

B&NES Strategic Network

Chew Valley Lake and communities

November 2014

About Sustrans

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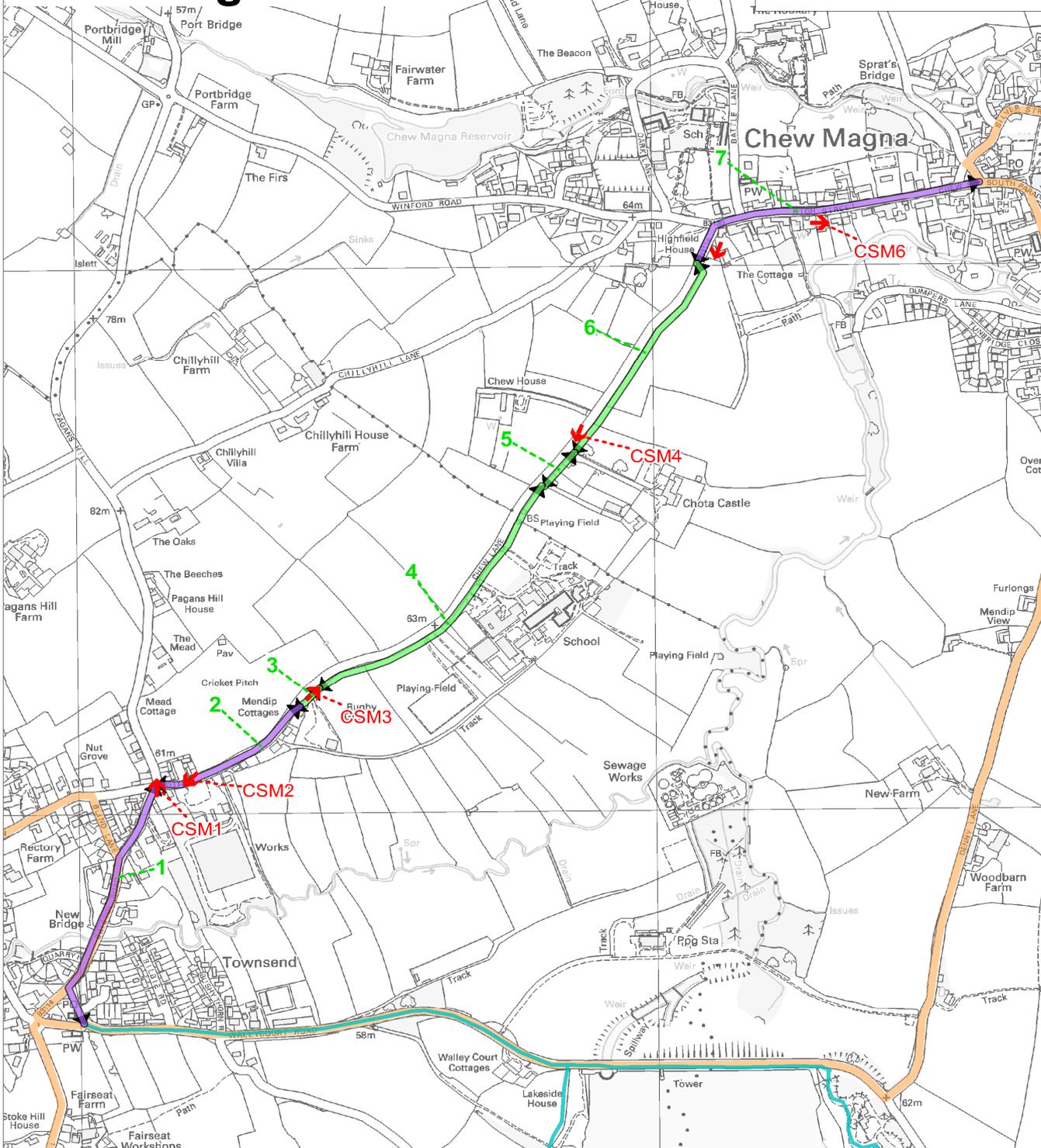
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Proposed Chew Stoke to Chew Magna Link



Chew Stoke to Chew Magna proposals:

- Status:
- Provision of new facility
- Type:
- Traffic-free
 - On-road
- 1 Route section
- CSM1 Photograph reference

Other Routes:

- Additional routes proposed within Strategic Network Review
- Existing Routes

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Chew Valley Lake and communities

The villages around the north side of Chew Valley Lake, Chew Magna, Chew Stoke and Bishop Sutton, have a combined population of around 3,200, set in a very attractive rural area. Central to the area is the Chew Valley Lake, a man-made body of water which is one of the main Bristol Water reservoirs for Bristol and Bath. The lake is also a very popular destination for day visits, and a very important bird reserve, designated as a Ramsar site giving it the highest level of international conservation protection for wetland.

In view of the limited employment opportunities locally, and the infrequent public transport service, there is thought to be a high level of car commuting from the area towards Bath and Bristol. The secondary school between Chew Stoke and Chew Magna, Chew Valley School, with 1,200 pupils, attracts staff and pupils from a wide catchment, with many school trips being made by car.

The main difficulty for cyclists in the area making local journeys is the volume of peak time traffic, and the speeds on the local roads, which are generally of restricted width, often with high hedges on either side that obscure lines of sight.

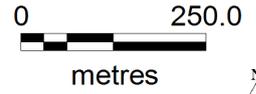
Chew Valley School is located on the B3114 Chew Lane which is busy at peak times (40mph) with narrow footways, and no specific cycle facilities of any kind. The school is less than a mile from Chew Magna and Chew Stoke, but the road conditions at the start and end of the school day are intimidating for less confident cyclists and not suitable for the school journey.

Improving opportunities for cycling will very challenging in this area. There is little if any scope for on road improvements outside the villages, where a 20 mph limit and some minor interventions are proposed. To make a real difference it would be necessary to create entirely new cycle paths off the carriageways of the main roads, which would require the acquisition of third party land to achieve.

There is however a major opportunity to create an exceptional leisure route which could link to and also serve the villages. A very high level of public demand for a Chew Valley Lake Circuit was demonstrated through public consultation, and significant lengths of this route have already been created, on the western side of the Lake and the south eastern corner, and a planning permission has been granted for a section along the north side within the Bristol Water boundary. A Chew Valley Circuit could have local economic and health benefits, and would attract visitors from nearby towns and cities. Its value for local utility journeys is relatively limited however.



Proposed Chew Stoke to Chew Magna Link



CSM3 Ample space on the highway verge



CSM4 Off highway traffic free path



CSB7 – Except cycles from No-entry rule



CSM6 traffic free path could be created inside the adjacent field



CSM5 Chew Lane leaving Chew Magna



Chew Stoke to Chew Magna proposals:		Other Routes:	
Status:			
	Provision of new facility		Additional routes proposed within Strategic Network Review
Type:			
	Traffic-free		On-road
	Existing Routes		
	1 Route section		CSM1 Photograph reference



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Chew Stoke to Chew Magna

The main purpose of this route is to serve demand for cycling to Chew Valley School from its nearest catchment villages and as part of a longer school journey from outlying settlements. The journey to school from Chew Magna and Chew Stoke is less than one mile, a very short cycling distance, and while walking this distance is perfectly feasible on road side footways, there is a case for making specific provision for cycling when the journey from more distant settlements is taken into account.

Suggested measures:

1. Road with pedestrian footway
Include 20 mph zone. (See 2 below)
2. On road with pedestrian footway.
Consideration should be given to the speed limit within the village should be reduced to 20mph. The transition from the traffic free path / shared footway is achieved at the entrance at the Ruby Club, taking advantage of the existing access and the wide highway verge.
traffic free path could be created inside the adjacent field boundary on the eastern side of the road, subject to agreement being reached with the private landowners. The path width should be at least 2m and separate from the pedestrian facility.
3. There is a pedestrian footway only alongside the road.
Widen footway for shared use. Link footway to new traffic free path on perimeter of Rugby Club.
4. No existing cycle facility. Pedestrian footway only.
Off highway traffic free path
5. Footway 1.2 m wide fronting residences
Widen to 2.5 m minimum as shared footway to continue traffic free route to School boundary.
6. The distance from Chew Magna to Chew Valley School is about half a mile, easily walkable for pupils and staff living locally. The road is generally 6 - 7 metres wide, with a footway varying between c. 1.0 and 1.5 m wide. It would not be practicable to create cycle lanes of minimum recommended width (1.5 m) on carriageway.
To encourage cycle journeys between Chew Magna and the school, and between the villages, an off highway
7. Busy High Street with restricted width between raised footways and residential walls. The on-road car parking tends to reduce traffic speeds, and engender caution in road users.
To reinforce the existing conditions, and improve conditions for pedestrians in places where there are no footways, a 20 mph limit should be considered, with appropriate signage to alert the possible presence of cyclists.

Chew Stoke and Bishop Sutton

Chew Stoke and Bishop Sutton are only 2.5m apart but are separated by busy and fairly fast roads which are enough to intimidate less confident cyclists. The route is also slightly indirect thanks to the prohibition on entry to Ham Lane from the east.

The aim of the proposed works would be to create a very attractive, partly traffic free route, exploiting the best of the Chew Lake margin, and reducing traffic speeds where opportunities exist. The route also links to the existing National Cycle Network route on Denny Lane as a direct link to Chew Magna, and would form the northern section of a Chew Lake circuit, described in more detail below.

Suggested measures:

1. Leaving Chew Stoke the speed limit is 30 mph on a well-engineered modern road with good forward visibility. Beyond the village gateway the speed limit is 40mph.

Consideration should be given extending the 30 mph speed limit to the eastern end of the dam to encourage cycling between the village and the traffic free routes to Bishop Sutton and round Chew Lake.

2. Pedestrian Footway approx. 2m wide

The existing footway is below recommended width for shared use. The footway links to the

recently constructed gateway to the path on to the Bristol Water facility at the eastern end of the dam. If the speed limit over the dam were reduced to 30 mph, shared use on the footway could be acceptable.

3. Pedestrian path.

A planning application has been granted and partly implemented to create a new access at the east end of the Lake dam, and upgrade and widen the existing footpath between the dam and the access road from Ham Lane. The path would form part of the proposed Chew Lake circular route.

4. Ham Lane shows a 'No Entry' sign at the approach from Walley Lane to the north, but is not one way. Motor traffic is restricted due to the width of the lane, generally 4 metres minimum.

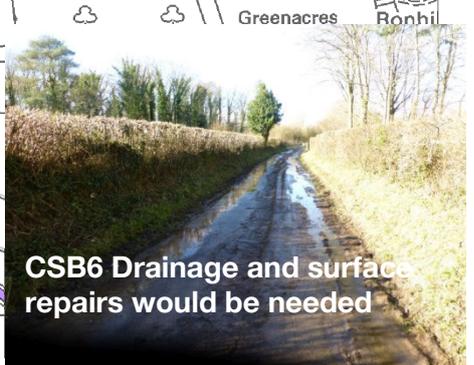
An audit would be necessary, but there appears to be sufficient width for motor traffic and cycles / pedestrians to pass comfortably within the existing width of the lane. An exclusion from the 'no entry' rule for cyclists should be implemented, with warning signs for vehicles using the road.



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Proposed Chew Stoke to Bishop Sutton Link (south)

0 150.0



Chew Stoke to Bishop Sutton proposals:
Status:

— Provision of new facility

Type:

■ Traffic-free ■ On-road

1 Route section CSM1 Photograph reference

Other Routes:

— Additional routes proposed within Strategic Network Review

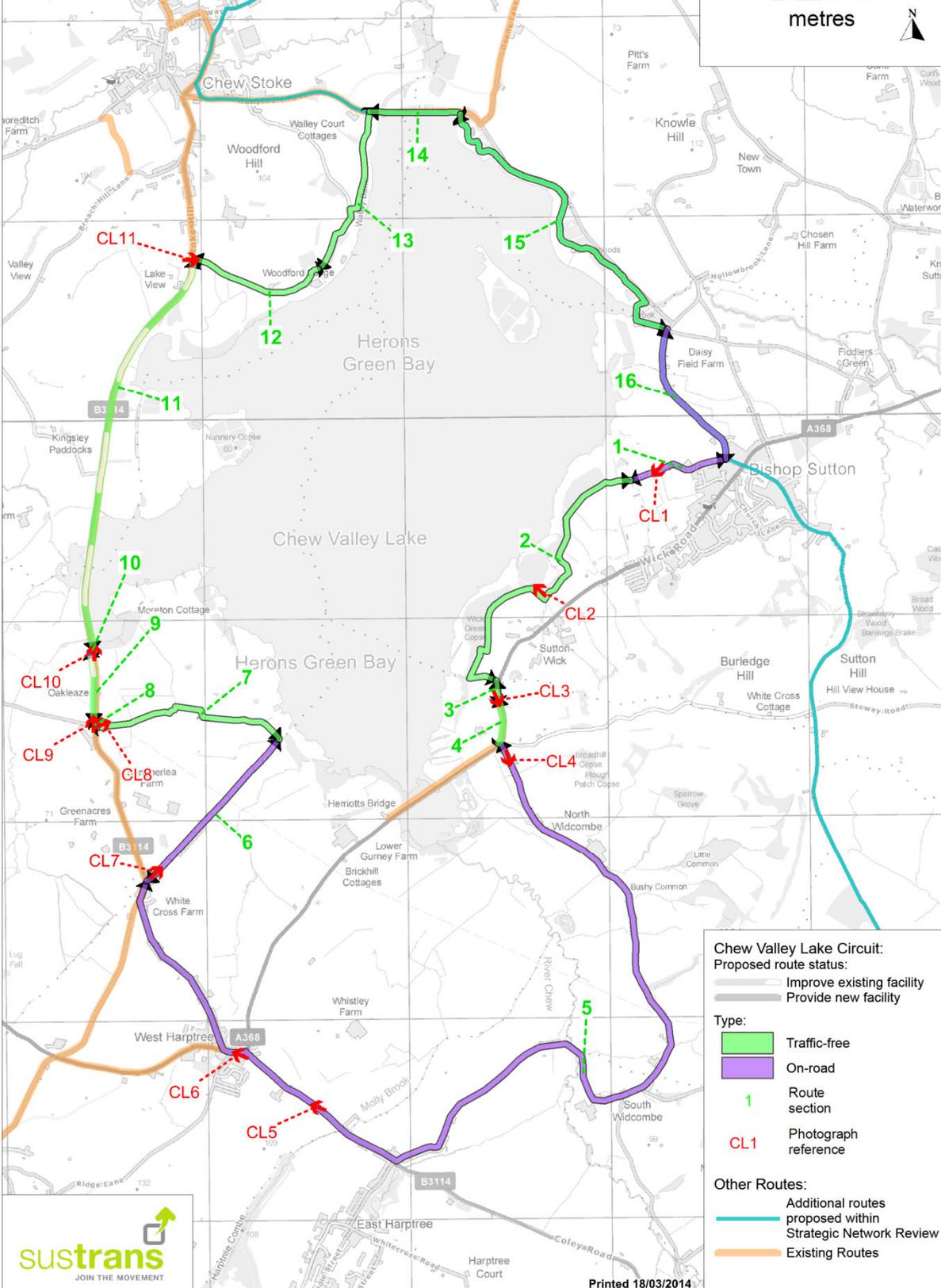
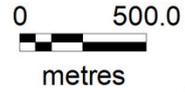
— Existing Routes



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Proposed Chew Valley Lake Circuit



Chew Valley Lake Circuit:
Proposed route status:
 Improve existing facility
 Provide new facility

Type:
 Traffic-free
 On-road
1 Route section
CL1 Photograph reference

Other Routes:
— Additional routes proposed within Strategic Network Review
— Existing Routes



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Chew Lake Circuit

Chew Lake is one of the acknowledged scenic highlights of Bath & NE Somerset, a huge expanse of water, artificially held in a low valley, but with all the appearance of a natural lake surrounded by the pastoral splendour of the Chew Valley. The lake is a Ramsar site, protected for its international significance for waterfowl, but is also a popular recreational centre hosting bird-watching, angling, and sailing, as well as passive walking round sections of the margin.

There has been a long standing desire for a cycle and walking route around the entire lake perimeter, and this route seeks to meet this desire. It is accepted that conservation considerations to protect nesting birds from disturbance rule out a route on the lake margin, except where already open to public access, and the route avoids such impacts by following a line which, at the closest is separated from the lake by fields or woods, and takes a meander through the delightful lanes south of the lake to avoid the busy southern road causeway. It also visits the villages of Bishop Sutton and West Harptree with their pubs, and shops, as well as the Bristol Water café on the north shore, offering the possibility for visitors to enjoy a short days cycle taking in the splendid scenery, and benefitting the local economy.

The proposal which has been mapped is closely based on Sustrans study dated May 2007, which also shows a shorter walking route following the southern shore around Herriotts Mill Pool. This is not included on this proposal but should form part of any development of this project.

In the public consultations for this strategic network study, the Chew Lake circuit was by far the most popular in terms of nominations by the public, especially at the Chew Magna event.

The full cycling circuit is about 12 miles. This would be a good family cycle ride for visitors to the Lake, and local residents would be within a mile of the route, and, if the other local proposals are implemented, connected to it by good quality links, creating a potentially popular attraction and facility for leisure and exercise. There could, though we have done no economic study, be potential for commercial activity such as bike hire, or organised guiding, and increased trade at local cafes, pubs and shops.

No that part of the circuit coincides with part of the route between Chew Stoke and Bishop Sutton, described above, so some of the notes are duplicated. Parts of the route are on private land, visited for the previous study, but not accessed for this study.

The Chew Lake Circuit would be a major project, requiring the acquisition of new permissions over private land, environmental appraisal, planning permissions and significant funding. However, large parts of the route exist, planning permission has been granted, and apparently implemented, in the section between the northern dam and the Bristol water visitor centre, and there is substantial local support.

1. Very quiet narrow lane.
No proposals - the lane serves only one property and the adjacent fields.
2. This section runs along the edge of woodland and fields.
This section is designed to minimise any impact of birds on the Lake (a Ramsar Site) by creating a new path along field edges and around natural features. The route has been surveyed for a previous study, but not this one where access on private land was required, and a number of variations on this alignment may be necessary to meet the needs of private land owners.
3. Field edge and highway verge
Construct new path on field boundary with agreement of landowner to meet existing path at entrance to farm shop.
4. High quality traffic free path.
No intervention proposed. The crossing of the A368 at the north-east end of the dam has fair sightlines but may need attention to clearing signs obstructing sightlines.
5. The roads are generally very lightly trafficked attractive pleasant rural lanes for cycling.
On the road through West Harptree there is more significant traffic and higher speeds, though some traffic calming at village 'gateways'. Signing may be needed to alert motorists that cycles will be present, as well as directional signing to promote the route.
6. Stratford Lane is narrow, very quiet and pleasant.
The surface is in need of minor repair, but little other action needed.
7. Ill defined public footpath through fields
This section should improve the existing public access and we suggest that some land should be acquired to create a well surfaced wide path for all users round the perimeter of the fields and using the historic green lanes.
8. Cross road at junction
It is unfortunate that the road must be crossed twice to use the shared use footways, but the crossing is well placed and acceptable. The off-highway paths are a vital facility on this very fast road.
9. Existing shared use footway
Slightly less than ideal width but protected from road by verge. No intervention necessary.
10. Existing road crossing
No proposed changes.
11. Existing traffic free shared use path alongside road.
Good quality path is generally excellent, set back from carriageway.
12. Excellent access drive to Woodford Lodge
No works necessary except signage.
13. Sections of existing access roads in good condition run into a section of informal paths and sections where no paths exist.
The proposal is to construct a new path parallel to the sailing club access to avoid conflict and maintain security. Minor variations on the proposed route could be preferred subject to negotiation with the sailing club and other interests. The route joins the road (and the Chew Stoke to Bishop Sutton route) at the west end of the dam.
14. Pedestrian Footway c. 2 m wide
The existing footway is below recommended width for shared use. The footway links to the recently constructed gateway to the path on to the Bristol Water facility at the eastern end of the dam. If the speed limit over the dam were reduced to 30 mph, shared use may be acceptable.

15. Pedestrian path

A planning application has been granted and partly implemented to create a new access at the east end of the Lake dam, and upgrade and widen the existing footpath between the dam and the access road from Ham Lane.



CL3 – High quality path alongside Wick Road A368

16. Ham lane shows a 'No Entry' sign at the approach from Walley Lane to the north, but is not one way. Motor traffic is restricted due to the width of the lane, generally 4 metres minimum.

An audit would be necessary, but there appears to be sufficient width for motor traffic and cycles / pedestrians to pass comfortably within the existing width of the lane. An exclusion from the 'no entry' rule for cyclists should be considered, with warning signage for motorists.



CL4 – Very attractive quiet lanes east of the lake



CL1 – Very quiet Stitching Shord Lane



CL5 – Traffic calming at West Harptree



CL2 – Sunken lane leads towards lake



CL6 – Shop and pub, West Harptree



CL7 – Stratford Lane – intriguing view of the lake in the distance



CL8 – Public footpath suitable for upgrading at junction with B3114



CL10 – Excellent traffic free path next to B3114 -



CL9 – Traffic free path next to B3114 -



CL11 – Excellent quality entrance to Woodford Lodge



Lake view from cycle path on the west side