

B&NES study

Radstock Midsomer Norton

November 2014

About Sustrans

Sustrans makes smarter travel choices possible, desirable and inevitable. We're a leading UK charity enabling people to travel by foot, bike or public transport for more of the journeys we make every day. We work with families, communities, policy-makers and partner organisations so that people are able to choose healthier, cleaner and cheaper journeys, with better places and spaces to move through and live in.

It's time we all began making smarter travel choices. Make your move and support Sustrans today.
www.sustrans.org.uk

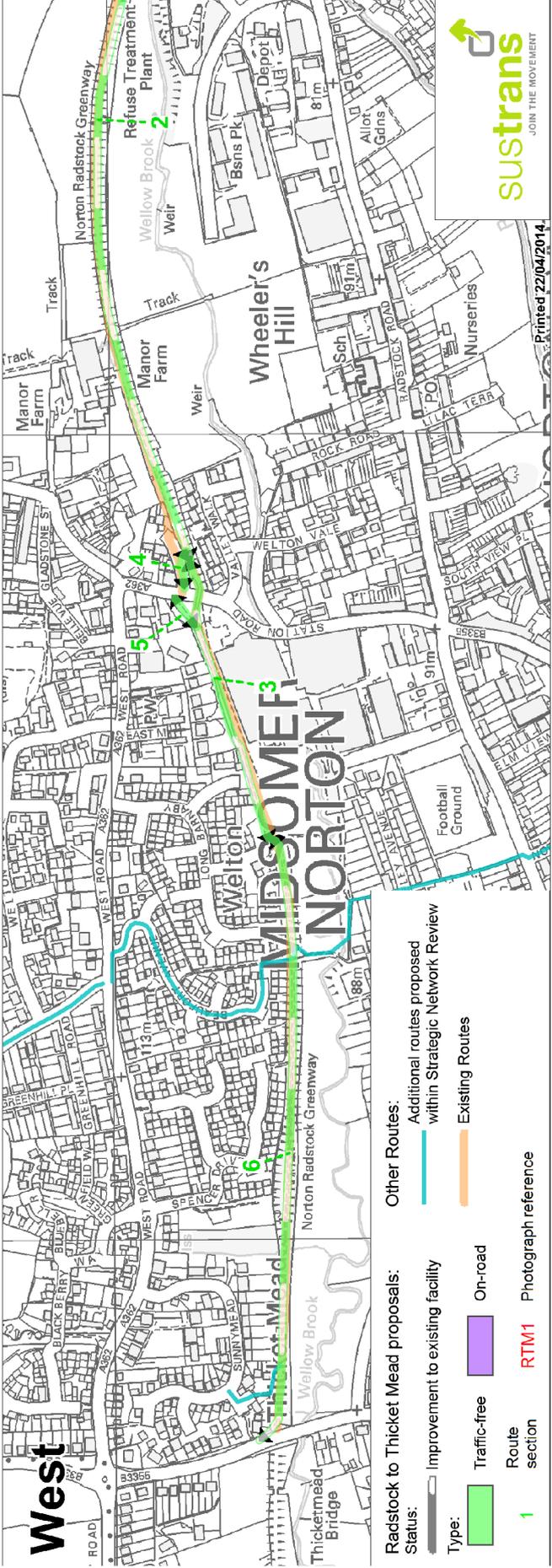
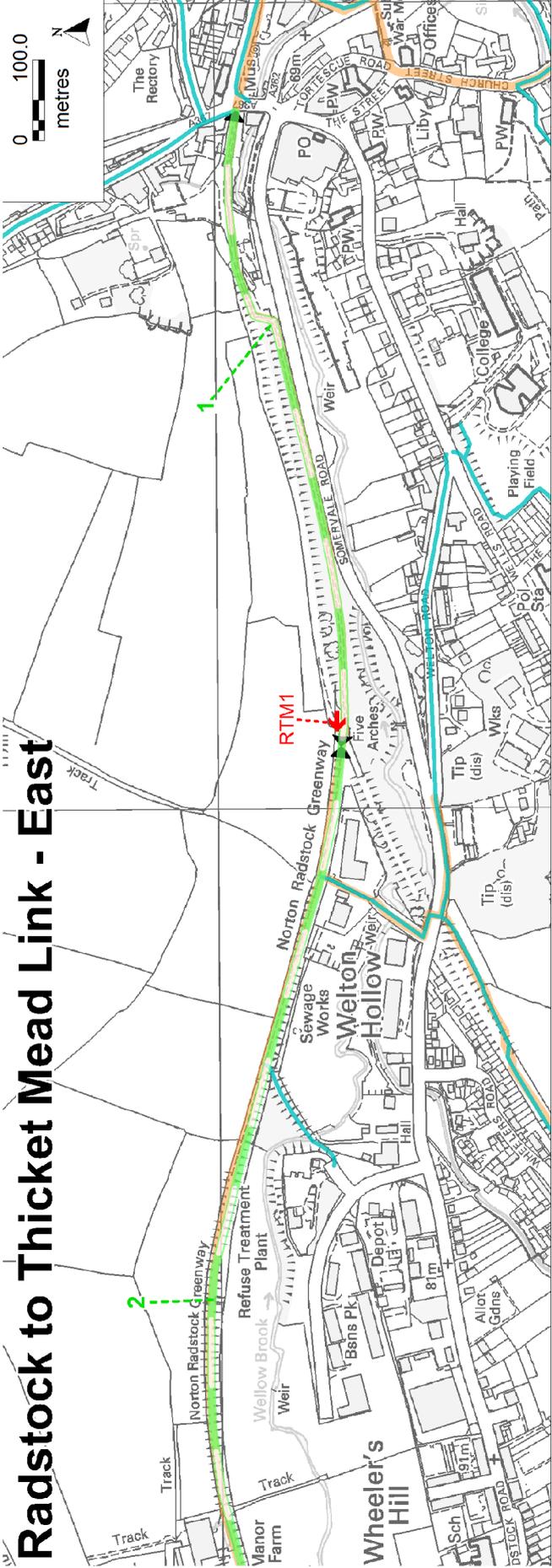
Head Office
Sustrans
2 Cathedral Square
College Green
Bristol
BS1 5DD

© Sustrans November 2014
Registered Charity No. 326550 (England and Wales) SC039263 (Scotland)
VAT Registration No. 416740656

Contents

Radstock to Thicket Mead Link - East	5
Midsomer Norton Enterprise Park Link	7
Underhill Link	11
Waterside to Westfield Link.....	13
Farrington Gurney Link.....	15

Radstock to Thicket Mead Link - East



Radstock to Thicket Mead proposals:

Status:

- Improvement to existing facility
- Additional routes proposed within Strategic Network Review

Type:

- Traffic-free
- On-road

Route section

- 1

Photograph reference

- RTM1

Other Routes:

- Existing Routes



Mapping contains Ordnance Survey data supplied by DeLorme Eyes. (c) Crown Copyright. Licence nos 13007 9818

Printed 22/04/2014.

Radstock to Thicket Mead Link - East

An important spine on the east / west axis of the town, linking Radstock and Midsomer Norton (via Five Arches Greenway) and Welton, potential usage is depressed by the relatively poor surface condition. Parts of the route are finished with a good sealed surface, but significant sections are compacted stone, which after wet weather are prone to hold water and discourage walkers and cyclists from using it.

Suggested measures:

1. Norton Radstock Greenway. Tarmac path 2.5 - 3 metres wide.

Good quality path. Could benefit from street lighting to lengthen period of daily use.

2. Compacted stone path prone to puddling and vegetation creep from sides. Maintained width less than 2 metres.

Resurface as sealed surface and widen to 2.5 or 3 m. Consider street lighting.

3. Tarmac path and bridge over Welton Road. Overgrown hedges narrow useable path.

Action should be taken to cut back hedges to make most of this narrow section of path.

4. Link to Welton Road – Recommend enhanced signing.

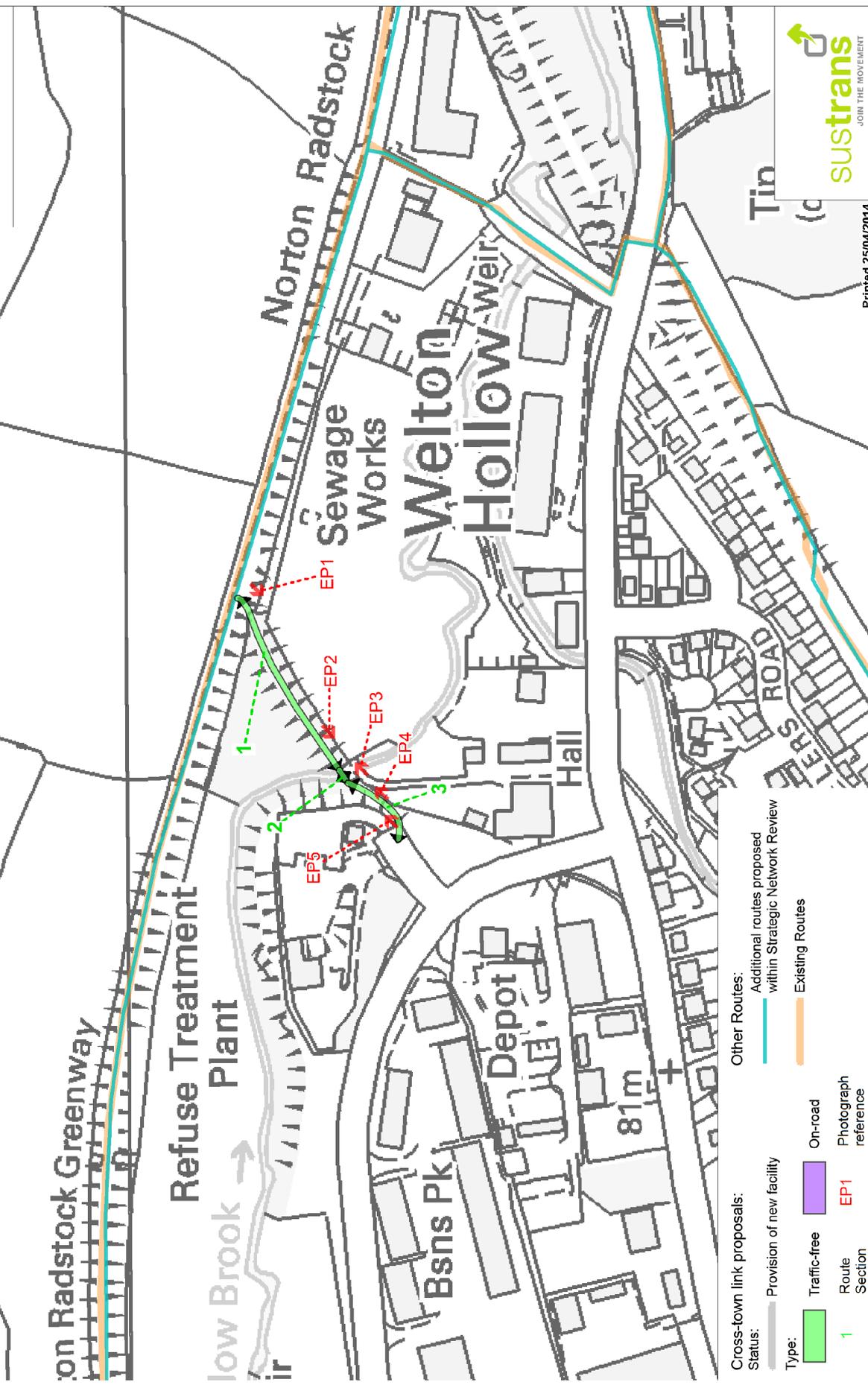
5. Link to Norton Radstock Greenway westwards - Enhanced signage recommended.

6. Part tarmac, part compacted stone railway path.

Lay sealed surface to parts not already tarmacked and widen to 2.5 m minimum.



Proposed Midsomer Norton Enterprise Park Link



Cross-town link proposals:

Status:

Provision of new facility

Type:

Traffic-free

Route Section 1

EP1

On-road

Photograph reference

Other Routes:

Additional routes proposed within Strategic Network Review

Existing Routes

Midsomer Norton Enterprise Park Link

The Midsomer Enterprise Park is a significant centre for employment locally, the location for a number of small enterprises, and the local headquarters of Business West. Although within only 250 metres of the Norton Radstock Greenway, the existing public footpath which links the Greenway to the Enterprise Park does not permit cycling, and is in poor condition.

Suggested measures:

1. The existing public footpath is narrow and unmade, and not suitable for shared use.

The path runs on an embankment the top of which is overgrown with dense scrub. Clearing the scrub would open up a width of approx. 3 metres, sufficient for a shared use path.

2. Masonry footbridge over watercourse, width between parapets 1.5 m. Parapet height approx.. 1.3 m.

The bridge appears to be in good condition. It does not meet current guidance for width, and would not allow comfortable passage of two users. However the cost of demolishing the attractive and substantial structure, and its replacement with a wider decked bridge may not be warranted by the benefit. The span is about 7 metres. We propose simply re-surfacing the deck.

3. The footpath narrows on this section as it runs on a narrow ledge between the higher land to the north (Amenity site) and the adjacent yard at a level about 2m below the path.

Some extra width can be gained by vegetation clearance but some modest retaining structure may also be needed over a short length and the narrowest point. The path ramps up slightly to meet the road at the gates to the amenity site. It would be possible alternatively to join the road close to the nearby junction where a ramp would have to be constructed to overcome the change in levels.



EP1 – Norton Radstock Greenway joins the Enterprise Park link



EP2 – The narrow overgrown footpath deters all users



EP3 – Narrow footbridge – the cost of replacement is likely to be prohibitive



EP4 – Clearing vegetation will widen path but works o secure bank will also be needed



EP5 – Entrance to path is close to amenity site gateway. Clear sightlines must be ensured.

Underhill Link

In the context of Midsomer Norton, the heavily trafficked main roads are thought to deter cycling for local journeys. The Underhill link aims to provide a signed level route using quiet residential roads and traffic free paths to connect the Underhill area, and adjacent neighbourhoods to the main spine routes of the proposed network, and the town centre.

Suggested measures:

1. The roads in this area are quiet but slope down towards the valley. For this reason a route following the contours as closely as possible will offer most potential.

The route inevitably entails some climbs but these are short and not steep. The existing narrow pedestrian link between St Lukes Road and Northmead Avenue would need to be widened and modified for cycle access.

2. Short alley linking Hayes Road to Northmead Road.

Cycling should be formally allowed. The alley is less than ideal width but can be tolerated for this short distance to access the quiet roads away from Northmead Road which carries large volumes of traffic.

3. Underhill Lane is a quiet residential road which serves as a link into the neighbouring residential streets.

Signing only necessary.



Waterside to Westfield Link

Waterside is the residential area to the east of Wells Road, one of the busiest and least attractive roads for cycling in the area. The streets in Waterside are, typically of those away from main roads, quiet well laid out roads which are very suitable for cycling. The network of residential roads is focussed on Elm Tree Avenue, where there are local shops, and this is also the location of the natural crossing point of Wells Road on the journey to Midsomer Norton town centre.

The deterrent to making this journey by cycle is partly the difficulty in crossing Wells Road, which at present entails a left / right manoeuvre and a 50 metre cycle on the main road; this is not recommended for any but confident cyclists.

Suggested measures:

The proposed improvements would require cooperation from a private land-owner to achieve the desired result.

1. Shakespeare and Ruskin Roads are quiet residential streets suitable for cycling.

The route aims to link the residential areas with the town centre incorporating an improved crossing of Wells Road.

2. The small green next to the church enables a link to the footway, but the footway is approx. 1.8 m wide, too narrow for shared use.

Possibilities for widening the footway would be widening the footway into the carriageway, which would almost certainly require widening the carriageway on the eastern side, and setting the footway back; or, a more economic option if it could be agreed, widening the footway into the Methodist Church car park on the western side approaching the existing zebra crossing. A cycle zebra crossing could be considered.

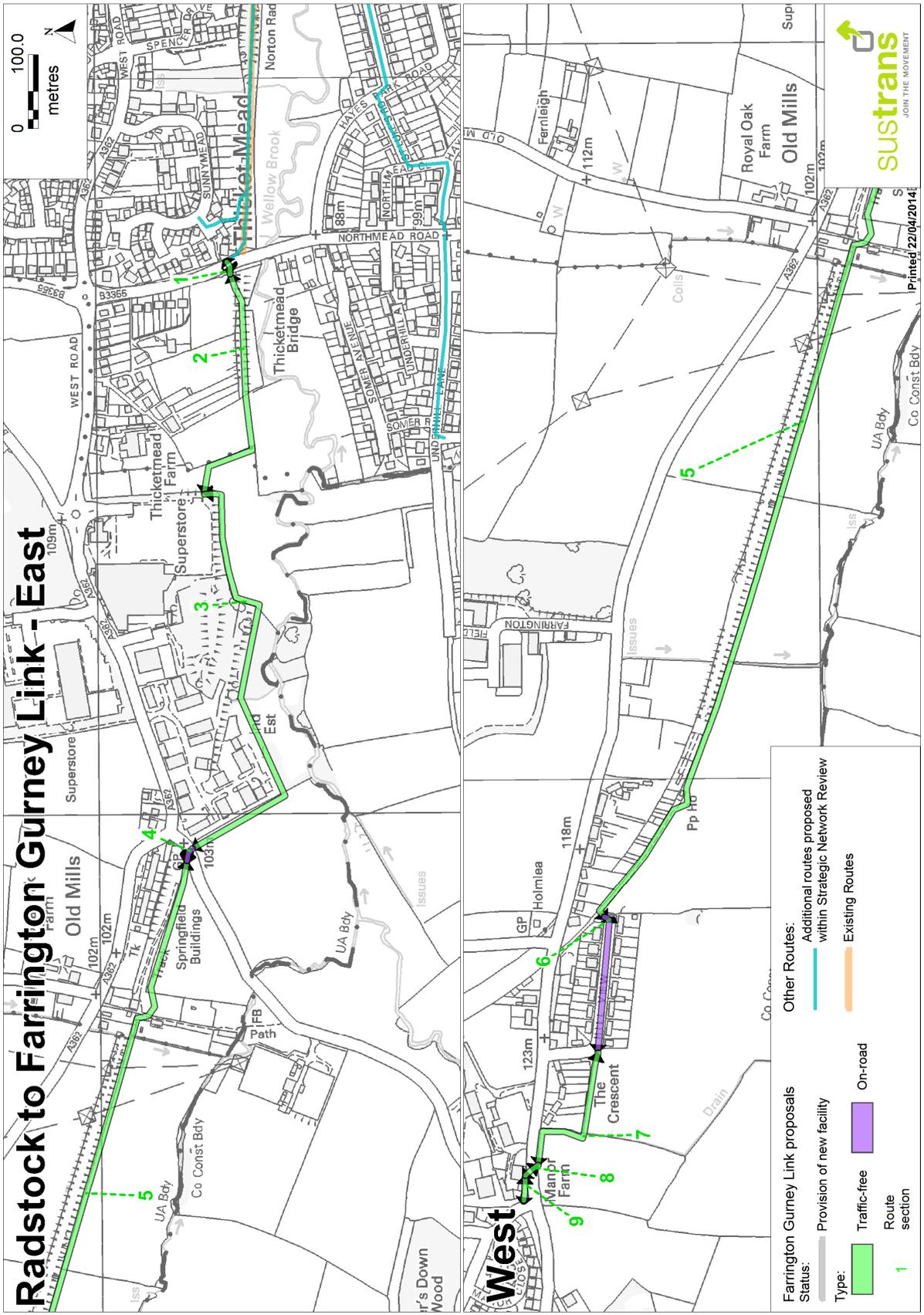
3. Wide pedestrian footway

Introduce shared use on footway to take cyclists round corner away from Wells Road.

4. Quiet residential roads.

Only signing route required.





Farrington Gurney Link

The Norton Radstock Greenway at its western end connects to the busy Northmead Road, where no cycle facilities exist. There has been a longstanding aspiration, for which indeed developer contributions were secured to partially fund, for the greenway to extend to make a link to the heavily used Tesco store a mere 400 metres distant from the end of the greenway now. This would clearly be a major benefit for local people accessing the store by non-motorised means, who must at the moment negotiate climbs and busy roads and roundabouts to reach it.

Extending the link to the village of Farrington Gurney (1.7 miles approx..) would assist the residents in journeys to school and for work, shopping and leisure. An action group sought to promote this link within the last few years.

Despite the benefits and the potential high quality of this link, we have not recommended that it is prioritised at present. This decision was reached due to our reservations over the deliverability of the link within the foreseeable future.

Creating the link would require significant resources to be allocated for a programme of detailed feasibility appraisal including a programme of land acquisition which would be key to success. We have not investigated the land ownership, but there are several separate owners, all of whom would need to cooperate to deliver the route shown in outline.

There are clearly significant impacts on Thicketmead Farm, a dairy farm where the path would have to cross a route used by livestock on a daily basis. It is hard to see how the path could co-exist with the dairy operation and we regard this scheme as undeliverable unless this obstacle can be overcome. Entering into detailed negotiations on this subject is beyond the remit of this report. It may be that this section of route could not be achieved unless at some time in the future the farm land was developed. Alternative alignments have been considered, but they do not offer the high quality of route which is more likely to encourage people to use it for walking and cycling.

There are further ownership issues at Old Mills where a number of ownerships and buildings appear to obstruct the ideal route.

The ground has been built up over the former railway to create the industrial estate at Old Mills, and any route alignment will inevitably entail careful design and engineering to minimise steepness of gradients.

Although the route reputedly has community support, this has not been evidenced in the public consultations.

A more detailed feasibility study and public consultation may reach a different conclusion. If such were undertaken, the Council should, before embarking on the exercise, carefully consider the implications of a failure to secure the cooperation of any of the landowners on the route.

The route mapped is not the only possible route, though it is most direct, and involves only two road crossings, both in good situations. Other routes could be considered but we consider the route shown to be likely to be optimal.