a primary north-south route connecting the M4 with the Dorset coast and Poole port. Through Wiltshire the A350 passes around the principal settlements of Chippenham and Trowbridge and through the town of Melksham. The section of the A350 through Melksham has been identified as a key constraint on the route, with 30mph sections passing through residential areas with several busy junctions. Projected growth in travel demand along the A350 and locally around Melksham is expected to result in increased traffic volumes using the A350, resulting in a bottleneck through the town.

A route has been identified as the emerging option through the Option Assessment Report (OAR) process and would divert traffic around the town via a route to the east of Melksham. An indicative route is included on figures in this report to allow assessment against the emerging option. It should be clarified that the emerging option has been identified during the development of this report and the actual route options generally have not affected the assessment which is primarily focussed upon information gathering in the study area.

The bypass would follow a route from the A350 between Lacock and Beanacre in the north to the A3102 east of Eastern Way, then continue south to the A365 east of Bowerhill, then south-west connecting to the A350 south of Hampton Park West (see Figure 1-1). The alignment at the northern end of the scheme and the tie-in to the existing A350 has yet to be confirmed. This route – currently likely to be a single carriageway – would be circa 9km in length.

## 1.4. Study area

The Melksham Bypass project has been designated as a GG 142 'large scheme' by the Lead Assessor and after discussions with the client (Wiltshire Council) it has been decided that a buffer of approximately 2.5km radius from the scheme extents would cover the required study area. Whilst GG 142 indicates that a typical study area

might extend 5km from the scheme extents it has been judged that the selected study area covers the urban area of Melksham, including the town centre, as well as the key villages of Lacock, Beanacre, Semington, Seend, Seend Cleeve and Great Hinton.

The indicative study area is shown in Figure 1-1, which indicates the wider area that is relevant to this scheme within which key trip attractors and generators, and strategic links will be considered.

**Figure 1-1 - 2.5km Study Area**



## 2. WCHAR assessment

### 2.1. Policies and strategies

This section provides a review of relevant policies and strategies as part of this Assessment. The key points from each document relating to walking, cycling and horse-riding are provided.

#### 2.1.1. National policies and strategies

National policies and strategies relevant to the proposed scheme are outlined in Table 2-1 below.

**Table 2-1 - National policies and strategies**

Document	Key points	Relevance to scheme
<b>National Planning Policy Framework,</b> Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, February 2019	Section 8 states <i>‘Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve, healthy, inclusive and safe places which.....encourage walking and cycling’</i>  Para 102 states <i>‘Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals so that opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport are identified and pursued’.</i>	The potential scheme can provide infrastructure to support the encouragement of walking and cycling. Given the progress of the scheme through business case appraisal with the Department for Transport, its delivery and impact are to be considered when developing Wiltshire Council’s Local Plan (2016-2036).
<b>Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Strategy (CWIS),</b> Department for Transport (DfT), 2017	CWIS outlines the government’s ambition to make cycling and walking a natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of longer journeys by 2040.	The potential scheme can provide infrastructure to support the uptake of walking and cycling along its route, in areas affected by the scheme and locations of potential benefit.
<b>Gear Change: A Bold Vision for Walking and Cycling</b>	The vision is: England will be a great walking and cycling nation. Places will be truly walkable. A travel revolution in our streets, towns and communities will have made cycling a mass form of transit. Cycling and walking will be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030.  In order to deliver this vision, the strategy intends to ensure active travel is embedded in wider policy making to encourage and empower local authorities to take bold decisions. Four themes have been developed in order to set out the actions required at all levels of Government to make this a reality: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Theme 1: Better streets for cycling and people;</li> <li>• Theme 2: Putting cycling and walking at the heart of transport, place making and health policy;</li> <li>• Theme 3: Empowering and encouraging local authorities; and,</li> <li>• Theme 4: We will enable people to cycle and protect them when they cycle.</li> </ul>	The potential scheme can provide infrastructure to support the uptake of walking and cycling.  Subsequent development of the scheme will draw upon the experience of Wiltshire Council in delivering walking and cycling schemes across the county, including those within Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plans, town Transport Strategies and schemes associated with the Local Transport Plan.

Document	Key points	Relevance to scheme
	The strategy also includes 22 summary principles to 'help practitioners deliver high quality infrastructure based on the lessons learned from cycle infrastructure delivered to date' and also highlights the importance of high-quality stakeholder engagement practices. 'Proposals must be clear and unambiguous, as detailed as possible, including good maps and drawings, and frank about the disadvantages, to build trust and discourage misrepresentation'.	
<b>Advice on Multi-user Routes</b> , British Horse Society (BHS), September 2016	The BHS calls for horse-riders and carriage-drivers to be included in any provisions for cyclists or pedestrians which could physically include equestrians. The BHS also strongly advocates promotion of sharing and tolerance between all users.	As part of this Assessment, equestrians and their needs will be considered on par with pedestrians and cyclists.
<b>Advice on road crossings for horses</b> , British Horse Society, September 2016	A number of factors should be taken into consideration when looking at road crossings and equestrian needs. This includes visibility requirements for riders, siting of crossings, use of road markings, design of crossings and length of inter-green period.	As part of this Assessment, equestrians and their needs will be considered on par with pedestrians and cyclists.

### 2.1.2. Local policies and strategies

Local Authority policies and strategies for Wiltshire relevant to the potential scheme are outlined in Table 2-2 below.

**Table 2-2 - Wiltshire policies and strategies**

Document	Key points	Relevance to scheme
<b>Wiltshire Core Strategy</b> , Wiltshire Council, January 2015	<p>The Wiltshire Core Strategy has six strategic objectives. Strategic objective 6 is '<i>to ensure that essential infrastructure is in place to support our communities</i>'. To meet this objective, the strategy outlines a number of policies focused around sustainable transport measures, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core Policy 60: Sustainable transport – reduce the need to travel particularly by private car and encourage the sustainable, safe and efficient movement of people and goods within and through Wiltshire.</li> <li>• Core Policy 61: Transport and new development – new development should be located and designed to reduce the need to travel, particularly by car, and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives. As part of a transport assessment, the developer must demonstrate that consideration has been given to the needs of all transport users following a user hierarchy (visually impaired and other disabled people as the first priority, followed by pedestrians and then cyclists).</li> <li>• Core Policy 66: Strategic Transport Network - seeks to develop and improve the strategic transport network to support the objectives and policies in the Core Strategy and Local Transport Plan. For multi modal travel in particular improvements to Melksham Railway Station are promoted and encouraged as part of this core policy.</li> </ul>	The Core Strategy contains strong messages on promoting walking and cycling. The potential scheme can provide infrastructure to support the encouragement and promotion of walking and cycling.
<b>Wiltshire Local Transport Plan (LTP3) 2011-</b>	The Wiltshire Local Transport Plan (LTP3) outlines the following vision: ' <i>To develop a transport system which helps support economic growth across Wiltshire's communities,</i>	The need to improve walking and cycling routes and networks was



Document	Key points	Relevance to scheme
<p><b>2026</b>, Wiltshire Council, March 2011</p>	<p><i>giving choice and opportunity for people to safely access essential services. Transport solutions will be sensitive to the built and natural environment, with a particular emphasis on the need to reduce carbon emissions.</i></p> <p>Relevant local strategic transport objectives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• S02 - To provide, support and/or promote a choice of sustainable transport alternatives, including walking, cycling, buses and rail.</li> <li>• S05 - To improve sustainable access to a full range of opportunities particularly those people without access to a car.</li> <li>• S08 - To improve safety for all road users and to reduce the number of casualties on Wiltshire's roads.</li> <li>• S011 – To reduce the level of air pollutant and climate change emissions from transport.</li> <li>• S012 – To support planned growth in Wiltshire and ensure that new developments adequately provide for their sustainable transport requirements and mitigate their traffic impacts.</li> <li>• S014 – To promote travel modes that are beneficial to health.</li> <li>• S018 – To enhance the journey experience of transport users.</li> </ul> <p>The plan identifies three strategic transport themes related to cycling and walking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a sympathetically designed, high quality and well-maintained network of cycle routes in the market towns, and where appropriate, provide links between the market towns and to national cycle routes.</li> <li>• Provide high quality cycle parking at key destinations and transport interchanges. Require adequate levels of high-quality cycle parking in all new developments with higher levels of provision in the market towns.</li> <li>• Provide a sympathetically designed, high quality and well-maintained network of walking routes in and between significant trips origins and destinations (e.g. housing, shops, employment areas, transport interchanges, tourist attractions, etc.).</li> </ul>	<p>a prominent theme in the LTP3, along with ensuring new developments are designed to encourage and support walking and cycling. Health benefits and ensuring the safety of all road users are also key themes. This Assessment will look to support these aims.</p>
<p><b>The Wiltshire Community Plan</b>, Wiltshire Assembly, April 2011</p>	<p>The Wiltshire Community Plan sets out that the council and its partners need to: <i>‘Provide a safer and more integrated transport system that achieves a major shift to sustainable transport, including walking, cycling, and the use of bus and rail networks, especially in the larger settlements of Trowbridge, Chippenham, and Salisbury, and along the main commuting corridors’.</i></p>	<p>The Community Plan contains a strong message on the need for a major shift to sustainable transport in Wiltshire. This Assessment will look to support this aim.</p>
<p><b>Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan</b>, Final Referendum Version: 2020 - 2026</p>	<p>The Melksham Neighbourhood Plan is focused on helping to shape the future use and development of land in the settlement area. The vision of the plan is to <i>‘make the town of Melksham and the parish of Melksham great places to live, to work, to play and to visit; attractive, healthy, convenient and environmentally sustainable, with access to</i></p>	<p>The neighbourhood plan emphasises the need to provide for travel by walking and cycling in its overall vision. Better accessibility by walking</p>

Document	Key points	Relevance to scheme
	<p><i>employment, education, shops and services via <b>walking, cycling</b> and public transport</i>.</p> <p>Fifteen objectives set out the plan to create this vision, one of which directly impacts active travel users:</p> <p>Objective 10: <i>‘Encouraging journeys by rail and bus together with improving cycle and walking routes to reduce the need to travel by car’.</i></p> <p>Nineteen planning policies are also laid out. Policy 11 sets out the ‘Sustainable Transport and Active Travel’ for Melksham. The policy states that <i>‘All developments must be planned in line with the Sustainable Transport Hierarchy. Applications for major development must demonstrate through an effective travel plan how sustainable transport modes in the Plan area are maximised and that safe and suitable access can be achieved for all people’.</i> There is also emphasis on the area around Melksham Railway Station, stating that improvements to the accessibility and quality of the links between the wider town and the station will be strongly supported.</p>	<p>and cycling to Melksham Railway Station is also a top priority of its Transportation policy. This Assessment will look to support this aim.</p>

### 2.1.3. Key policy themes

All levels of policy strongly support walking and cycling (and horse-riding where applicable). The following key themes are prominent:

- Walking and cycling should be promoted and encouraged where possible due to the many benefits these modes of transport can deliver to individuals, communities and society. The commitment to do this was very prominent in many policy/strategy documents;
- New development and development design should support, promote and encourage walking and cycling; and,
- The need to successfully integrate walking and cycling with other sustainable modes of transportation was a strong theme, especially integration with Melksham Station.

## 2.2. Collision Data

Personal injury collision (PIC) data has been sourced for Melksham and the surrounding area from Wiltshire Council, and covers the most recent five-years of data available at the time of this assessment, covering the period from January 2015 to December 2019. This data also does not include the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and is therefore seen as being more representative of historic data. It should be noted that the data only includes those collisions which resulted in personal injury where a police report was issued and does not include damage-only collisions. The data has been analysed to identify any issues or trends that may affect pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians. The analysis has considered specifically collisions involving pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians within the wider study area.

Figure 2-1 maps the locations of all casualty types in the study area. In total there were 280 PICs in the study area during the assessment period, seven involving fatal injuries, 45 serious injuries and 228 slight injuries. Further analysis of collisions within the study area indicate there were 24 PICs resulting in injury to pedestrians and 33 PICs resulting in injuries to cyclists between 2015 and 2019 (see Figure 2-2). The majority of these were classified as slight injury and the vast majority were on routes within urban areas. There was one fatal PIC involving a pedestrian. There were no cyclist fatalities in the study area. There were no recorded collisions involving an equestrian within the study area in the five-year period.

The Melksham Bypass scheme would be built on previously undeveloped land, so there are no historical collisions within the scheme’s extent. However, clusters with high pedestrian and cyclist collision densities in the study area have been highlighted in

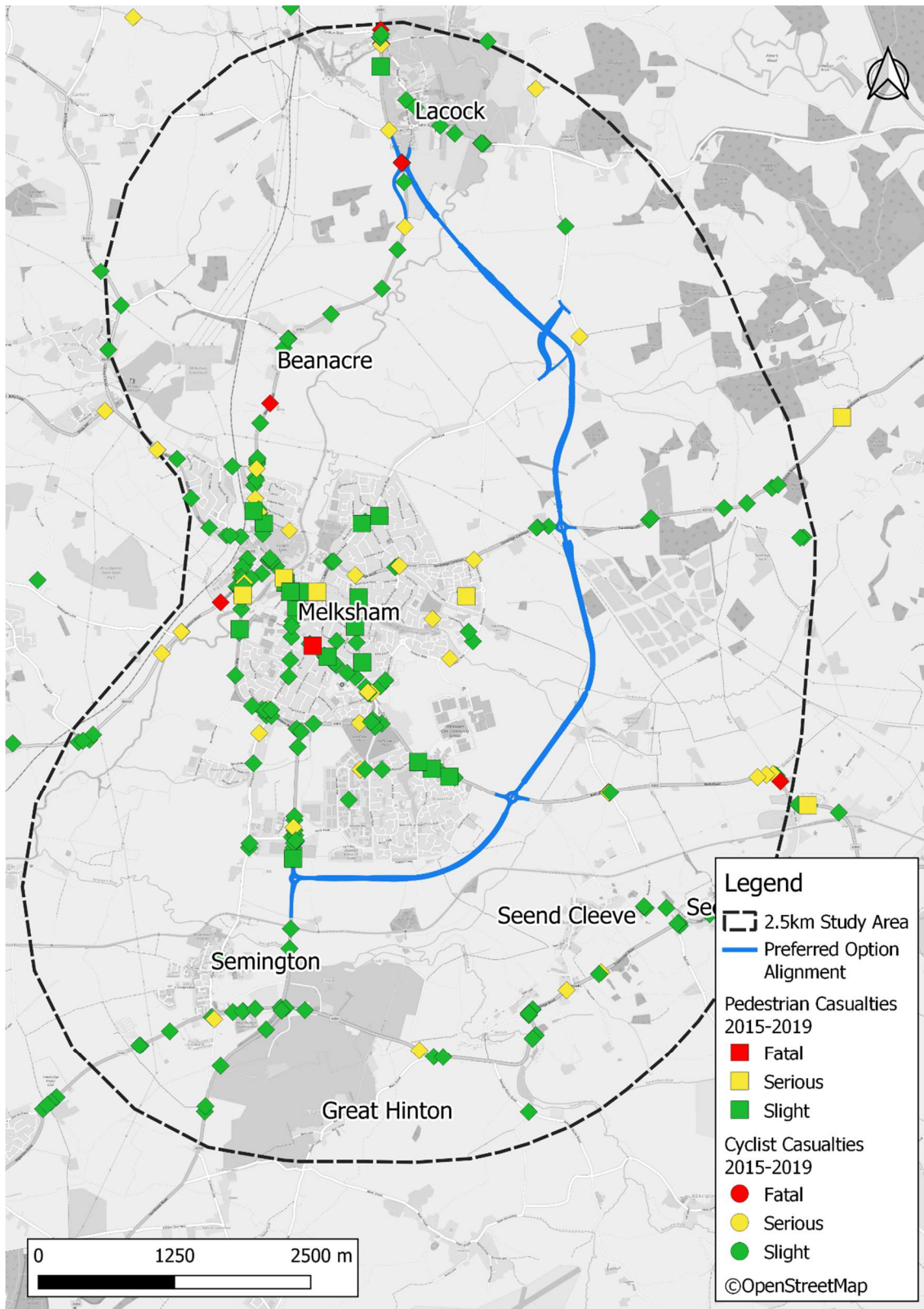


Figure 2-3 and are discussed in more detail below. Due to the size of the study area this list of collision clusters is not exhaustive but can be used to gain an understanding of the main problem areas related to safety for pedestrians and cyclists in and around Melksham.

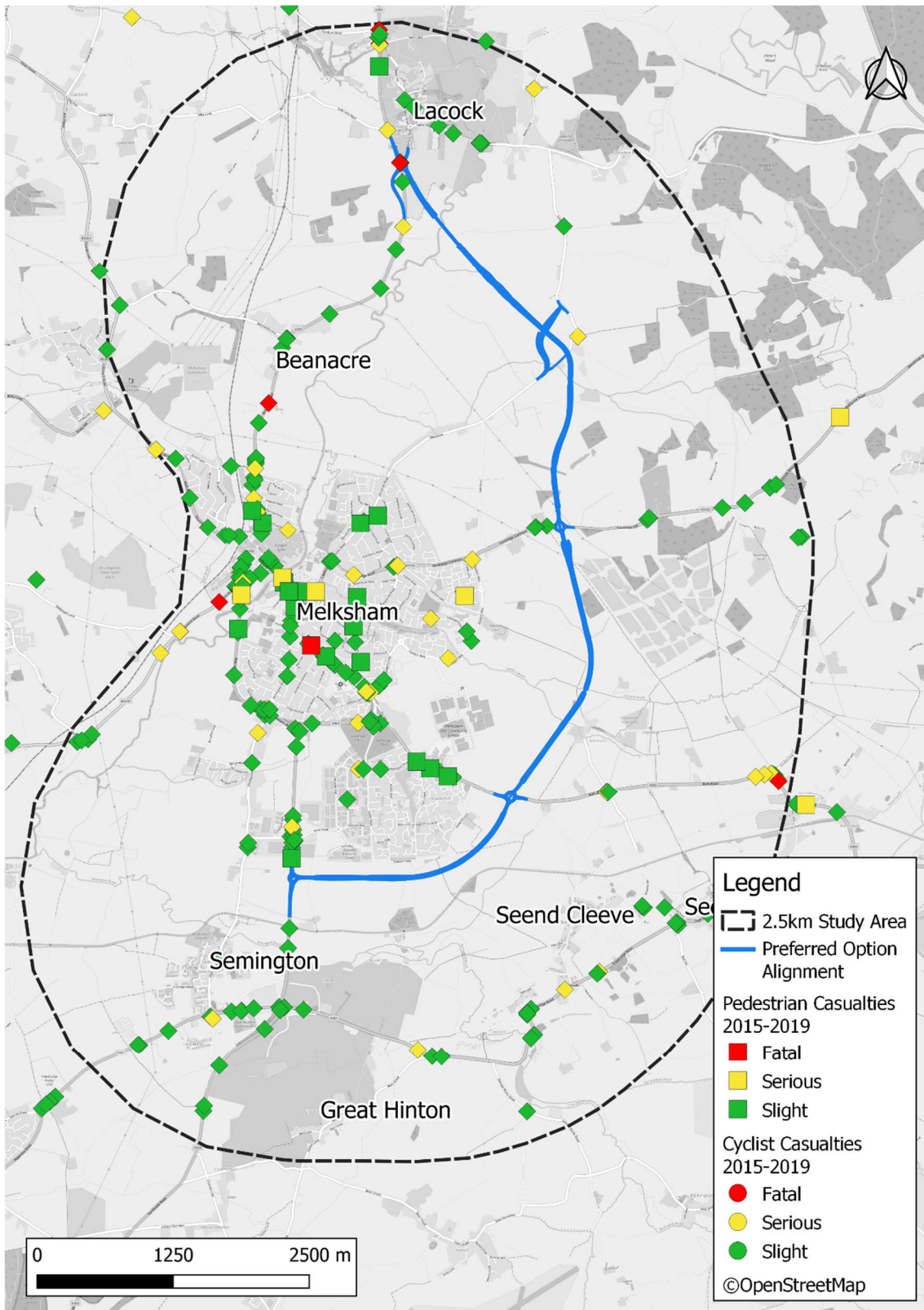
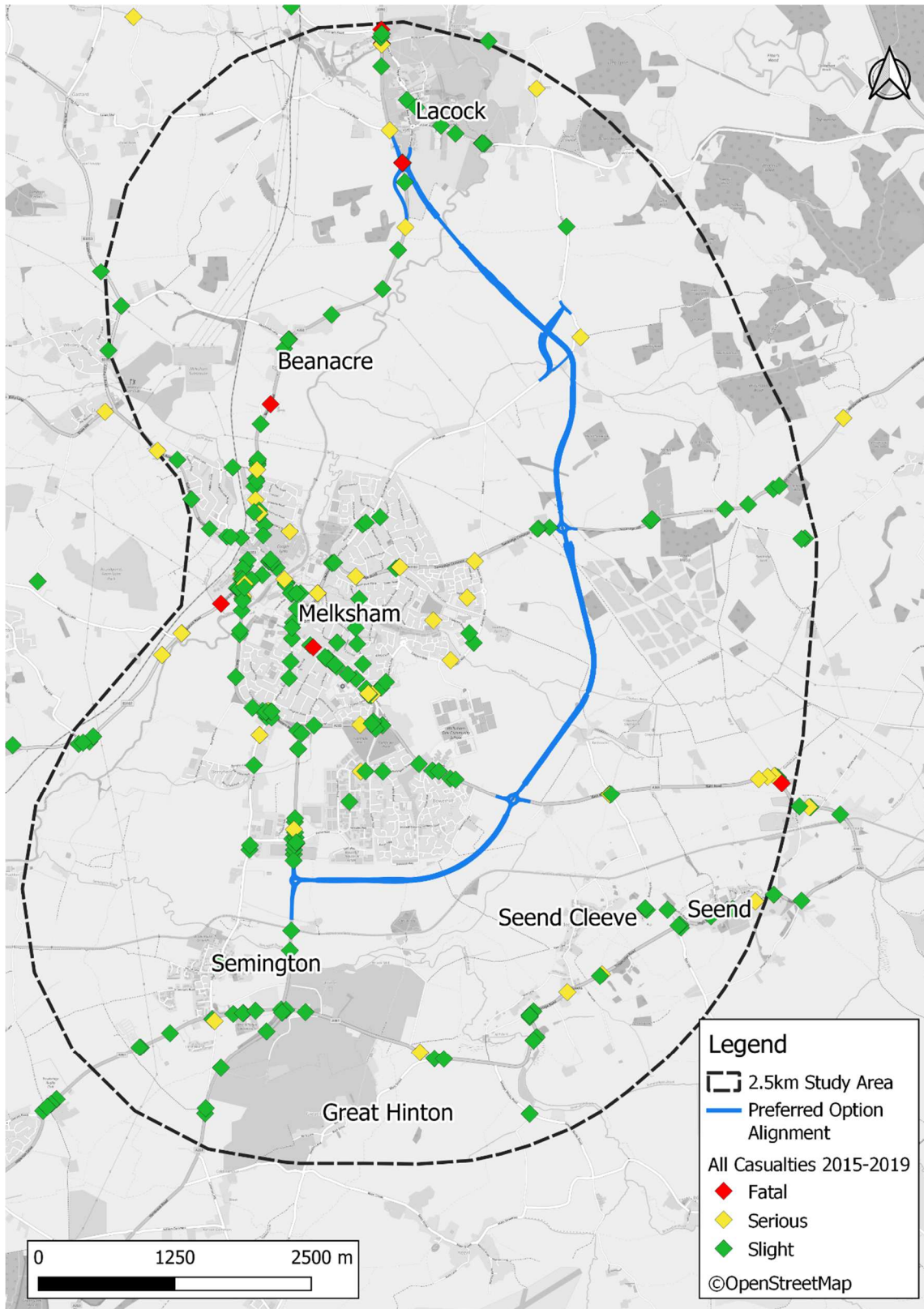


Figure 2-1 - All casualties in study area



### 2.2.1. Pedestrian and Cyclist Collisions

Figure 2-2 – Pedestrian and Cyclist Casualties in Study Area

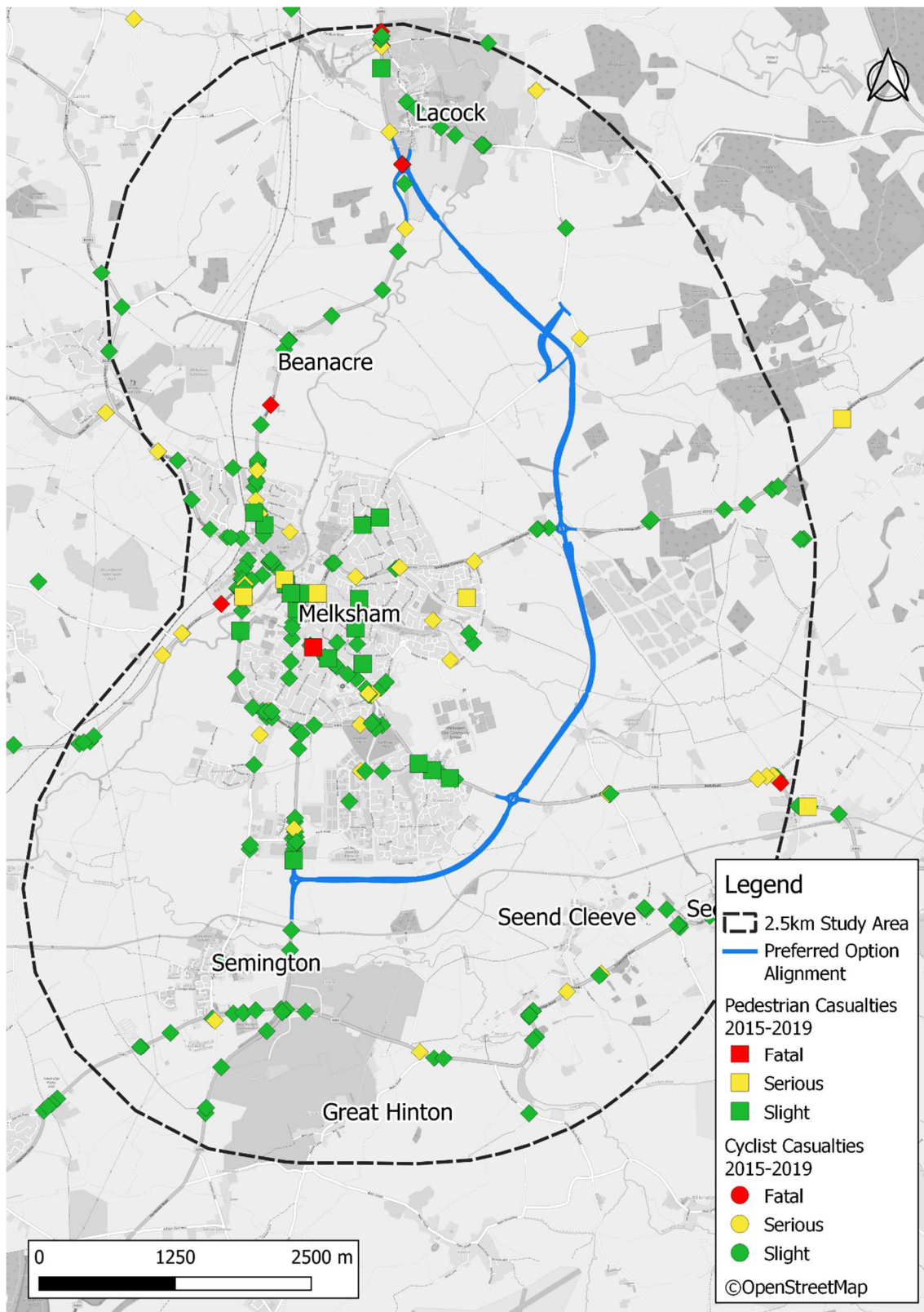
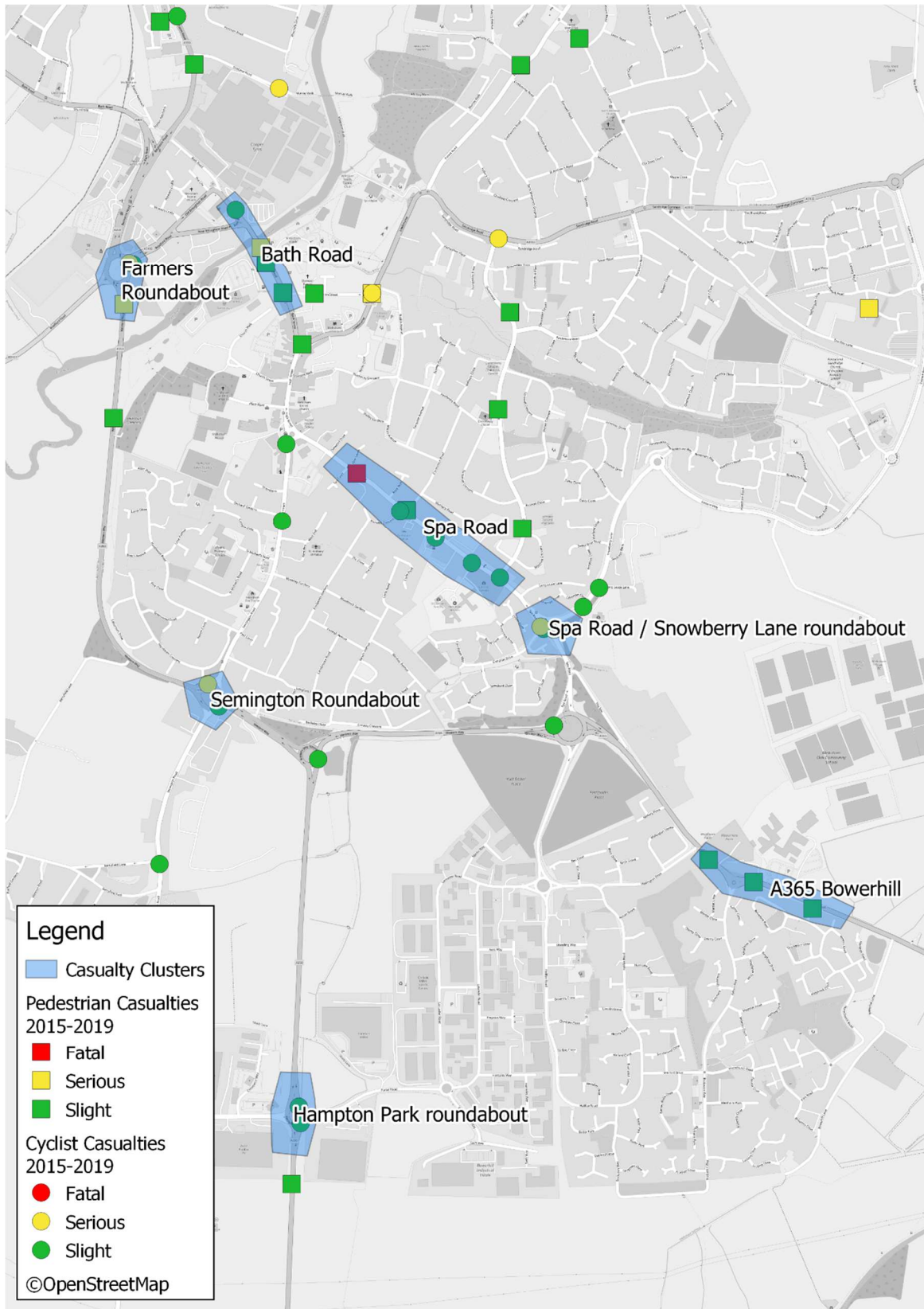


Figure 2-3 – Pedestrian and Cyclists Casualty Clusters



## Hampton Park Roundabout

Two collisions involving cyclists occurred on Hampton Park Roundabout. Both incidents involved cyclists on the roundabout gyratory being struck by cars. Both collisions resulted in slight injuries.

## A365 Bowerhill

Three collisions involving pedestrians were located along the A365 on the northern edge of Bowerhill residential estate. Two pedestrians were struck by cars as they crossed the carriageway in separate incidents, one crossing the A365 and one crossing the Hornchurch Road entrance to the residential estate. The third pedestrian casualty occurred when a pedestrian on the edge of a footway was struck by a passing car on the A365. All three collisions resulted in slight injuries.

## Semington Roundabout

Two cyclist casualties were recorded on Semington Roundabout, both occurring on the circulatory carriageway. One cyclist was hit by a car swerving to avoid a collision with another car in front as it suddenly changed lanes. This resulted in the cyclist sustaining serious injuries. The second collision involved a cyclist traveling south-west around the circulatory carriageway being knocked off their bicycle by a car joining the roundabout from the west. The driver claimed to not have seen the cyclist and the collision resulted in a slight injury.

## Spa Road / Snowberry Lane Roundabout

Three collisions involving cyclists occurred on the Spa Road/Snowberry Lane roundabout. All three collisions occurred in the circulatory carriageway and all three cyclists were hit by cars entering the roundabout. Two of the collisions resulted in serious injuries.

## Spa Road

Four cyclist and two pedestrian casualties were recorded along a 500m stretch of Spa Road, from Queensway Drive to New Lawns. All four cyclist casualties were a result of vehicles joining Spa Road from side streets, not seeing the cyclists travelling either north-west or south-east on the main carriageway and colliding with them. This resulted in all four cyclists sustaining slight injuries.

A pedestrian was struck by a car when crossing the Coronation Road junction with Spa Road. The car was turning right from Spa Road and collided with the pedestrian causing slight injury. A collision involving a pedestrian occurred on Spa Road in close proximity to the junction with Wharf Court. A car struck the pedestrian as they crossed the road, resulting in a fatality although it is not clear if the collision occurred at the uncontrolled crossing point or elsewhere.

## Farmers Roundabout

Three collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists occurred at Farmers Roundabout. The pedestrian casualty was the result of a road rage incident where the pedestrian attempted to block the car from leaving the scene after an assault. The car struck the pedestrian as it fled, causing serious injuries. Two collisions involving cyclists occurred on the Farmers Roundabout circulatory carriageway. Both incidents involved cyclists struck by cars either entering or exiting the roundabout, with one resulting in serious injury and the other resulting in slight injury to the cyclist. Recent improvements to Farmers Roundabout throughout 2019-2020, including the introduction of signal control and carriageway widening, have the potential to reduce conflict between cyclists and motorists at the junction. Monitoring and reviewing of future collisions at the junction will need to be carried out to assess the impact of the improvements on pedestrians and cyclists in particular.

## Bath Road

Four pedestrian casualties and one cyclist casualty were recorded along Bath Road. Three of the pedestrian casualties took place at designated crossing points; a pedestrian was seriously injured when struck by a car when using a Zebra crossing, a second pedestrian was hit by a car when crossing a Pelican crossing (pedestrian signal was red) and the third was struck by a car when crossing to the central refuge on the arm of a mini roundabout. The fourth pedestrian sustained slight injuries when being hit by a car as they attempted to cross the carriageway at an undesignated crossing point. The cyclist casualty occurred outside of the Cooper Tire factory at the north-east end of Bath Road. A car pulled out of the factory car park and struck a cyclist travelling on the (off-carriageway) shared use path that crosses the car park entrance. This collision resulted in slight injury to the cyclist.



## 2.2.2. Opportunities

A summary of opportunities identified through analysis of personal injury collision data is listed below. It should be noted that none of these locations lie within the scheme extents but are likely to be affected to some degree by the proposals and the changes they may bring.

### Opportunity

A large number of collisions in the area involved cyclists being struck by cars on a roundabout circulatory carriageway. There is an opportunity to increase driver awareness of the potential for cyclists to be using the roundabout, or the provision of dedicated cycle infrastructure providing a segregated route – or even a wholly different route – for cyclists away from the roundabouts with the worst historical collision numbers. There is an opportunity to review the geometry of each roundabout to assess the feasibility of amending geometry to reduce entry and exit speeds and improve general visibility of cyclists. The key roundabouts are:

- Hampton Park Roundabout;
- Semington Roundabout;
- Spa Road / Snowberry Lane Roundabout.

### Opportunity

Four collisions occurred involving cyclists traveling along Spa Road being struck by cars turning onto the main carriageway from side streets. This highlights that there is a lack of awareness by drivers of cyclists using the main carriageway. There is an opportunity to increase this awareness with the use of signs/road markings or by improving the visibility splays at junctions when joining Spa Road.

### Opportunity

Four collisions occurred involving pedestrians crossing the carriageway on Bath Road at both designated and undesignated crossing points. There is an opportunity to improve the existing crossing infrastructure and add more priority crossings along this busy stretch of Melksham’s high street area.

## 2.3. Existing facilities within the local area (scheme area)

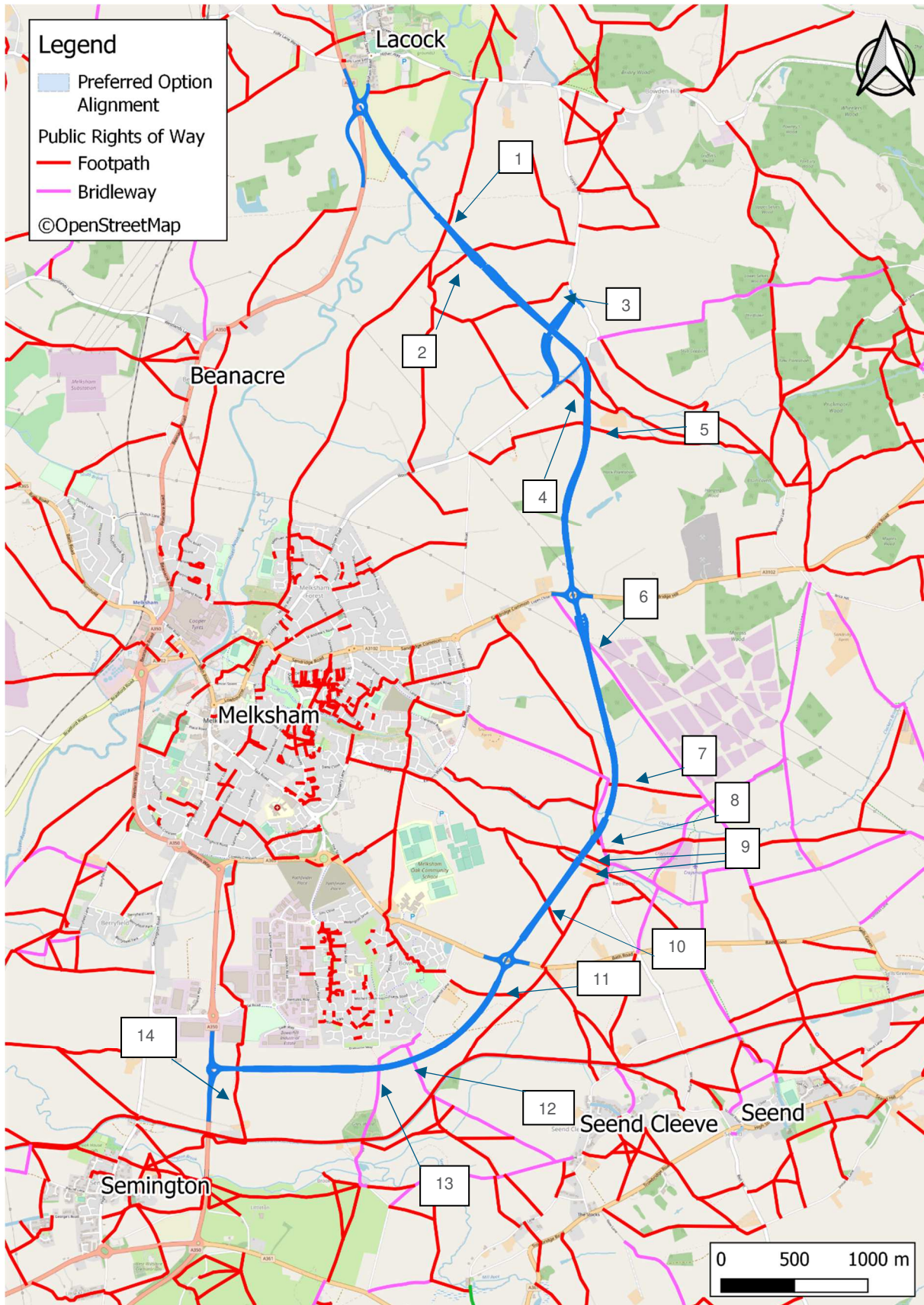
### 2.3.1. Public Rights of Way

Within the 2.5km study area there are multiple Public Rights of Way (PRoW) that interact with the scheme extents. PRoW that will potentially be severed by the indicative scheme route are summarised in Table 2-3. The locations of the surrounding PRoW network are illustrated in Figure 2-4 (north-east Melksham) and Table 2-3 (south-east Melksham). The information available online for PRoW is only a representation of the physical Definitive Map held by Wiltshire Council.

**Table 2-3 - Summary of PRoW severed by scheme**

Reference	Type	Location (numbers in parentheses refer to labels on Figure 2-4)	Description
MELW 61	Footpath	East of Beanacre (1)	Footpath from Woodrow Road linking to footpath network approximately 1.5km directly south of Lacock.
MELW 62A	Footpath	East of Beanacre (2)	Footpath on east-west alignment between MELW61 and Forest Lane to the east.
MELW63	Footpath	East of Beanacre (3)	Footpath on east-west alignment between MELW61 and Forest Lane to the east.
MELW48	Footpath	South of Lower Woodrow (4)	One of several footpaths connecting Lower Woodrow to places to the east.
MELW47	Footpath	South of Lower Woodrow (5)	One of several footpaths connecting Lower Woodrow to places to the east. Starts at the junction of Lower Woodrow and New Road.
MELW 40	Bridleway	South of A3102 (6)	Wide and open bridleway connecting a parking area on A3102 to other bridleways to the south.
MELW 30	Footpath	Immediately north of Tanhouse Farm (7)	Footpath on east-west alignment connecting two bridleways.
MELW 41 & MELW26	Bridleway/ Footpath	North-east of A365 (8)	Bridleway and footpath link running alongside each other in north-south alignment.
MELW 23	Footpath	East of Melksham Oak Community School (9)	Footpath link between Melksham's Eastern Way and bridleway through Redstocks. Two sections running parallel both designated as MELW23.
MELW 24	Footpath	East of Melksham Oak Community School (10)	Footpath link between Melksham's Eastern Way and footpath network south of Redstocks.
MELW 35	Footpath	East of Bowerhill residential estate (11)	Link between Bowerhill Lane and footpath network south of Carnation Lane.
SEEN 13	Bridleway	South of Bowerhill residential estate (12)	Bridleway connecting the western side of Seend Cleeve to Bowerhill Lane immediately south of Bowerhill residential estate.
SEEN 17	Bridleway	South of Bowerhill residential estate (13)	Short section of Bridleway from Semington Brook, north through Giles Wood, connecting to Bowerhill Lane immediately south of Bowerhill residential estate.
MELW 42	Footpath	East of the section of A350 south of Melksham (14)	Footpath connects Kennet and Avon Canal to Portal Road on the west side of Bowerhill Industrial Estate.

Figure 2-4 - PRowWs around scheme extent<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Row Maps: <https://www.rowmaps.com/showmap.php?place=Melksham&map=OSM&lat=51.3729&lon=2.13818&lonew=W>

### 2.3.2. Pedestrian specific facilities

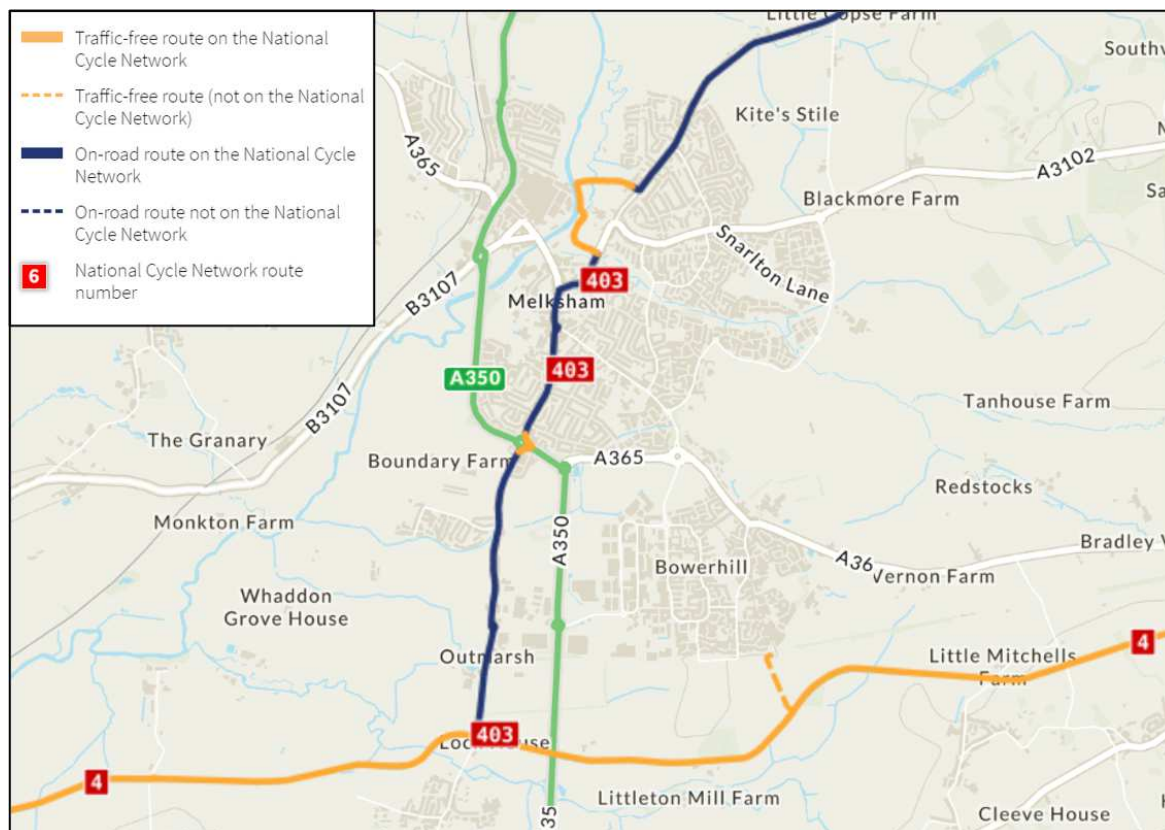
Most roads within the urban area of Melksham have footways adjacent to them. This contributes to a more cohesive walking network at these locations compared to the rural areas that the scheme passes through to the north, east and south of Melksham. PRow footpaths that intersect the proposed scheme route in these rural areas have been highlighted in Table 2-3 in the previous section. There are also five road links that will interact with the scheme extent, including the two points of the A350 that could connect to the north and south extents of the Melksham Bypass. Pedestrian infrastructure on these links has been noted below, from north to south:

- A350 (North of Melksham) – a footway on the north side of the A350 carriageway links the Shurnold area of Melksham to the point where the Melksham Bypass could connect to the A350, north of Beanacre.
- Woodrow Road / Lower Woodrow Road – no pedestrian or cycling-specific facilities along the stretch of the road that could connect to the Melksham Bypass.
- A3102 – a footway on the south side, separated from the carriageway by a narrow grass verge.
- A365 – a narrow footway (approximately 0.5m wide) on the north side of the A365.
- A350 (South of Melksham) – no pedestrian or cycling-specific facilities along the stretch of the A350 that would connect to the proposed Melksham Bypass.

### 2.3.3. Cycle specific facilities

National Cycle Network (NCN) Routes 4 and 403 run through the study area (see Figure 2-5). NCN Route 4 runs east to west linking London to Bristol, passing approximately 3km south of Melksham town centre and connecting the towns of Devizes in the east and Trowbridge immediately to the west of Melksham. The section of Route 4 that passes through the study area is a ‘NCN traffic-free route’, running along the north side of the Kennet and Avon Canal. NCN Route 403 branches off the NCN Route 4 at Semington Bridge and continues directly north through Melksham town centre, Melksham Forest residential estate and further north onto Chippenham. The majority of Route 403 that passes through the study area is classified as an ‘NCN on-road route’.

Figure 2-5 - National Cycle Network<sup>2</sup>



NCN Routes 4 and 403 would intersect with the proposed bypass route at two separate points:

<sup>2</sup>National Cycle Network: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/national-cycle-network>

- A short 'traffic-free route' spur that connects Route 4 to the Bowerhill residential estate (see Figure 2-6) would be severed by the bypass. This section of cycle route infrastructure is a path with a sealed surface approximately 2m in width.
- NCN Route 403 is a 'on-road route' that follows Woodrow Road north-east out of Melksham (see Figure 2-7). The route of the proposed Melksham Bypass would cross Lower Woodrow (and thus NCN Route 403), potentially at an at grade roundabout. This will require careful consideration about how to provide a safe and effective route for cyclists (and other users of Route 403).

Figure 2-6 - NCN Route 4 spur within scheme extent<sup>3</sup> (dotted blue line is indicative scheme route)

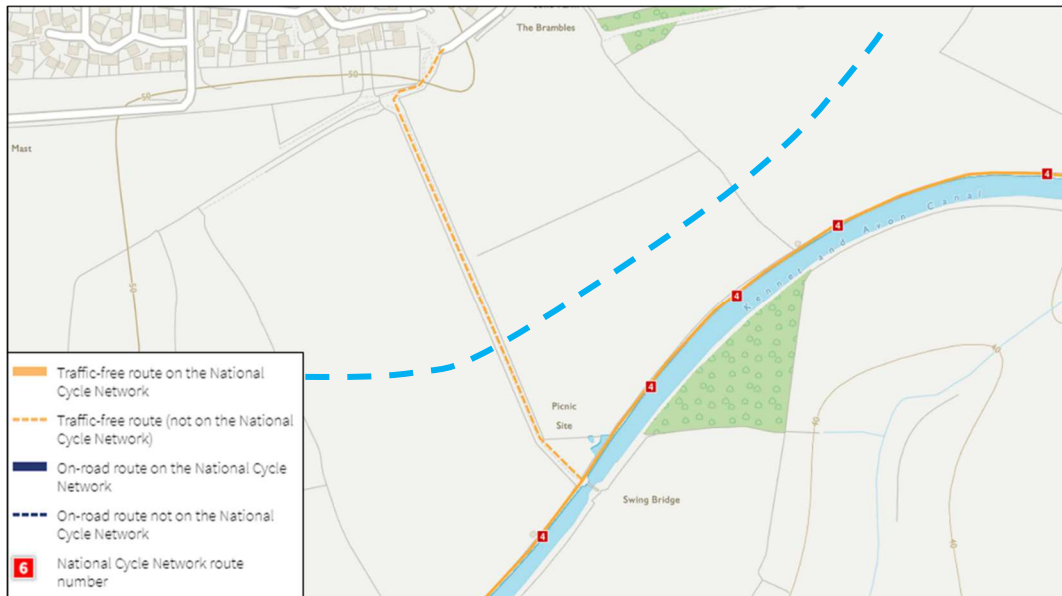
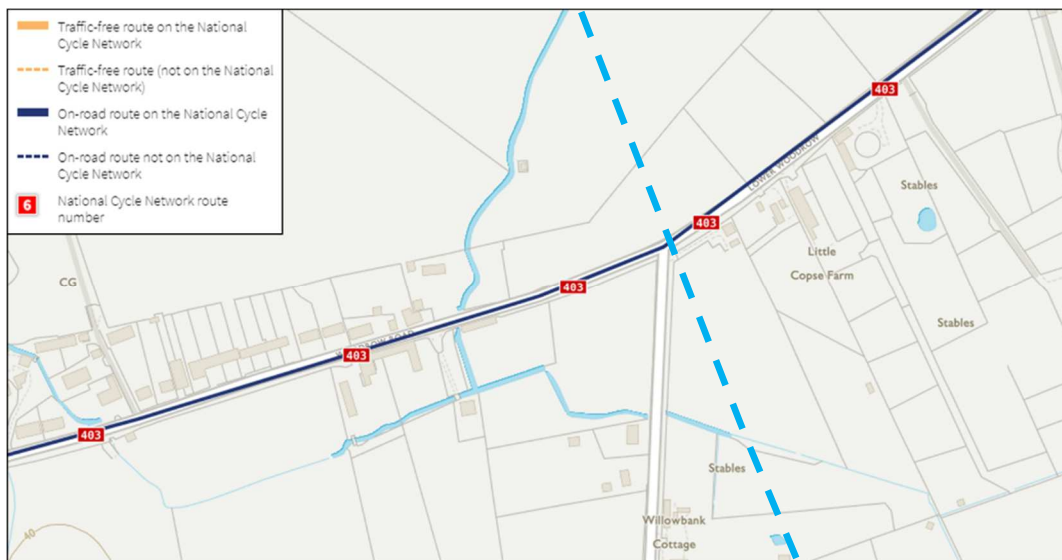


Figure 2-7 - NCN Route 403 within scheme extent<sup>4</sup> (dotted blue line is indicative scheme route)



Beyond the NCN and a number of cycle facilities within Melksham itself, the key cycle route of relevance to the bypass route is the shared use path alongside Eastern Way on the eastern edge of Melksham.

It is also worth noting the Department for Transport traffic count data available for two of the roads that the route of the bypass would be expected to cross. On the A3102 to the east of the likely bypass route the 2013 manual count figures indicated in the 12-hour survey period there were 11 cyclists and 5,637 total vehicles. On the A365 to the east of the proposed bypass the 2018 manual count recorded 26 cyclists and 6,848 total vehicles. Heavy

<sup>3</sup>National Cycle Network: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/national-cycle-network>

<sup>4</sup>National Cycle Network: <https://www.sustrans.org.uk/national-cycle-network>

goods vehicles made up less than 5% of the total volume. Figure 2-8 Shows the existing cycle facilities in Melksham.

### 2.3.4. Equestrian facilities

Table 2-3 shows that three sections of bridleway PRowS would be severed by the scheme:

- A short section of Bridleway connecting Semington village via Semington Brook and Giles Wood, to Bowerhill Lane immediately south of Bowerhill residential estate;
- A Bridleway connecting the western side of Seend Cleeve to Bowerhill Lane immediately south of Bowerhill residential estate; and,
- A Bridleway linking Melksham's Eastern Way to Redstocks to the south-east.

In addition, the bypass route would affect the alignment of bridleway MELW40 which connects directly to the A3102 which due to high traffic volumes and speeds does not appear to be an appealing route for equestrian users.

Due to the rural nature of the area surrounding the likely bypass route multiple farms and riding stables are located near the scheme extents. These are likely to make use of the bridleway network in the area east of Melksham and therefore prompts the opportunity for the network of facilities available to equestrians to remain well connected to the wider countryside.

## 2.4. Existing pedestrian, cycling and equestrian facilities beyond the scheme extents within the study area and links to county / strategic networks

The study area covers the Melksham urban area and the rural areas to the north, east and south. Neighbouring settlements such as the villages of Lacock and Beanacre to the north and Seend, Seend Cleeve, Semington and Great Hinton to the south are also within the study area.

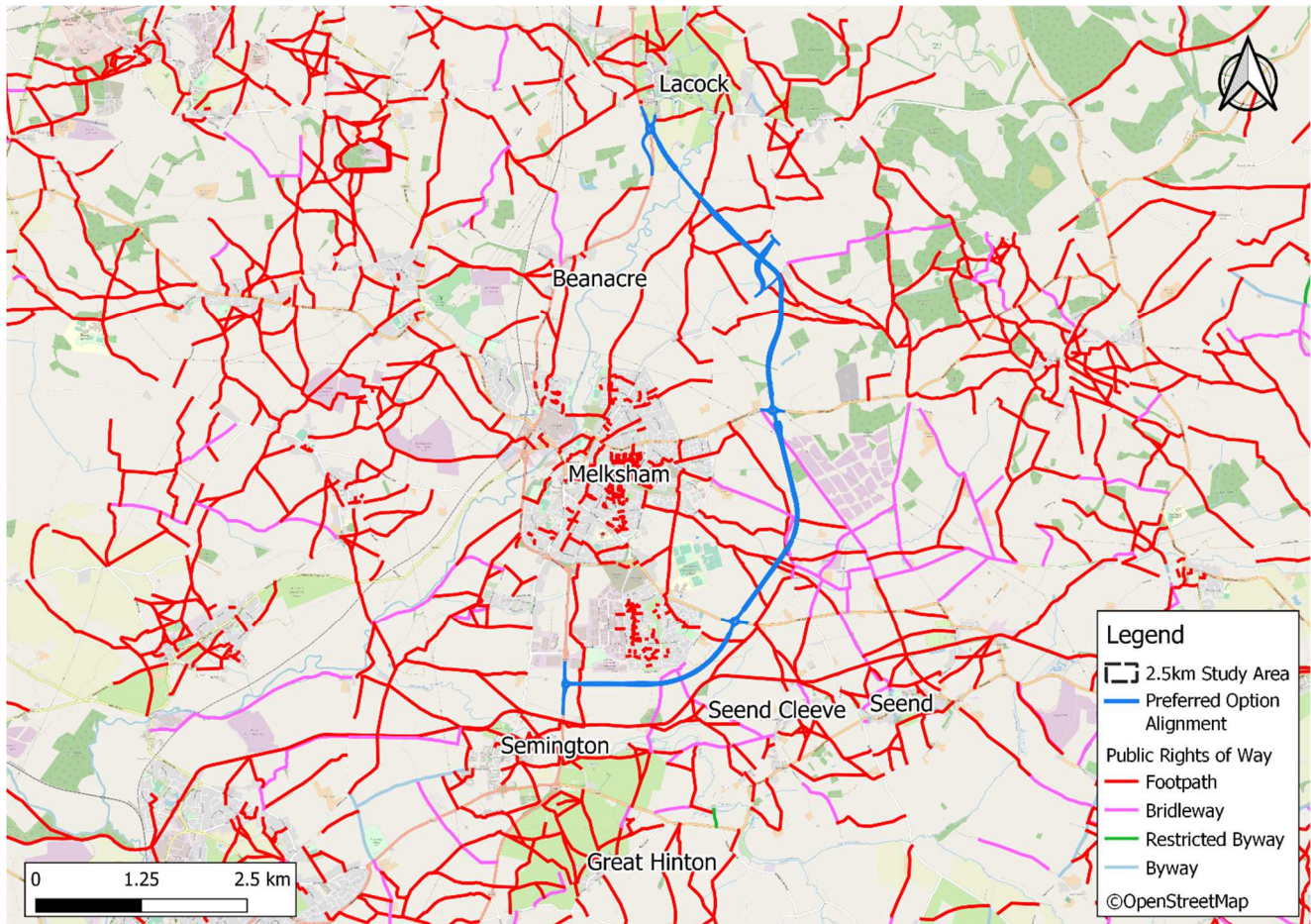
Relevant pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian facilities beyond the scheme extent but within the wider study area have been identified below. The following do not form an exhaustive or detailed list of facilities across this area, rather a representative overview, or where specifically relevant to this assessment.

### 2.4.1. Public Rights of Way

There are a large number of PRow within the study area, with the majority designated as footpaths and bridleways. These routes provide a loose network; however, the quality and usability of routes varies with many more catered towards leisure journeys than utility trips. Inadequate width, surfacing and signing are all examples of factors which could deter some users, particularly those with mobility issues.

An overview of the PRow network in the wider area is illustrated in Figure 2-8. The villages of Seend, Seend Cleeve, Semington and Great Hinton are all connected by dense networks of footpaths and bridleways passing through the fields in their respective surrounding areas. There is also a dense network of bridleways to the east of Melksham, located around Sandridge solar farm. There is one main footpath running north to south between Lacock and north Melksham that would be severed by the scheme.

Figure 2-8 - PRow Network in the wider area<sup>5</sup>

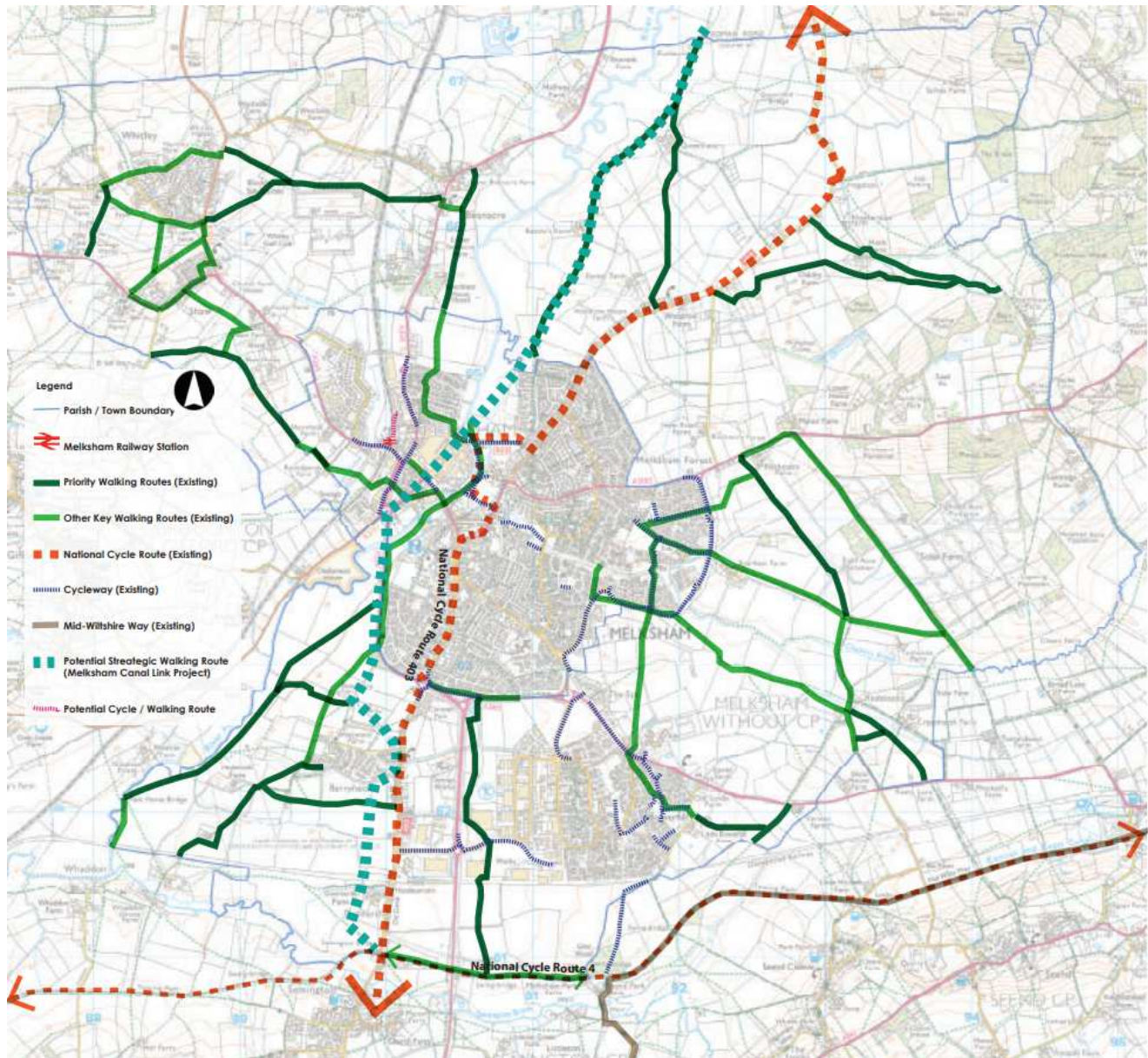


### 2.4.2. Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan

The Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan sets out the key walking and cycling routes running through and around the town. The majority of the Primary (dark green) and Key (light green) walking routes on the eastern side of Melksham are PRow (although some follow footways alongside the carriageway). Some of these will be severed by the likely bypass route. This has previously been covered in more detail in Section 2.3.1. There are also sections of cycleway (blue dotted lines) spread through the town. However, these are generally disconnected and fail to form a cohesive network for cyclists to access the different areas of Melksham.

<sup>5</sup>Row Maps: <https://www.rowmaps.com/showmap.php?place=Melksham&map=OSM&lat=51.3729&lon=2.13818&lonew=W>

Figure 2-9 - Key Walking and Cycling Routes Around Melksham<sup>6</sup>



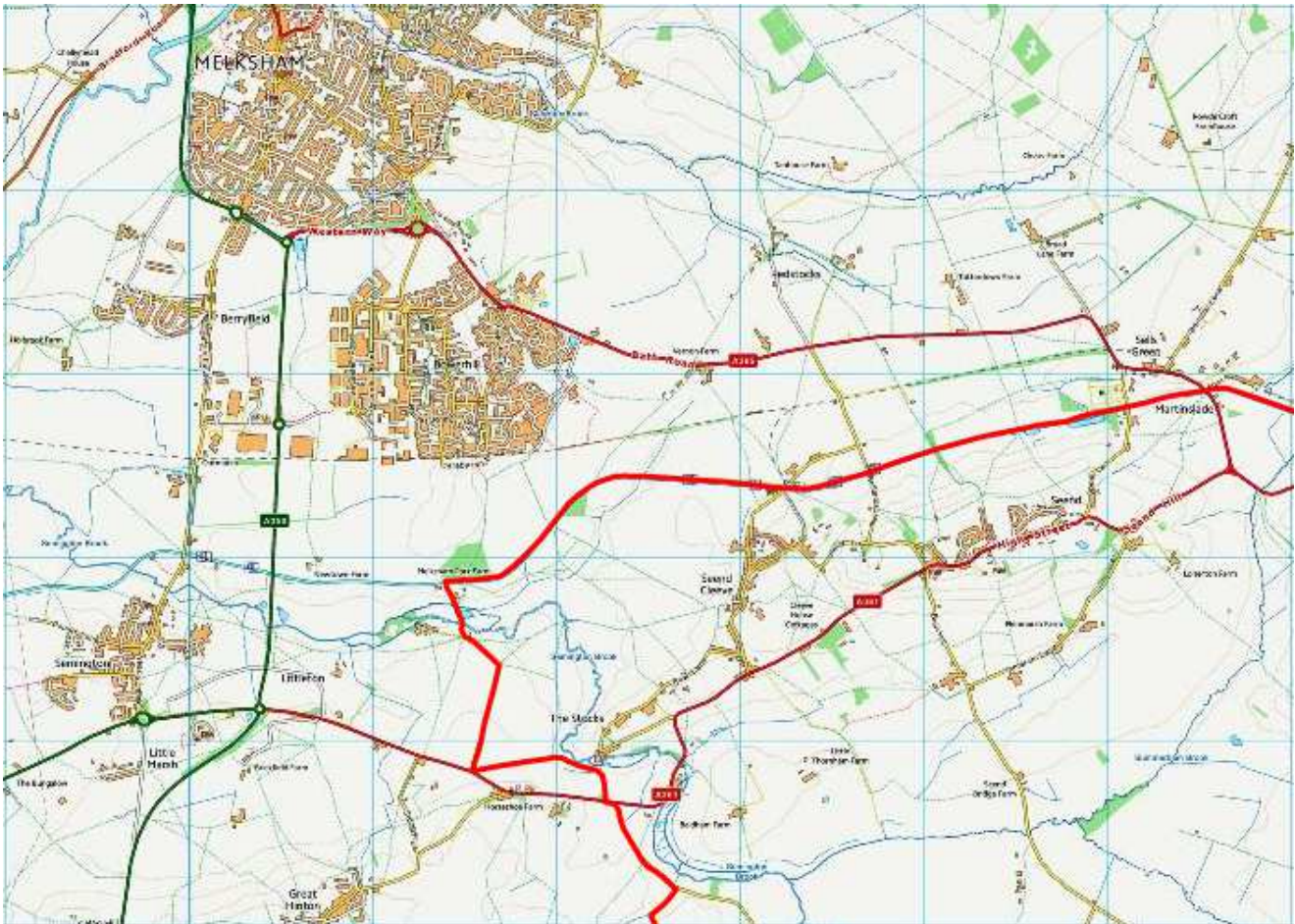
### 2.4.3. Mid Wiltshire Way

The Mid Wiltshire Way is a 68-mile walking route with the eastern end in the village of Ham, just to the south of Hungerford, and western end in the village of Mere, close to the Somerset border. A section of the route passes through the southern end of the study area, joining the NCN Route 4 from the south at Giles Wood and following it eastward to Devizes.

<sup>6</sup>Joint Melksham Neighbourhood Plan: [https://8e84f94a-3875-44b6-81c4-427b900c1ee9.filesusr.com/ugd/fcc864\\_4ef1deaefb924b8db0d3971ac5dc2019.pdf](https://8e84f94a-3875-44b6-81c4-427b900c1ee9.filesusr.com/ugd/fcc864_4ef1deaefb924b8db0d3971ac5dc2019.pdf)



Figure 2-10 - Mid Wiltshire Way<sup>7</sup>



#### 2.4.4. Melksham Canal Link Project

The Melksham canal link project is part of the larger ambition to restore the original Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal. The Wilts & Berks Canal Trust *'is committed to restoring the full length of this historic canal; from Wiltshire through Swindon and into Oxfordshire'*. The proposed Melksham link project would provide a canal link between the Kennet and Avon Canal north of Semington and the River Avon to the east of Melksham town centre (see Figure 2-11). The regeneration project involves 3km of new canal that will also include new towpath for walking and cycling routes that could be used to link up the existing cycling and walking routes south-east of Melksham.

Furthermore the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust is also progressing with another project within the study area named 'Destination Lacock'. The route of this new walking and cycling path will pick up from where the 'Melksham Link' joins the River Avon, utilising the existing riverside walk through the town, before joining the route of the former Wilts & Berks Canal between Melksham and Lacock (see Figure 2-12). The project is currently in the early stages of stakeholder engagement prior to a planning application<sup>8</sup>.

<sup>7</sup>LDWA: [https://ldwa.org.uk/ldp/members/show\\_path.php?path\\_name=Mid+Wilts+Way](https://ldwa.org.uk/ldp/members/show_path.php?path_name=Mid+Wilts+Way)

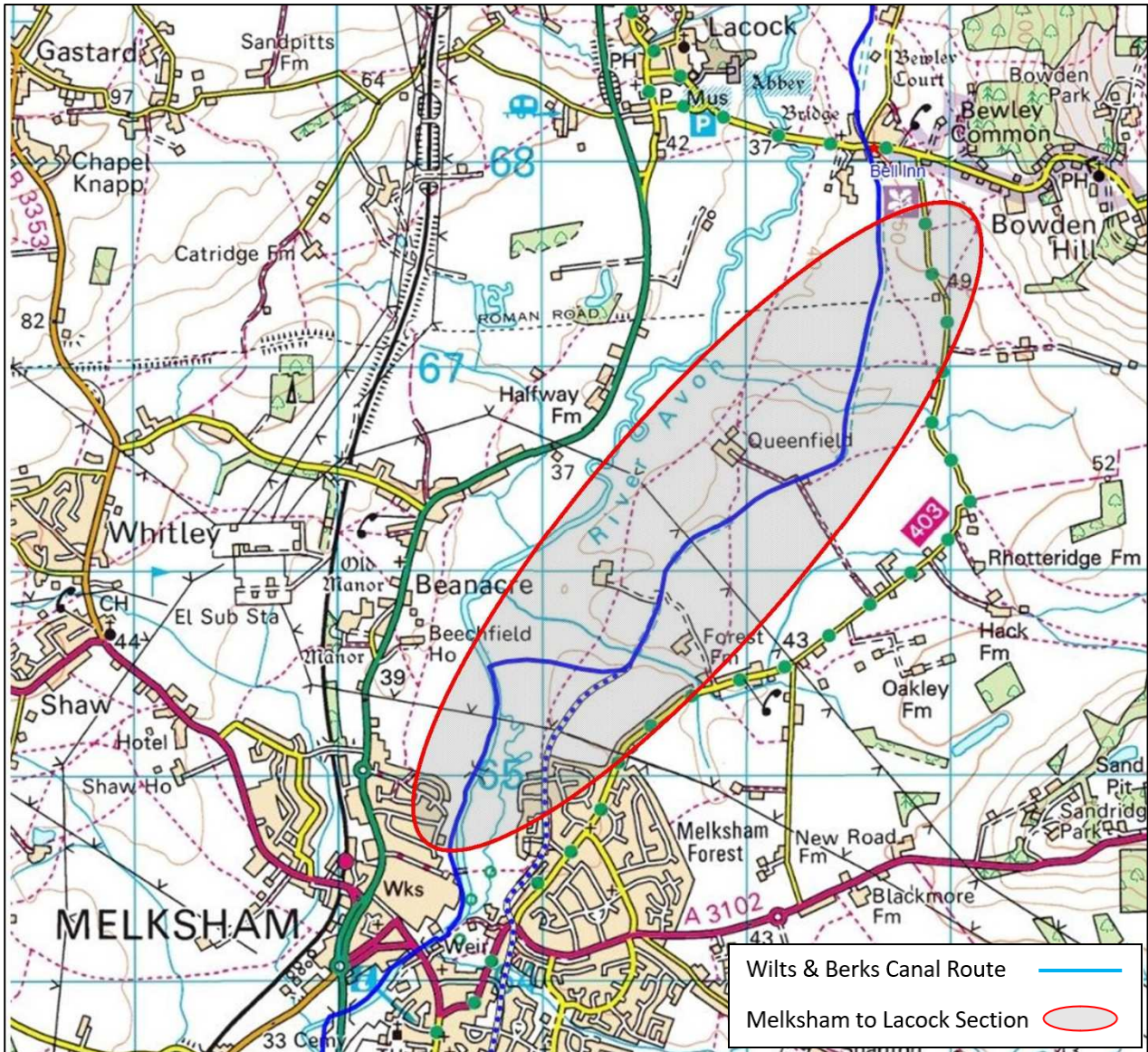
<sup>8</sup>Wilts & Berks Canal Trust: <https://www.wbct.org.uk/116-otb-articles/546-agm-2020>

Figure 2-11 - Melksham Canal Link Project<sup>9</sup>



<sup>9</sup>Melksham Canal Link Project: <https://www.canalpartnership.org.uk/files/studies/blreportnarrative.pdf>

Figure 2-12 - Original Melksham and Lacock Wilts & Berks Canal Route<sup>10</sup>

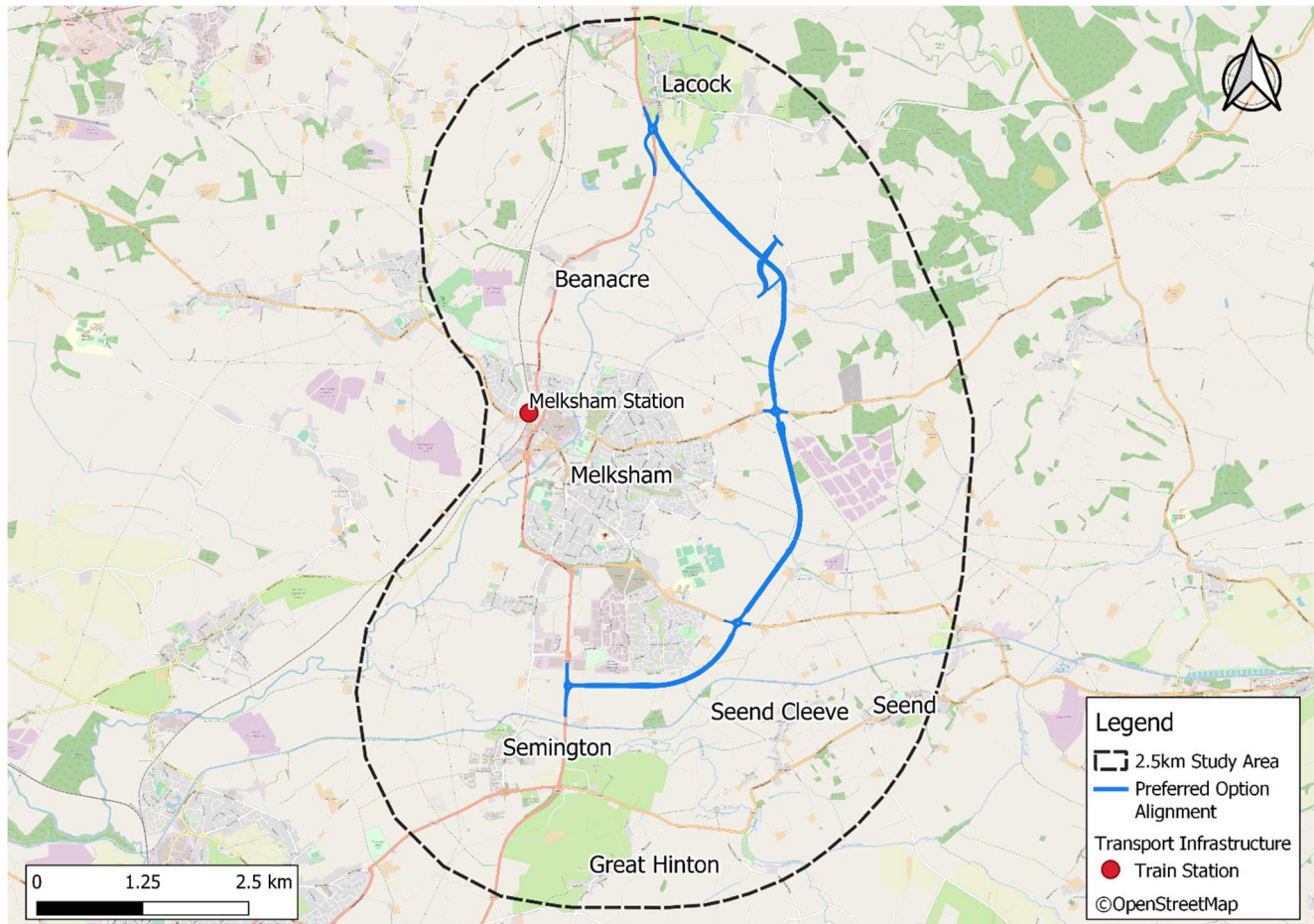


<sup>10</sup>Canal Partnership: <https://www.canalpartnership.org.uk/index.php/restoration-strategy/projects/melksham-to-lacock>

## 2.5. Public transport and interchange information

The identification of public transport services and infrastructure (see Figure 2-13) has raised the key points outlined below. Service destinations, frequencies and interchange facilities have been reviewed and access to them assessed.

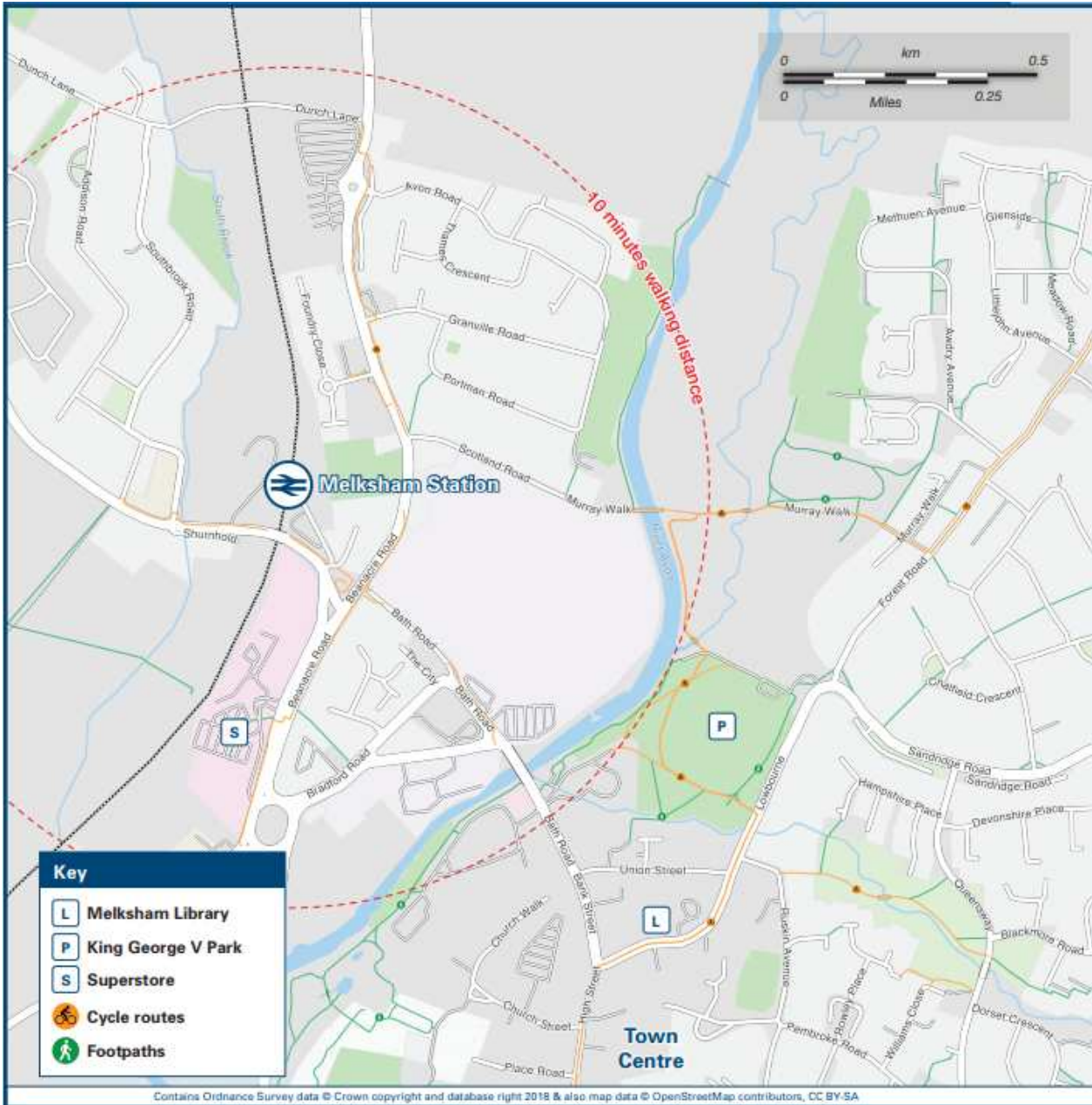
Figure 2-13 – Public Transport Infrastructure



### 2.5.1. Rail stations

Melksham Station is located within the scheme study area, in the north west corner of Melksham, situated alongside the A350. It is over ten minutes' walk from Melksham town centre and is supported by some disconnected sections of cycle route (Figure 2-14) although it is noted that Wiltshire Council have progressed works to improve this connectivity including along Bath Road near the existing A350. The station is located on a single-track section of the TransWilts Line with services running approximately every two hours each way between Westbury and Swindon. There is bicycle parking in the form of stands but no waiting rooms or toilet facilities. The platform has recently been extended to accommodate three carriages and there are further plans to upgrade the station. The Trans Wilts website (January 2021) states: "Phase 1 of the Plan has received planning permission and includes new platform signage, destination indicators, increased parking, electric vehicle charging, cycle storage and even a community café! Phase 2 would see further improvements in the layout at the station including northern pedestrian access." Further details can be found at <https://transwilts.org/2020/04/28/melksham-station-set-for-transformation>.

Figure 2-14 - Cycle routes around Melksham Station<sup>11</sup>



<sup>11</sup>National Rail: <https://www.nationalrail.co.uk/posters/MKM.pdf>

## 2.5.2. Bus services

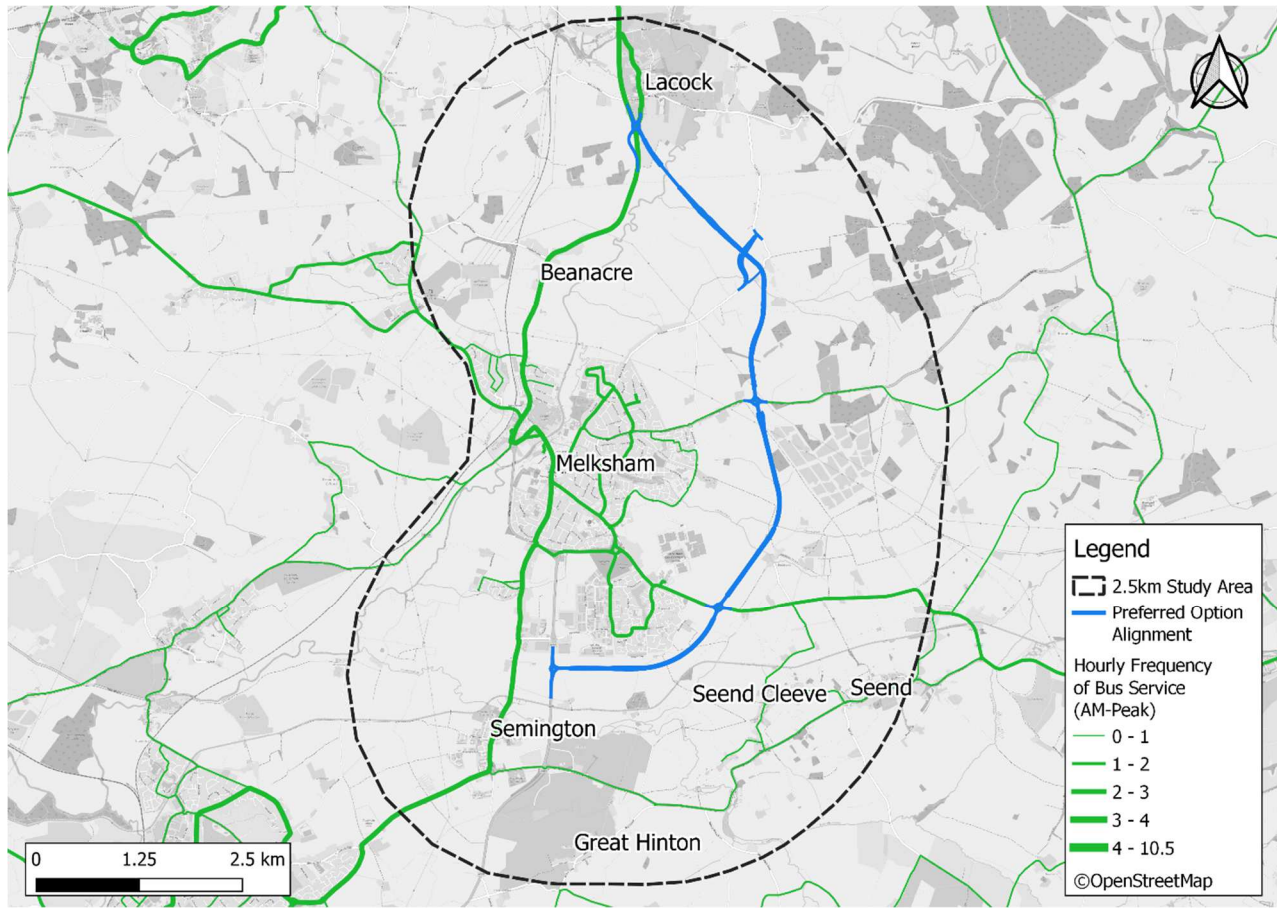
The majority of bus services provided in the study area (summarised in Table 2-4) are run by Faresaver and Frome Bus. Figure 2-15 maps the bus services out by Monday AM-peak frequency. The busiest route through Melksham in terms of service frequency is the A350. There is a mix of services within Melksham, linking areas within the town as well as the smaller villages in the surrounding area, and also a number of routes linking Melksham to larger urban areas such as Trowbridge, Chippenham and Bath.

**Table 2-4 - Bus Services (as of November 2020)<sup>12</sup>**

Route/Service	Bus operator	Route/Destinations	Frequency
14	Frome Bus	Melksham Metro	Approximately 2 per hour (weekday) and 1 per hour (Saturday)
15	Frome Bus	Melksham Town Service	Approximately 1 per hour (weekday) and 2 per day (Saturday).
68	Frome Bus	Melksham - Staverton - Trowbridge	Approximately 1 per hour (weekday and Saturday)
X69	Frome Bus	Frome - Bradford on Avon - Melksham	One service per day (weekday and weekend)
69	Faresaver	Trowbridge - Melksham - Corsham - Chippenham	Four services per day (weekday and weekend)
X34	Faresaver	Frome - Trowbridge – Chippenham (A350 north of Melksham)	Approximately 2 per hour (weekday) and 1 per hour (Saturday)
271	Faresaver	Bath - Bathford - Melksham – Bowerhill (via A365)	Approximately 1 per hour (weekday and Saturday)
272	Faresaver	Devizes - Melksham - Box – Bath (via A365)	Approximately 1 per hour (weekday and Saturday)
273	Faresaver	Bath - Box - Melksham – Devizes (via A365)	Approximately 4 services per evening (Monday to Saturday) and 6 services per day (Sunday)
X76	Swindon's Bus Company	Marlborough - Calne - Melksham – Bath (via A3102)	One service per day (weekday)
SB2	The Seend Shuttle	Seend Cleeve - Sells Green - Seend - Bowerhill – Melksham (via A365)	One service per day (weekday)

<sup>12</sup>Bus Times: <https://bustimes.org/>

Figure 2-15 - Hourly frequency of bus services – Monday AM peak (0700-0859)<sup>13</sup>



<sup>13</sup>Bus Route Lines (Pre Covid-19): <http://datacutter.basemap.co.uk/DataCutter>

## 2.6. Trip generators

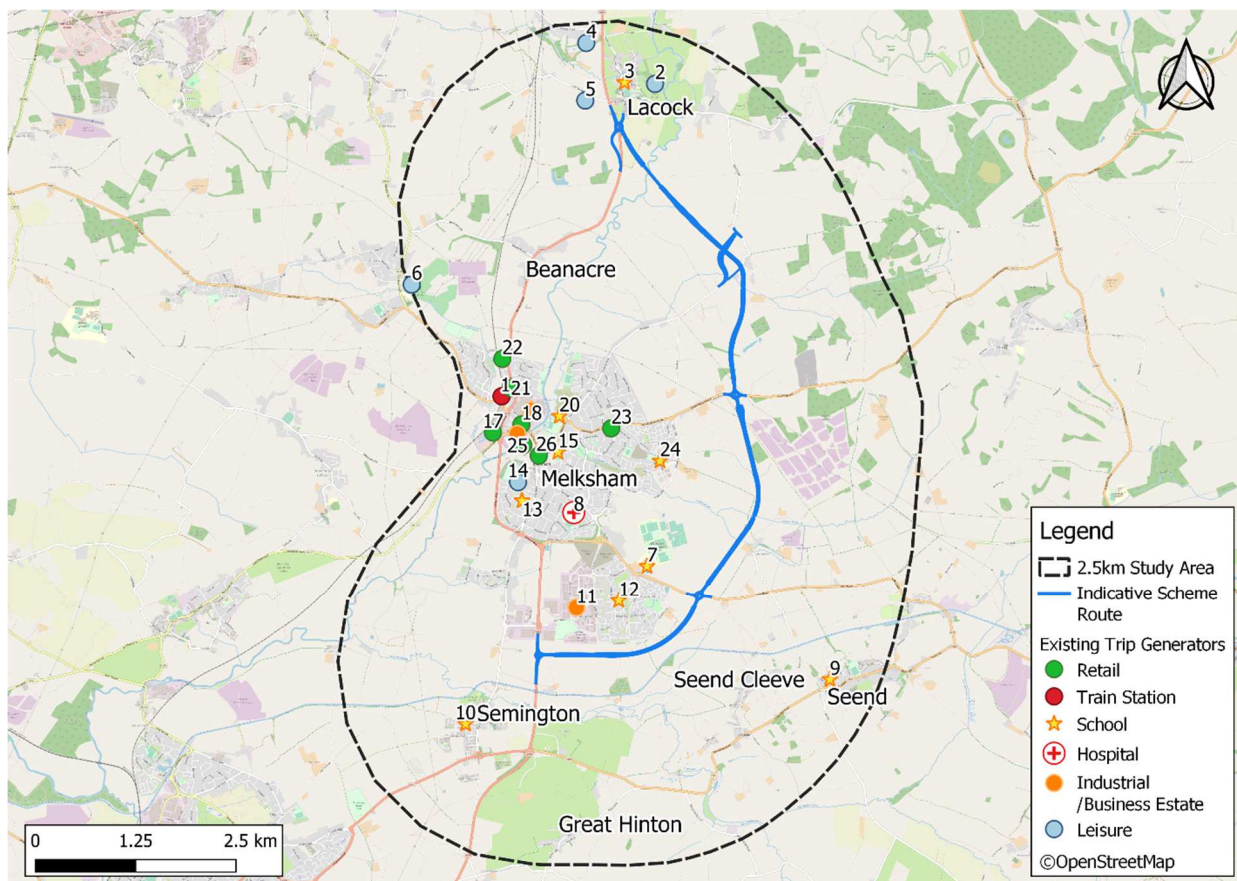
### 2.6.1. Existing trip generators

A summary of existing trip generators within the study area are listed in Table 2-5 with the locations presented in Figure 2-16. These trip generators were identified subjectively by the assessment team to have the potential to result in notable movements in and around the overall scheme extents. Note the list of trip generators presented is not exhaustive.

**Table 2-5 - Existing Trip Generators**

Existing Trip Generators			
1	Melksham Station	14	Melksham Town Football Club
2	Lacock Abbey (National Trust)	15	The Manor School
3	Lacock C of E Primary School	16	Sainsbury's supermarket
4	Whitehall Garden Centre	17	Asda supermarket
5	Piccadilly Caravan Park	18	Lidl supermarket
6	Whitley Golf Club	19	Cooper Tires
7	Melksham Oak Community School	20	River Mead School
8	Melksham Hospital	21	Aldi supermarket
9	Seend C of E Primary School	22	Leekes home department store
10	St Georges School	23	Co-op supermarket
11	Bowerhill Industrial Estate	24	Forest and Sandridge C of E Primary School
12	Bowerhill Primary School	25	Avonside Business Park
13	Aloeric Primary School	26	Melksham Town Centre

**Figure 2-16 - Existing Trip Generators**



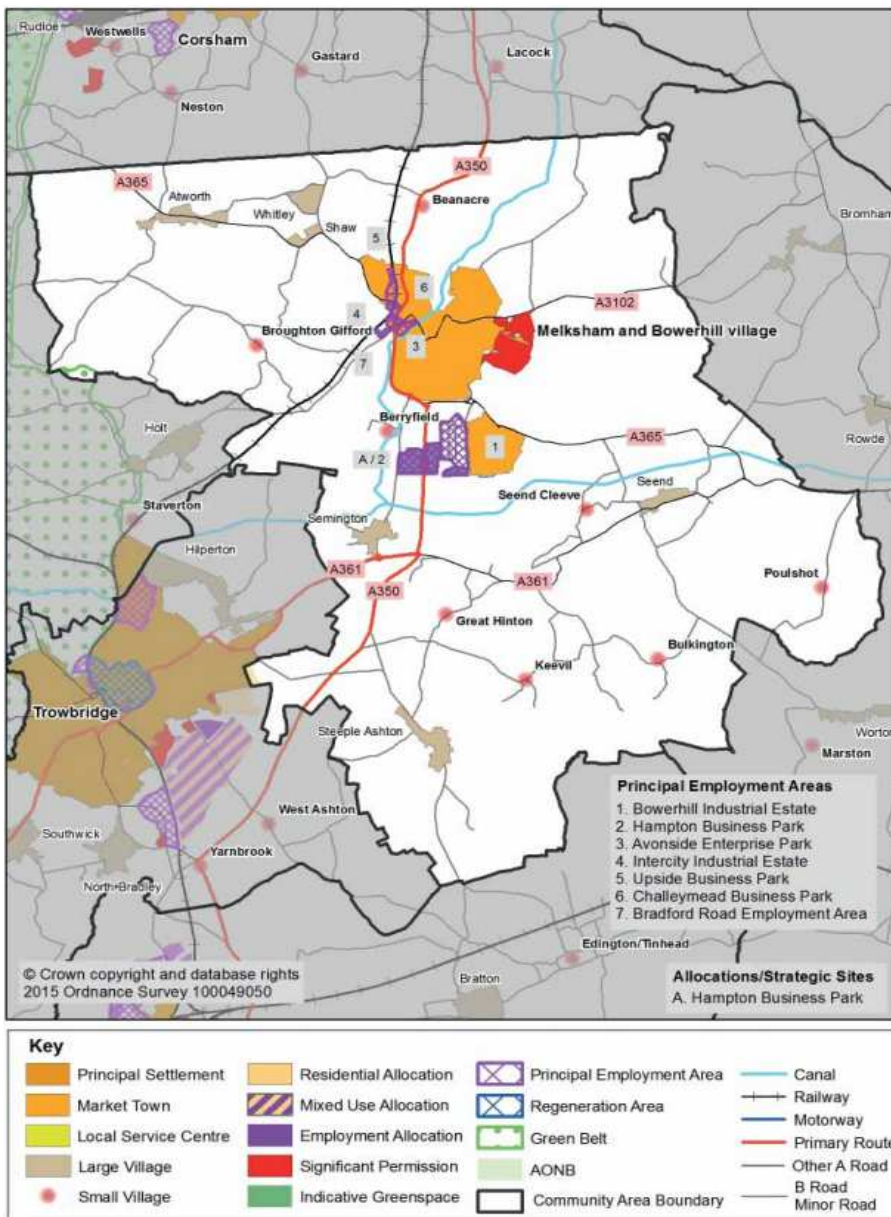


### 2.6.2. Future trip generators

The Wiltshire Core Strategy sets out the strategic vision for delivering sustainable growth over the period up to 2026. The spatial strategy is split into the individual community areas of Wiltshire. Development in the Melksham community area – which includes Melksham, Bowerhill village, Seend, Semington and Beanacre – has approximately 2,370 new homes allocated; of which about 2,240 should occur in Melksham town. As of 2014 approximately 1,239 of these have already been completed, 390 have specific permitted sites allocated and 611 are still to be identified. Up to 6ha of employment land will also be provided over the plan period (2006-2026), located at Hampton Business Park just south of Melksham (see Figure 2-17).

It should be noted that the Wiltshire Core Strategy is the current Local Plan for Wiltshire. The Government requires every Local Plan to be reviewed at least once every five years. The Core Strategy was adopted in 2015 and is therefore being currently being reviewed with the consultation phase undertaken between January and March 2021. Responses are currently being reviewed by Wiltshire Council. The local plan review involves considering if the existing adopted development strategy remains relevant, as well as identifying new site allocations relating to housing and employment.

Figure 2-17 - Melksham Policy Map<sup>14</sup>



<sup>14</sup>Wiltshire Core Strategy: <https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-core-strategy>

## 2.7. Stakeholder liaison

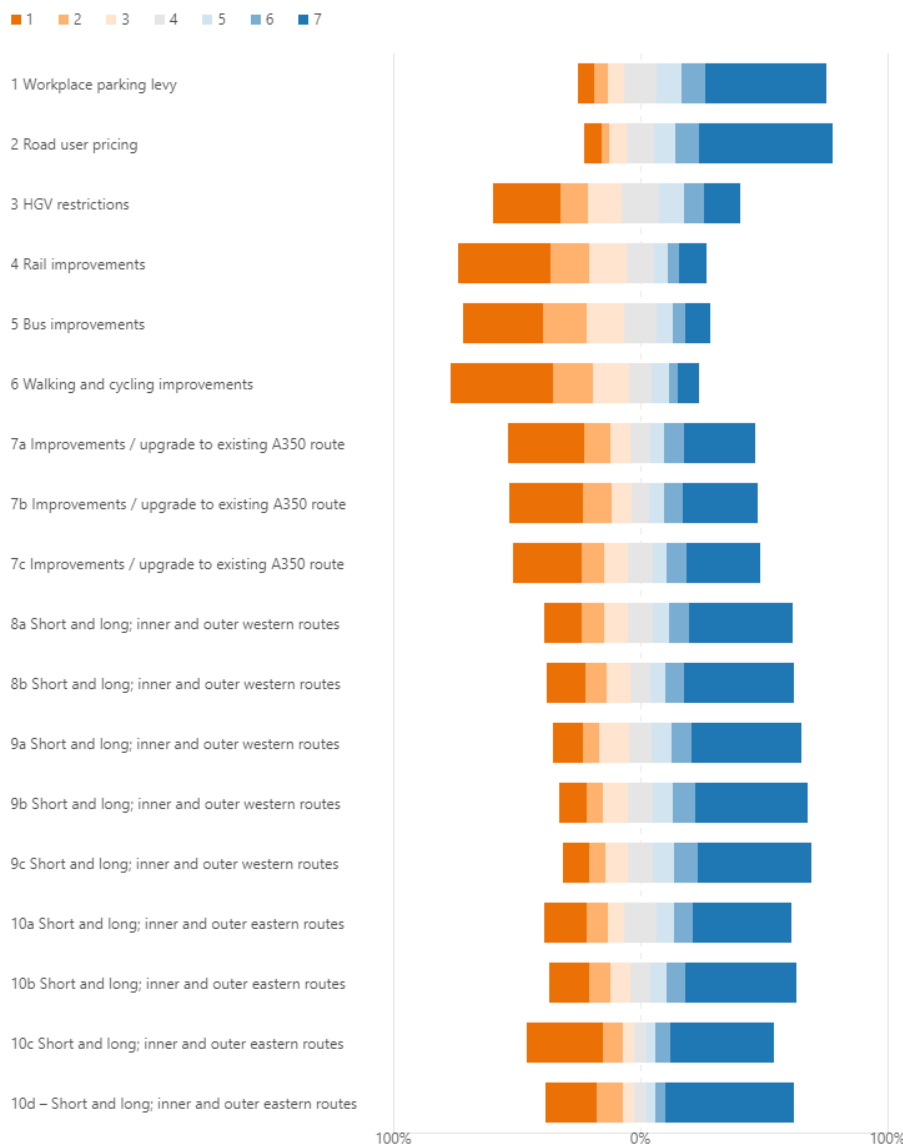
During a non-statutory consultation in Autumn 2020 respondents were asked to rate (from 1-7) which options they would most like to see brought forward as part of the Melksham Bypass proposal. The participants were presented with 18 different options (see Figure 2-18). The option that was chosen the most by stakeholders was ‘walking and cycling improvements’, highlighting that there is a clear desire from local stakeholders to see improvements to the walking and cycling network in and around the Melksham area. The numerous responses have been reviewed as part of this assessment and will continue to be considered in any future work. The key summary paragraphs from the Consultation report were:

*“The majority of responses would like to see more facilities for walking and cycling within Melksham come forward as complementary measures to a potential A350 Bypass (Yes 682/No 318).*

*There were 270 comments that wanted to see more cycle paths and routes, 185 wanted improvements to walking and cycling facilities, and 54 wanted walking improvements. There were a variety of suggestions and requests made, including the standard of walking and cycling infrastructure, facilities required to encourage walking and cycling, and suggestions for new routes which should be provided.”*

**Figure 2-18 - Stakeholder Liaison Questionnaire Feedback**

10. Thinking about the options that you would most like to see come forward, please rank these in order of preference from 1 to 7. (1 = most preferred; 7 = least preferred)



Targeted stakeholder liaison has been undertaken as part of the WCHAR process. A number of stakeholders were contacted in January 2021 with the British Horse Society and Ramblers being the stakeholders to respond to this approach so far, although the Spatial Planning Team are providing comments to the Melksham Bypass team through monthly meetings. Any subsequent responses will be included in a subsequent GG 142 review report and the associated design deliberations. Those contacted were as follows:

- Sustrans;
- Spatial Planning Team - Economic Development and Planning;
- Wiltshire Council;
- Cycling UK;
- British Horse Society – see response summarised below;
- Ramblers – see response summarised below;
- Wilts and Berks Canal Trust;
- Kennet and Avon Canal Trust; and,
- Wiltshire Council PRow Team.

### 2.7.1. British Horse Society

An emphasise was made that special consideration must be given to the treatment of bridleways crossed by any route of the Melksham Bypass:

*'Bridleways (in green on the two attached maps) form important routes for horse riders, who are very vulnerable road users, and these bridleways are also used by off-road cyclists and walkers. Crossing points over or under the bypass must therefore be carefully designed with the safety of horse riders, cyclists and walkers in mind. The BHS is able to provide guidance.*

#### *Example Map 1*

*If the major bypass route 10c were constructed, it would pass over bridleways SEEN17 (leading to MELW45) and SEEN13. See points A and B on [Figure 2-19]. It is essential that any under or overpass carrying these bridleways over or under the bypass are safely usable by horse riders, as the bridleways in the area form a good round route for users from Seend Cleeve and further afield. These round routes are also very useful routes for cyclists and walkers coming from the urban area of Melksham Without.*

#### *Example Map 2*

*Again if route 10c were constructed, it would pass over bridleway MELW41 and connect with the end of MELW40. These bridleways provide horse riders, cyclists and walkers with safe off-road access between the urban area of Melksham Without, through countryside to Bromham, Rowde and Seend. However, the network is fragmented and MELW40 ends at the A3102, which is dangerous / unpleasant for horse riders, child cyclists and walkers to use. Route 10c would provide the ideal opportunity to add a bridleway route along the line of the bypass to connect bridleways MELW41 and MELW40, between points C and D [see Figure 2-20]. This could be done as part of the highway scheme itself, with suitable screening / fencing / distance provided between bypass and new bridleway. This would provide much enhanced off-road provision in the form of a round route for horse riders, cyclists and walkers in the area, and from further afield as part of the scheme.'*

Figure 2-19 - BHS Stakeholder Map 1

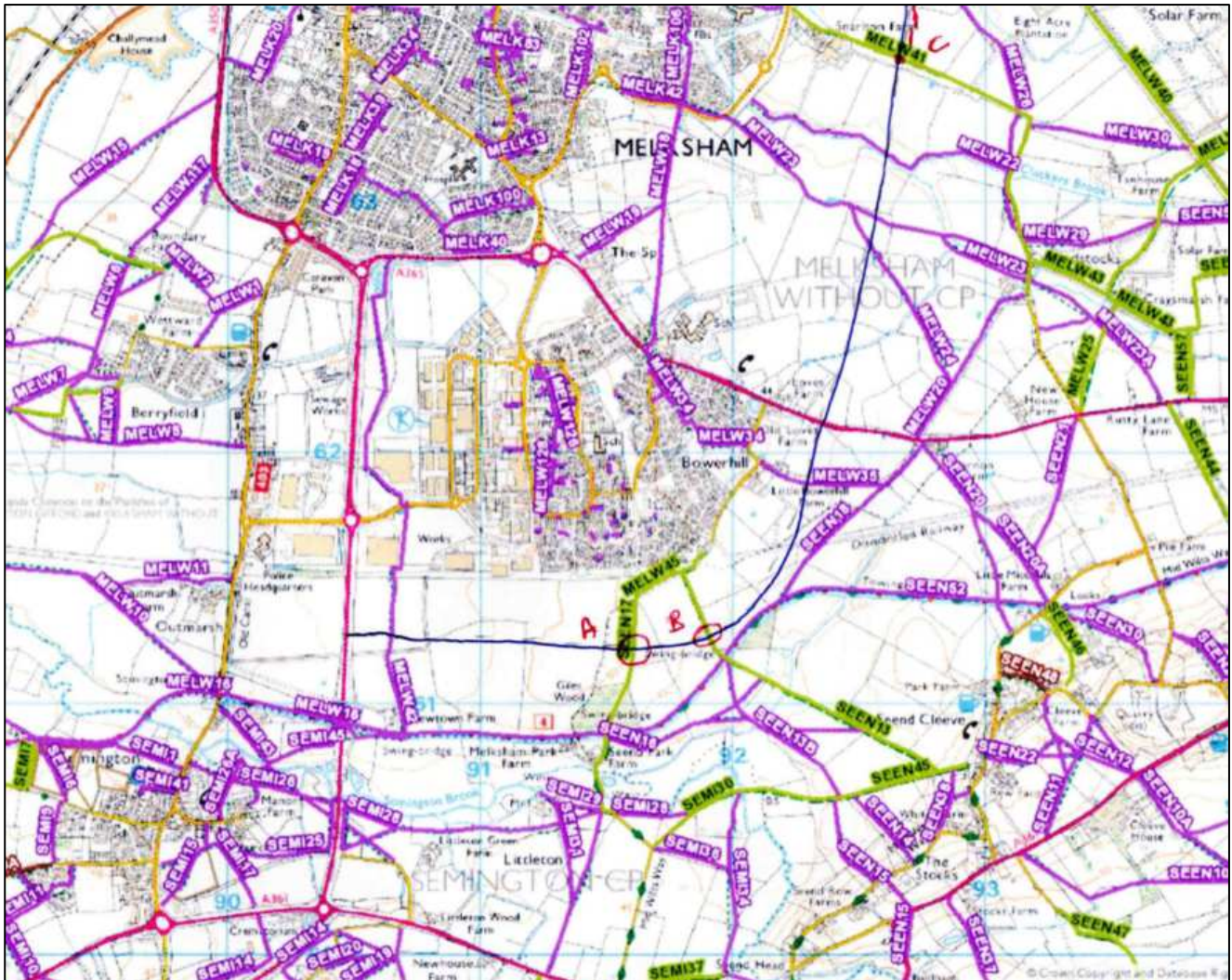
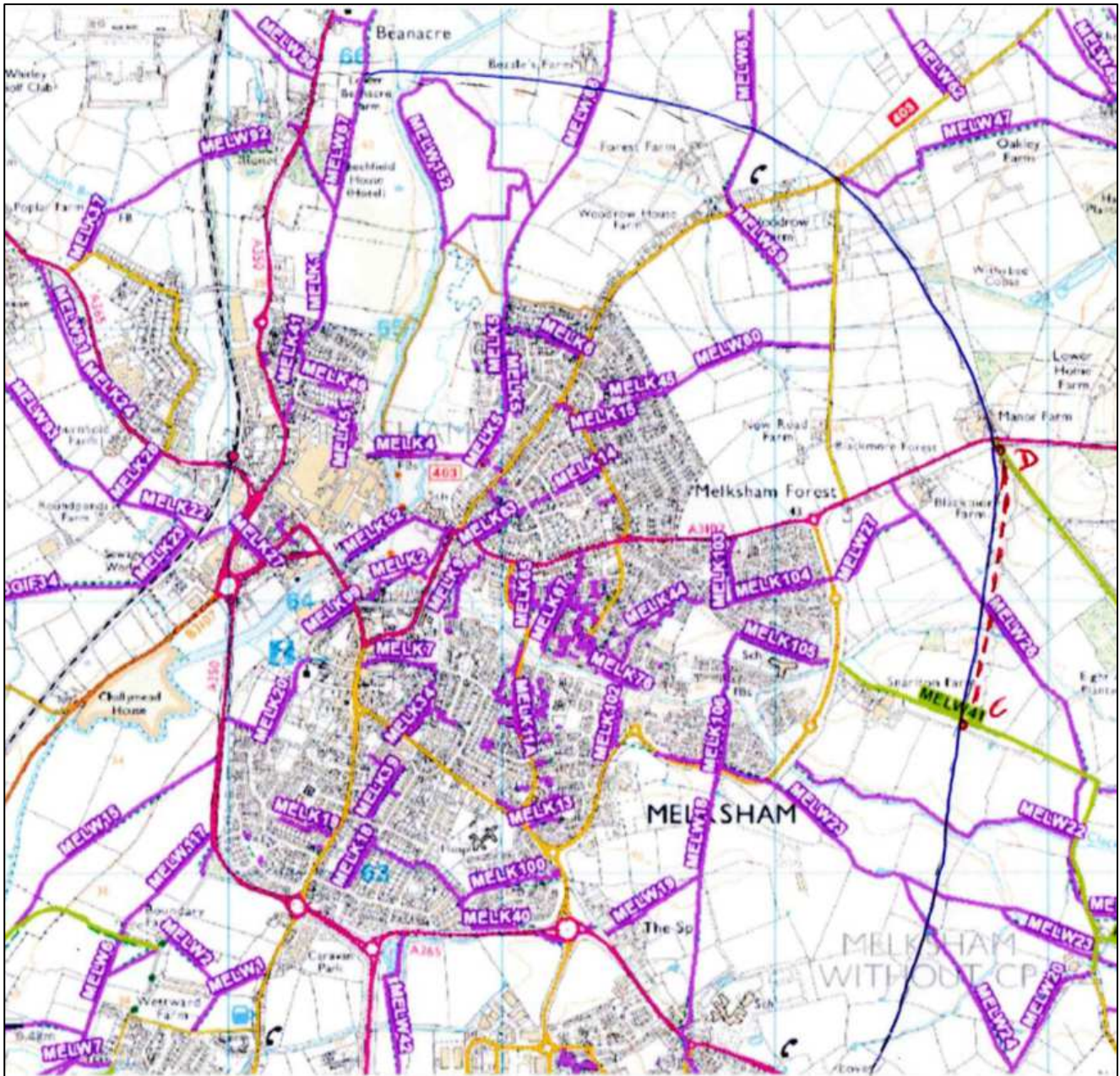


Figure 2-20 - BHS Stakeholder Map 2



## 2.7.2. Ramblers

### General observations:

1. All current RoWs – which are numerous - to be maintained;
2. Crossing points to have adequate bridge or underpass;
3. Underpasses to have adequate drainage as land generally low lying;
4. All non-vehicular routes to be tarmac where possible to protect against erosion from usage;
5. Wilts & Berks Canal towpaths to be linked in where possible;
6. A new RoW adjacent to the bypass would be useful in providing north-south links between routes;
7. Option 10d seen as environmentally damaging;
8. RoWs to be of adequate width to allow for multipurpose – cyclists, horse-riders and walkers; and
9. Stiles to be eliminated and replaced with kissing gates to allow for wider community use – positive impact on health.

### PRoW specific observations:

1. Footpath improvement from Melksham Oak School to the new estates on the east side of Melksham;
2. Traffic calming on Lower Woodrow (south east of Queenfield Farm) due to high equestrian use;
3. A PRoW link between FP MELW26 and BrW MELW40 to enable safer circular walking; and,
4. A linking PRoW alongside the new road bridge from north of Beanacre would be a very useful west to east link in the north.

## 2.8. User survey data

### 2.8.1. Strava Heatmaps for walking and cycling

Strava Heatmaps record walking and cycling data from Strava users and online mapping displays data from the most recent 24-month period (January 2019 to December 2020). The walking Strava Heatmap (Figure 2-21) indicates that pedestrian use is generally focused within the Melksham urban area with a few key routes seeing higher levels of use in the rural area around the likely bypass route, namely:

- NCN Route 403 along Woodrow Road and Lower Woodrow;
- New Road to the south of NCN Route 403;
- Eastern Way;
- Bridleway SEEN 13 connecting Melksham to NCN Route 4; and
- NCN Route 4 itself alongside the canal.

Other radial roads including the A3102 and A365 show lower levels of pedestrian movements.

**Figure 2-21 - Strava walking Heatmap for scheme extents (red – higher use, blue – low use)**



The cycling Strava Heatmap (Figure 2-22) indicates that the key cycling routes used by Strava members were:

- A350 at the north and south ends of the route;
- NCN Route 403 along Woodrow Road and Lower Woodrow;
- New Road;
- A3102;
- Eastern Way;
- A365;
- Bridleway SEN 13; and
- NCN Route 4.

**Figure 2-22 - Strava cycling Heatmap for scheme extents (red – higher use, blue – low use)**



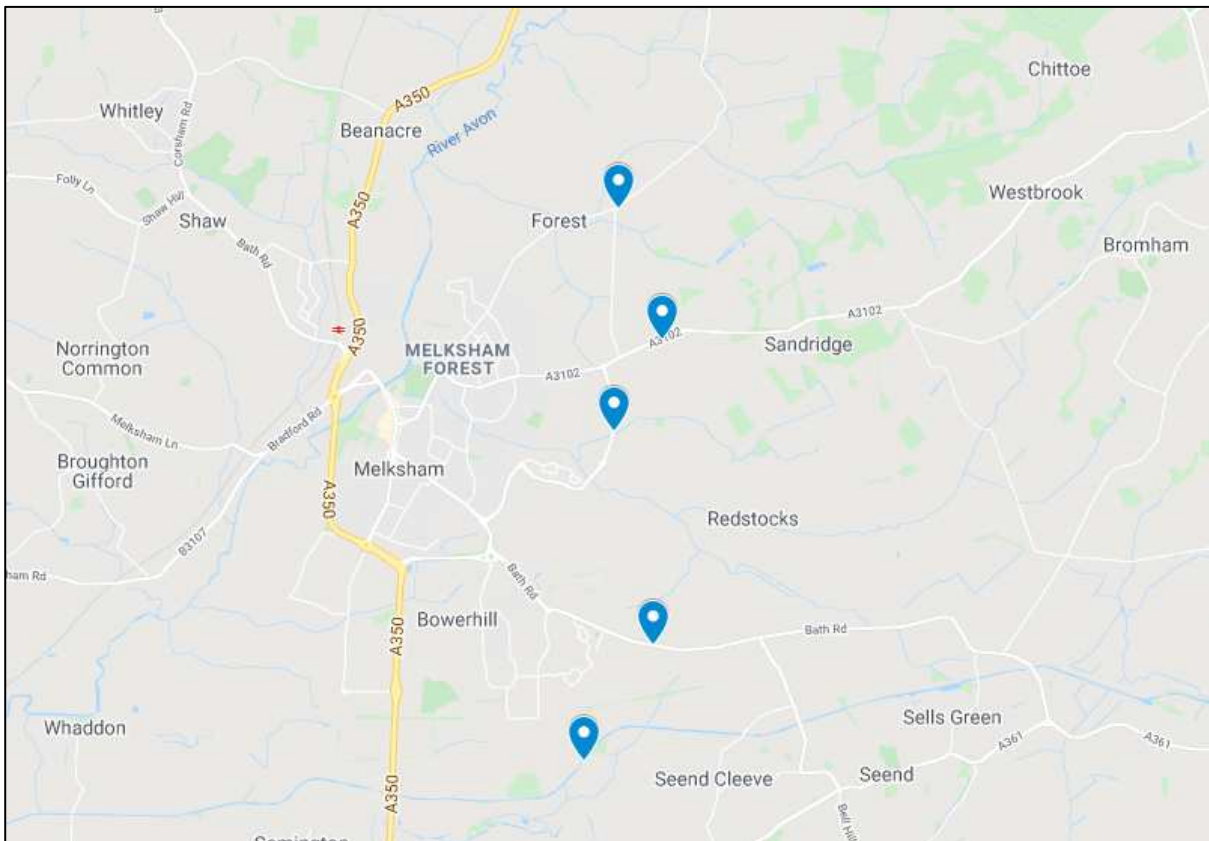


### 2.8.2. Classified user counts January 2021

Pedestrian, cyclist and horse-rider surveys were commissioned for five locations to the east of Melksham centre, as shown in Figure 2-23. The locations chosen were primarily where the indicative route of the Melksham Bypass would cross the existing network and were, from north to south, as follows:

- 1 Woodrow Road;
- 2 A3102 north-east of Melksham;
- 3 Eastern Way to the east of Melksham;
- 4 A365 to the south-east of Melksham; and
- 5 Canal lock to the south-east of Melksham.

**Figure 2-23 - Locations of user surveys sites (mapping courtesy of Google MyMaps)**



The surveys of the four sites recorded pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian movements at each location and were undertaken over two 24-hour periods on Thursday 28th and Saturday 30th of January 2021. The review considers the Thursday and Saturday movements separately due to their weekday and weekend nature. The surveys used cameras installed at key points on stretches of road and at junctions and subsequent desk-based manual counts of the video surveys were conducted to develop the results. The results were presented in a visual format (included here) and in tabulated counts of crossing movements of each arm and movements on each side of each link for a full analysis of pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian movements. In addition, the counts on each arm were divided into footway and carriageway movements.

This report includes a summary of the two datasets including observations on:

- total crossing movements on each arm where applicable;
- movements on each arm for both footway and carriageway; and
- the pedestrian/cyclist/equestrian mode split.

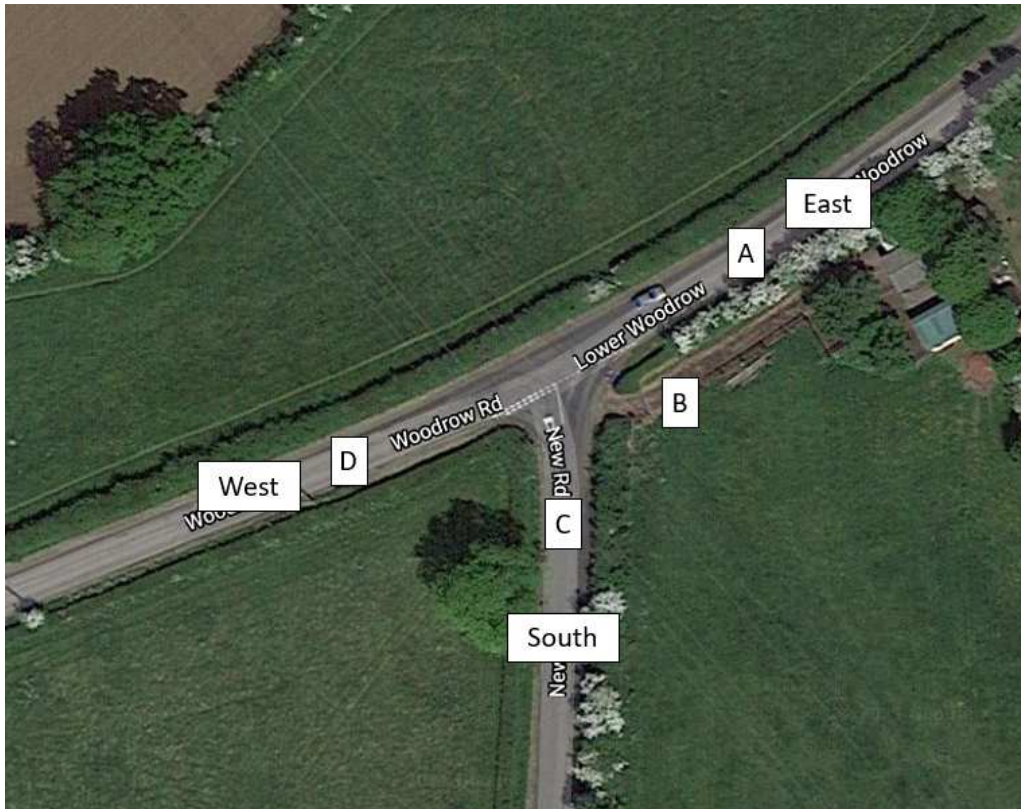
The analysis also makes mention of the interpreted demographics of the users at each site.

A number of factors should be taken into account when considering the results of this survey:

- The survey is a snapshot of use on a single weekday and a single weekend day and thus is primarily intended to give an indication of levels of use and desire lines;
- The number of users is likely to be different at other times of the year and in different weathers; and
- A national lockdown relating to the Covid-19 pandemic was in force at the time of the survey and there is a high likelihood that the pandemic has influenced the results (this could be positively or negatively).

Site 1 - Woodrow Road

Figure 2-24 - Survey Layout for Site 1 - Woodrow Road



Thursday

A total of 254 movements were observed to use the carriageway. Of these, 126 were pedestrian movements along Arms C and D of the junction. A total of 104 movements were carried out by cyclists along Woodrow Road, Lower Woodrow Road and New Road and a total of 12 equestrian movements were recorded along Arms A and D combined. From the user survey data, it was observed that all NMU users are from the 16-65 age range with 100% of users identified as male. The highest crossing movement was from Arm B's western edge to Arm C's northern edge (see Figure 2-26).

Figure 2-25 - Site 1 Thursday Movements per Arm

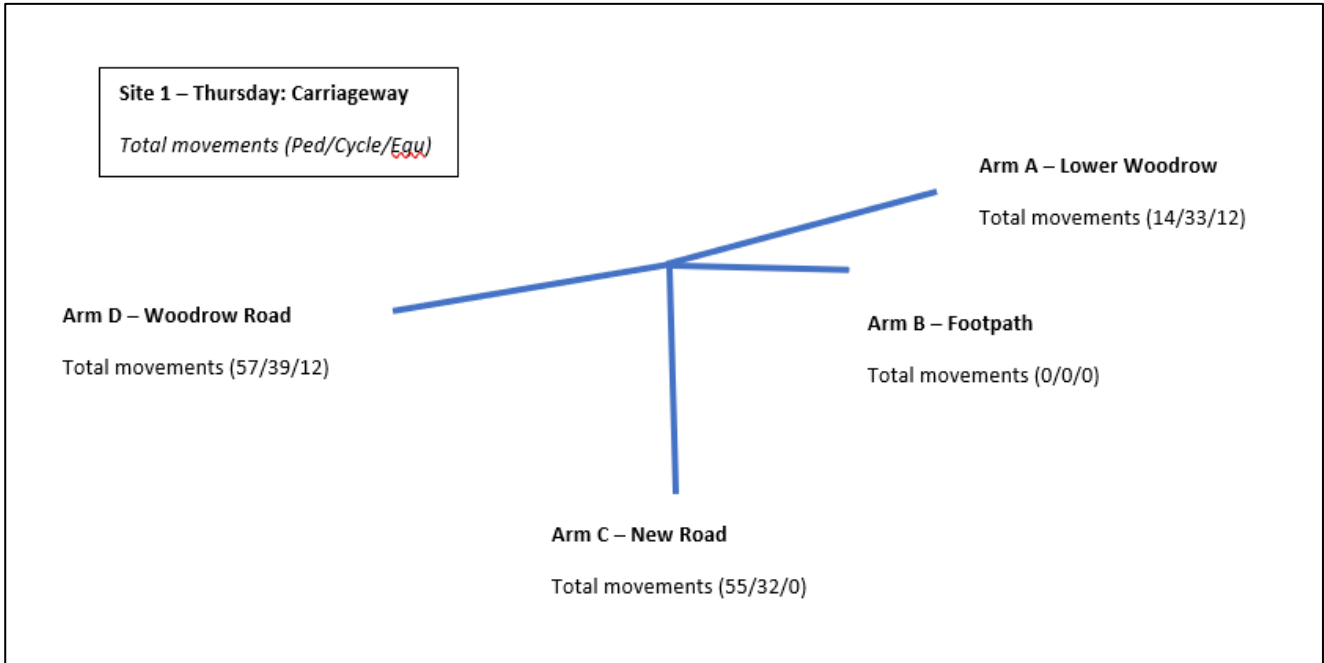
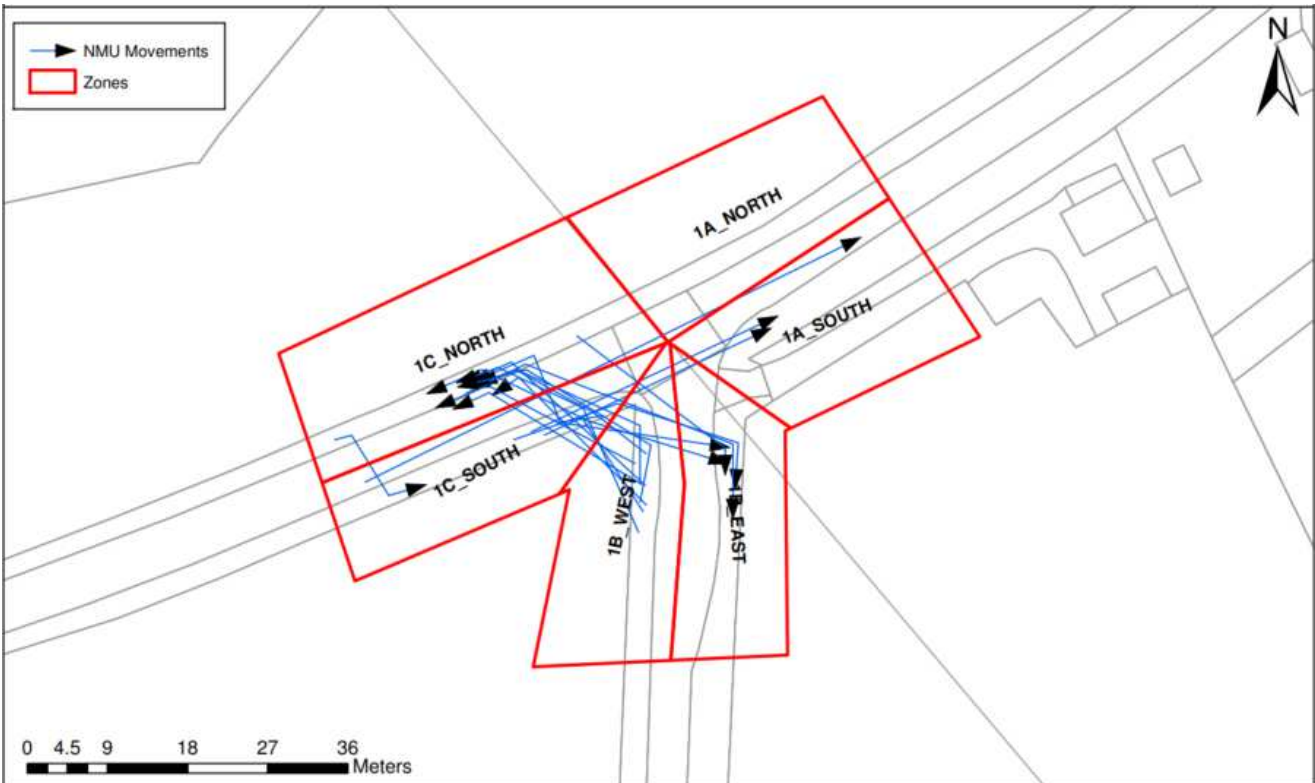


Figure 2-26 - Site 1 Thursday Crossing Movements



Saturday

A total of 279 movements were observed to use the carriageway. Of these, 151 were pedestrian movements along Arms C and D of the junction. A total of 90 movements were carried out by cyclists along Woodrow Road, Lower Woodrow Road and New Road and a total of 14 equestrian movements were recorded along Arms A, C and D combined. From the user survey data, it was observed that nearly all NMU users are from the 16-65 age range with 100% of users identified as male. The highest crossing movement was between Arm B's western edge and Arm C's northern edge (see Figure 2-28).

Figure 2-27 - Site 1 Saturday Movements per Arm

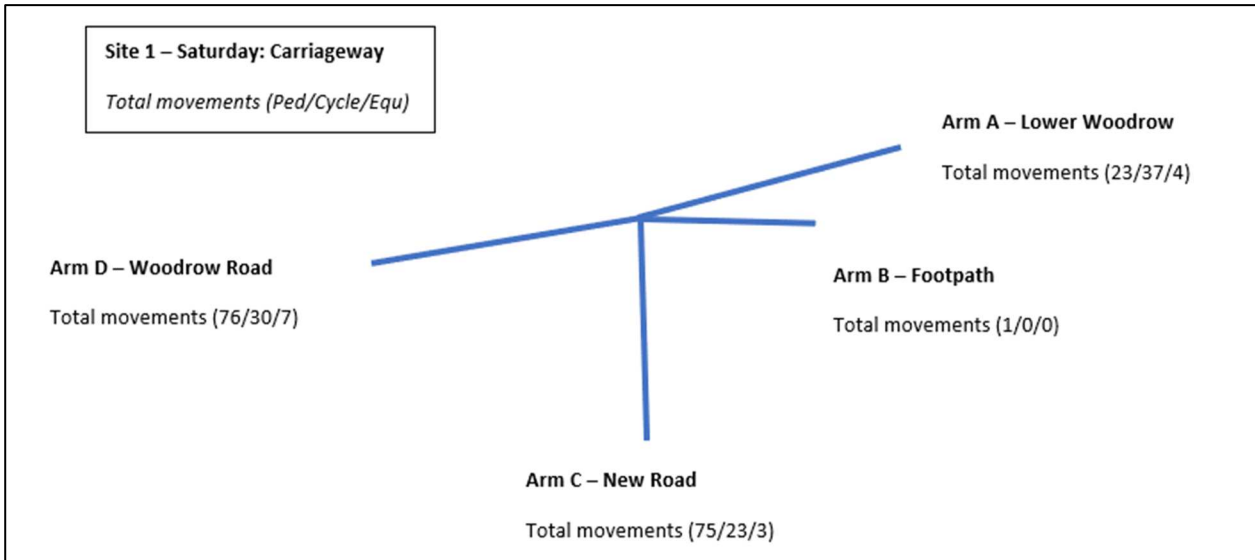
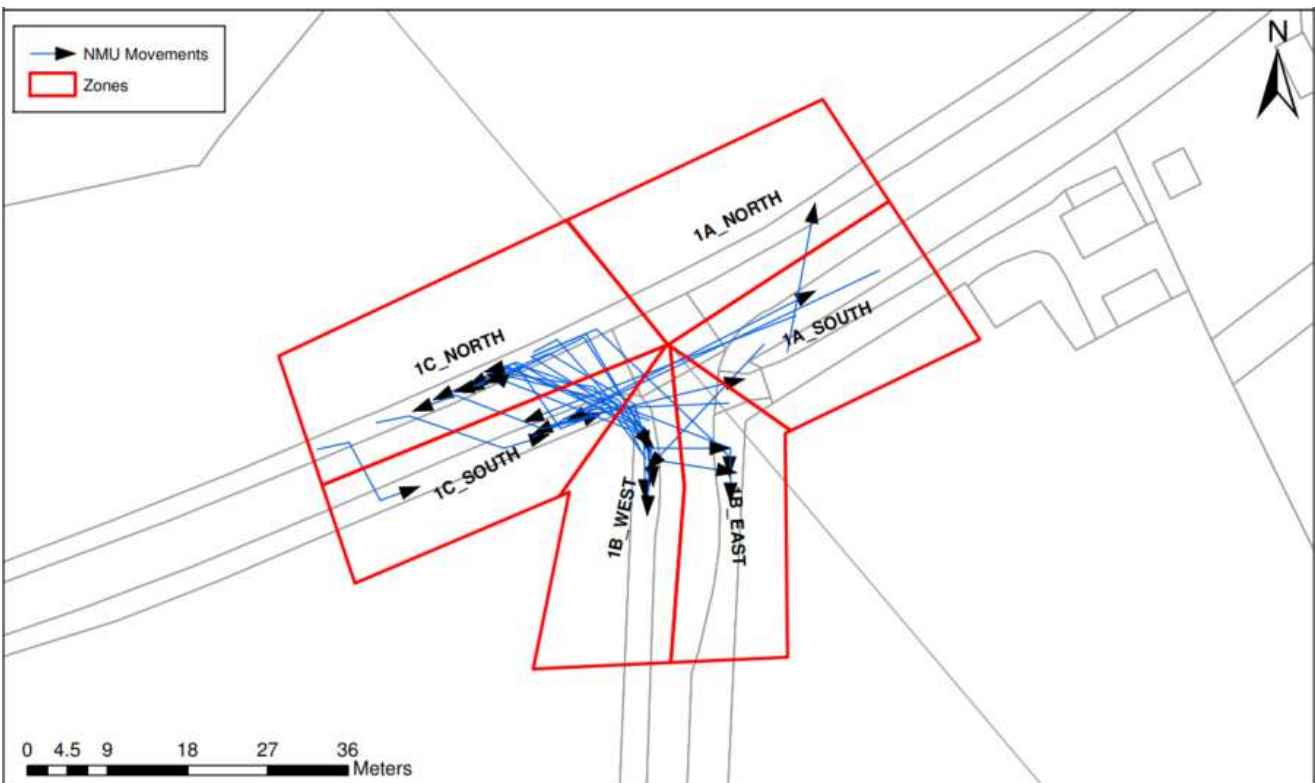


Figure 2-28 - Site 1 Saturday Crossing Movements



Site 2 - A3102 north-east of Melksham

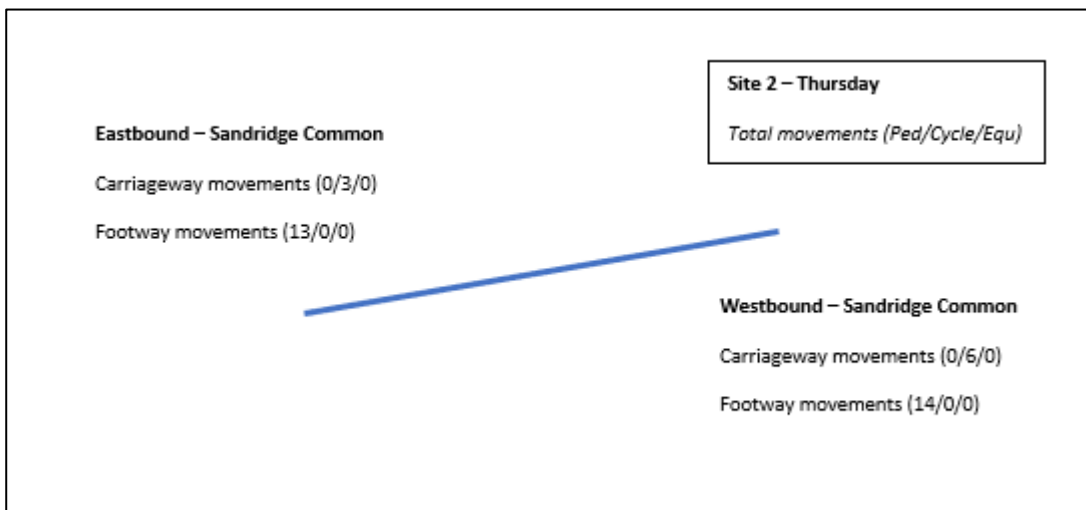
Figure 2-29 - Survey Layout for Site 2 - Sandridge Common



Thursday

A total of 36 movements were observed to use both the carriageway and footway of the A3102 Sandridge Common. Of these, 27 were pedestrian movements along the footway (13 eastbound and 14 westbound) and 9 were cyclists along the carriageway (3 eastbound and 6 westbound).

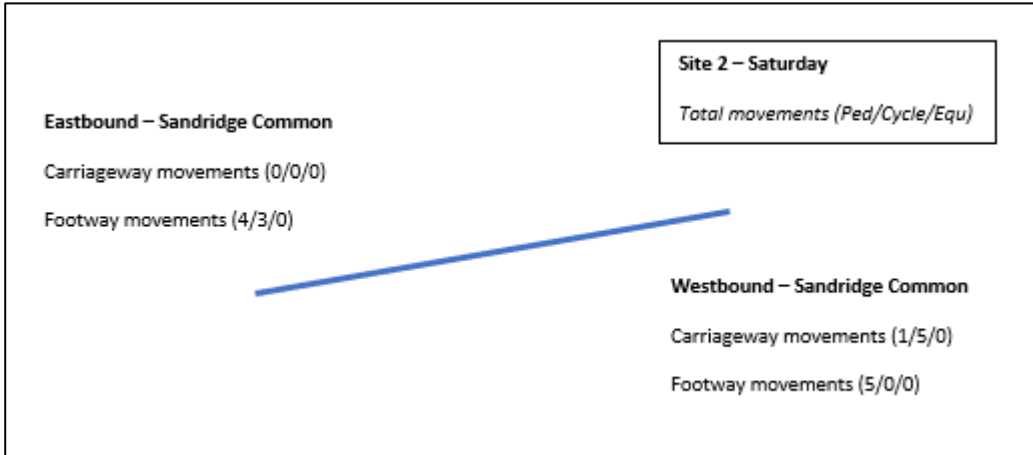
Figure 2-30 - Site 2 Thursday Movements per Arm



Saturday

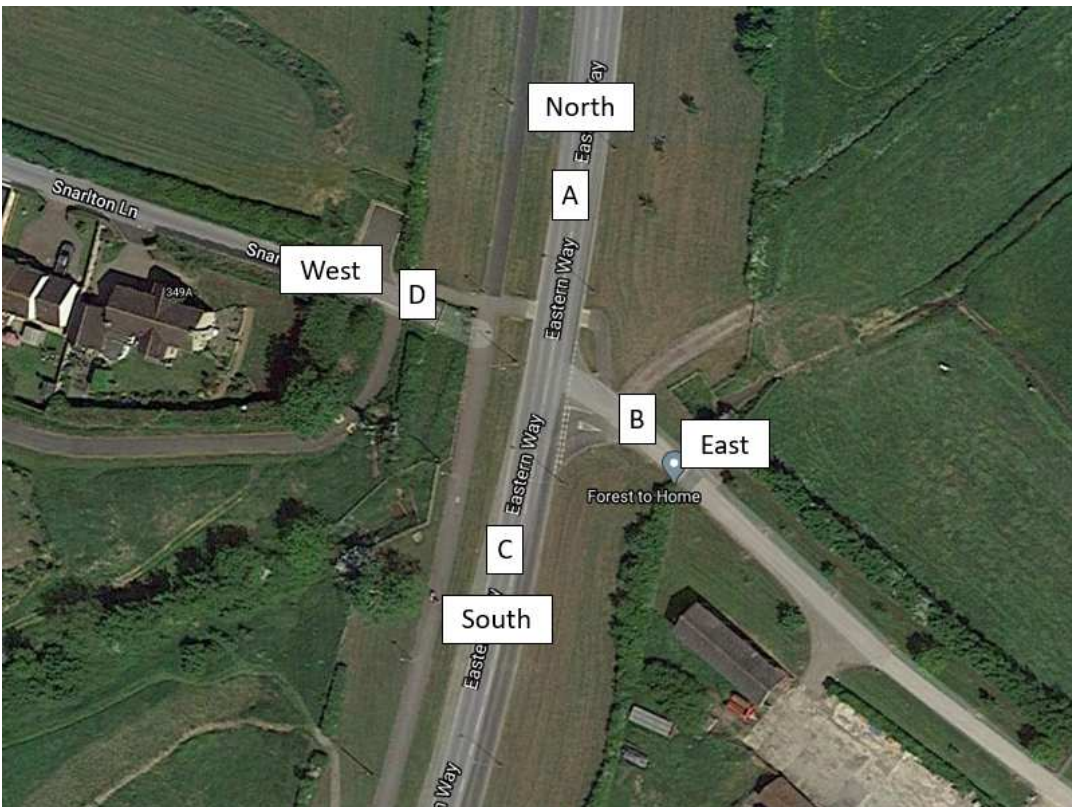
A total of 18 movements were observed to use both the carriageway and footway of the A3102 Sandridge Common. Of these, 9 were pedestrian movements along the footway (4 eastbound and 5 westbound) and 3 were cyclists using the footway heading eastbound. A total of 5 cyclists were recorded travelling in the carriageway headed westbound and 1 pedestrian walking in the carriageway headed westbound also.

Figure 2-31 - Site 2 Saturday Movements per Arm



Site 3 - Eastern Way to the east of Melksham

Figure 2-32 - Survey Layout for Site 3 - Eastern Way



Thursday

A total of 732 movements were observed to use the junction on the Thursday survey. Of these, 369 were pedestrian movements along Eastern Way's footway (Arms A and C of the junction). A total of 45 movements were carried out by cyclists along Eastern Way also (32 on the footway and 13 in the carriageway). Arm D, the footway only access to the west recorded 242 pedestrian movements and 5 cyclists on the Thursday whereas the PRow Bridleway heading east recorded 65 pedestrians and 6 cyclists. From the user survey data, it was observed that the vast majority of NMU users are from the 16-65 age range. The highest crossing movement was across the Eastern Way carriageway between Arm A and Arm B, linking the bridleway to the footway heading west into Melksham (see Figure 2-34).

Figure 2-33 - Site 3 Thursday Movements per Arm

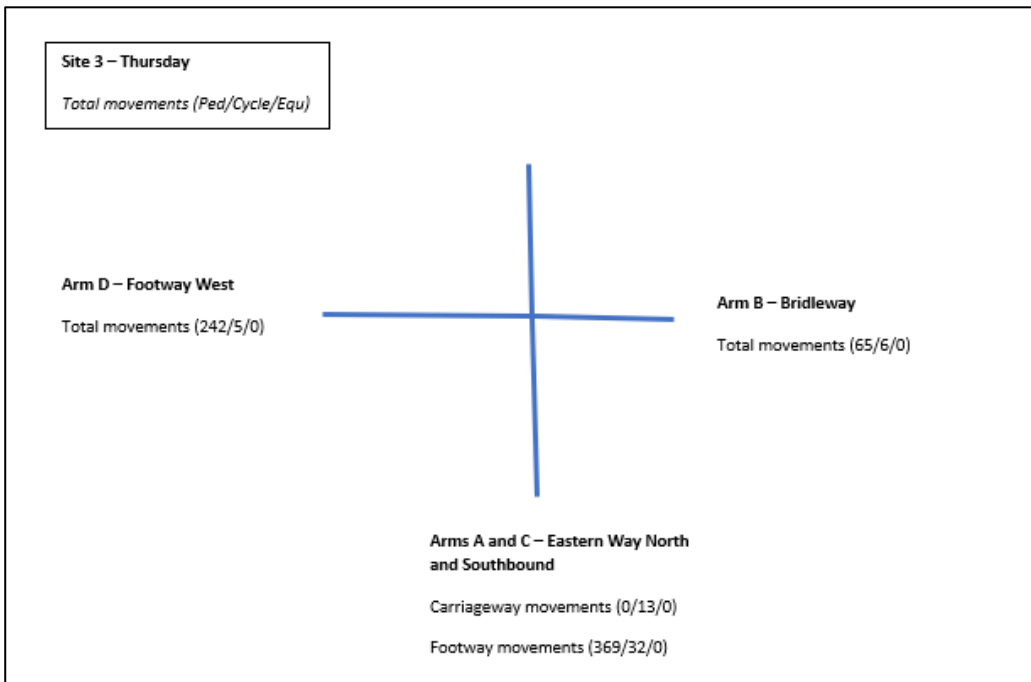
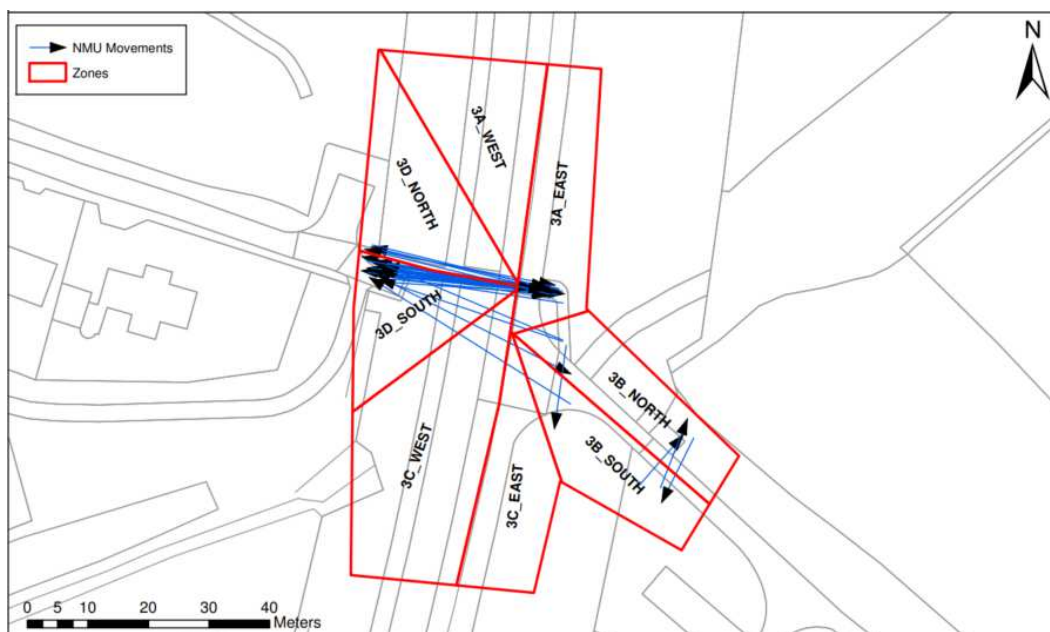


Figure 2-34 - Site 3 Thursday Crossing Movements



Saturday

A total of 1598 movements were observed to use the junction on the Saturday survey. Of these, 722 were pedestrian movements along Eastern Way's footway (Arms A and C of the junction). A total of 162 movements were carried out by cyclists along Eastern Way also (78 on the footway and 84 in the carriageway). Arm D, the footway only access to the west recorded 242 pedestrian movements and 5 cyclists on the Thursday whereas the PRow Bridleway heading east recorded 202 pedestrians and 28 cyclists. From the user survey data, it was observed that the NMU users were a mix of males and females covering all ages from under 16 to 65. Again, the highest crossing movement was across the Eastern Way carriageway between Arm A and Arm B, linking the bridleway to the footway heading west into Melksham (see Figure 2-36). As can be seen from the data this area is substantially busier during the weekend.

Figure 2-35 - Site 3 Saturday Movements per Arm

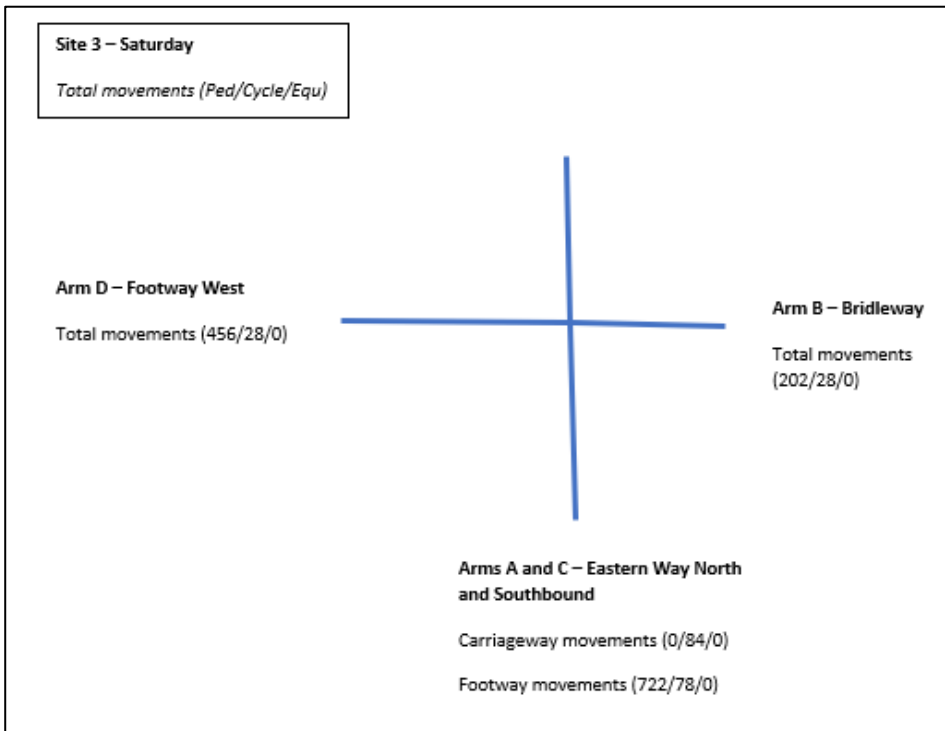
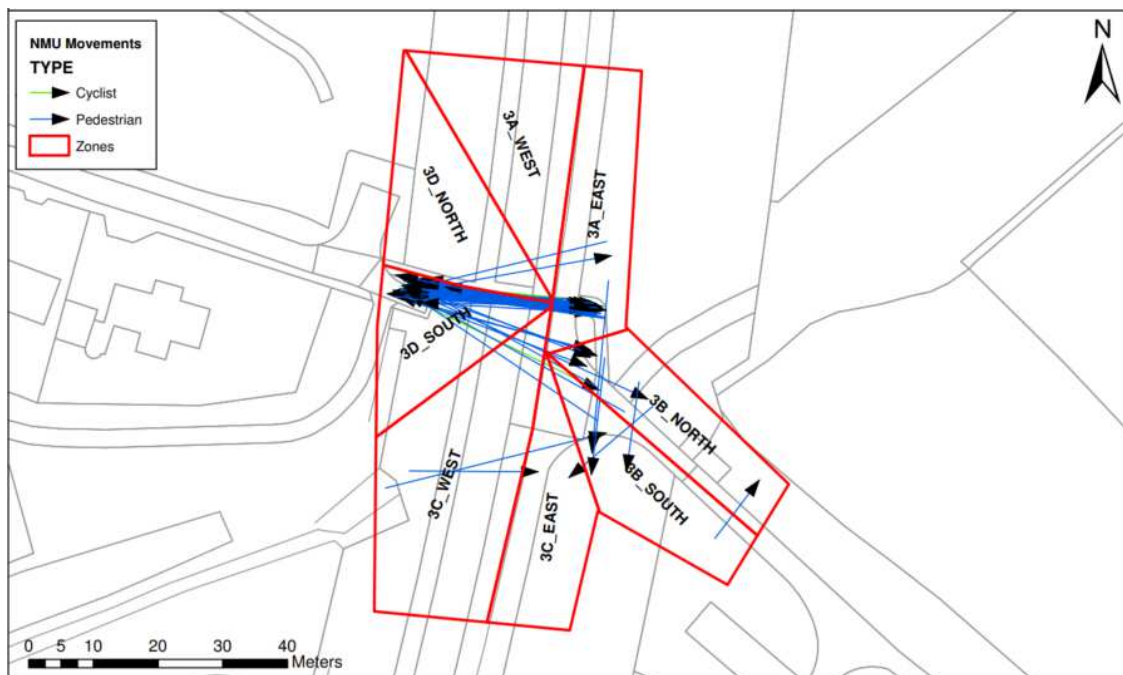


Figure 2-36 - Site 3 Saturday Crossing Movements





Site 4 - A365 to the south-east of Melksham

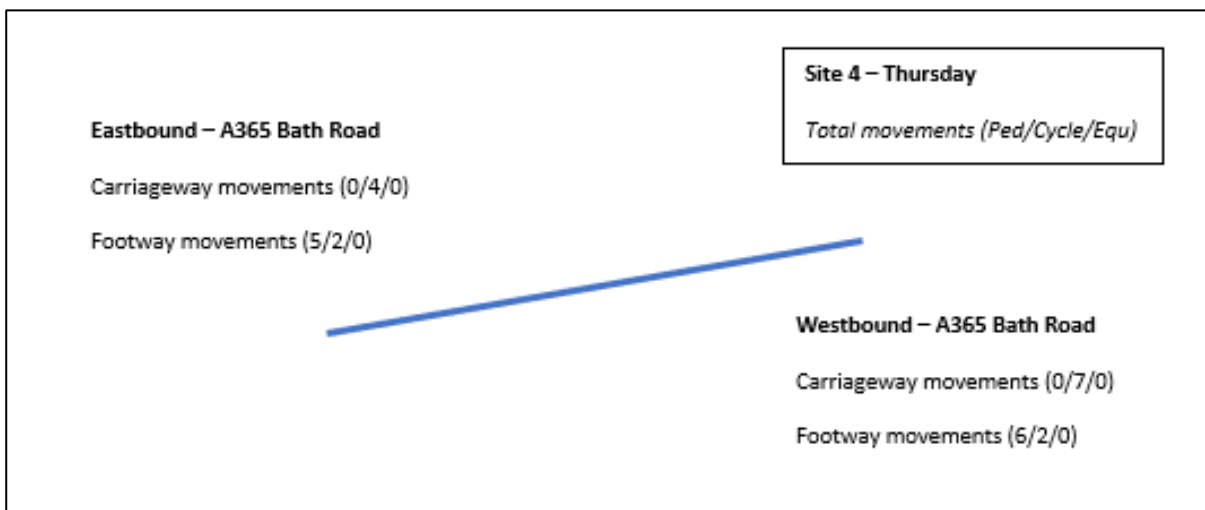
Figure 2-37 - Survey Layout for Site 4 - Bath Road



Thursday

A total of 26 movements were observed to use both the carriageway and footway of the A365 Bath Road. Of these, 11 were pedestrian movements along the footway (5 eastbound and 6 westbound) and 11 were cyclists along the carriageway (4 eastbound and 7 westbound). Four cyclists were also recorded using the footway (2 eastbound and 2 westbound).

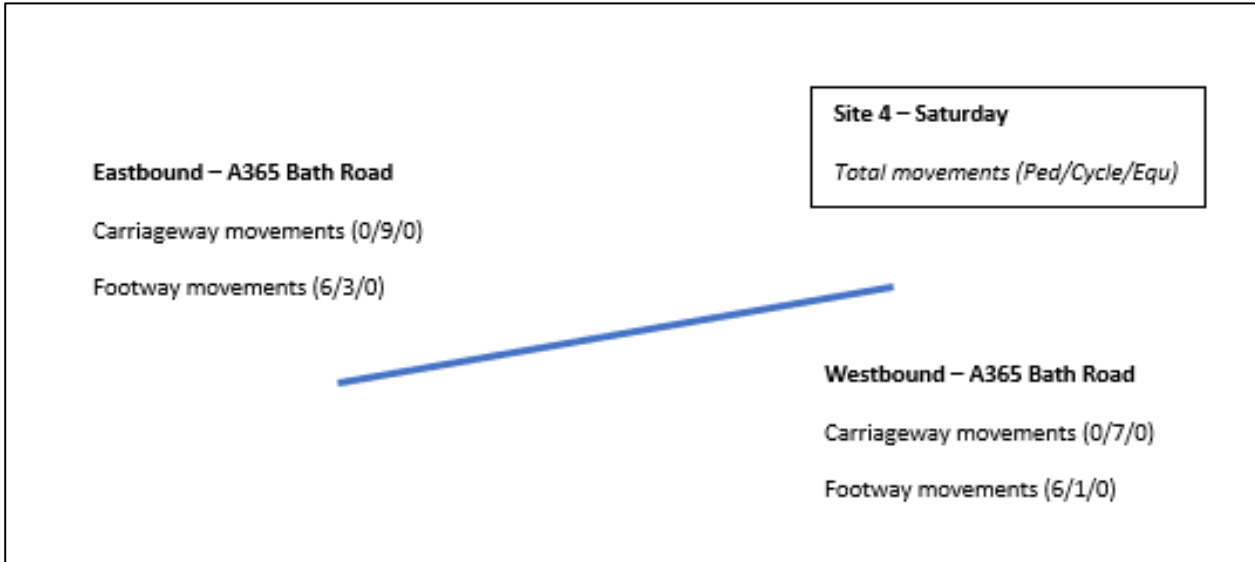
Figure 2-38 - Site 4 Thursday Movements per Arm



Saturday

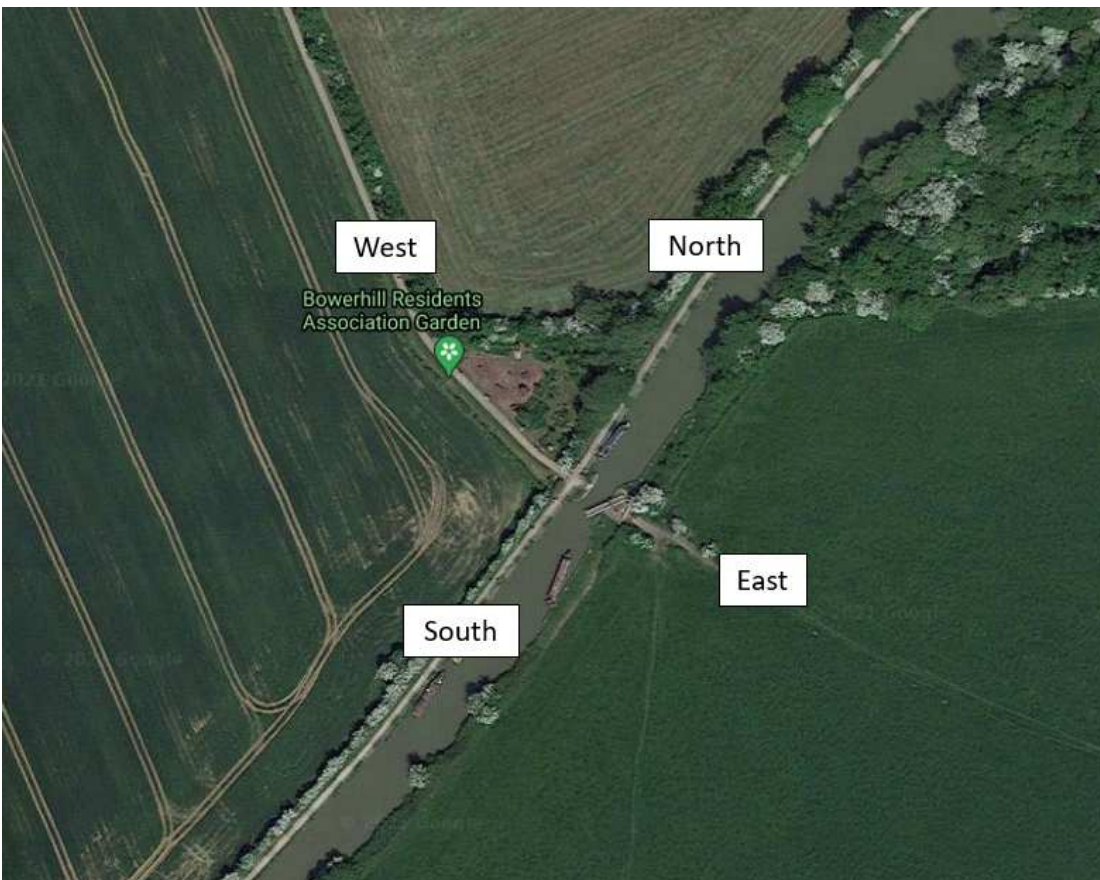
A total of 32 movements were observed to use both the carriageway and footway of the A365 Bath Road. Of these, 12 were pedestrian movements along the footway (6 eastbound and 6 westbound) and 16 were cyclists along the carriageway (9 eastbound and 7 westbound). Four cyclists were also recorded using the footway (3 eastbound and 1 westbound).

Figure 2-39 - Site 5 Saturday Movements per Arm



Site 5 - Canal lock to the south-east of Melksham

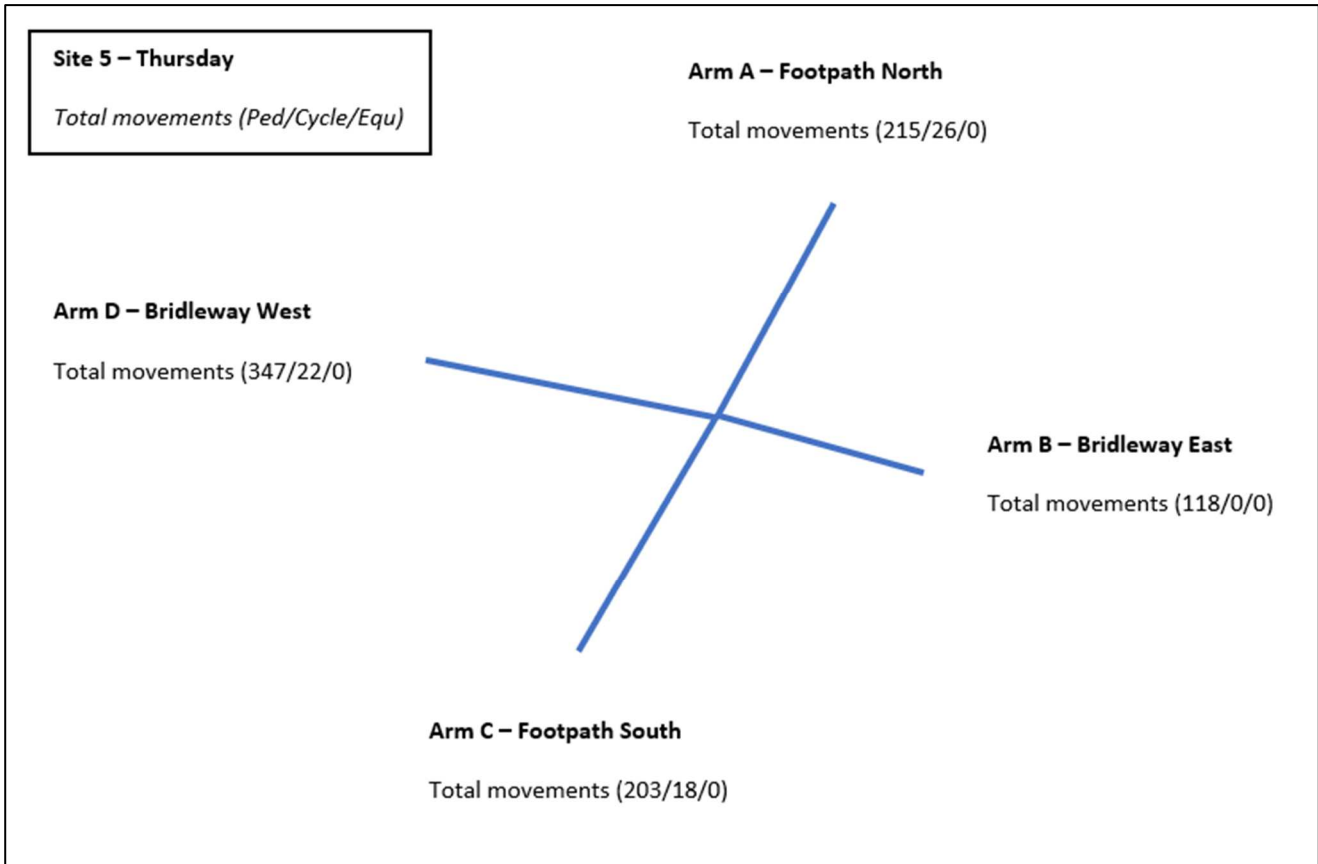
Figure 2-40 - Survey Layout for Site 5 - Canal Lock



**Thursday**

A total of 949 movements were observed to use the PRow junction on the Thursday survey. Of these, 418 pedestrian and 44 cyclist movements were recorded along Arms A and C of the junction, following the Kennet and Avon Canal footpath. A total of 347 pedestrian movements and 22 cyclist movements were recorded along Arm D of the junction, covering the footway that heads north west into Melksham. A total of 118 pedestrian movements were surveyed along Arm B, crossing the canal.

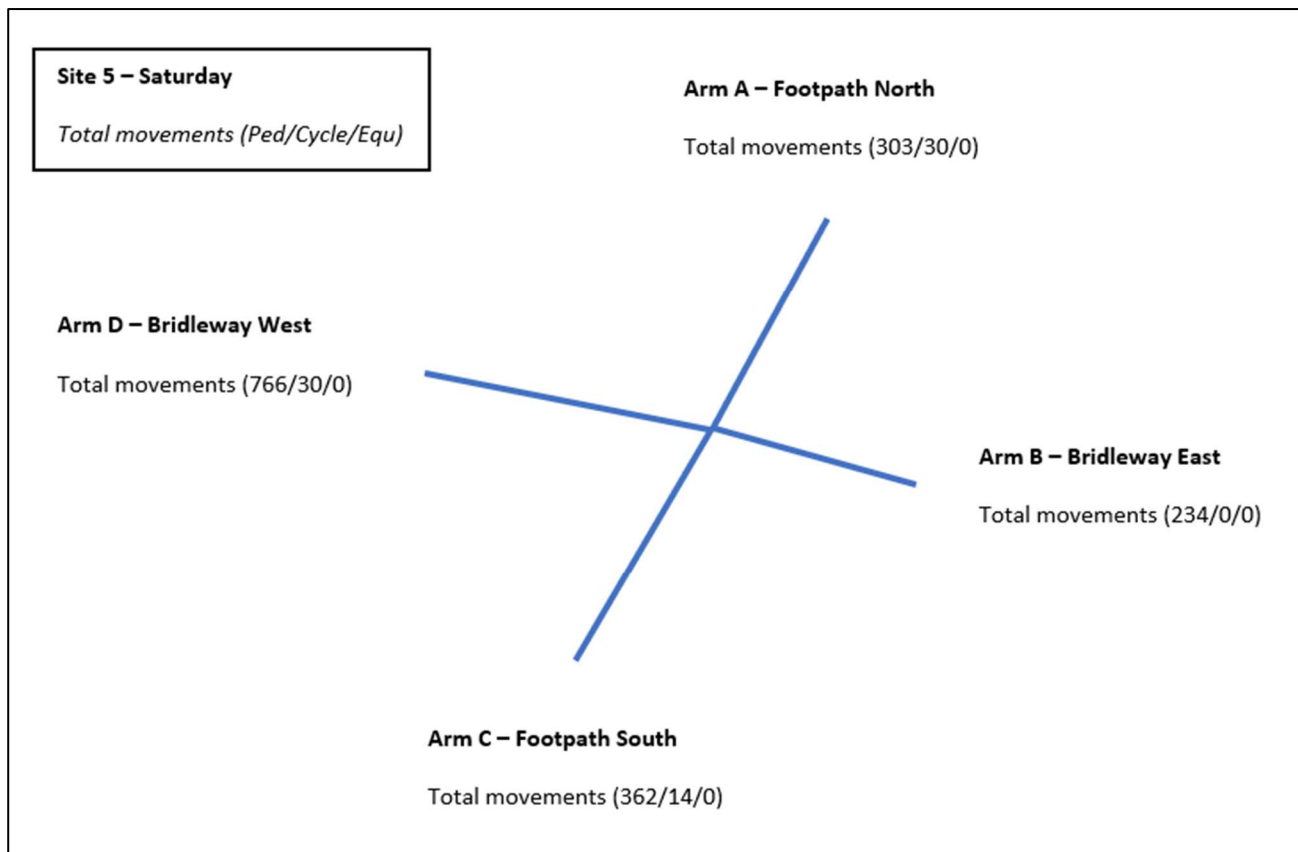
**Figure 2-41 - Site 5 Thursday Movements per Arm**



**Saturday**

A total of 1739 movements were observed to use the PRow junction on the Saturday survey. Of these, 665 pedestrian and 44 cyclist movements were recorded along Arms A and C of the junction, following the Kennet and Avon Canal footpath. A total of 766 pedestrian movements and 30 cyclist movements were recorded along Arm D of the junction, covering the footway that heads north west into Melksham. A total of 234 pedestrian movements were surveyed along Arm B, crossing the canal. Again, as can be seen from the data this area is substantially busier during the weekend.

Figure 2-42 - Site 5 Saturday Movements per Arm



### Conclusions from Survey Data

The key information that can be drawn from the survey results are:

- The only site with recorded equestrian use was Site 1 at Woodrow Road/Lower Woodrow, primarily on the Thursday and along Woodrow Road/Lower Woodrow;
- The highest movements were recorded at Site 5 at the canal lock to the south-east of Melksham. The bridleway linking the residential area of Bowerhill to the canal had the highest flows (primarily pedestrians) and Saturday was the busiest day;
- The next busiest site was Site 3 at Eastern Way; again Saturday was the busiest day and pedestrians far-outweighed cyclists at this location; and
- There were very low pedestrians or cyclists movements along the A3102 (Site 2) or the A365 (Site 4) on either Thursday or Saturday.

## 2.9. Site visit observations

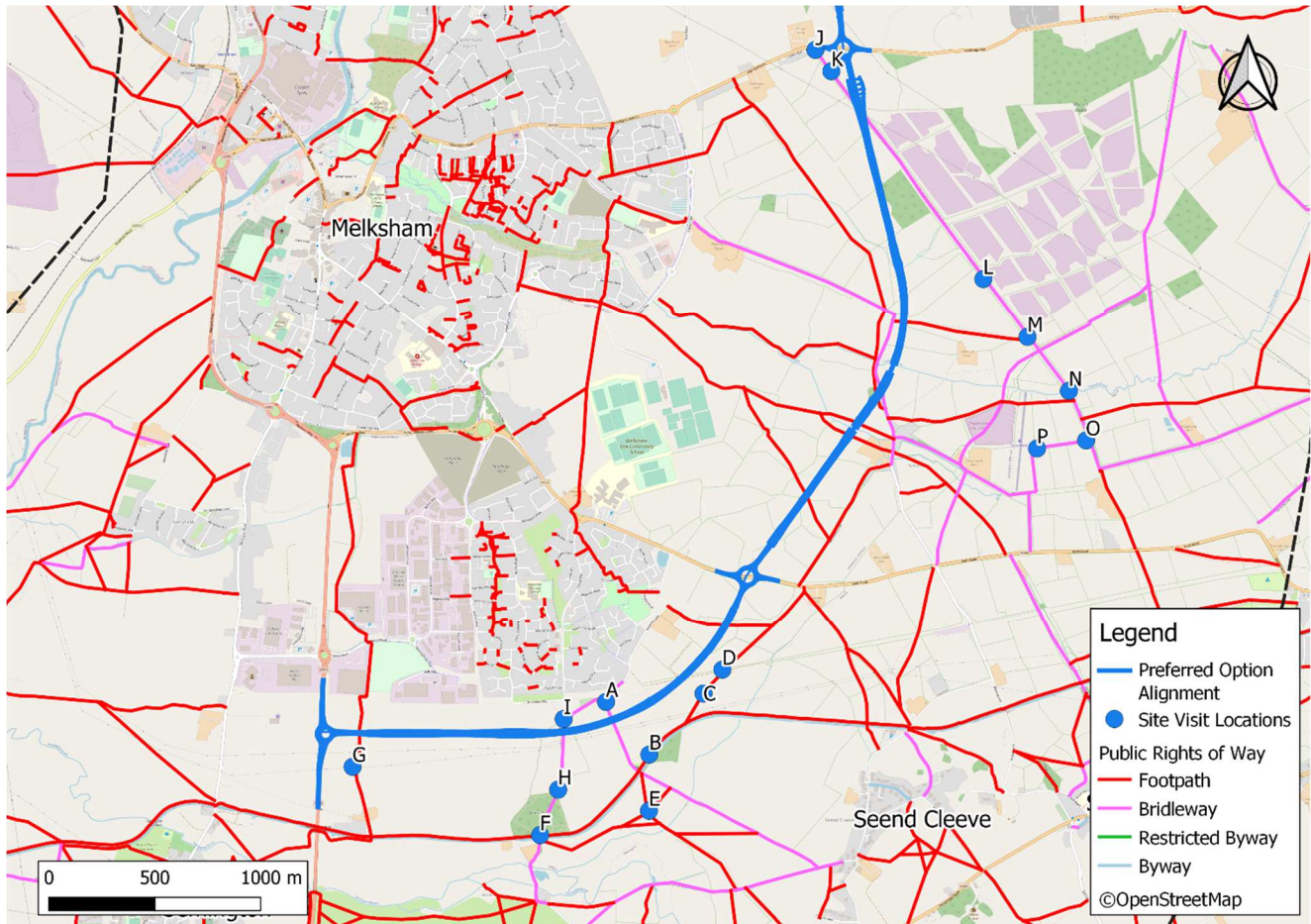
The site visit was undertaken by the Assessment Team (Rob Hunt and Jozef Denby) on Monday 15th March 2021 between 9am and 3pm. A wide range of pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian routes were walked during the site visit and a number of photographs were taken to supplement notes. It should be noted that it was intended that routes around the northern end of the bypass were also visited but were not included on the day due to a lack of publicly available parking locations in the vicinity (primarily New Road, Lower Woodrow and Lacock village). The interfaces between a number of PRowWs and the road network to the north of the A3102 were visited but it was not possible to take photos or leave vehicles due to a lack of safe places to stop. Due to several procedural challenges in the Covid-19 pandemic and time constraints the assessment team were not able to use bicycles on the site visit.

The weather on the day was clear and dry; however there was heavy rain on the days preceding the site visit which resulted in many of the PRowWs to the east of Melksham also being impassable due to boggy ground and flooding. This further restricted the completion of the planned site visit as some rights of way were inaccessible.

## Site Survey Observations

The following key observations were made during the site visit. It should be noted that sections of the PRow network were not visited as planned due to significant access problems caused by mud and standing water and parking not being possible in Lacock village. The locations of the key observations are highlighted on Figure 2-43 and the following photographs:

Figure 2-43 - Site Visit locations



- A. Good quality gravel topped bridleway between Bower Hill Lane and Bowerhill Community Picnic Area on the northern side of the Kennet and Avon Canal.
- B. The Kennet and Avon Canal tow path was a good quality well trafficked footpath used by a constant flow of walkers and dog walkers as well as canal boats users.
- C. Footpaths heading north east from Kennet and Avon Canal tow path, parallel to the proposed scheme route, are all footpaths passing across grass fielded areas.
- D. Route of old disused railway line now a well-worn compressed earthen track, approximately 5m wide. Large water filled potholes have been worn into the surface.
- E. Footpaths south of canal looked relatively well used even during bad weather. Main gates through fielded hedgerows become extremely waterlogged after rain.
- F. The Kennet and Avon Canal footpath was well signposted, including the routes branching off from the canal tow path.
- G. Footpath MELW42 is set to be diverted to follow the A350 carriageway and cross at the new junction with the south western end of the Melksham Bypass. Current footpath is across ploughed fields with no designated route across. Gates are provided at either end of the field, however these entrance/exit locations become very boggy/well-worn post wet weather.
- H. Sections of Bridleway SEEN17 become impassable after bad weather. Detour had to be taken during site visit. This route is only suitable for equestrians post heavy rain.

- I. Footpath from Bridleway SEEN17 to Brabazon Way impassable due to boggy ground through ploughed field.
- J. Large tarmacked parking area, located on the southern side of Sandridge Common carriageway, for people who want to use the bridleway MELW40 heading south. Stakeholders have stated that this is a popular area for equestrians to park up their horse boxes.
- K. Bridleway MELW40 begins as a good quality gravel track heading south, approximately 3m wide. Multiple dog walkers were seen using the route during the site visit, although it should be noted that the visit was undertaken during a weekday with the country still under some COVID-19 lockdown restrictions.
- L. Bridleway MELW40 becomes a very wide grass corridor, approximately 30m wide, with no designated track within this 30m cross section.
- M. Entrance to footpath MELW30 from bridleway MELW40 blocked by broken metal farm gate. No obvious path across proceeding field.
- N. As Bridleway MELW40 crosses Clackers Brook the PRow becomes very boggy and difficult to transverse after any wet weather.
- O. Bridleway SEEN14 branches off to the west. On the day of the site visit the track was nearly impassable.
- P. As SEEN41 opens up from a set bridleway corridor into the open fields to the south west the ground is covered in standing water that looks like it may be flooded most of the year round (deep water full of pond weed).

(Location A)



(Location B)



(Location C)



(Location D)



(Location D)



(Location E)



(Location F)



(Location G)



(Location G)





(Location H)



(Location I)



(Location J)



(Location K)



(Location L)



(Location M)



(Location M)



(Location N)



(Location O)



(Location P)



(Location P)



### 3. User Opportunities

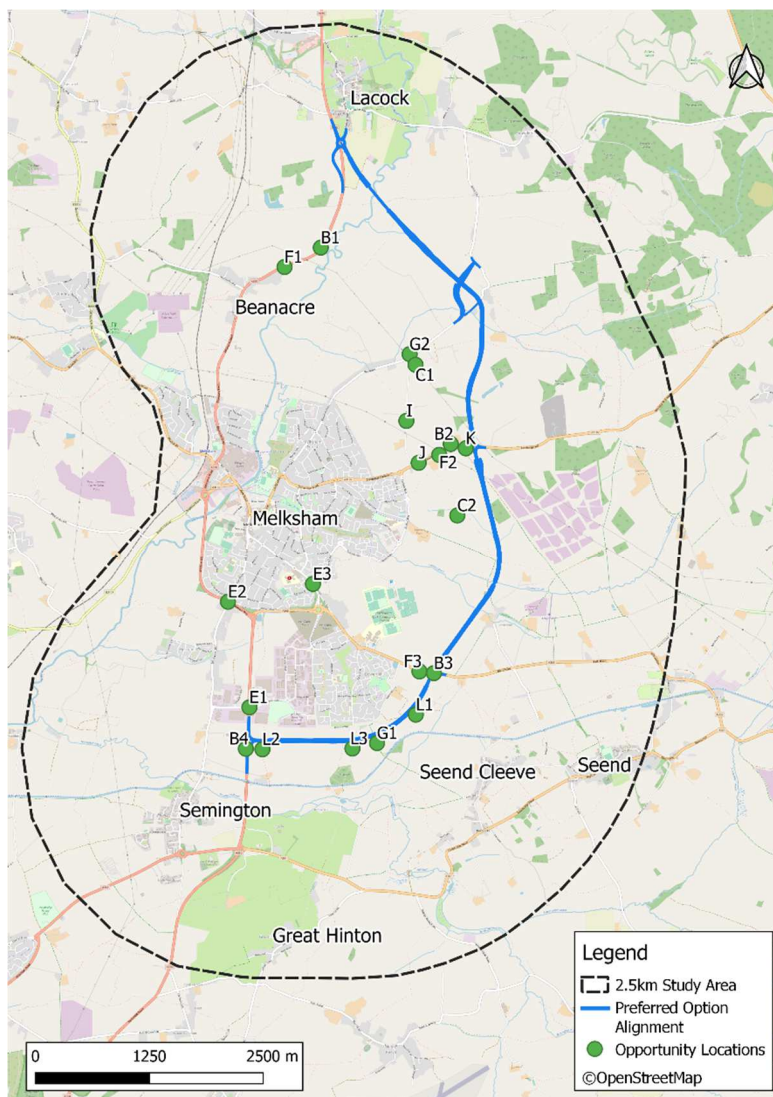
Based on findings from the desktop research, site visit and stakeholder liaison, the following opportunities have been identified which should be considered as the scheme design develops. It is stressed that GG 142 encourages the identification of opportunities that are associated with the scheme, but which may not be within the geographical scope of the works and thus it may not be possible to look to deliver some opportunities within the proposals. However, the identification of these further opportunities is intended to allow them to be highlighted for consideration in future works.

GG 142 requires that the identification and evaluation of the needs of all use groups is demonstrated in the assessment report. Whilst this is done throughout the preceding section of the report it would be normal practice to report on the opportunities in sections specific to each user group. However, for this report opportunities have been grouped geographically into one of three categories:

- Category 1: opportunities relating to the design of the bypass;
- Category 2: opportunities relating to complementary measures in the Melksham urban area/town centre; and
- Category 3: opportunities that relate to links between the bypass and other areas such as Melksham town.

Figure 3-1 maps the location of the highlighted opportunities within the study area.

**Figure 3-1 - Opportunity Location Map**



## 3.1. Overarching Design Opportunities - Critical

### A. Strategic Opportunity

There is an opportunity for any new walking, cycling and horse-riding infrastructure to be designed as high-quality routes that are inclusive and accessible for all types of user appropriate for each route. Although the route would not form part of the trunk road network design information for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians can be found in CD 143 and CD 195 in the Design Manual for Roads and Bridges; for cycling guidance the design should refer to latest national guidance on Cycle Infrastructure Design (LTN 1/20), following the five core design criteria that all cycle routes should be coherent, direct, safe, comfortable, attractive. For equestrian routes reference to the British Horse Society design guides is recommended.

## 3.2. Category 1: Bypass Design Opportunities – High Priority

### B. Public Rights of Way Opportunity

A number of PRow (footpaths and bridleways) are likely to be severed by the potential scheme route. These are detailed in Table 2-3 in Section 2.4. There is therefore an opportunity to provide high-quality crossing facilities – the format of which should be considered carefully – of the Melksham Bypass to connect these severed PRow. These crossing facilities should be appropriate for the user type of the particular PRow, such as pedestrians, cyclists or equestrians. Where diversion is unavoidable, there is an opportunity for diversions to be as short as possible and cater to the desire line for users. For any connecting PRow there is an opportunity to change the status of footpaths to bridleways if the connecting facilities are of an appropriate designation.

The Melksham Bypass is likely to include multiple junctions with existing highways that cross its potential route. All new junctions on the bypass should consider provision of high-quality crossing infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians in order to reduce severance caused by the scheme. At this early stage the following provision would appear to be appropriate (although this may change as the design progresses):

1. A350 northern junction – footway for pedestrians;
2. A3102 roundabout – footway for pedestrians following the A3102 or possible multi-user path for bridleway MELW40 users proceeding to New Road (pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians);
3. A365 roundabout – footway for pedestrians following the A365; and
4. A350 southern roundabout – footway for pedestrians from diverted footpath MELW42.

### C. Parallel Route Opportunity

There is an opportunity to provide infrastructure for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians alongside or parallel to the route of the Melksham Bypass. This would join up the PRows that will connect to the bypass and would particularly benefit the central section of the proposed bypass where there is a dense PRow network.

## 3.3. Category 2: Melksham Urban Area Complementary Opportunities – Beyond the Immediate Scheme Area, High User Benefit

### D. Walking & Cycling Opportunity

The need to successfully integrate walking and cycling with other sustainable modes of transportation was a strong theme within the local policy and strategy documents, with special emphasis on integration with Melksham Station.

One of the expected consequences of the Melksham Bypass is a reduction of through traffic passing along the A350 through Melksham. This reduction in town centre traffic opens up the opportunity to improve the overall active travel environment within Melksham town, with special reference to cyclist routes such as NCN Route 403.

The potential Melksham Bypass scheme could help facilitate several opportunities including:

1. A walking & cycling-friendly town centre – improved access for people to reach the town centre, through walking/cycling improvements on King Street/Bank Street;
2. Better access to the rail station – more direct links across the A350 between the station/employment areas and the rest of the town for pedestrians and cyclists; and,
3. Regional connections – a high-quality crossing of the A350 at Semington Road – completing a quality off-road route to NCN Route 403, to Trowbridge and to Bradford-on-Avon.

4. Four collisions occurred involving pedestrians crossing the carriageway on Bath Road at both designated and undesignated crossing points. There is an opportunity to improve the existing crossing infrastructure and add more priority crossings along this busy stretch of Melksham's high street area.

#### E. Cyclist Opportunity – Road Safety in Melksham

A large number of collisions in the area involved cyclists being struck by cars on a roundabout circulatory carriageway. There is an opportunity to increase driver awareness of the potential for cyclists to be using the roundabout, or the provision of dedicated cycle infrastructure providing a segregated route – or even a wholly different route – for cyclists away from the roundabouts with the worst historical collision numbers. There is an opportunity to review the geometry of each roundabout to assess the feasibility of amending geometry to reduce entry and exit speeds and improve general visibility of cyclists. The key roundabouts are:

1. Hampton Park Roundabout;
2. Semington Roundabout; and
3. Spa Road / Snowberry Lane Roundabout.

Four collisions occurred involving cyclists traveling along Spa Road being struck by cars turning onto the main carriageway from side streets. This highlights that there is a lack of awareness by drivers of cyclists using the main carriageway. There is an opportunity to improve cycle infrastructure e.g. cycle lanes that continue across junctions and to increase vehicle user awareness of cyclists with the use of signs/road markings or by improving the visibility splays at junctions when joining Spa Road.

### 3.4. Category 3: Network Connection Complementary Opportunities – Beyond the Immediate Scheme Area, Moderate User Benefit

#### F. Connecting Highways Opportunity

Improvements to existing footways for pedestrians or on-carriageway routes for cyclists on all connecting highways present an opportunity for improvement connected with the proposed bypass scheme. This could include:

1. the path/route between Melksham and Beanacre (and the connection with the bypass) for pedestrians and cyclists;
2. the junction with the A3102 for pedestrians (and possibly bridleway users wishing to cross the bypass); and
3. pedestrians (on the footway) and cyclists (on the carriageway) following the A365.

#### G. Traffic-Free Cycle Route Opportunity

There is an opportunity to retain – or provide a suitable, direct alternative – to two existing routes:

1. A bridleway (SEEN13) that connects Route 4 to the Bowerhill residential estate (see Figure 2-6) would be severed by the bypass. This section of cycle route infrastructure is a path with a sealed surface approximately 2m in width and survey data indicates this is heavily used. The bridleway to the west (MELW45) was noted to be in significantly poorer condition – and impassable in some locations – and thus SEEN13 should be retained; and
2. NCN Route 403 is a 'on-road route' that follows Woodrow Road north-east of Melksham (see Figure 2-7). The bypass would cross the route of the NCN on Woodrow Road/Lower Woodrow.

#### H. Canal Towpath Connection Opportunity

There is an opportunity to link walking, cycling and horse-riding routes provided as part of the bypass scheme to current and proposed canal towpath routes in the Melksham area. Further investigation of proposed canal development schemes is recommended.

#### I. New Road Opportunity

Strava Heatmap data suggests New Road (between Woodrow Road and the A3102) is well used by both pedestrians and cyclists. There is an opportunity to improve this route for these users, for example through introduction of a speed limit, traffic calming, signing and improved access to the junctions at either end as well as a possible extension of the footway on Woodrow Road to New Road. New Road may also present an acceptable alternative route for users travelling parallel to the bypass route. Signs are located on New Road indicating the presence of horse-riders and thus any improvements are also likely to benefit these users.

### J. Equestrian Opportunity

Traffic speed control measures on Lower Woodrow (south-east of Queenfield Farm) could be introduced for the benefit of equestrian users and to promote a more appealing environment for on-carriageway users.

### K. Equestrian Opportunity

The realigned MELW40 bridleway will meet the A3102 at a different location and there is an opportunity to re-provide a parking area for horse-boxes to allow equestrians to access the bridleway as is facilitated at present.

### L. Public Rights of Way Condition Opportunity

An opportunity exists to improve the condition of the PRowS that connect with the bypass both in terms of the condition of each route, for example with vegetation clearance, improvements to surfacing and fencing – appropriate facilities, e.g. appropriate surfacing, width, fencing etc as well as access arrangements. The identification of specific elements of this opportunity should be considered as part of a wider review of the network once a route option has been confirmed for development. However, from the site visit the following specific locations were identified:

1. The route of a dismantled railway line south-east of Bowerhill Lane may be used as a new route for diverted PRowS (and possibly for farm vehicles). The surface of this route should be suitable for all types of use and resistant to flooding and rain damage;
2. Footpath MELW42 at the southern end of the bypass may be diverted to cross the bypass close to the A350. As the existing footpath crosses ploughed fields and thus becomes indistinct at certain times of the year. The diverted route should be protected from farm activities and be resistant to flooding and rain damage; and
3. Bridleway SEEN17 is being rerouted and should be more resistant to flooding and rain damage than the existing bridleway.

### M. Pedestrian, Cyclist and (possibly) Equestrian Opportunity

The A350 between Melksham and Lacock is currently unappealing for most pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians due to the high speed and volume of traffic and the lack of continuous or appropriate facilities. There is an opportunity for the development of a new off-carriageway facility within the highway boundary alongside the A350 to connect Melksham and Lacock.



## 4. Next Steps

### 4.1. Collaborative design

The walking, cycling and horse-riding review team provide advice to the design team regarding opportunities for including improvements to pedestrian, cyclist and equestrian facilities as the design process continues.

### 4.2. Further outputs

A walking, cycling and horse-riding review report will be produced at the end of the preliminary design phase to document the discussions and decisions made during that phase of the design process. A second WCHAR review report should be produced at the end of the detailed design phase as a record of deliberations during design work following the preliminary design phase.

## 5. Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Assessment Team Statement

As Lead Assessor, I confirm that this walking, cycling & horse-riding assessment report has been compiled in accordance with DMRB GG 142, except where noted in the Introduction section. It contains the appropriate information for the wider design team. The walking, cycling & horse-riding assessment was undertaken by the following Assessment Team:

### Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Lead Assessor

**Rob Hunt** BEng, MSc (Eng), CertHE, CEng, MICE, MCIHT, FSoRSA  
 Managing Consultant  
 Atkins Transportation  
[rob.hunt@atkinsglobal.com](mailto:rob.hunt@atkinsglobal.com)

Signed:  
 Date: June 2021



### Walking, Cycling and Horse-Riding Assessor

**Jozef Denby**  
 Graduate Transport Planner  
 Atkins Transportation

As design team leader I confirm that the assessment has been undertaken at the appropriate stage of scheme development and that the wider design team has been involved in the process. I confirm that in my professional opinion the appointed Lead Assessor has the appropriate experience for the role making reference to the expected competencies contained in GG 142.

### Design Team Leader

**Jeevan Rana** BEng, MEng, CEng MCIHT  
 Principal Engineer

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Signed:  
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