

Appendix 12

Comberton Greenway Review



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October 2016

A report for

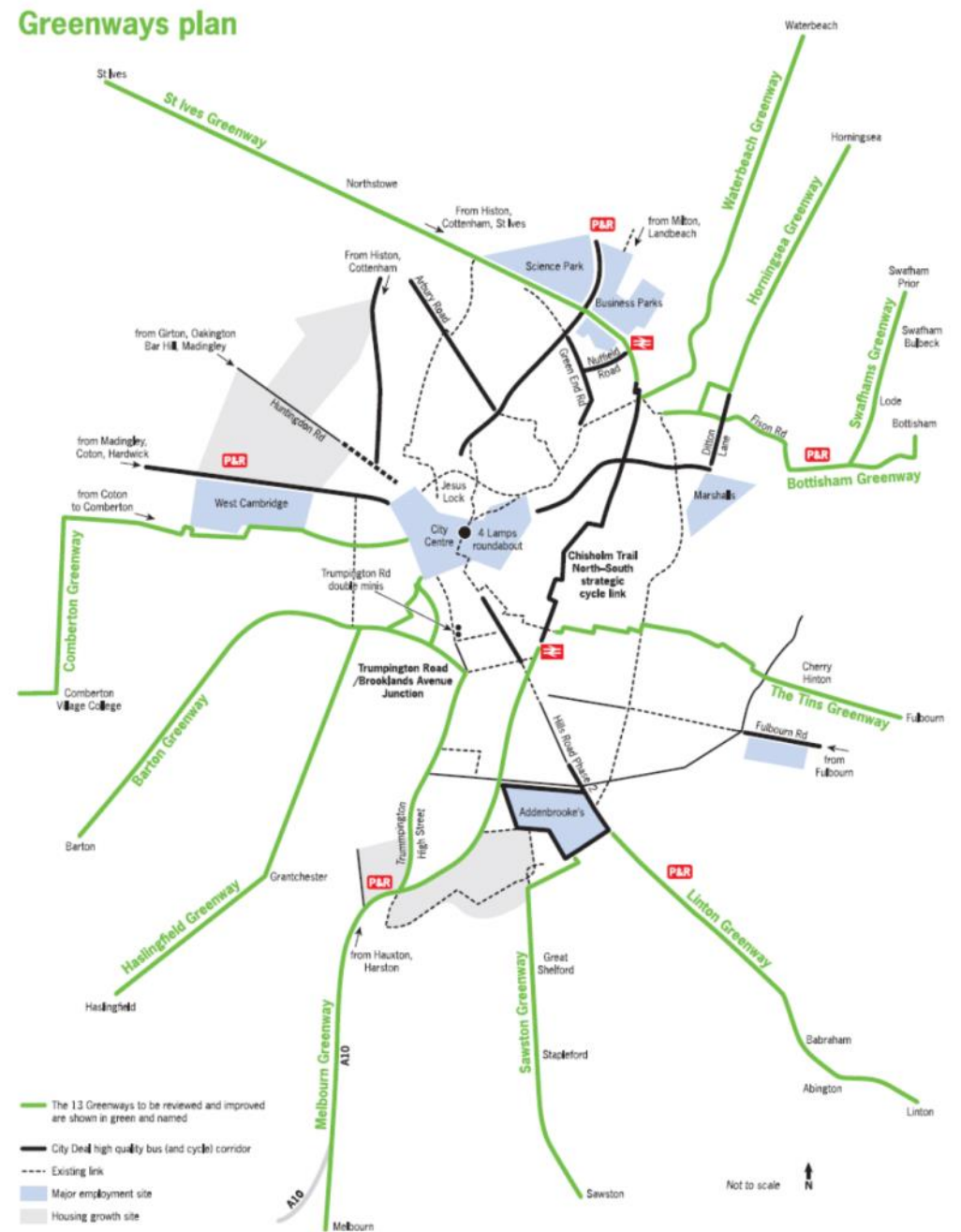


Cambridgeshire
County Council

Introduction

This report is based on fieldwork carried out in 2016 to review the Greenway network around Cambridge as shown here.

An overview of the Greenways is covered in the Cambridge Area Greenways Review Main Report with each Greenway covered in detail in an Appendix.



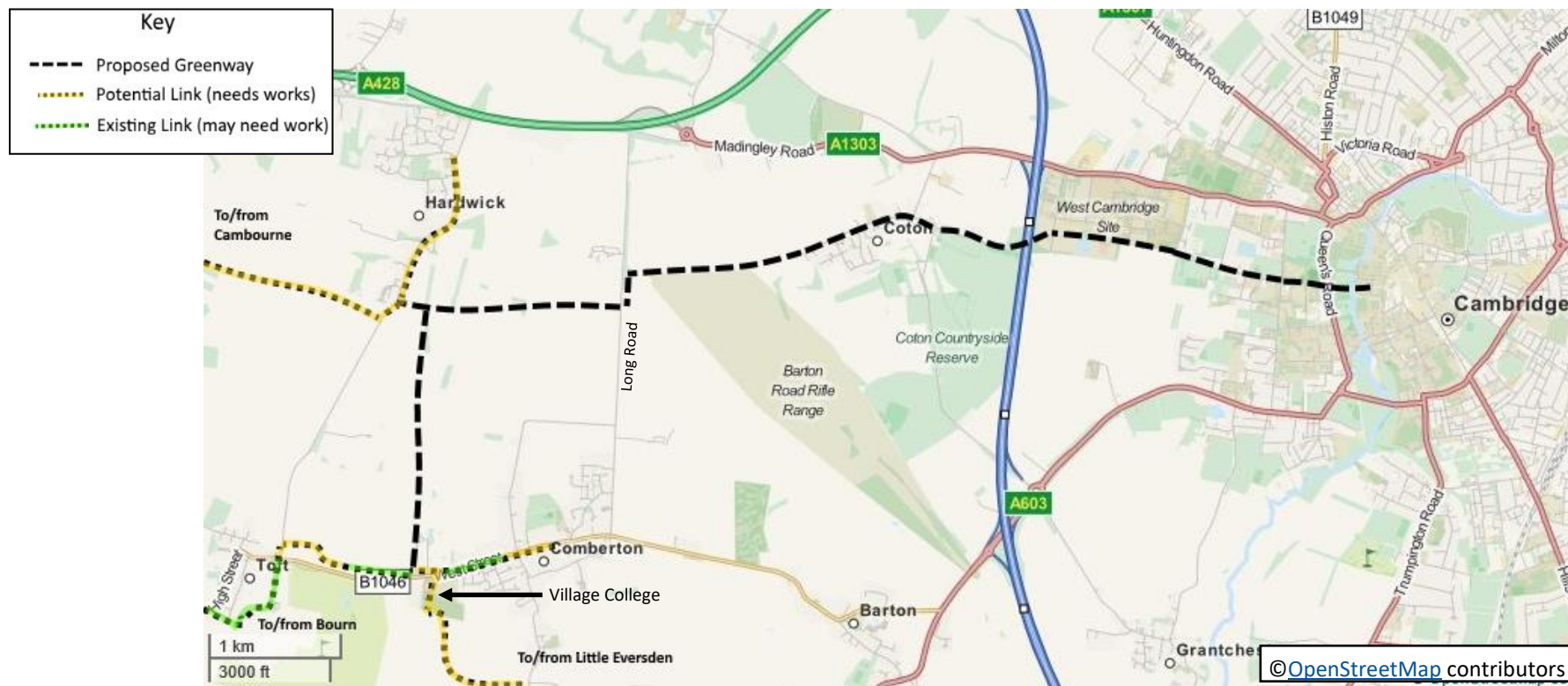
Comberton Greenway

This Greenway serves two distinct purposes which link together well. Within Cambridge the Greenway has potential to provide excellent links between communities west of the M11, the West Cambridge developments and the City Centre. Beyond the M11 Comberton is an obvious focus because of the need for young people from many dispersed villages to get to and from school.

The route starts in the historic City centre at Trinity Lane and follows a well established route to West Cambridge and then uses the high quality new University route through west Cambridge. Minor changes are proposed in the City and a new link to the existing M11 crossing (which needs upgrading) and through Coton. From Coton there is no surfaced route and

a new facility is proposed including a new grade separated crossing of Long Road. Much of the route follows bridleways but will also require landowners' agreement to ensure continuity of a high quality route through to Comberton Village College. The route also has interesting potential to link up communities further west including Cambourne.

The suggestion of linking up with Cambourne (which needs more investigation) can tie up with the proposals from the City Deal A428 Cambourne to Cambridge Corridor Study. Whilst this corridor is focused on bus priority it is expected to also include new walking and cycling provision. There is some way to go before the bus priority scheme is finalised and there is flexibility in the Comberton Greenway proposals so there are good opportunities to ensure that the corridor cycling and walking provision links well with the Comberton Greenway.



The case for Works

The case for improvements along the corridor between Coton and Cambridge is very strong and it is surprising that the high quality major west Cambridge development has such a poor link with Coton which is very close to this major employment site. The case for improvements between the West Cambridge site and the City centre is also very strong , especially given that this is one of the most heavily used routes in the City.

The case for links with Comberton Village College is strongest in relation to school travel and the need for young people to have safe ways to travel independently. For Comberton residents the best route to Cambridge for most would be via Barton if that route is upgraded, but Comberton Village College is such a focal point that good links with the College would be very beneficial for many villages.

The case for a new direct link between Hardwick and Coton is strong, especially if this route can be extended to Cambourne potentially linking with the City Deal scheme for the A428 or on a different alignment.

Whilst Cambourne to Cambridge is a long way many people do commute similar distances by bike and the growth along the whole corridor is very significant.



West Cambridge site—close to Coton and close to Cambridge City Centre

Trip Generators and the focus of the Study

Key destinations that have been considered are:

- Cambridge City Centre
- West Cambridge
- Coton
- Hardwick
- Comberton
- Comberton Village College
- Toft
- Bourn Airfield
- Cambourne
- Western Orbital (scheme details unknown but if it goes ahead would include a busway and if away from M11 a cycleway on one side or other of M11)
- A428 corridor bus scheme (scheme details unknown but may include new cycling and walking facilities.)

Links that have also been considered include:

- Bourn
- Eversdens
- Barton



View of existing M11 bridge—a key link between Coton and communities to the west and one of the most prestigious development sites in Cambridge. The poor quality is not something that people would expect.

Summary

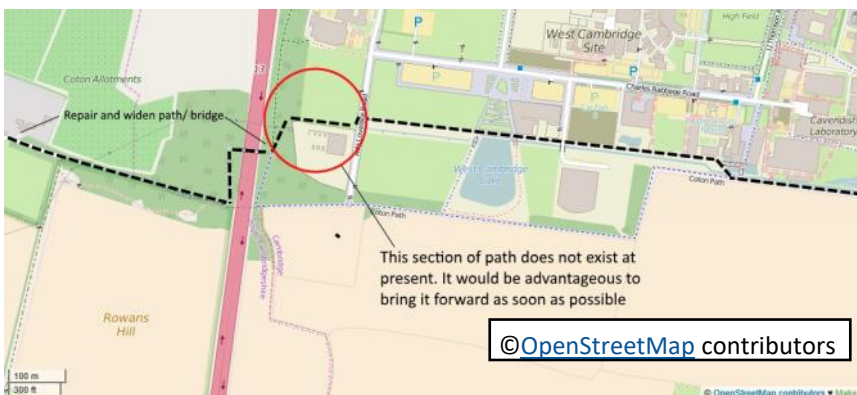
The route between Coton and the City Centre is based on the existing route with some variations. From Coton to Comberton Village College a lot of options have been investigated with the aim of establishing a route that benefits as many people as possible.

City Centre to West Cambridge

This existing route is one of the great routes into the City Centre and is popular with students, locals and tourists. Some changes are proposed to improve the quality at certain points.

West Cambridge to Long Road

At present those heading to Coton have to turn off the West Cambridge route to join the Coton path which includes a number of right angle bends before a final sharp bend at the M11 bridge. The preferred alignment is one that is shown in the West Cambridge Masterplan and creates a new link to the M11 bridge.

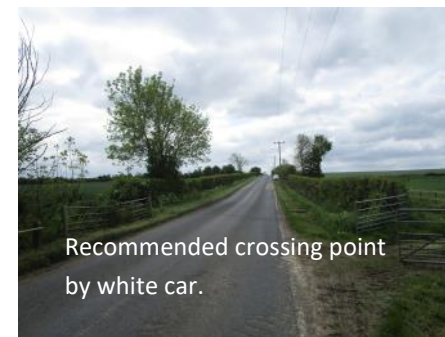


Within Coton the route follows existing roads to the edge of the village where it joins a bridleway towards Long Road. This bridleway or a parallel adjacent route requires surfacing with a good quality sealed surface. Negotiations will be needed with the landowners to agree plans.

Long Road crossing

Long Road is a fast road that can be busy at peak times and this is likely to be a considerable concern particularly for parents of those on their way to school who need to cross the road. At off-peak times road conditions are acceptable and some cyclists use the road, but given that one of the major justifications for the route is for usage by those going to work or school at peak times a safe crossing is important. There are a lot of options about where and how to cross the road depending on the onward alignment with a grade separated crossing needed.

A bridge over the road has been considered and is possible, but given that the proposed crossing point is on a significant slope an underpass is proposed. A cut and fill option would be ideal, but the details will depend on site surveys and discussions with landowners.



If there are minimal services in the road a concrete box could be prepared adjacent to the road and installed relatively quickly. The area will need more detailed survey, but a safe crossing and a high quality continuous route are needed for this route to succeed.

Long Road to Hardwick

The existing bridleway (shown right) is a direct attractive route that links well with the southern part of Hardwick. If surfaced it would be a popular and useful Greenway and irrespective of the final route to Comberton it needs to be surfaced to a good standard throughout, to accommodate all users.



The route towards Comberton

A number of routes have been surveyed including an alignment that links with Branch Road, Comberton. However this alignment represents a significant diversion from the desire line for those from Hardwick heading for Comberton. It is also not easy to find a good alignment to link with the College. The ideal alignment would head almost directly to the school from the Hardwick bridleway and it has not been possible to survey this because the land is private. There do appear to be good options following field boundaries, but this will be a matter for discussion with the landowner. A green lane could form part of a very good link to Comberton Village College but options will need to be discussed with landowners before any decision can be taken. A possible alternative following field edges near Hardwick Road to Toft could work but would be a diversion from the desire line for Coton-based students.

Links

The main links proposed are additional links that could serve Comberton Village College well.

From Hardwick it appears to be possible to continue on the same bridleway alignment to Caldecote and then potentially to Bourn Airfield and Cambourne. This route has not been surveyed.

From Comberton Village College there is an existing path besides the road towards Toft. The path needs widening and in Toft a different alignment may be needed either crossing to the opposite side of the road by the golf club entrance or taking a route to the rear of properties.

Within Toft a quiet road avoids the main road and could link to an onward route to Bourn. This has not been surveyed, but was known to be an aspiration for Bourn many years ago.

Within Hardwick it will be important that local people can access any new route easily and the main road through Hardwick will need to be improved for cycling, but has not been surveyed in detail.



Narrow path in Toft with wide verge on opposite side.

Route Details and Maps

• Comberton Greenway Map 1

1. Links with St Ives, Waterbeach, Horningsea, Swaffhams and Bottisham Greenways on City centre roads. Links with Barton and Haslingfield Greenways via King's Parade.

2. Route uses Senate House Passage or Trinity Lane, Garret Hostel Lane. Senate House Passage is busy and the cobbles are not easy for walking or cycling. *Consider resurfacing in suitable materials to give a better pedestrian and cycling surface, including for those in wheelchairs, with pushchairs etc. .*

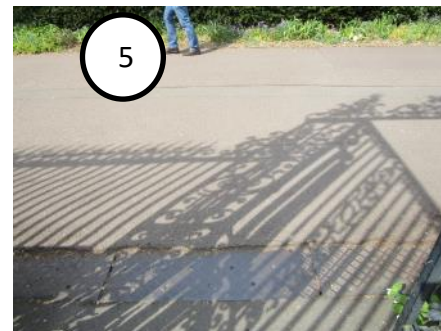
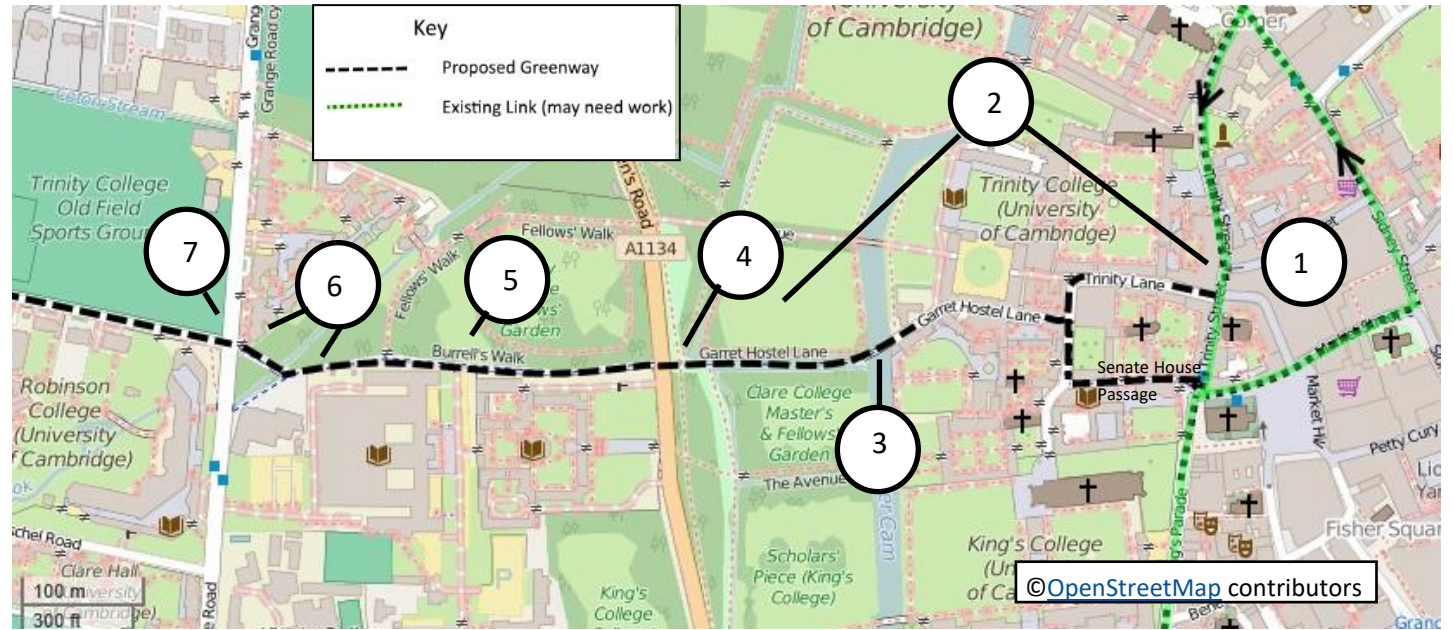
3. Bridge over Cam has steep ramps, but this slows people and the route works well despite being so busy.

4. Existing toucan crossing.

5. Link to University Library. *Adjust gully for flush crossing.*

6. Over this section the path narrows and visibility is poor at the junction. *Move back fencing and clear vegetation at junction to improve visibility. Replace narrow bridge over Bin Brook with wider bridge.*

7. Existing signalled crossing of Grange Road.



- **Comberton Greenway Map 2**

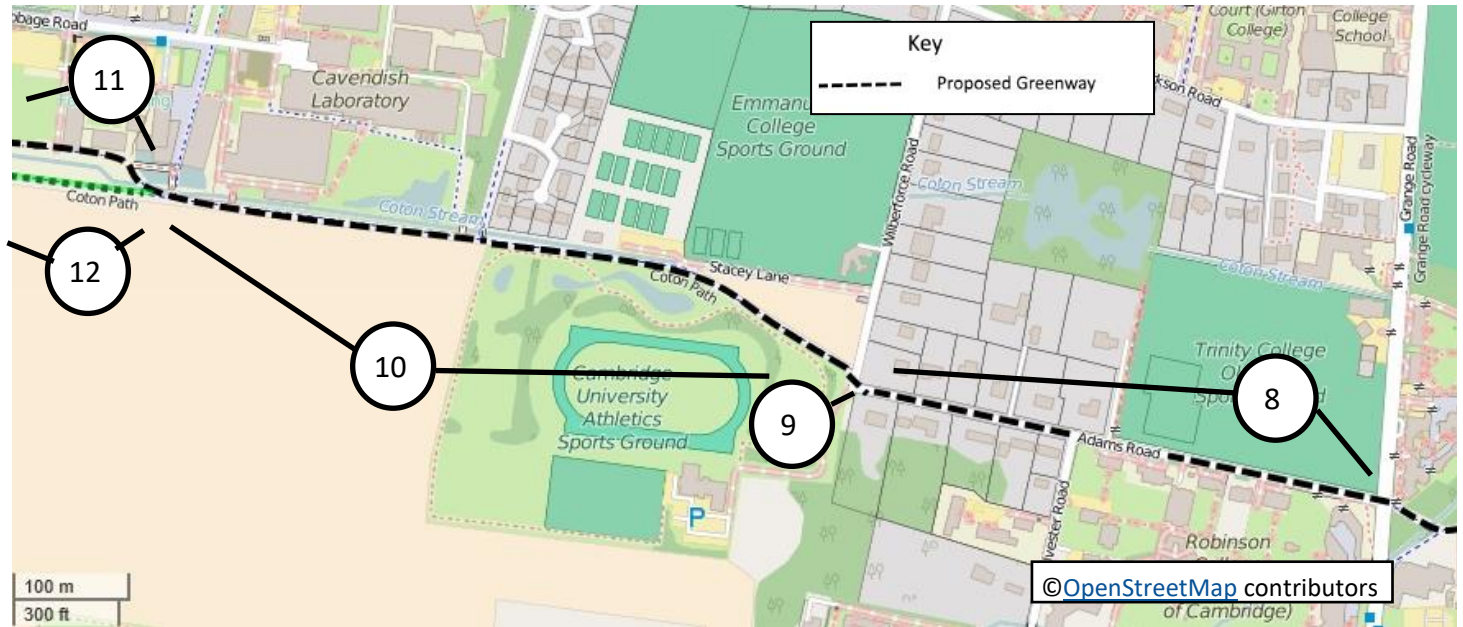
8. Route on Adams Road. This quiet road which is busy with cyclists could be designated as a Cycle Street. (See below).

9. At the junction of Adams Road and Wilberforce Road there is a raised table and an unusual staggered arrangement for the start of the off road path. *Remove low level wall and straighten out entry to cycle path. Add bollards as necessary.*

10. Good quality kerb segregated route. 2.8m cycle facility and 1.8m footway. The abrupt kerb gives no scope to move out of the way in an emergency situation and is not ideal. At a suitable opportunity it could be replaced with an angled “Cambridge kerb” as on the Hills Road and Huntingdon Road hybrid cycle lanes. (Low priority).

11. Route diverts on to high quality West Cambridge University route.

12. Existing Coton path 2m wide between fences, in places.

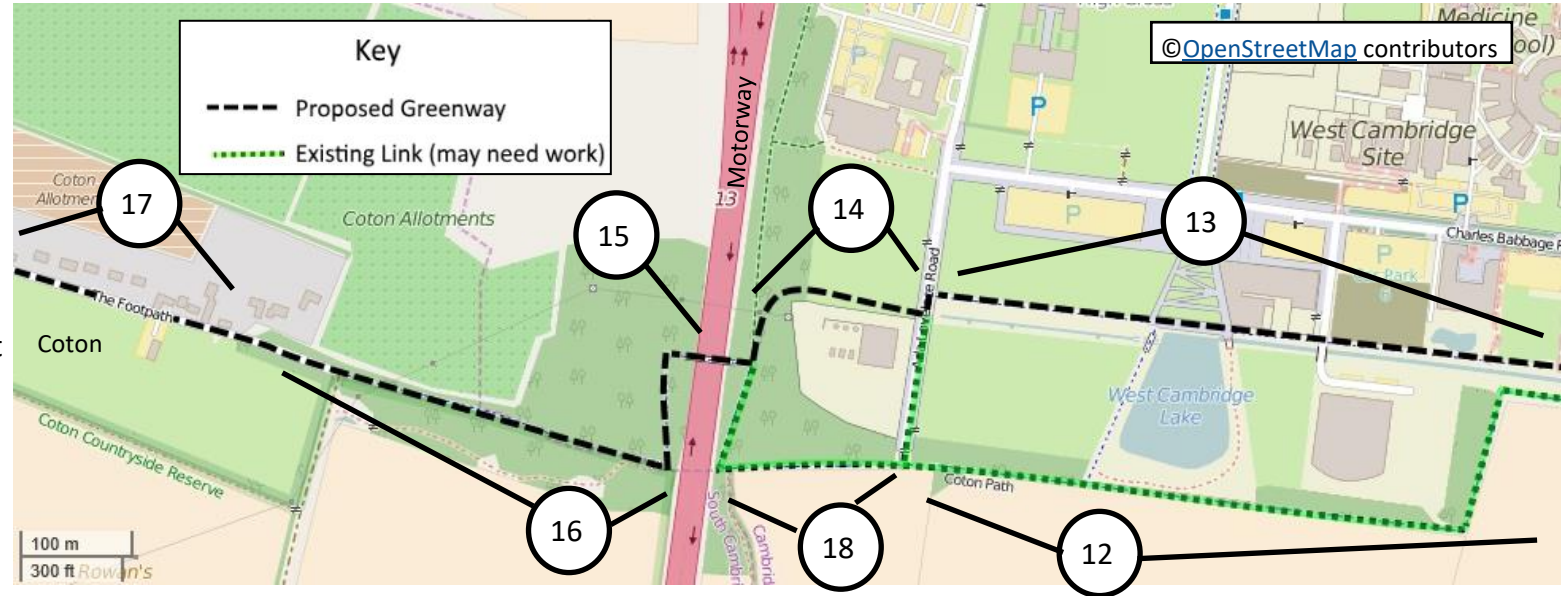


Cycle Street does not have a clear definition, but is becoming more common in the Netherlands, Germany and elsewhere, so could perhaps be trialled in Cambridge. Cycle Streets usually have a lot more cycle movements than car traffic and are usually important through routes for cyclists whilst only being accessed by car by local residents. They are indicated by distinctive road markings designed to deter through usage by cars and warn car drivers and cyclists to expect large numbers of cyclists and some cars.

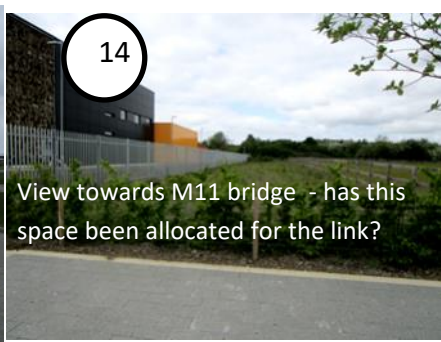


- **Comberton Greenway Map 3**

- 12. Existing Coton path 2m wide between fences, in places.
- 13. High quality spacious greenway, alongside water, parks and University buildings. A good example for future developments.
- 14. The preferred alignment is one that is shown in the West Cambridge Masterplan and creates a new link to the M11 bridge . *This valuable link path and ramp should be completed as soon as possible.*

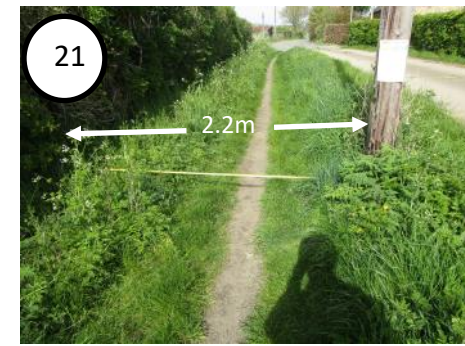
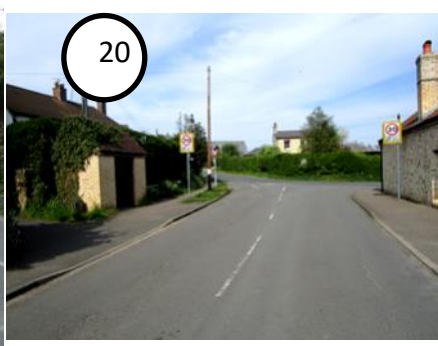


- 15. Existing bridge over M11. The bridge approaches are in poor condition and need rebuilding on both sides. *Rebuild approaches on both sides and bridge deck surface. Widen path to 3m and where possible.* The bridge itself is 2.5m wide with 1.7m high parapets and although narrow is acceptable.
- 16. Widen path to 3m, where possible (currently 2m).
- 17. Route on quiet village road.
- 18. The existing Coton path includes right angled bends and the surface is poor in places. A good route along 14 would be a big improvement. If for any reason this is delayed it would be beneficial to widen the existing path and smooth out existing bends.



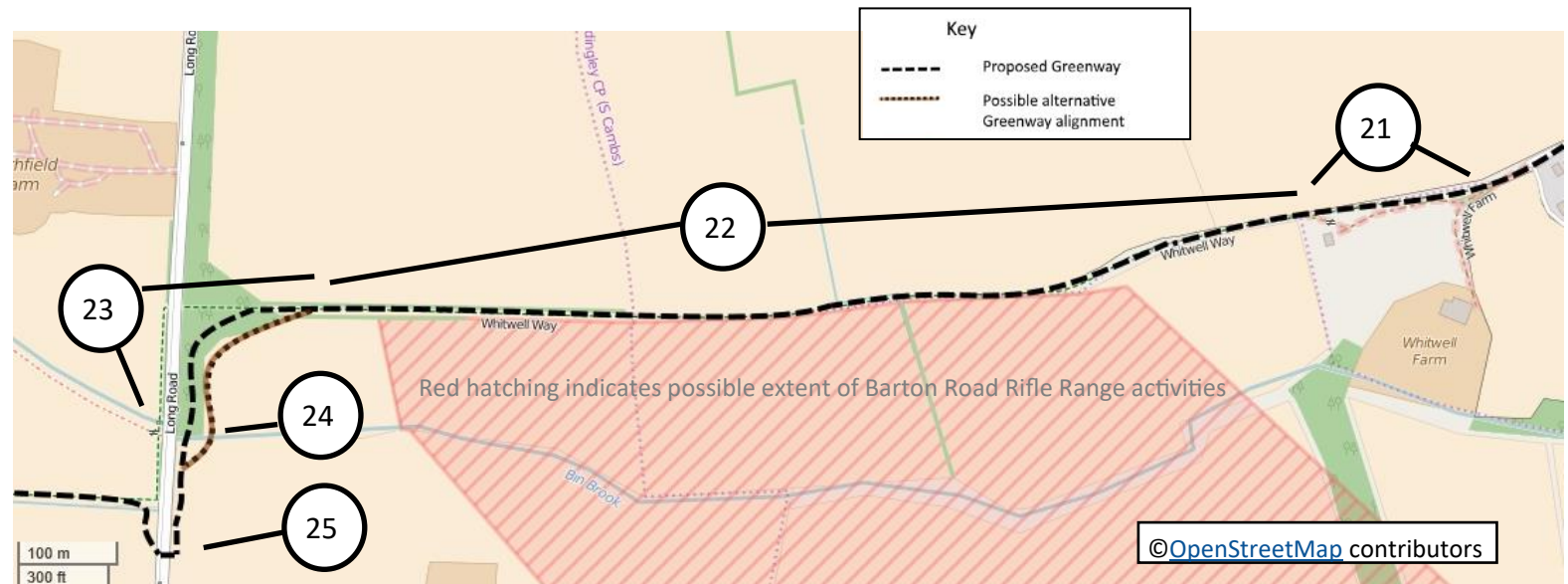
- **Comberton Greenway Map 4**

- 17. Route on quiet village road.
- 19. Busier village road 30mph, but naturally traffic calmed by bends. *Consider designating whole village as 20mph and removing road markings to change visual appearance.*
- 20. This part of village is currently designated as 20mph.
- 21. Bridleway from the end of surfaced road turns away from farm road and runs between hedges. The width available between a telegraph pole and hedge is 2.2m. Subject to discussions with rights of way team and other users *construct 2m—2.5m wide path along bridleway alignment.* Path to be sealed surface. An alternative to surfacing the bridleway would be to construct a field edge path behind the existing hedge and subject to agreement with the landowner.



- **Comberton Greenway Map 5**

21. See previous page
22. *Construct 3m wide path along bridleway alignment. Path to be sealed surface. The obvious alignment is to follow the bridleway, but this is also shared with farm traffic and horse-riders so it may be better to either construct a new farm track or construct the path to the north of the bridleway.*



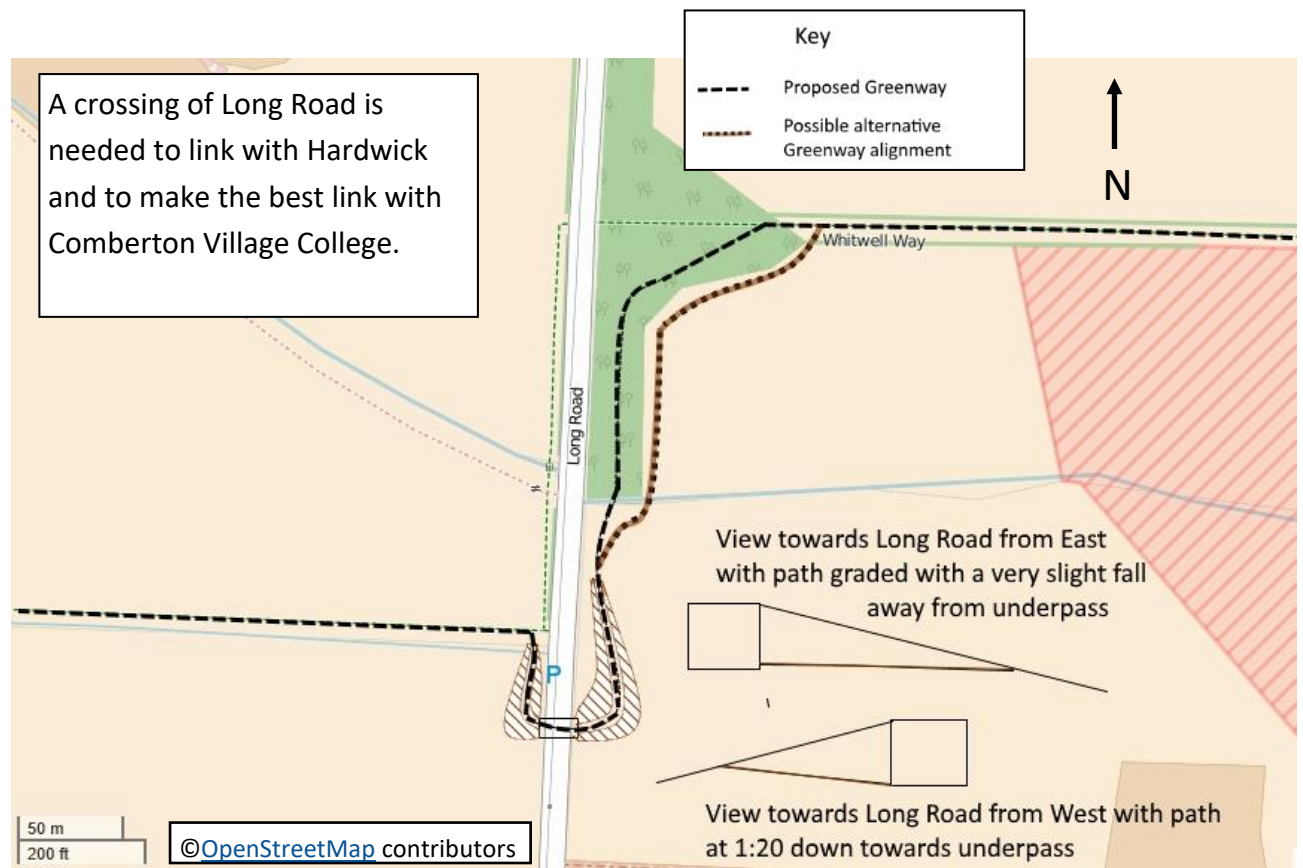
23. *Construct new path through woodland, or on field edge around woodland subject to landowner’s agreement .One landowner is believed to be Ministry of Defence. The existing bridleway finishes at a difficult crossing of Long Road, so a new bridleway route and road crossing should be beneficial.*
24. *Replace existing small bridge over Bin Brook with new wider bridleway bridge.*
25. *Construct new safe crossing of Long Road, subject to landowner’s agreement and further technical studies. Consider diverting rights of way onto new alignment. Add mounting blocks for horse-riders. See following page.*



- **Long Road crossing**

Long Road is a fast road that can be busy at peak times and this is likely to be a considerable concern particularly for parents of those on their way to school who need to cross the road. At off-peak times road conditions are acceptable and some cyclists use the road, but given that one of the major justifications for the route is for usage by those going to work or school at peak times a safe crossing is important. There are a lot of options about where and how to cross the road depending on the onward alignment with a grade separated crossing needed.

A bridge over the road has been considered and is possible, but given that the proposed crossing point is on a significant slope an underpass is proposed. A cut and fill option would be ideal, but the details will depend on site surveys and discussions with landowners. If there are minimal services in the road a concrete box could be



View up Long Road towards the proposed crossing point (near the white car)



View towards Long Road from the East with the proposed crossing to the right, away from the tree.

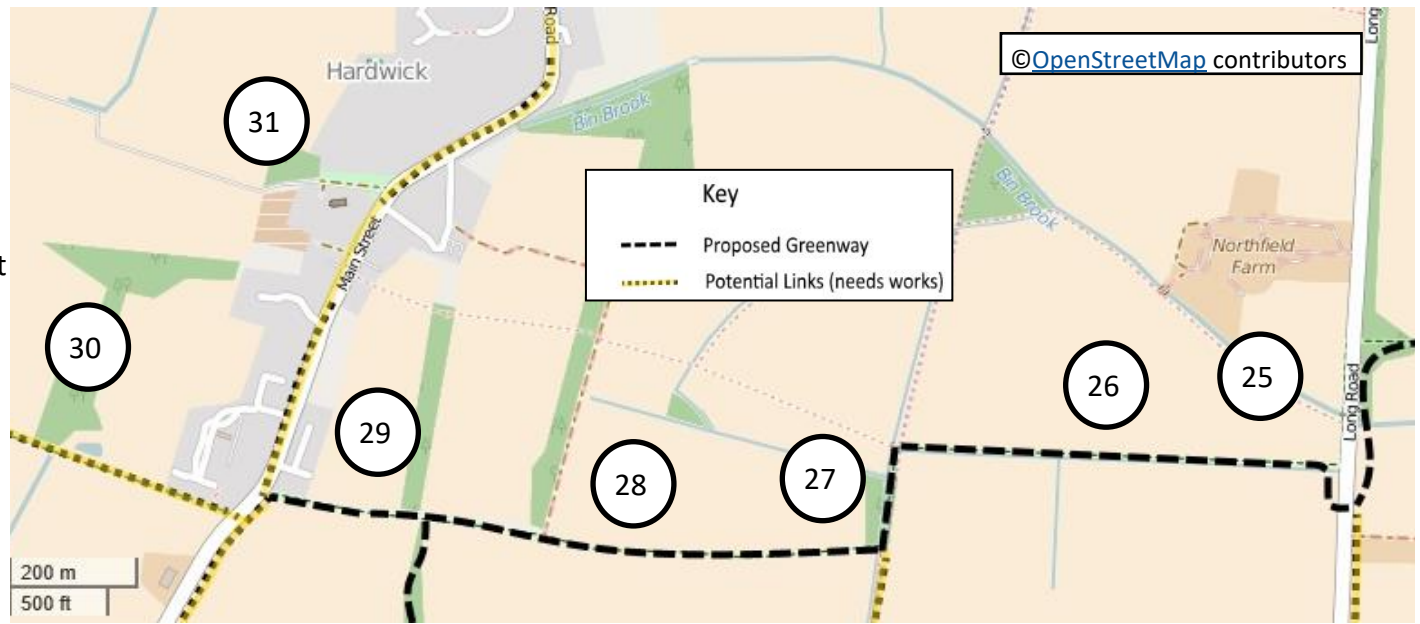
prepared adjacent to the road and installed relatively quickly. The area will need more detailed survey, but a safe crossing and a high quality continuous route are needed for this route to succeed.

The key to a successful crossing at a reasonable price will be to use the natural contours to maximum benefit and to find a solution that satisfies the landowners.

The sketch above is an indicative layout that will need to be developed. The ideal route would cross below Long Road exactly in line with the bridleway but that looks difficult due to the need to allow for farm traffic, link with existing paths and avoid an established tree and a wooden overhead wire pole. Any underpass should be 4m width minimum with good visibility through and 2.4m minimum headroom.

• **Comberton Greenway Map 6**

- 25. See previous pages.
- 26. *Construct 2.5m -3m wide path along bridleway alignment.* Path to be sealed surface. The obvious alignment is to follow the bridleway, but there will need to be liaison with horse-riders, landowners and others to agree the best option.
- 27. *Construct 2.5m -3m wide path along bridleway alignment.* Over this stretch the path is already surfaced with a loose surface. A better surface is needed.
- 28. *Construct 2.5m - 3m wide path along bridleway alignment.* There will need to be liaison with horse-riders, landowners and others to agree the best option.
- 29. A green lane leads to Main Street, Hardwick. *Construct new raised table at Main Street for link with bridleway.*



- 30. Existing bridleway to Caldecote. Not surveyed but a good potential route and could possibly be extended to Bourn Airfield and Cambourne.
- 31. Within Hardwick it will be important that local people can access any new route easily and the main road through Hardwick will need to be improved for cycling, but has not been surveyed in detail.

The route towards Comberton

Options for a route towards Comberton are discussed on the following page. The main focus on this has been on links to the Village College which lies to the west of Comberton. The aim has been finding an alignment that can benefit as many as possible including Coton, Hardwick and others.



The route towards Comberton

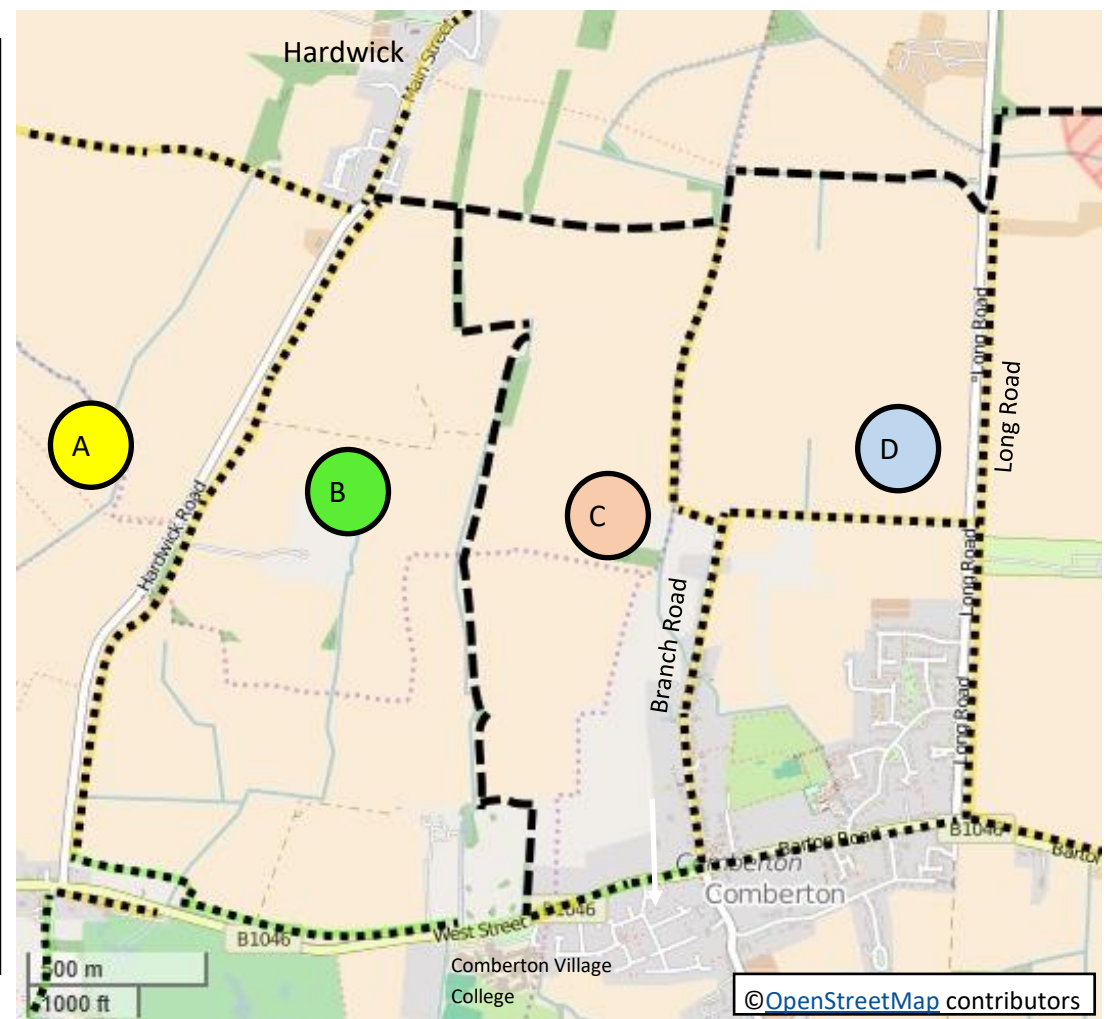
A number of routes have been considered including as indicated adjacent

Option A would be a good option for Hardwick residents and anyone west of Hardwick, but would be a detour for those living in Coton.

Option B is the ideal alignment and would head almost directly to Comberton Village College from the bridleway. It has not been possible to survey this because the land is private. There do appear to be good options following field boundaries.

Option C enters Comberton via Branch Road. This is a possibility and links well with the centre of Comberton but there is more interaction with traffic than Option B and it is unlikely to be able to match the quality of Option B.

Option D would not need a new crossing of Long Road and could follow Long Road to Comberton. The route would be of no benefit for Hardwick residents and would not improve links between Hardwick and Coton. There are land issues but it could work.



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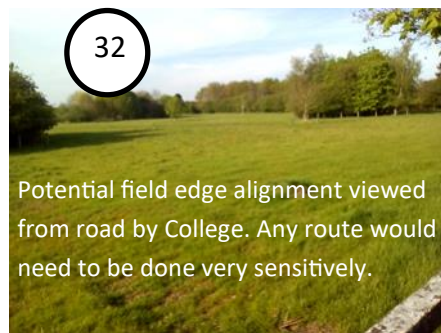
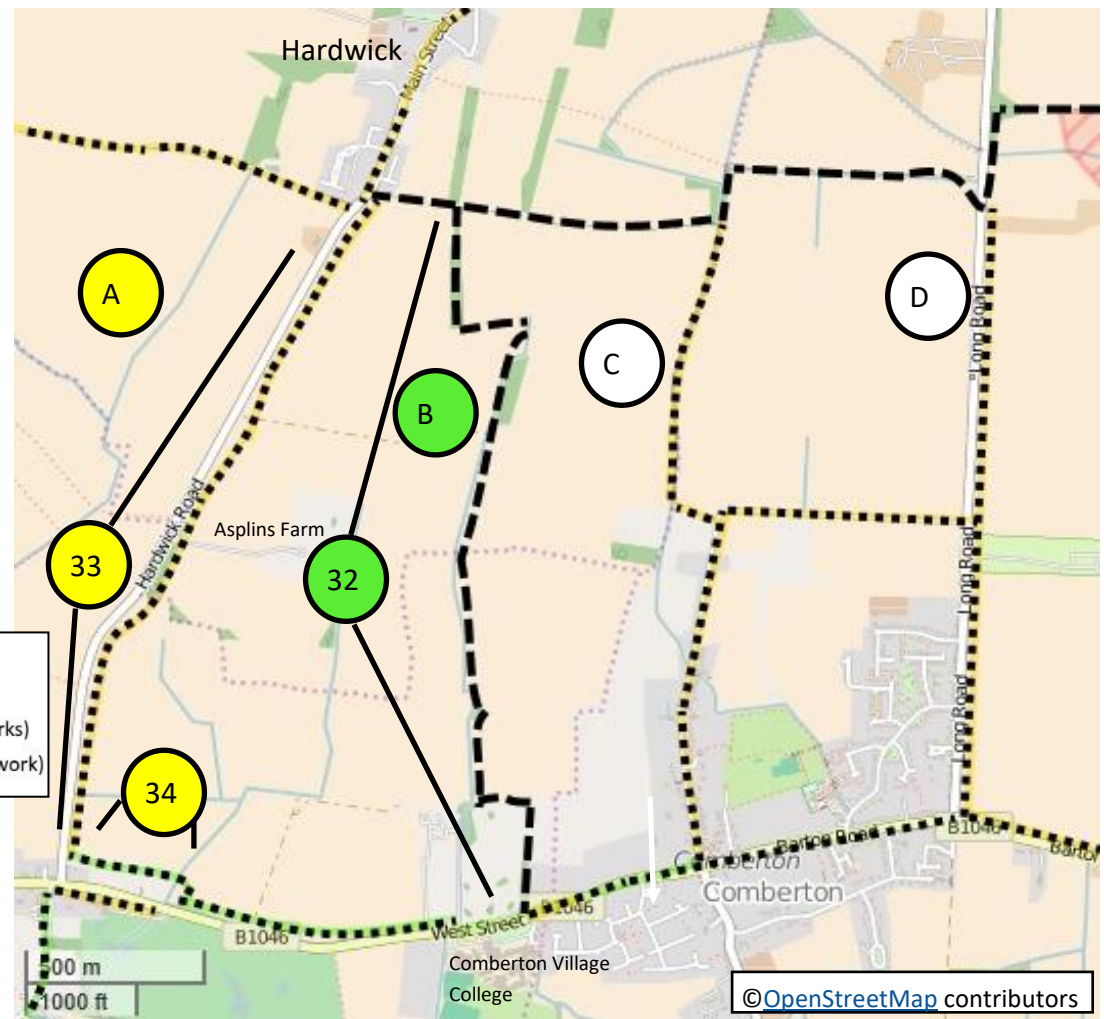
Key

- Proposed Greenway
- Potential Link (needs works)
- Existing Link (may need work)

- **Comberton Greenway Map 7.1**

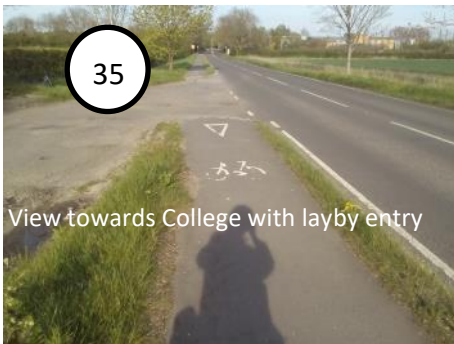
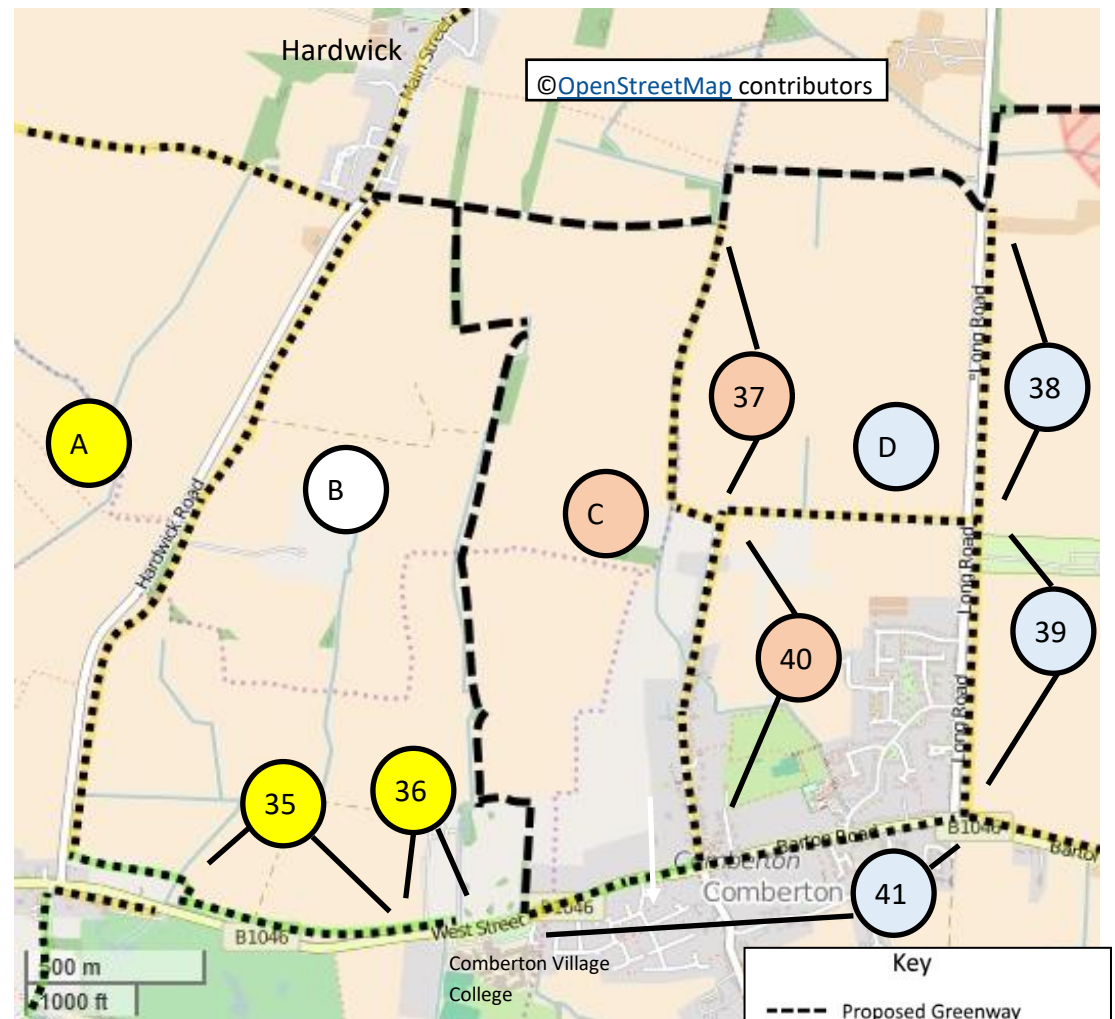
32. Construct 2.5m -3m wide path along alignment, to be agreed with landowners. Path to be sealed surface. The obvious alignment starts from the north with a green lane and follows a field ditch and field edges emerging almost opposite the Village College in Comberton. The potential for horse usage or the possible creation of a bridleway will need to be considered and discussed with the landowners.
33. A potential alternative alignment would follow Hardwick Road on field edges again subject to landowner’s agreement. The alignment could be close to the road apart from near the entrance to Asplins Farm where it would need to be set back to run behind a house. The potential for horse usage or the possible creation of a bridleway will need to be considered and discussed with the landowners.
34. For a Hardwick Road route to work it would need a good route through Toft. This is likely to mean that the route would follow field edges around the edge of properties in this area, subject to landowner’s agreement.

Key	
	Proposed Greenway
	Potential Link (needs works)
	Existing Link (may need work)



• **Comberton Greenway Map 7.2**

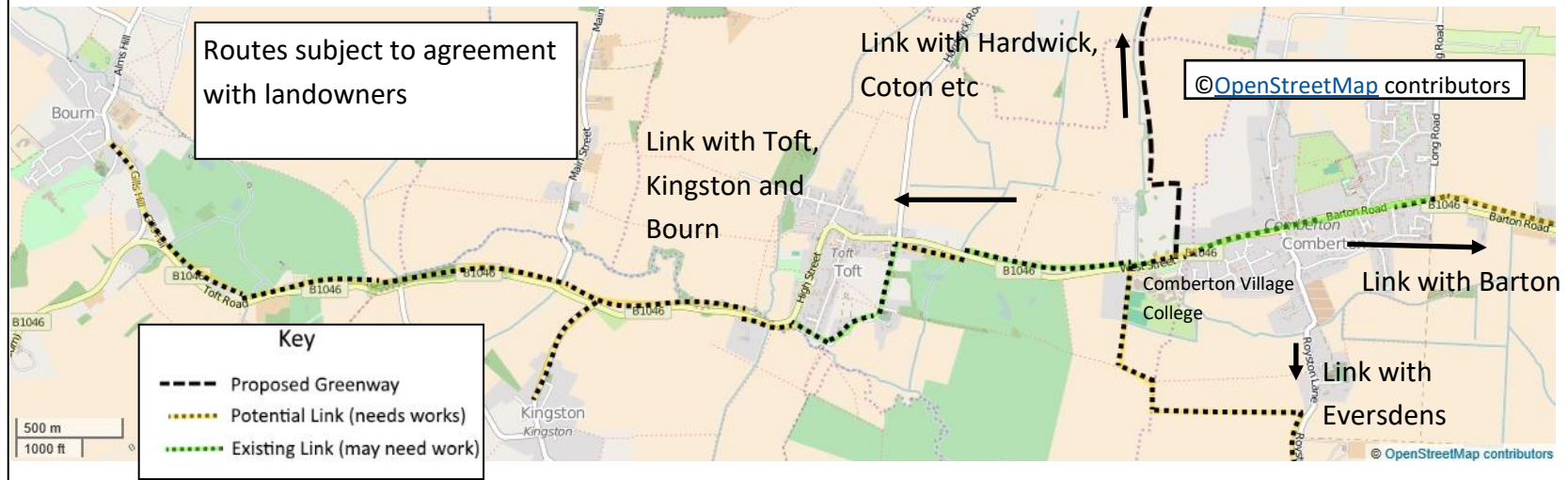
- 35. Widen existing path to 2m (from 1.5m) and mark out across layby .
- 36. At the school entrance there are a number of constraints, particularly where two drains cross under the road. The best option is likely to be to build out over the top of these drains to allow the path to be widened. A 2m wide path with verge separation will not be possible, but it should be possible to get continuity to the school western entrance.
- 37. Existing public footpath constrained in places. Width varies but approximately 2m between rows of trees leaves little space for vegetation growth or adequate width path. Links to Branch Road.
- 38. A route following field edges east of Long Road is possible. Any crossing to Branch Road would involve crossing Long Road, so is not recommended.
- 39. A route following field edges and verge in front of Highfield Farm Touring Park east of Long Road is possible. The potential for horse usage or the possible creation of a bridleway will need to be considered and discussed with the landowners.
- 40. Branch Road is relatively quiet but speeds can be high.
- 41. Route on road through village ideally with some traffic calming.



Comberton Links

Comberton Village College draws students from many of the surrounding villages, but the quality of links is poor, which is a problem for students wanting to travel independently and safely.

The ambition must be that there should be a good safe route that links each of the surrounding communities with Comberton. This can be done with four routes as indicated here, as long as the necessary land can be agreed.



East. At present there is a path besides the B1046 between Comberton and Barton which is not up to current standards. This is an important route because it is also the obvious route to/ from Cambridge for Comberton residents. (See Barton Greenway Report).

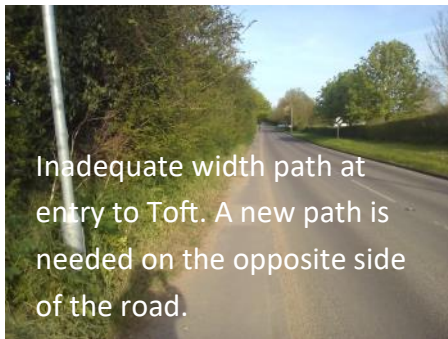
South. At present the route is on road via Royston Lane. A potential off-road alignment is identified in the Barton Greenway report, but has not been surveyed. If this alignment and the North route could accommodate horse-riders there would be a major addition to the local network.

West. An existing path besides the B 1046 needs upgrading (see note 35). At Toft Golf Club a new path is needed to the south of the B 1046 to link with Church Road Toft. The best route through Toft needs agreeing and to continue to Kingston and Bourn a new path would be needed (potentially to the north of the highway).

North. A number of options have been identified in this report, with the aim that this north-south link will serve Coton, Hardwick and potentially Caldecote. It is possible that if the desired alignment cannot be achieved more than one route will be needed to serve Coton and Hardwick separately.

Hardwick Links

Hardwick could be a major beneficiary of the Comberton Greenway, but this will need an improvement on existing facilities within the village to link well with the Greenway. In addition a potential link from Hardwick to Caldecote, Bourn Airfield and Cambourne has been highlighted and this is worth pursuing as well.



Inadequate width path at entry to Toft. A new path is needed on the opposite side of the road.

Recommendations

- For Coton to Cambridge: as early priority
 - ◇ Widen and upgrade existing path and ramps from Coton edge to existing bridge over M11 for approximately 400m.
 - ◇ Repair surface of bridge over M11.
 - ◇ Construct new ramps and path from existing bridge over M11 into West Cambridge University Site (Charles Babbage Road) for approximately 300m.
 - ◇ Remove low level wall at Adams Road/ Wilberforce Road junction.
 - ◇ Replace existing bridge over Bin Brook with new wider bridge and make minor adjustments to path on Burrell's Walk.
- For Coton to Comberton: as early priority
 - ◇ Undertake negotiations with landowners to agree a route that links Coton and Hardwick with Comberton Village College .
 - ◇ Complete initial designs for safe crossing of Long Road.
 - ◇ Investigate options for extending route to Cambourne, the Eversdens, Barton and Bourn.
- For Coton to Comberton subject to agreeing a final route:
 - ◇ Construct new path on field edges and bridleway for approximately 5km including new safe crossing of Long Road, currently assumed to be a new underpass.