

A35 Junctions

Active Travel Feasibility Study

New Forest National Park Authority

June 2025



About Sustrans

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

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Introduction

1 Introduction

This study, funded by the New Forest National Park Authority and in partnership with Hampshire County Council, will investigate the feasibility for three new crossings on the A35 in the New Forest National Park, in order to reduce the severance of existing active travel routes caused by traffic movements on the A35, and to improve overall road safety. It will also consider a fourth location where existing traffic conditions exclude the majority of route users.

The study will:

- Provide background and policy context to the report.
- Build a strategic case for delivering at least one of the options detailed in the project.
- Provide an overview and concept designs for 3 potential crossing locations, their opportunities and constraints.
- Provide an overview and concept design for a shared use path on the Old Railway (known locally as the “Holmsley Straight Mile” and identify opportunities and constraints).
- Determine any likely ecological, arboricultural, landscape or archaeological constraints.
- Carry out an Active Travel England (ATE) route check to assess the Level of Service the routes provide according to LTN 1/20 government guidance.
- Provide a summary of recommendations and detail the next steps to developing one of the options going forwards.
- Provide high-level costings for each option.

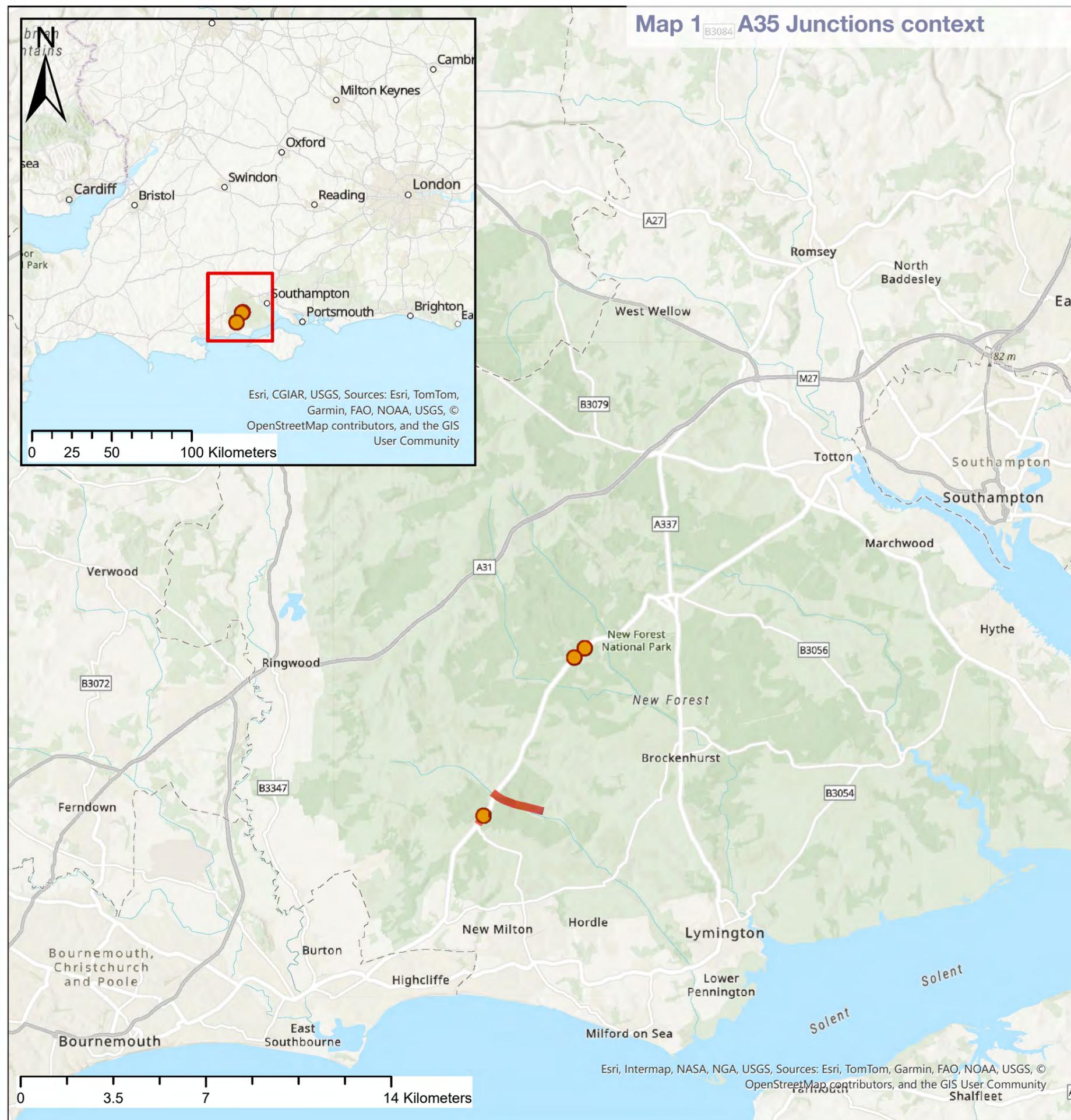
1.1 Background and context

Active travel in the UK

In July 2020 the UK government published ‘Gear Change: a bold vision for cycling and walking’ outlining its intent to make cycling and walking the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030. The plan - backed up by new funding for walking and cycling - sets out a vision for a step change in provision for active travel in this country.

The report notes the contribution made by active travel to:

- Health and wellbeing
- Easing congestion
- Increasing footfall for local businesses
- Reducing transport CO2 emissions
- Improving environmental and air quality



In addition, the government's second cycling and walking investment guide issued in 2022 set out four objectives for 2025, to:

- Increase the percentage of short journeys in towns and cities that are walked or cycled to 46% in 2025
- Increase walking activity
- Double cycling
- Increase the percentage of children ages 5 to 10 who usually walk to school to 55% in 2025.

Active Travel in the New Forest

The New Forest contains 26 miles of National Cycle Network (NCN), as well as an extensive network of recreational walking and cycling routes, including approved off-road gravel tracks, bridleways, byways and other routes on relatively quiet country lanes.

The New Forest Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan is currently in development, with public engagement carried out in autumn 2024. Once complete, the plan will provide a strategic approach to identifying cycling and walking improvements at a local level within the New Forest National Park.

In summer 2024 Sustrans was commissioned by NFNPA to audit the existing 26 miles of NCN within the boundary of the national park. A number of high-level recommendations were made, with the A35 and Old Railway identified as the areas of highest priority to improve the safety, comfort and coherence for route users.

Other regional plans and programmes currently in place include:

- [Hampshire Local Transport Plan \(LTP4\)](#)

A statutory plan setting out Hampshire's vision for future transport and travel infrastructure

- [NFNPA Net Zero with Nature](#)

A commitment from NFNPA to work with partners and communities to make the National Park "net zero with nature" by 2050 as well as to become a net zero organisation by 2030

- [New Forest National Park Partnership Plan](#)

A plan to guide and co-ordinate the work of all those with an interest and influence in the National Park including statutory organisations, land managers, businesses, local communities and user groups

- [New Forest National Park Recreation Management Strategy](#)

A strategy setting out the strategic direction for the management of outdoor recreation in the New Forest National Park from 2010 - 2030

- [NFNPA and New Forest District Council Local Plans](#)

Plans setting out the planning framework for the National Park and District Council including the scale and location of new development and the need to conserve the local distinctiveness of the area

- [New Forest Waterside LCWIP](#)

A Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Hampshire's Waterside region which borders the National Park

1.2 Strategic case

One of the UK's 15 designated National Parks, the New Forest is a unique landscape known for its heathland, pastures and ancient woodland. The forest is a popular destination for recreational walking and cycling, with an extensive cycle network crossing the area, consisting mostly of waymarked gravel tracks, byways & bridleways and minor roads, making it a popular destination for tourists.

A35

The A35 is a single carriageway arterial road that bisects the New Forest National Park between Southampton and the Bournemouth area via the village of Lyndhurst. To the west of Lyndhurst it cuts through some of the most attractive and environmentally sensitive areas of the New Forest National Park. The majority of the section between Hinton Admiral and Lyndhurst is 60mph, and due to the volume and speed of traffic it acts a barrier for many people looking to cross it on foot, by mobility scooter, by cycle or on horseback. While active travel in the New Forest is primarily leisure use, utility cyclists living locally to commute or access local services are also affected and restricted by this road.

The Old Railway

The Old Railway, known locally as the "Holmsley Straight Mile" is a section of former railway which is now a 40mph road, beginning at the Old Station Tea Rooms in the west and extending to the junction with Brockenhurst Road in the east. It forms an on-road section of NCN2 between 2 good quality traffic-free sections. It provides a poor level of service for pedestrians and cyclists, with no protected space for these users. The provision of segregated space for active travel on this section has been a long-standing local aspiration which would complete a well-known weak link in the network.

Current route users

The New Forest attracts thousands of tourists a year who enjoy recreational walking and cycling on the extensive network of waymarked routes, public roads, byways open to all traffic (BOATs) public and restricted bridleways. The park is popular with local cycle clubs as well as people travelling from further afield to explore the area by bike or on foot. Active travel provides an economic boost

for bike shops and cycle hire, cafes and campsites which sit close to routes on the network.

By reducing the severance of the A35 in this location, there is an opportunity to improve walking and cycling opportunities for local people making day to day utility journeys, such as commutes, journeys to public transport hubs and between residential areas. Creating greater opportunities for local people to walk, wheel and cycle in the New Forest has the potential to improve local health and wellbeing, improve air quality and reduce congestion.

Sites Appraisal

2 Sites appraisal

In this section, we provide an appraisal of the study sites, including an analysis of their existing conditions. This includes a review of current walking and cycling connections, as well as heritage, archaeology, and landscape considerations. The aim is to identify potential opportunities and constraints when proposing design improvements for these sites.

2.1 Existing conditions

The sites to assess are all located along the A35 and includes:

- **Site 1: Rhinefield Ornamental Drive/A35 Junction**

The site requires users to cross the A35, but there is currently no dedicated infrastructure for pedestrians or cyclists. Furthermore, there are no footways or cycle facilities along Rhinefield Ornamental Drive or Bolderwood Arboretum Ornamental Drive, limiting safe and accessible active travel in the area.

- **Site 2: Lyndhurst Road/A35 Junction**

The site requires crossing the A35, but there is currently no dedicated infrastructure for pedestrians or cyclists. Gates are present on both sides of the A35, providing access to rural paths, although these are rough and unsurfaced. The link from Lyndhurst Road includes a dedicated arm connecting to the A35 in both northbound and southbound directions. However, there are no footways or cycle facilities at this crossing point.

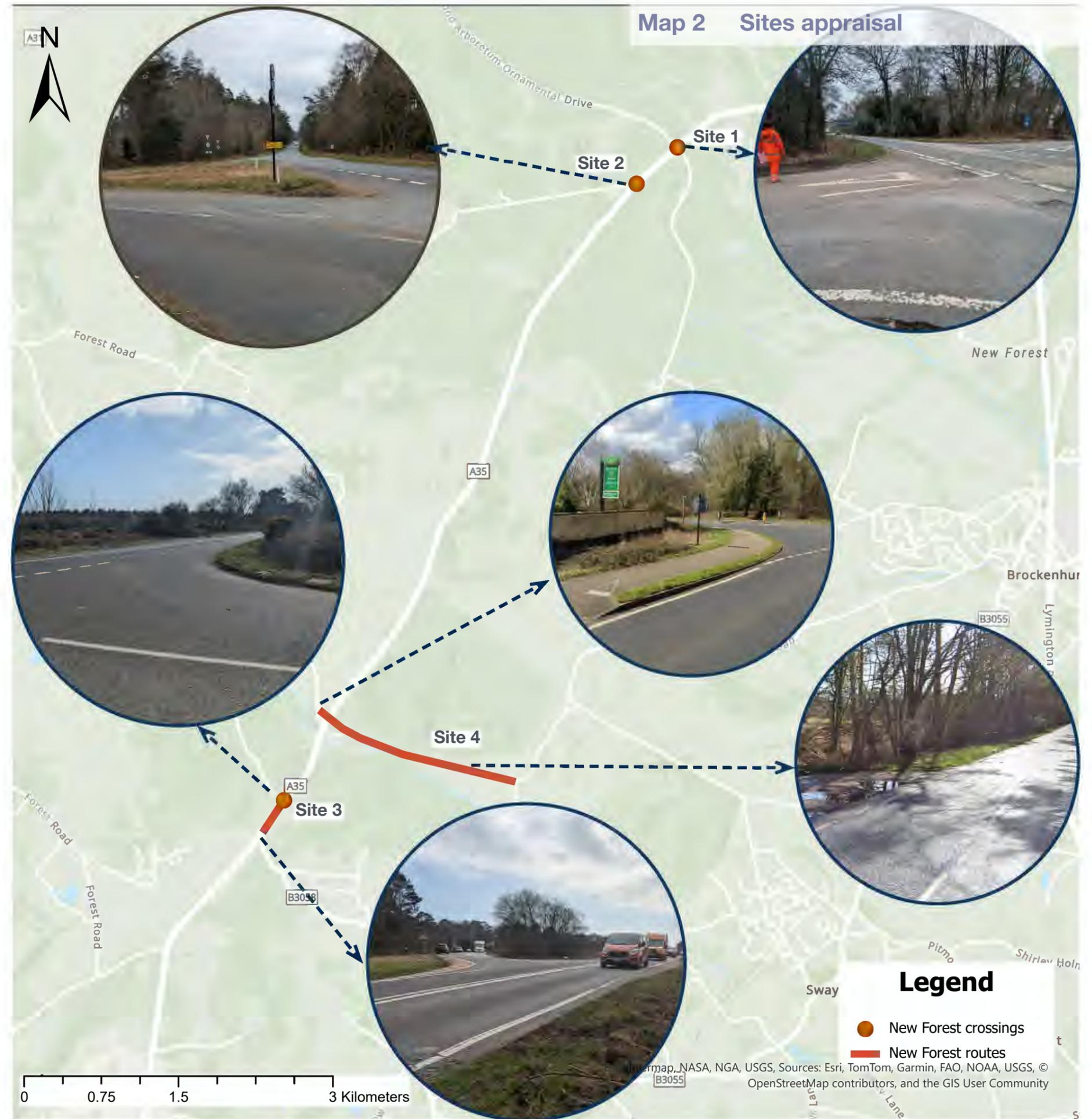
- **Site 3: A35 / Holmsley Passage and road junction and A35 route section**

There is no dedicated walking or cycling infrastructure along the A35 between Holmsley Passage and Holmsley Road. Although there is a vegetated verge on either side of the carriageway, it does not provide a suitable route for pedestrians or cyclists. Additionally, there are no formal crossing facilities to enable safe movement across the A35.

- **Site 4: Route section along Station Rd between the Old Station Tea Rooms and Brockenhurst Rd**

There is no dedicated walking or cycling infrastructure along Old Railway, between the Old Station Tea Rooms and Brockenhurst Road. While some sections feature a vegetated verge, it is intermittent and does not provide a continuous or safe route for pedestrians or cyclists. Additionally, there are no formal crossing facilities to support safe movement across Old Railway.

In front of the Old Station Tea Rooms, there is an uncontrolled crossing over a side road, which connects to a traffic-free section of NCN 2. At this junction, a short section of cycle track is also provided to allow cyclists to rejoin the carriageway.



Road Network

The area is serviced by many roads, both major & minor. The main road between the sites is the A35 which presents high traffic speed and volumes reaching an AADT of 13,928 to the south of Old Railway. Other minor roads feeding into the A35 are Bolderwood Arboretum Ornamental Dr and Rhinefield Ornamental Dr on Site 1, Lyndhurst Rd on Site 2, Holmsley Passage and Holmsley Rd on Site 3 and Old Railway on Site 4.

Bus Network

There is no public transport service along the A35 in the New Forest. However, the New Forest Tour operates along the A35 during the summer season, from July to September. Other bus companies, such as Bluestar and Morebus, provide routes throughout the area, connecting towns including Christchurch, Lyndhurst, Ashurst, and Totton.

Railway

The nearest railway station to Sites 1 and 2 is Brockenhurst, located 5.3 km to the southeast. For Sites 3 and 4, the closest stations are Sway and New Milton, both approximately 4.5 km to the southeast.

National Cycle Network (NCN) and Public Right of Way (PROW)

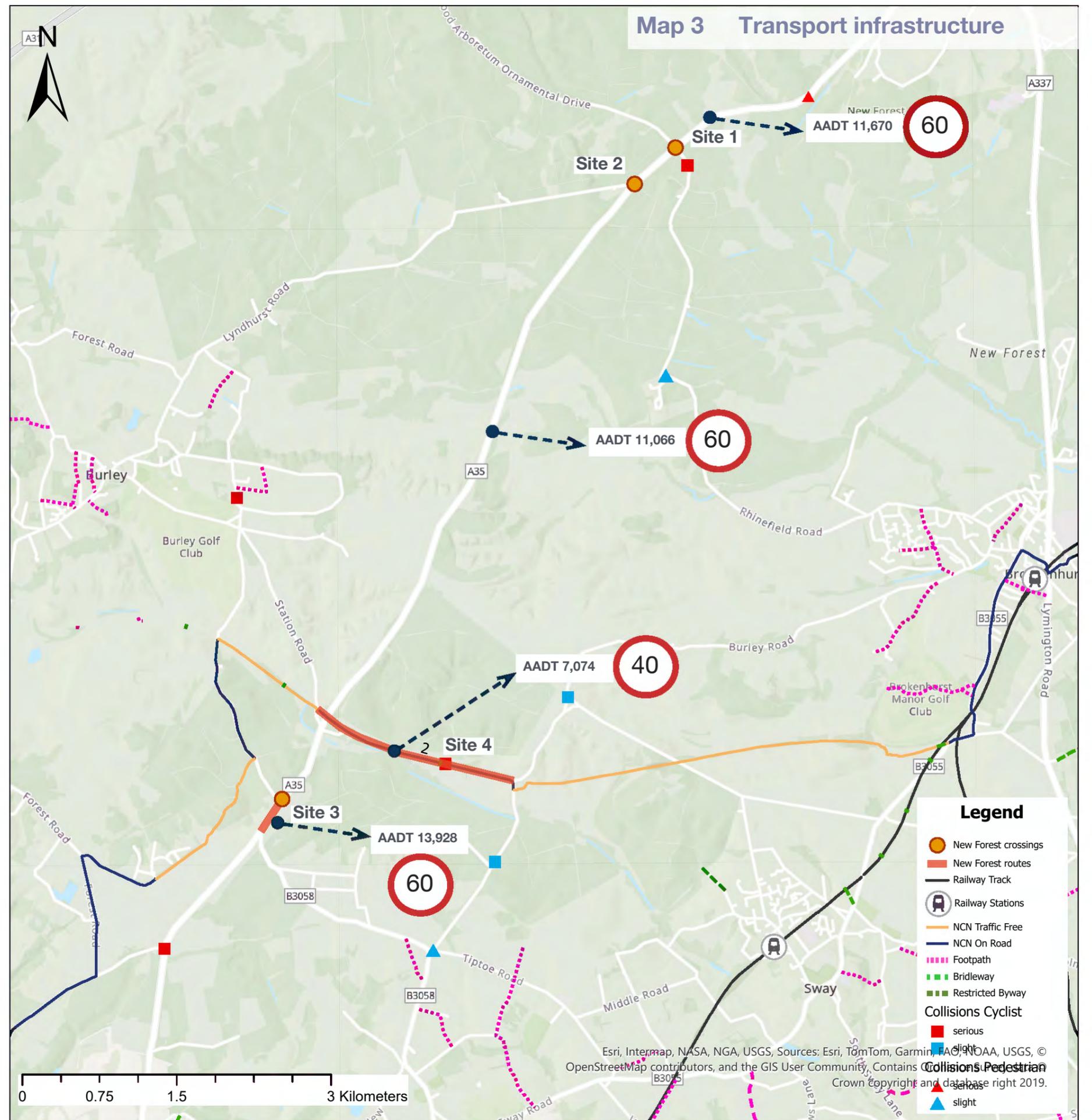
There is limited cycling infrastructure and few public rights of way near Sites 1 and 2. In contrast, Sites 3 and 4 are located close to NCN 2, which runs parallel to the A35 on a traffic-free path. The route then follows Old Railway on an on-road section, aligning with Site 4 and providing a direct connection to Brockenhurst.

Collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists

Publicly available data from [CycleStreets](#) on pedestrian and cyclist collisions from 2018 to 2023 was collected for the areas surrounding the study sites. One serious cyclist-related collision was recorded near Site 1 on 55 Rhinefield Ornamental Drive, although it did not occur directly at the junction with the A35.

At Site 4, a serious collision was recorded at the junction with an unclassified road. This incident involved four cyclists and occurred on Old Railway, where the speed limit is 40 mph.

The collision on Old Railway indicates a need for safety improvements to better protect cyclists and potentially pedestrians in the area.



2.2 Walking and cycling connection assessment

Sites 1 and 2

Connectivity Strengths:

- Proximity to likely desire lines, indicating pedestrian and cyclists movements, from nearby attractions and accommodations.
- Multiple picnic areas and attractions suggest potential for leisure walking and cycling.

Weaknesses:

- No visible connection to NCN routes or PROWs.
- Limited infrastructure for walking/cycling –no designated footpaths or off-road cycleways nearby.
- Lack of safe access to Brockenhurst railway station, limiting sustainable travel integration.

Recommendations:

Enhance connections to existing desire lines by providing safer crossings for cyclists and pedestrian and provide wayfinding signage. Improve surface quality of informal paths, to enhance network connections.

Sites 3 and 4

Connectivity Strengths:

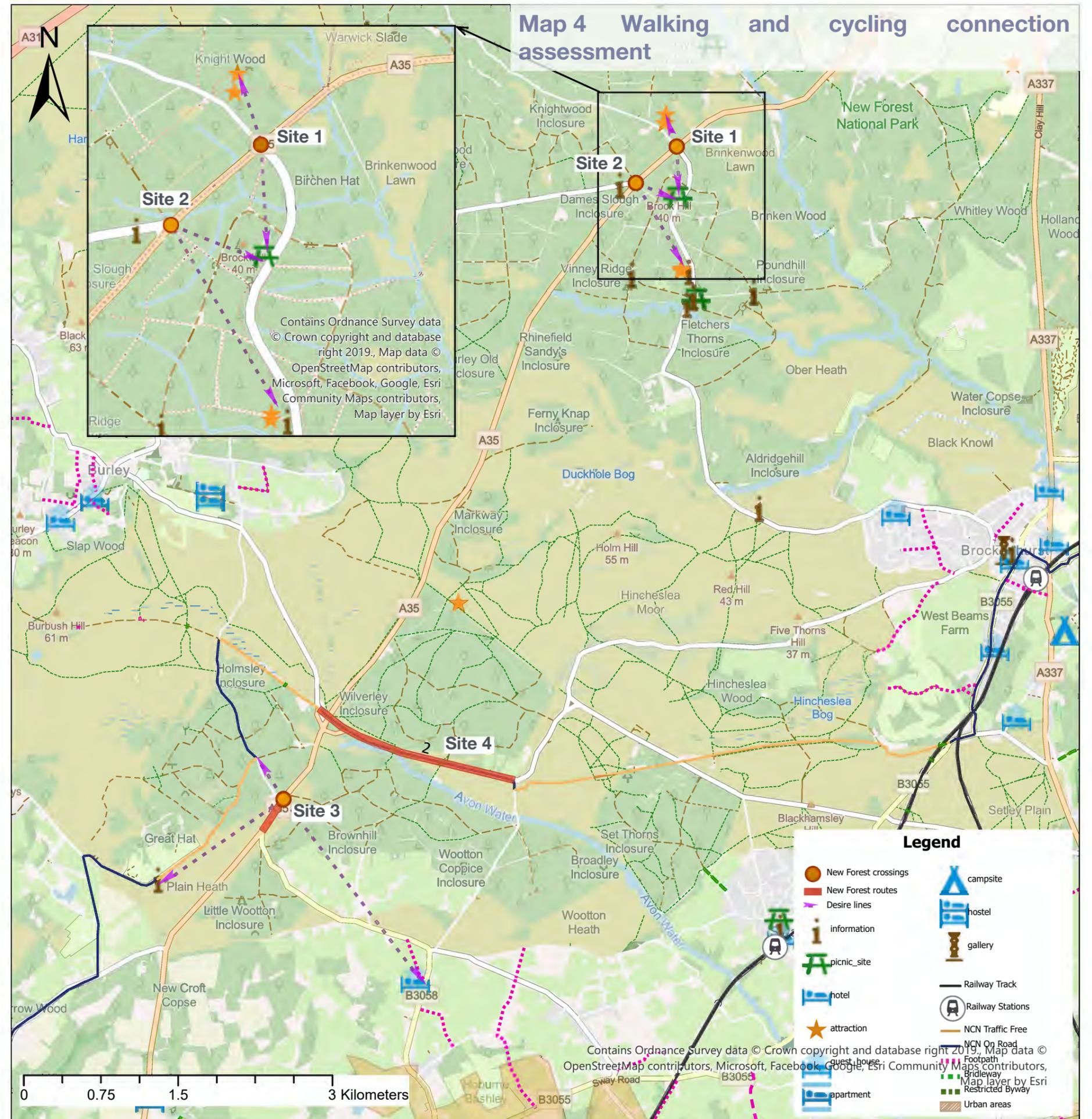
- Site 4 is part of NCN Route 2, which provides a strong east-west cycle corridor with connections to Brockenhurst railway station.
- Desire lines toward tourist attractions and rural roads near Site 3 may support cycling and walking routes.

Weaknesses:

- Cyclist safety concerns in Site 4 due to a serious collision reported on Old Railway where the speed limit is 40 mph.
- Not protected pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure on Site 3.

Recommendations:

Enhance safety on Old Railway near Site 4 by implementing traffic calming measures and dedicated infrastructure for walking and cycling. Additionally, consider developing a shared-use path along the A35, between Holmsley Road and Psge, to encourage active travel and provide a safe, continuous connection to NCN 2.



2.3 Heritage and archaeology

This section provides an early stage archaeological issues/feasibility statement, based on information provided by the archaeologist from Hampshire County Council. The complete early stage archaeological issues/feasibility statement provided can be found in **appendix 1**.

- **Site 1: Rhinefield Ornamental Drive/A35 Junction**

There are no archaeological sites impacted by the scheme shown. The proposed works are small in scale, of limited ground impact and are within the existing highway verge. It is not anticipated that archaeological matters would preclude the development.

- **Site 2: Lyndhurst Road/A35 Junction**

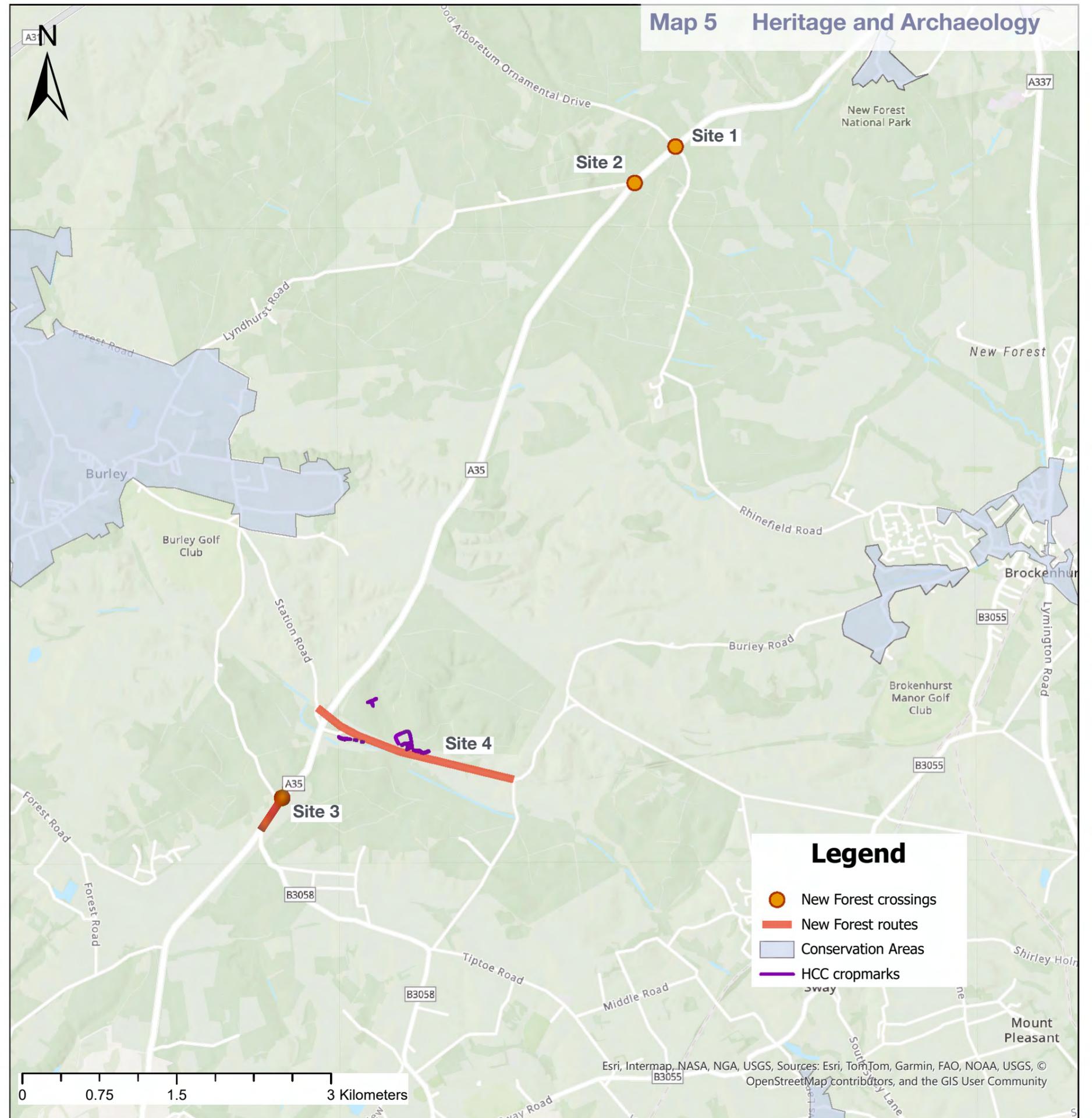
There are no archaeological sites impacted by the scheme shown. The proposed works are small in scale, of limited ground impact and are within the existing highway verge. It is not anticipated that archaeological matters would preclude the development.

- **Site 3: A35 / Holmsley Passage and road junction and A35 route section**

There are no archaeological sites impacted by the scheme shown. The proposed works are small in scale, of limited ground impact and are within the existing highway verge. It is not anticipated that archaeological matters would preclude the development. However, if the works cannot be completed within the existing highway corridor there are earthworks visible on LiDAR and recorded on the Historic Environment Records (HERs) which if impacted (albeit marginally) would need to be investigated. At the Holmsley road junction there are braided tracks which are crossed by the line of the A35 which are likely to represent original drove routes across the fens. Just south of Holmsley Passage is a rectangular enclosure that has been cut through by the A35.

- **Site 4: Route section along Station Rd between the Old Station Tea Rooms and Brockenhurst Rd**

There are no archaeological sites currently recorded alongside Old Railway, and if the works are within the existing highway, or the existing railway cutting in which the road runs, it is not anticipated that archaeological matters would preclude the development. However, if the works cannot be completed within the existing highway corridor there are earthworks visible on LiDAR and recorded on the HERs which if impacted might need to be investigated.



2.4 Landscape Character Assessment

This section uses the Landscape Character Assessment provided by the New Forest National Park Authority. Each site was mapped onto the Landscape Types Map to determine its specific location. Listed below are the sites, along with their corresponding Character Areas and Landscape Types

Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is a tool for setting out what makes one place different from another. They identify those features, such as variations in the natural environment, settlement pattern and land uses, that give a locality its 'sense of place' and pinpoints what makes it different from neighbouring areas¹. The proposed designs presented in Chapter 6 will adhere to the landscape considerations outlined in the LCA.

- **Site 1: Rhinefield Ornamental Drive/A35 junction:** It falls within LCA 23, under the Ancient and Ornamental Woodland landscape type.
- **Site 2: Lyndhurst Road/A35 Junction:** It falls within LCA 23, under the Ancient and Ornamental Woodland landscape type.
- **Site 3: A35 / Holmsley Passage and road junction and A35 route section:** It falls within LCA 20, under Heathland Landscape type
- **Site 4: Route section along Station Rd between the Old Station Tea Rooms and Brockenhurst Rd:** It falls within LCA 20, under Heathland Landscape type

LCA 20: Southern Heathland and Forest

The southern district features gently sloping terrain with large areas of open heathland, ancient woodlands, and valley mires. New Forest ponies and cattle roam freely across the landscape and along straight forest roads. Burley and Brockenhurst act as key tourist centres, supported by campsites, car parks, and other visitor facilities. The area also offers long views toward landmarks such as Fawley Refinery and Sway Tower.

LCA 23: New Forest Central Woodlands.

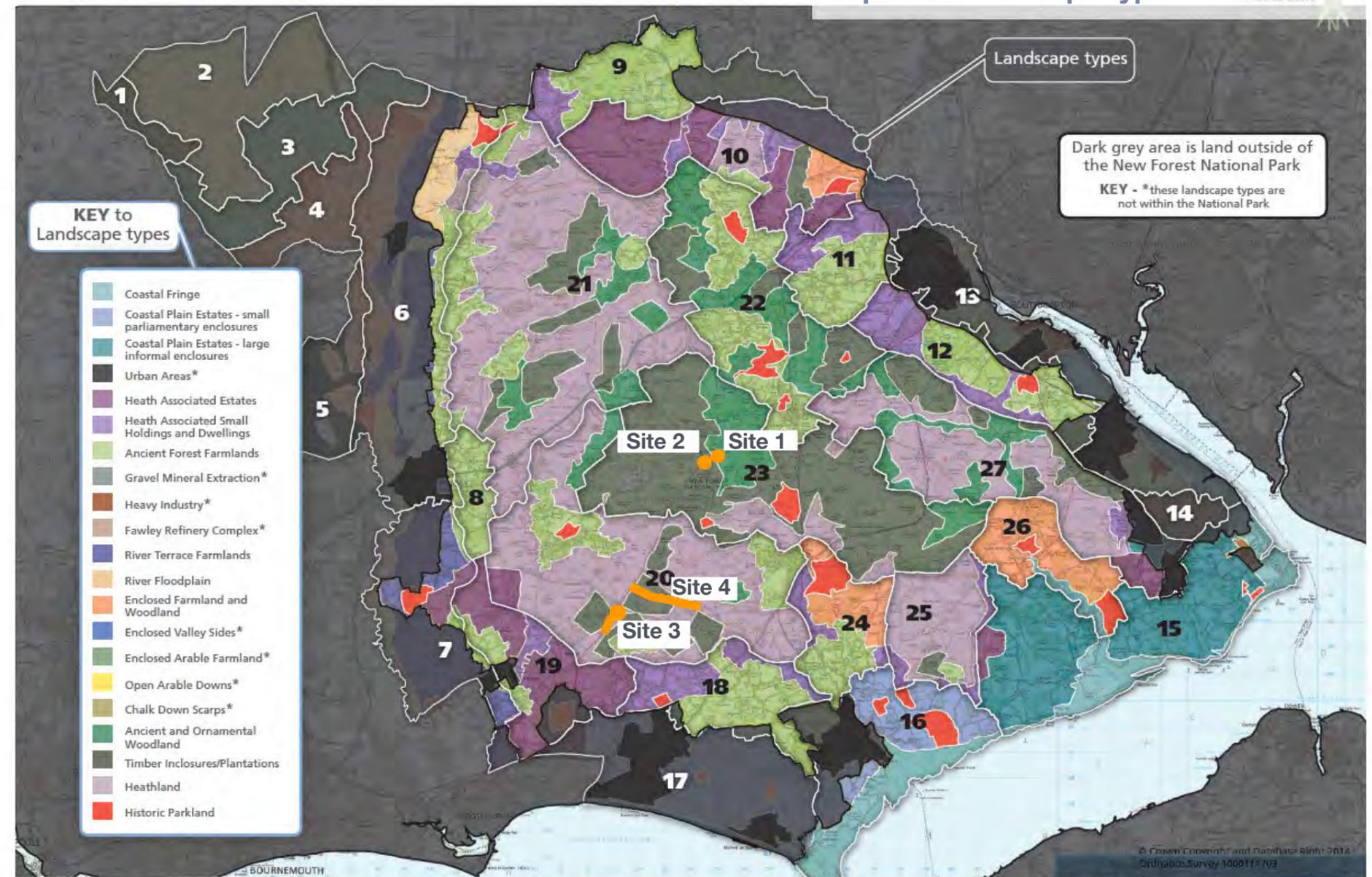
This central New Forest landscape features gently rolling terrain on fertile soils, dominated by woodland enclosures with beech, oak, and mixed trees. Large areas of ancient and ornamental woodland form one of Britain's largest lowland ancient woodlands. The area includes winding ornamental drives, scattered parkland, and forest clearings with isolated houses and lodges. Access is via straight main roads and decorative forest drives. Recreational facilities such as car parks, campsites, and picnic sites are common.

Sensitive material selection, such as buff-colored surfacing, can lessen the visual intrusion of hard measures compared to traditional materials.

¹ Landscape Character Assessment, New Forest National Park

Landscape Types map

Map 6 Landscape types



Source: [Landscape Character Assessment, New Forest National Park](#)

Character Area and Landscape type	Summary of Issue	Management guidelines
LCA 20 Southern Heathland and Forest, Heathland	Varying levels of grazing – scrub, bracken and secondary woodland encroachment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Forestry and woodlands, 6:</i> Manage and restore further areas of ancient wood pasture and New Forest Lawn, particularly through appropriate grazing by commoners' livestock and control of scrub/invasive species
	Past planting of heath with conifer plantations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Biodiversity, 2:</i> Protect and reinstate areas of heathland through grazing and restoration work. Refer to the appropriate Forest Design Plan for more detailed information in line with New Forest SAC plan (in the Timber Inclosures/ Plantations and Heathland landscape types). • <i>Forestry and woodlands, 5:</i> Manage the Inclosure woodlands aiming towards a gradual conversion of conifers to predominantly native broadleaves and open forest habitats through thinning and natural regeneration. Refer to the appropriate Forest Design Plan for more detailed information (in the Timber Inclosures/Plantations landscape type) • <i>Forestry and woodlands, 7:</i> Manage and enhance the Inclosures' ground flora and habitats including heathland, wood pasture and lawns, including potentially opening up the Inclosures to commoners' livestock if appropriate and carefully monitored. Refer to the appropriate Forest Design Plan for more detailed information (in the Timber Inclosures/ Plantations landscape type). • <i>Forestry and woodlands, 8:</i> Protect and retain stands of Scots Pine where they are valued as landscape features within the open plains (in the Heathland landscape type).
	Past drainage operations leading to a loss of wetland habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Biodiversity, 3:</i> Protect and restore areas of mire, wet heathland and riverine woodland through reestablishing water flows and reinstating natural channel courses. Refer to the appropriate New Forest Wetland Management for more detailed information (in the Timber Inclosures/ Plantations and Heathland landscape types).
	Recreational pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recreation, 9:</i> Manage the setting of recreational facilities in the landscape, utilising the screening benefits of vegetation and topography. Manage visitor locations and timings to protect valued flora and fauna (particularly in the Heathland and Ancient Forest Farmlands landscape types).
	Pylons, communications masts and long-range views of industry at Fawley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Tranquillity and views 13:</i> Protect levels of tranquillity and views with the use of strategic tree planting, or allowing vegetation succession, to screen views of pylons and the industry at Fawley on the horizon.
	Death of some tree species; diversity of species needed to maintain tree numbers in future.	
LCA 23: New Forest Central Woodlands, Ancient and Ornamental Woodlands	Spread of exotics, such as rhododendron, in the woodland understorey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Forestry and woodlands, 1:</i> Protect the area's important ancient and ornamental woodlands, including rhododendron and bracken control and selected holly pollarding and continued grazing by commoners' stock to maintain a diverse age structure and species range. Refer to the appropriate Forest Design Plan for further detailed information.
	Varying levels of grazing in some locations, leading to an evenage structure of the ancient and ornamental woodlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Forestry and woodlands, 2:</i> To assist regeneration of ancient and ornamental woodlands allowing dead wood to remain.
	Lack of traditional woodland management techniques, including pollarding and coppicing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Forestry and woodlands, 1:</i> Protect the area's important ancient and ornamental woodlands, including rhododendron and bracken control and selected holly pollarding and continued grazing by commoners' stock to maintain a diverse age structure and species range. Refer to the appropriate Forest Design Plan for further detailed information.
	Visitor and recreation pressure – including the location of car parks, campsites and prominent signage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Recreation,9:</i> Use the screening benefits of vegetation and topography to manage the setting of recreational facilities in the landscape. • <i>Development and settlement edge, 12:</i> Protect the remote rural character of the landscape, including the removal of excessive signage and utilising materials such as locallysourced timber to help blend signs into their natural setting
	Development pressure (National Park-wide issue).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development and settlement edge, 10:</i> Protect the sparse settlement pattern of the area, avoiding new development outside existing forest clearings and ensuring new development is constructed in sympathy with the local vernacular.
	Intrusion of the A35 and A337 road corridors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Development and settlement edge, 11:</i> Protect undeveloped views and levels of tranquillity, including retaining conifer stands, allowing natural regeneration of shrubs and gorse and the planting of broadleaf trees along road verges to minimise the visual/noise impacts of the A337 and A35 corridors.

Table 1 Landscape Character Assessment Summary

Ecological Review

3 Ecological review

As part of this feasibility study an ecological assessment is required to provide an early indication of what the ecological implications might be. This will identify any high level ecological constraints and opportunities for the proposals, and determine what further ecological steps will be needed for this project to meet planning and legal requirements.

This appraisal has been conducted based on desk study data only. It has involved the initial collation and review of contextual information from freely available online datasets¹ such as designated sites occurring within the potential zone of influence of the proposals, and a review of aerial photography and photographs taken on a site walkover by Sustrans Engineers. Due to the early stage of the project no on-site habitat or species surveys have been undertaken to inform this assessment, nor have data searches for species records been conducted. This level of assessment is considered sufficient to identify obvious barriers and opportunities to the proposals at this early feasibility stage.

Four Sites are being considered by this ecological review, three road crossing/junctions (Sites 1 – 3) and a new path along Station Road (Site 4)

The complete ecological review can be found in **appendix 2**.

3.1 Design Considerations

- **Site 1: Rhinefield Ornamental Drive/A35 Junction**

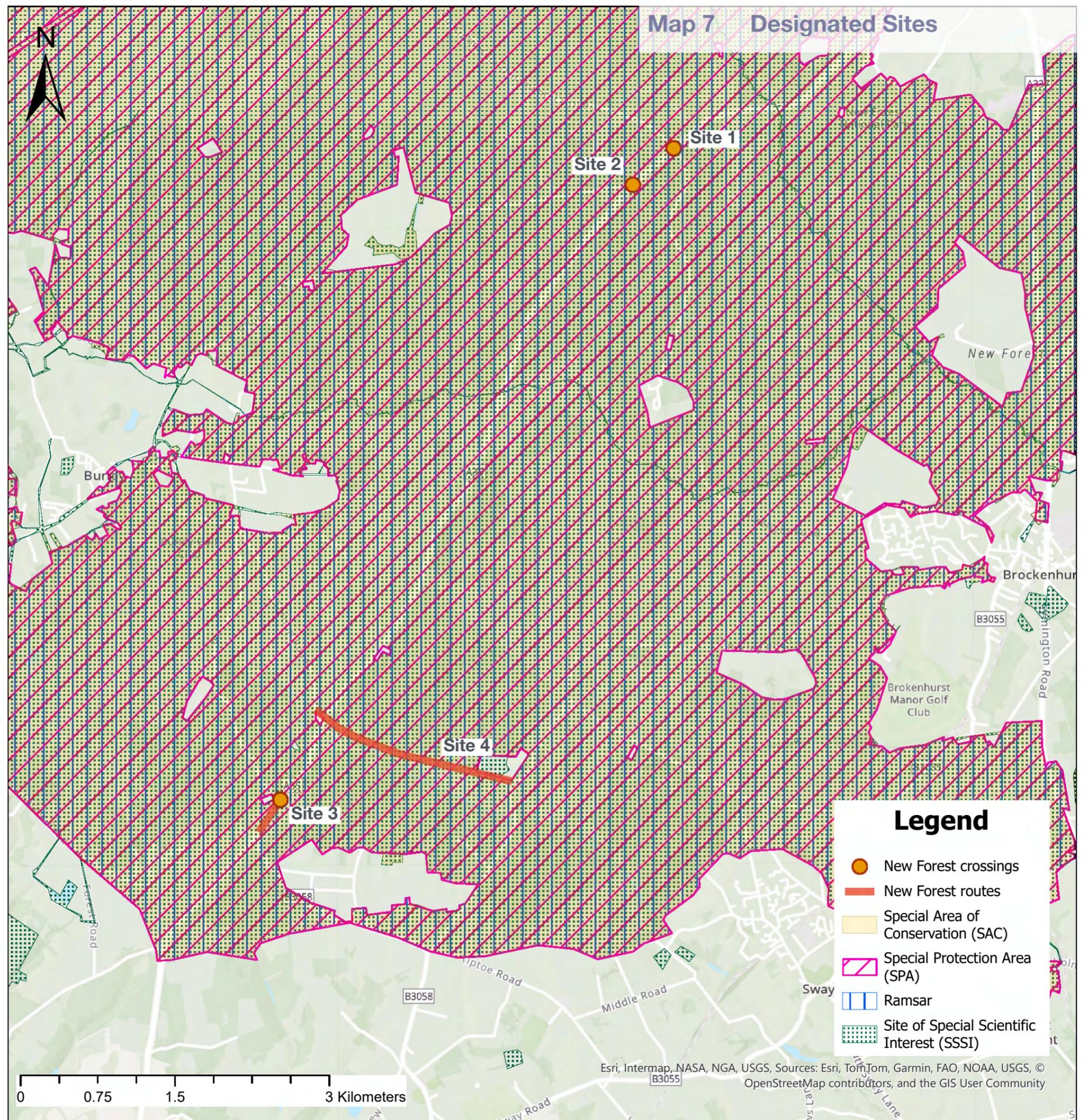
Proposals are likely to fall within land designated as Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW). Consideration should be given to how to minimise this and to ensure that trees and any flora associated with ASNW are protected.

- **Site 2: Lyndhurst Road/A35 Junction**

Measures to protect the vegetated triangle between the junction arms should be incorporated into the designs, as currently there is evidence of overrunning by vehicles. The road verges are also botanically important and should be protected, proposals should strongly seek to retain these areas.

The proposals at the time of writing estimate a 21m² loss of grassland within the triangle to accommodate turning movements onto the A35 (half of which is within the visibility cut zone). However, there is ~44m² to be recovered from overrun, and a further 110m² potential gain from current paved area which should offset this loss.

A landing area from the traffic island is proposed in the road verge, connecting to the adjacent forestry track. An alternative to tarmac should be considered, such as hogging. Hoggin may be more acceptable to NE as it has a similar underlying geology to the forest, so may not be viewed as a permanent loss of habitat.



¹ Multi-Agency Geographic Information Centre (Website accessed November 2024) Magic Map Application (defra.gov.uk)



Figure 1 Site 2 likely impacts

~250m of grass track through the conifer woodland is proposed to be upgraded to a more accessible surface path. This will represent habitat loss (grass to hard surface) within the SAC/SPA/Ramsar designation, Natural England should be consulted on this at an early stage to discuss the feasibility of this, and a full ecological assessment undertaken.

• **Site 3: A35 / Holmsley Passage and road junction and A35 route section**

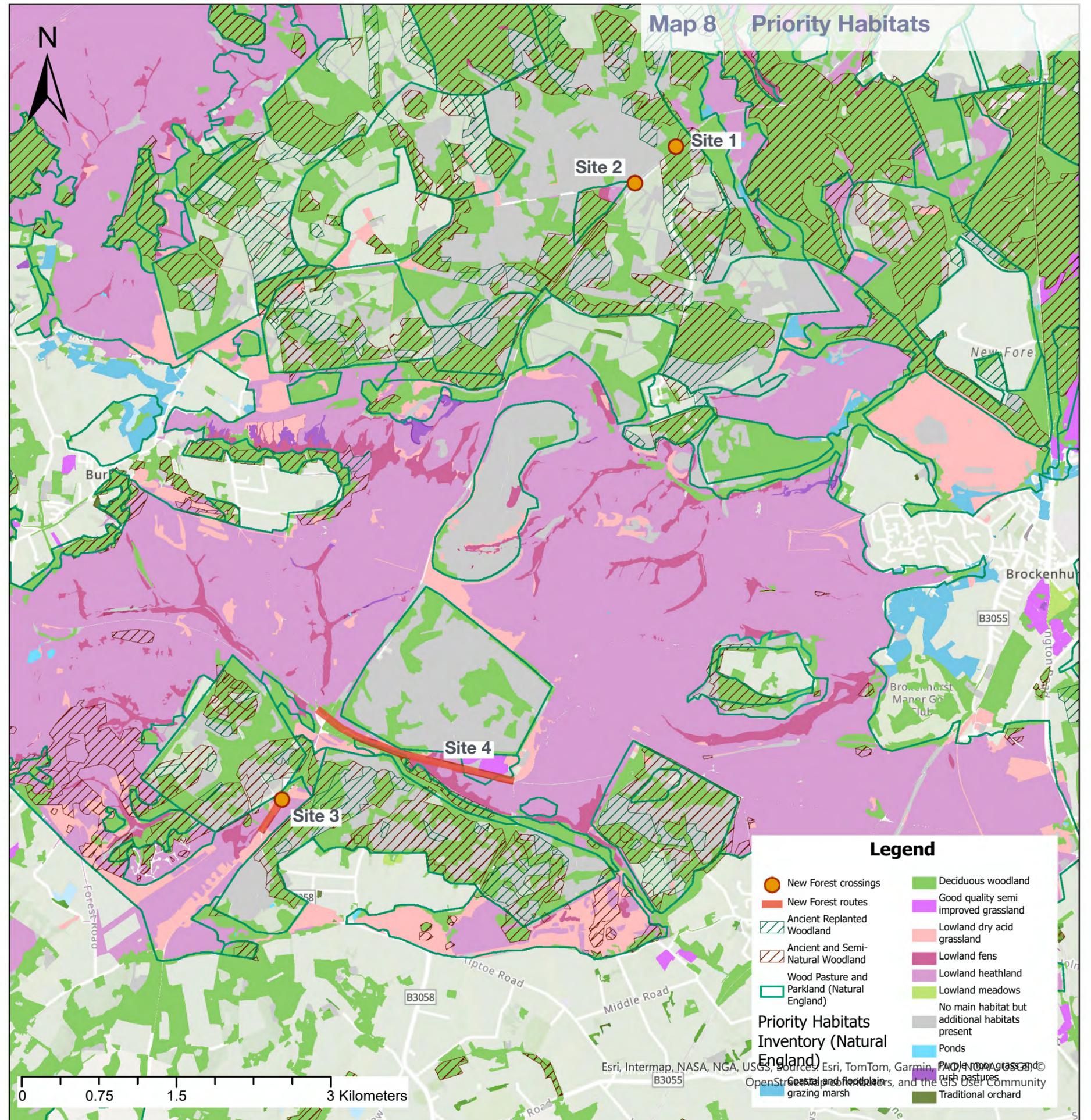
Impacts of the proposals are likely to be higher than Sites 1 and 2 with more habitat loss within the SAC/SPA/Ramsar designation being required. Measures to reduce the impact such as rerouting the path to link to Holmsley Road into the grazed field rather than the rough grassland, which will have greater importance to reptiles and other species should be considered.

Measures to retain boundary habitat along the A35 should be explored, such as moving the carriageway into the adjacent verge to maximise space on the northwest side where the new path will be created.

The area of lowland fen (an irreplaceable habitat) mapped as within 10m of Site 3 should be surveyed to determine if it is in fact present, and then be protected from impact from the proposals or during construction.

NE should be consulted about the proposals at an early stage to determine if this design is feasible and will be permissible. A reduction in path width should be considered to reduce the habitat loss within the designated sites.

A good compensation scheme would be required in order to progress these proposals. It is recommended opportunities elsewhere on the highways estate are explored, such as existing pull ins where habitat has been lost could be restored. It would



be important at an early stage to identify areas of compensation and review if they have already been allocated as compensation to other development schemes.

- **Site 4: Route section along Station Rd between the Old Station Tea Rooms and Brockenhurst Rd**

Measures to minimise habitat loss of the road verges should be given great consideration. It is likely an off-road shared use path in this location is not feasible from an ecology perspective and any proposals would likely cause significant habitat loss and change the character and connectivity of the habitat associated with the road. If it is progressed than costs associated with ecological surveys, mitigation, compensation and BNG offsetting are likely to be significant.

General Considerations

To protect the nature conservation interest, the detailed design (including temporary works areas) should:

- Avoid areas of irreplaceable habitat.
- Minimise habitat loss, particularly of higher quality adjacent habitat such as woodland, trees or species rich grassland.
- Protect retained habitats.
- Avoid fencing and lighting where possible, or design for minimal impacts on wildlife if essential.
- Include biodiversity enhancements, appropriate planting/ seeding of re-instated habitat and any biodiversity net gain requirements (if required).

Construction

A Construction Environmental Management Plan will be required that includes measures to protect designated sites, retained habitats and protected and notable species.

Trees

To safeguard the habitats adjacent to site, an Arboriculture Impact Assessment will be required and adherence and an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP), to prevent damage to boundary features and retained trees.

Ecology Survey

When proposals for each Site are confirmed a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) should be produced in the first instance. This will map the habitats present within the site and identify the potential presence of protected/notable species, and make recommendations for further survey. Once these have taken place an Ecological Impact Assessment will be produced. If planning permission is needed then it is possible the development would trigger an Environmental Impact Assessment as a result of comprising Sc 2 development in a sensitive site (National Park/

SAC/SSSI). If this is the case then an ecology chapter will be required of the EIA reporting.

Consult with Natural England

It is recommended that Natural England (NE) is consulted about the scheme at an early stage to advise if any additional mitigation measures or surveys are required. This should be done by seeking discretionary advice via the DAS service.

Pre-App Advice

If planning permission is required it is recommended pre-app with the Local Authority is undertaken at an appropriate time.

Habitat Regulation Assessment

It is recommended a Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) is undertaken. When considering development proposals that may affect the integrity of European Sites, the “Competent Authority”, in this case the New Forest District Council (NFDC), is required by law to carry out an HRA. NFDC can request that the developer undertake the HRA work on its behalf and this is then reported to and considered by NFDC as the ‘competent authority.’ NFDC will only approve a planning application or Permitted Development Proposals if it considers that the Project will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site or have a significant effect on qualifying habitats or species for which the European sites are designated for. HRA refers to the assessment of the potential effects of a development plan on one or more European sites, in this case SPA, SAC and Ramsar. Adverse effects on the integrity of the designated sites will only be permitted if it can be shown there are no feasible alternative solutions that would be less damaging or avoid damage to the sites, and the proposals needs to be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

Biodiversity Net Gain

A scheme to provide a 10% net gain is mandatory for schemes requiring planning permission. Achieving BNG could be challenging within the sensitive location of the Sites being considered.

3.2 Summary

All the sites are within and will result in the loss of habitat within nationally and internationally important designated sites. This is a significant constraint and will require consultation with Natural England to progress proposals at any of the sites.

The ecological impacts at Site 1 are likely to be smaller than the other sites, however even small scale losses within the SAC/SPA/Ramsar is still considered important, despite the designated sites large size. Careful design considerations should be made to protect and retain boundary habitats, and further ecology survey work will be required.

Proposals at Site 2 are unlikely to encounter ecological constraints that would be a complete barrier to the scheme, if designs are sensitive to the botanically rich triangle and verges and appropriate mitigation is put in place. Proposals to improve the surface of the forestry track through the woodland could be considered to be impacting on a qualifying feature of the SAC so could present a constraint, further survey works and consultation with NE will be required.

Site 3 is more challenging with a larger amount of habitat loss expected within the SAC/SPA/Ramsar/SSSI, and the scale of impact is likely to make proposals unacceptable to NE. Design considerations such as reducing the path width should be explored, to reduce the habitat loss associated with the proposals. NE must be consulted to determine feasibility of the proposals, if any additional mitigation measures are required and to agree an accepted survey scope to inform designs. It is recommended this is done early to determine how feasible proposals at this Site are from an ecology perspective. A good compensation scheme will be required and areas to restore habitat elsewhere in the highways estate within the designated site identified.

Site 4 is likely to cause adverse impacts to the SAC/SPA/Ramsar/SSSI which cannot be mitigated for, so is unlikely to be permissible from NE. If this Site is progressed then early engagement with NE will be essential and costs associated with ecological survey, mitigation, compensation and BNG offsetting are likely to be significant.

Scheme proponents and decision makers would need to undertake an Appropriate Assessment at time of planning application/PD approval due to the impact on the designated sites (SAC, SPA, Ramsar). This will require further ecology survey and arboriculture work to inform this assessment. Under Article 6(4), a plan or project can only proceed when impacting a SAC/SPA/Ramsar provided three sequential tests are met:

- There must be no feasible alternative solutions to the plan or project which are less damaging to the affected European site(s).
- There must be “imperative reasons of overriding public interest” (IROPI) for the plan or project to proceed.
- All necessary compensatory measures must be secured to ensure that the overall coherence of the network of European sites is protected.

Stakeholder Engagement

4 Stakeholder engagement

As part of this study, Sustrans carried out engagement with key local stakeholders. Many of these stakeholders form part of the New Forest Cycle Working Group (CWG), which includes representation from local cycling clubs, businesses and Forestry England. A number of members of the CWG had taken part in an audit of the NCN as part of Sustrans' review in summer 2024, and had previously provided comments and recommendations for the A35 and Old Railway from a local perspective.

4.1 Stakeholder call

Sustrans held an online meeting in May 2025 with members of the CWG, Forestry England, and Burley Parish Council, in which draft designs for each of the 4 locations were shared and presented by the project's senior engineer. Members of the group commented that the designs were innovative and considered.

Comments included:

- “Please recommend that the stretch of road between the two junctions at location 1 is no more than 40mph (ideally 30mph) and no overtaking is enforced on the approach to each junction.”
- “The extremely dangerous crossing from the end of Holmsley Passage to the Permitted track is often used by families with young children, from the nearby Holmsley campsite.”
- “At location 1, could a refuge on the south side by the track enable cyclists to go into the layby and wait for traffic to clear before using the crossing? This would help the crossing to feel safer.”
- That there doesn't appear to be sufficient space for a segregated route on the Old Railway, so the alternative would be to look at traffic calming and reduction of speeds on the road. Reducing traffic volumes would be tricky and could involve restrictions or closing the road to all but local traffic – but a few levels of compromise would improve the environment for less confident cyclists.
- Buildouts could improve the Old Railway if there is no alternative on-road route. This may not bring it up to best-practice but it could still improve it. Buildouts could be built in such a way that cyclists can bypass them.

4.2 Engagement with landscape architect (NF), archaeologist (HCC and NF) and ecologist (NF)

Sustrans met with the landscape architect from NFNPA and the archaeologist from HCC, whilst receiving additional input from the NFNPA archaeologist. Each of these reviewed the design drawings and provided feedback in the form of a feasibility

statement. Their comments were used to inform considerations and recommendations in the Heritage and Archaeology and Landscape Character Assessment sections of the report.

Sustrans also engaged with NFNPA's ecologist to better understand the context of working in an area with multiple designated sites, and who also reviewed the design drawings and the ecological assessment in this report.

Design Options

5 Design Options

The Department for Transport’s Local Transport Note 1/20 “Cycle Infrastructure Design” (LTN 1/20) is the primary guidance for cycle infrastructure design in England and applies to both urban and rural contexts.

It is anticipated that DfT will soon publish additional guidance on active travel specific to rural contexts. The guidance is not published at the time of writing this report, however once published will need to be considered in future design stages.

The detailed design options can be found in **appendix 3**.

5.1 Proposed designs

Site 1: Rhinefield Ornamental Drive / A35 intersection

The proposed design at this location includes two shared path lanes on the northern and southern side of the A35, with a refuge island placed ~ 20m away from the junction to allow for cyclists to cross the road in two stages. There is also a refuge island on the north side of the junction that mirrors this, to promote traffic calming. The shared use paths begin after the cattle grids on both sides, which are assumed to be cycle friendly. There is the need to balance accessibility with a robust animal barrier, ideally both gate and grid options should be available to meet users differing needs.

There is an option for this design to be flipped to the opposite side of the junction, the optimum side to be determined by drainage, arboricultural, and ecological constraints.

The stagger away from the junction seeks to improve safety by separating the crossing from turning conflicts. The set back would also be suitable for sight of the signals if the crossing were signalised. However, the shared use path has an impact on the ecology of the verges, which is directly proportional to the extent of the set back. Reduction of this distance would lessen the ecological impact but needs to be balanced with the safe operation of the crossing.

With changes to traffic flows on Rhinefield Ornamental Drive and Bolderwood Arboretum Ornamental Drive, an alternative crossing layout may be able to be accommodated within the existing carriageway extents, further limiting the ecological impact. However, restrictions on turning or vehicle access would need to be considered at a network level.

The onward connections for cyclists would be on-road via Rhinefield Ornamental Drive and Bolderwood Arboretum Ornamental Drive.

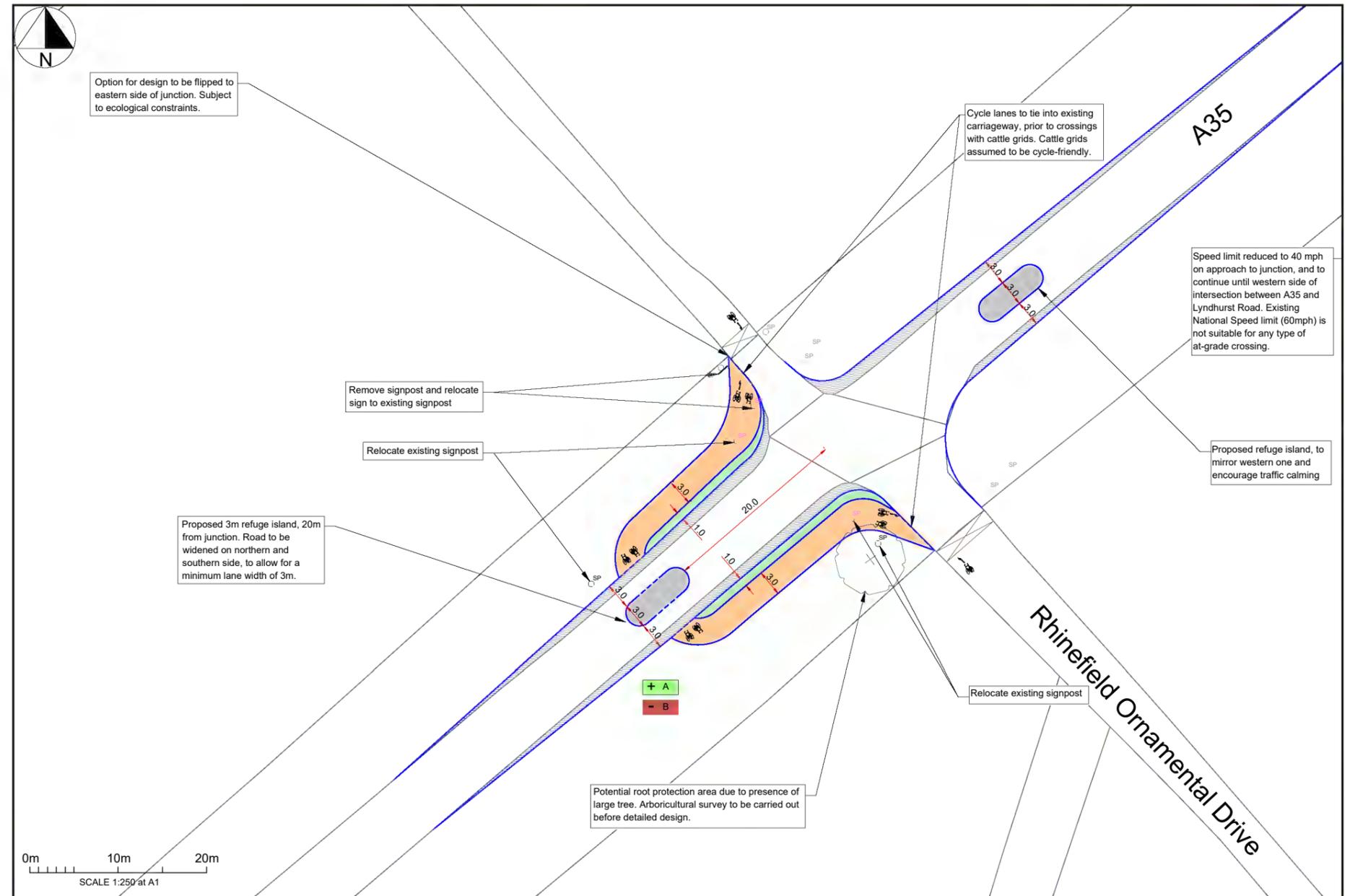


Figure 2 Site 1: Rhinefield Ornamental Drive / A35 intersection layout. See Appendix 3 for full design drawing.

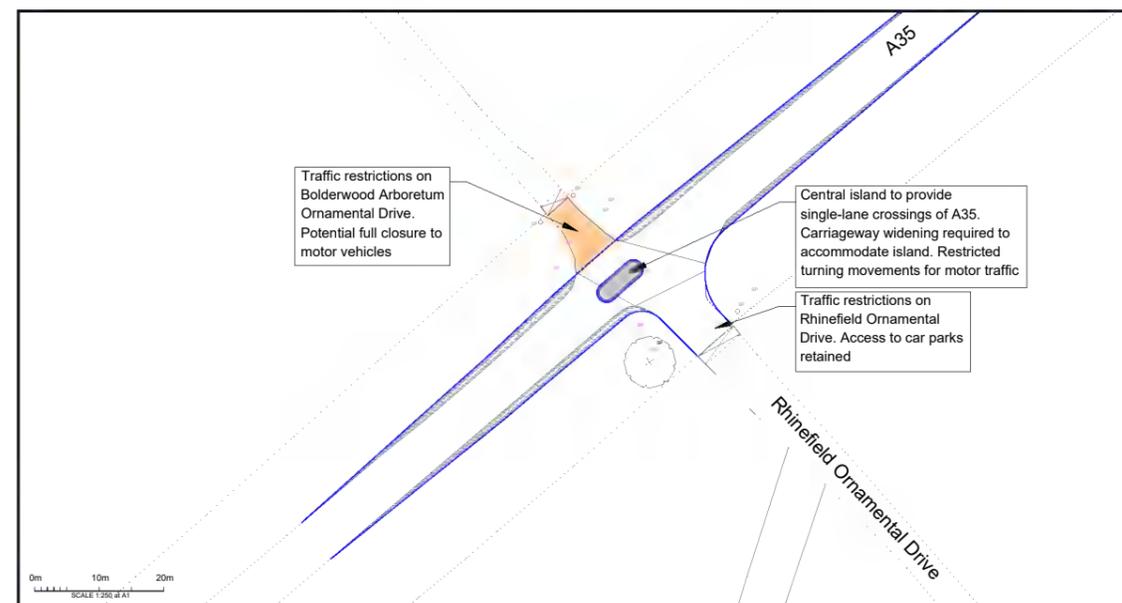


Figure 3 Site 1: Alternative crossing layout

Site 2: Lyndhurst Road / A35 intersection

The proposed design at this location involves closing an arm of this junction to separate cycle and motor movements. A footway extension is proposed on the northern side, and a refuge island proposed in the centre of the A35 to separate crossing movements similar to Site 1.

With the northern arm closed to motor traffic, the southern arm now accommodates all turning movements which will require minor modification of the junction geometry, affecting part of the central triangle. There is opportunity to restore part of this ecologically important sections that has been overrun by vehicles. The closure of the northern arm may provide opportunity to return part of the carriageway to nature, as the cycle link would only require a paved width of 3m.

The onward connections for cyclists would be on-road via Lyndhurst Road, and an off-road connection to existing routes within Vinney Ridge Enclosure. This link is currently unmade; any future improvements would need to be considered in collaboration with the New Forest National Park Authority. Some cyclists may choose to continue along the A35 itself, which can be accommodated within the crossing layout as a jughandled movement.

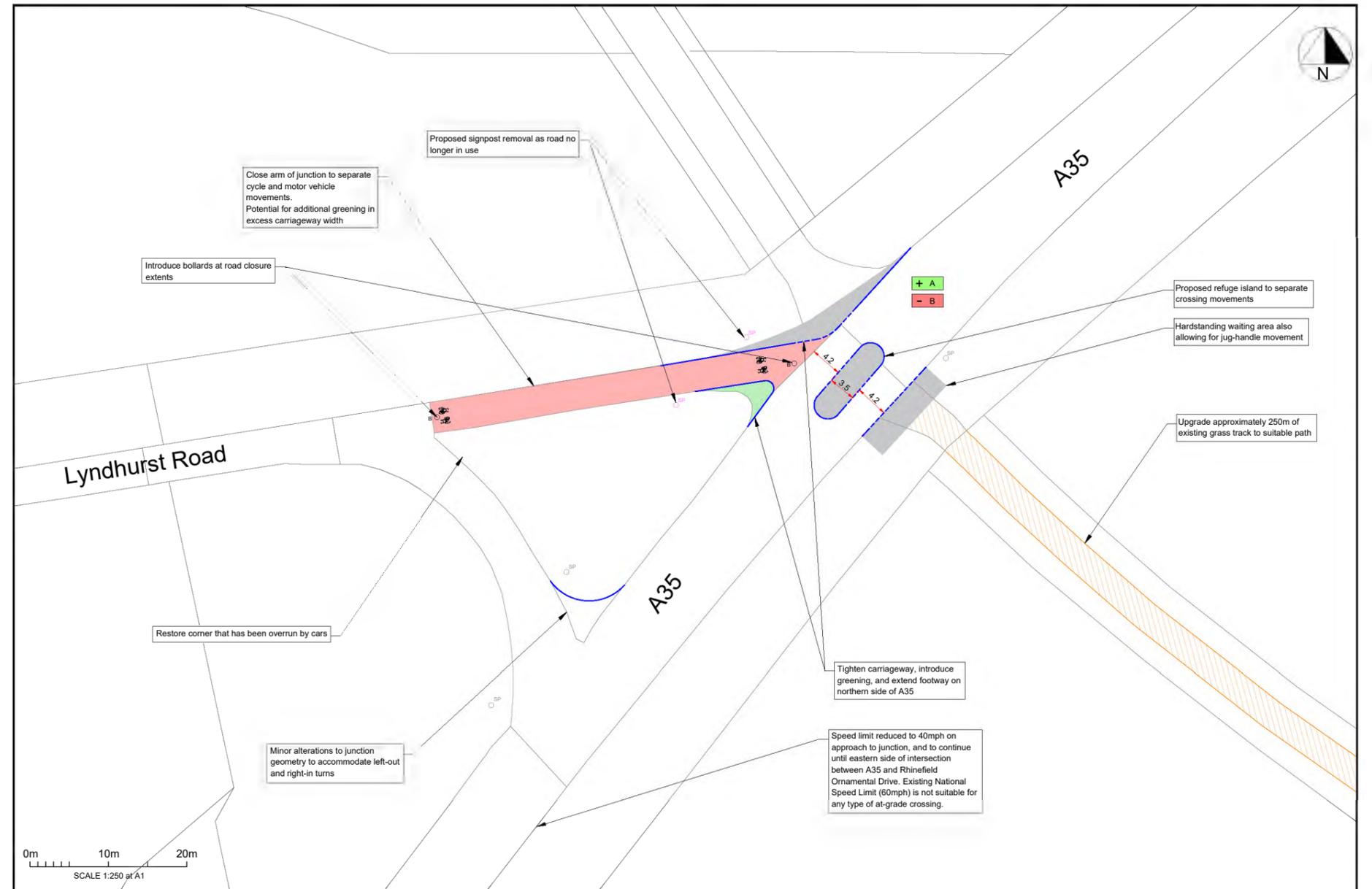


Figure 4 Site 2: Lyndhurst Road / A35 intersection layout. See Appendix 3 for full design drawing.

Site 3: Holmsley Passage / Holmsley Road

The proposed design at this location involves a 3m wide cycle track with a 1m buffer that extends along the A35 connecting Holmsley Passage to Holmsley Road. Working within the available highway verge, the track encroaches on a ditch, and therefore earthworks will be required at this location. While it may be possible to reclaim some limited width from the existing carriageway, the corridor is already constrained and will require significant impact on the verge.

Similar to the other sites, a refuge island is proposed to provide single-lane crossing points, south of the intersection between the A35 and Holmsley Road. The cycle track then rejoins the carriageway on Holmsley Road before the cattle grid, which is assumed to be cycle friendly.

The onward connections would be on-road via Holmsley Passage and Holmsley Road.

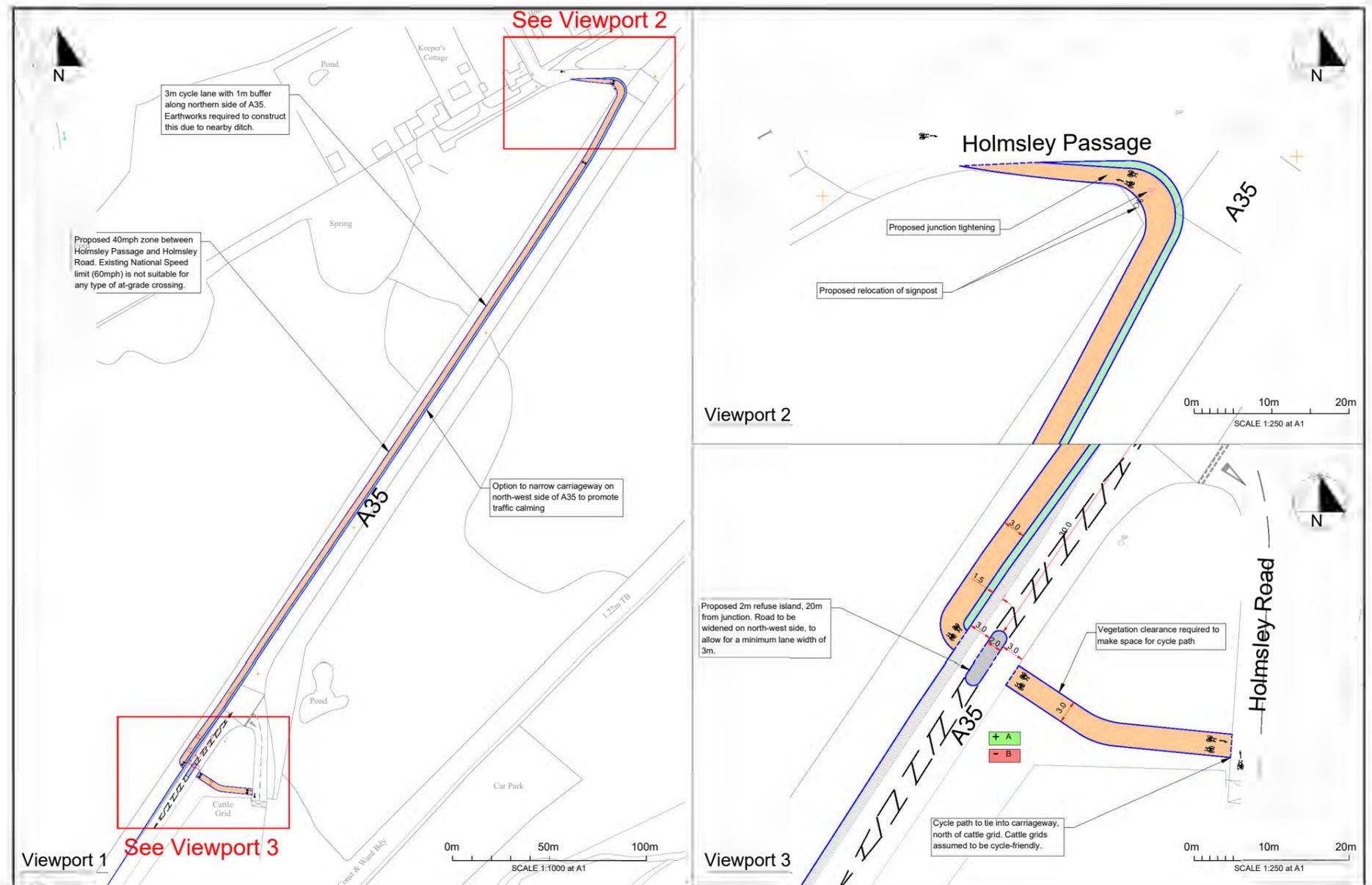


Figure 5 Site 3: Holmsley Passage to Holmsley Road layout. See Appendix 3 for full design drawing.

Site 4: Station Road

This road follows a disused railway embankment. It is used by approximately 7000 VPD, with an 85%ile speed of 50mph, making a segregated track necessary for the safety and comfort of people walking and cycling. However, the corridor is physically constrained; the carriageway is relatively narrow and culverts, banks, and trees limit the available verge space. A significant amount of earthworks or structures would be required to construct a compliant cycle track alongside the carriageway, which is uneconomical and would impact nearby ecology and arboriculture. It is therefore advised to implement a less intrusive approach. This is an important route for local buses and commuters, and needs to be further developed with the local community to ensure the right alternative is developed. Provision within the existing carriageway – for example a series of traffic calming buildouts to limit vehicle speeds to levels suitable for on-road cycling – would likely require significant reduction in traffic flow, which would need to be considered at a network level.

With a moderate reduction in traffic, a segregated cycle track may be feasible, with some reductions in widths at constraints. At culverts, it may be necessary to provide extended lengths of single-lane shuttle flow in order to fit a path within the extents of the structure.

With a significant reduction in traffic, paired with regular traffic calming such as priority buildouts to enforce reduced speeds, it may be possible to accommodate on-road cycling. However, the necessary flows for the comfort of all users are as low as 1000VPD at 30mph, or 2000VPD at 20mph, which may be difficult to achieve.

Measures to reduce speeds may include

- Signed speed limit change – most effective if supported by physical measures
- Gateway entry features, visual narrowing and soft measures to change the character of the road [Example image]
- Horizontal traffic calming (buildouts) [Example image]
- Vertical traffic calming features (humps) are not appropriate in an unlit environment.

Measures to reduce volume may include

- Speed reduction measures above, if the increased travel time makes an alternative route more attractive
- Traffic restrictions by regulation, for instance bus gates (diagram 953) or motor vehicle prohibitions (diagram 619), with suitable exemptions agreed with stakeholders.

However, the road network is relatively sparse in this area and prohibitions may make some journeys significantly longer, leading to local opposition. Any changes of this type will need to be considered at a network level and in consultation with stakeholders.

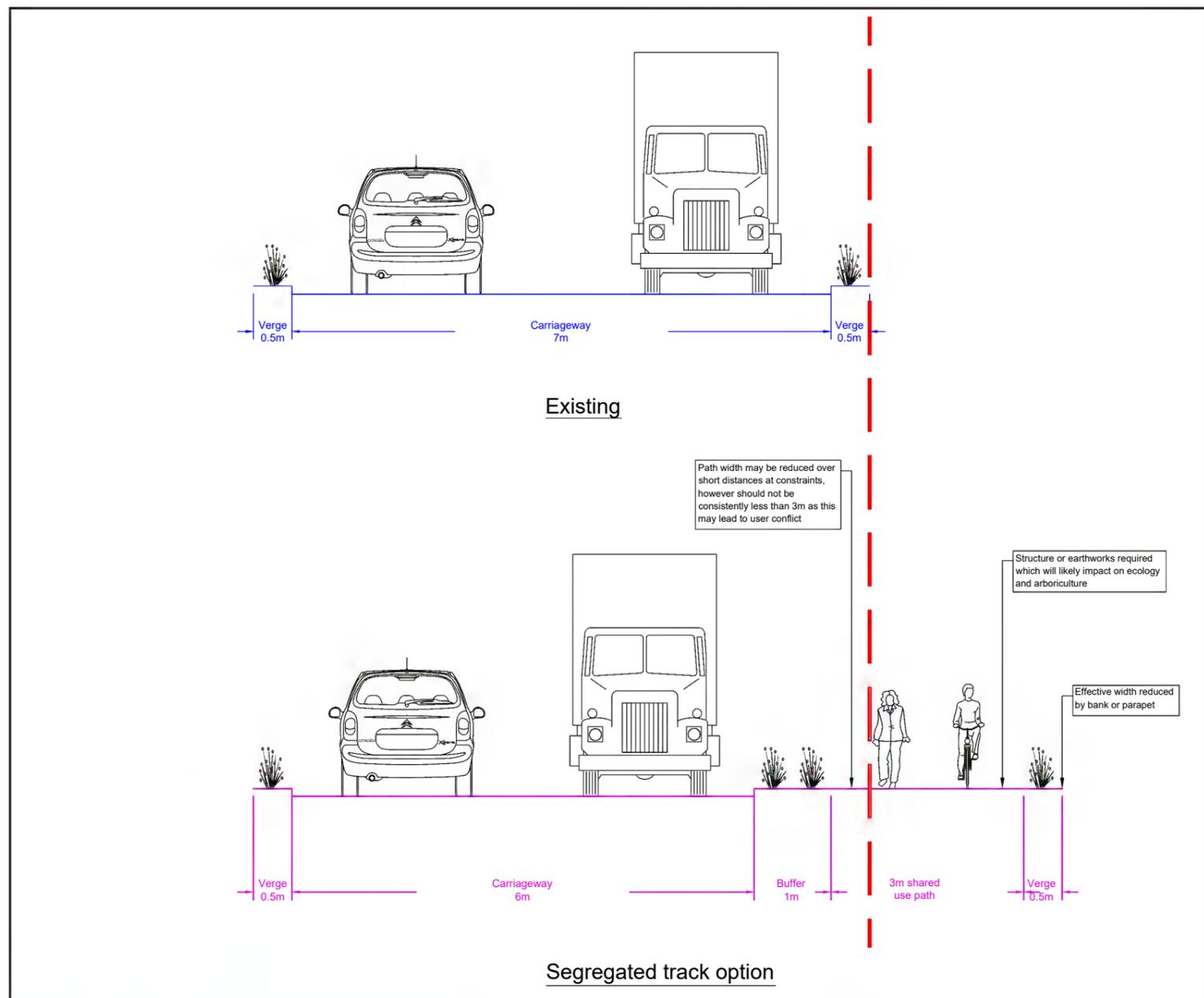


Figure 6 Site 4: Station Road layout. See Appendix 3 for full design drawing.



Figure 7 : Gateway entry features



Figure 8 : Horizontal calming features (buildouts)

5.2 Speed limit

The existing speed limit along the A35 is 60mph (National Speed Limit). Over a 7 day period, traffic surveys show average daily 85th %ile speeds of 56.8 mph at Rhinefield Ornamental Drive, 57.9 mph at Lyndhurst Road, 53.8 mph near Holmsley Road, and 49.5 mph on Station Road. Speeds and traffic volumes are roughly the same in both directions at each of these locations (table 2) (See **appendix 4**). Although below the speed limit, there is no suitable at-grade crossing type for these speeds, in line with LTN 1/20 Table 10-2. Additionally, a path adjacent to the road should have a buffer width of 1m in line with LTN 1/20 Table 6-1. A reduction in traffic speeds is critical for the provision of a safe crossing at any of the proposed locations. The speed limit at site 4 is 40mph, therefore the average speed of 49.5mph indicates that vehicles regularly exceed this limit.

Location	Total			
	AADT	Existing speed limit	Average speed	85%ile speed
Site 1	11,669.8	60mph	49.4	56.8
Site 2	11,065.5	60mph	51.7	51.9
Site 3	13,928.8	60mph	46.3	53.8
Site 4	7,074.4	40mph	43.7	49.5
Location	North/Eastbound			
Site 1	5,764.1	60mph	49.7	56.8
Site 2	5,466.5	60mph	54.1	60.3
Site 3	6,907.6	60mph	46.4	53.6
Site 4	3,499	40mph	44.9	51
Location	South/Westbound			
Site 1	5,905.7	60mph	49	56.7
Site 2	5,599	60mph	49.3	55.5
Site 3	7,021.2	60mph	45.4	53.3
Site 4	3,575.5	40mph	42.6	48

Table 2 ATC summary table

Although below the speed limit, there is no suitable at-grade crossing type for these speeds at locations 1,2 or 3 in line with LTN 1/20 Table 10-2

Table 6-1: Minimum recommended horizontal separation between carriageway and cycle tracks*

Speed limit (mph)	Desirable minimum horizontal separation (m)	Absolute minimum horizontal separation (m)
30	0.5	0
40	1.0	0.5
50	2.0	1.5
60	2.5	2.0
70	3.5	3.0

*Separation strip should be at least 0.5m alongside kerbside parking and 1.5m where wheelchair access is required.
Figure 9 LTN 1/20 Table 6-1

The designs propose reducing the speed limit to 40mph in designated sections; between Rhinefield Ornamental Drive and Lyndhurst Road and between Holmsley Road and Holmsley Passage (see figures below for 40pmh zone extents). Longer extents along the A35 could be considered from a more general road safety

perspective, in consultation with the highway authority. As the road is generally straight with good visibility, additional light-touch measures should be considered to supplement speed signage, to ensure actual speeds are reduced close to the speed limit. This may include gateways, visual narrowing, markings and surfacing.

Figure 4-1: Appropriate protection from motor traffic on highways

Speed Limit ¹	Motor Traffic Flow (pcu/24 hour) ²	Protected Space for Cycling			Cycle Lane (mandatory/ advisory)	Mixed Traffic
		Fully Kerbed Cycle Track	Stepped Cycle Track	Light Segregation		
20 mph ³	0					
	2000					
	4000					
30 mph	0					
	2000					
	4000					
40 mph	Any					
50+ mph	Any					

Figure 10 LTN 1/20 Figure 4-1



Figure 11 40mph Zone



Figure 12 40mph Zone

Even at reduced speeds of 40mph, LTN 1/20 states in Table 10.2 that due to the heavy traffic flow on the A35 (average daily volume = 12,000+), the optimal crossing option for the safety and comfort of users is a signalised crossing. However, due to the sensitive ecological setting it would be challenging to provide traffic signals, in particular the requirement for a power supply and street lighting on the approaches. This is not possible due to the setting, therefore we are proposing the introduction of staged crossings with the introduction of refuge islands in the centre of the road. This provides single-lane crossings, and while the traffic volume is slightly above the thresholds given in LTN 1/20, and this arrangement may not be suitable for all people, the compromise is considered to be a significant improvement over the existing situation.

However, as the road is approximately 7m wide in most locations, sections of the verge will have to be removed to accommodate a minimum lane width of 3m, which will have ecological implications.

Table 10-2: Crossing design suitability

Speed Limit	Total traffic flow to be crossed (pcu)	Maximum number of lanes to be crossed in one movement	Uncontrolled	Cycle Priority	Parallel	Signal	Grade separated
≤ 30mph	Any	Any					
30 mph and 40 mph	> 10000	Any					
	5000 to 10000	2 or more					
	0-5000	2					
40 mph	> 10000	1					
	5000 to 10000	2					
	0-5000	2					
50 mph	> 10000	1					
	5000 to 10000	2					
	0-5000	2					

Figure 13 LTN 1/20 Table 10.2

5.3 Drainage

The A35 primarily drains over-the-edge, with grips cut in the verge leading to local ditches. Gullies are present in limited places which are assumed to outfall locally.

Drainage works and readjustment will need to be considered in more developed stages of design, particularly in areas where the existing geometry of the road is changing. The introduction of kerbed edges will interrupt the existing flow and additional inlets will be needed to carry surface water from the carriageway to the outfall, across the proposed paths.

The connection between Holmsley Road and Holmsley Passage, in particular, may require the introduction of a piped drainage feature as the position of the proposed path requires earthworks in the existing ditch and an extension of the verge.

Proposed cycle paths would be constructed either to drain away from the road, into existing ground features, or towards the road and into roadside gullies.

5.4 Onward connections

Onward cycling connections from the proposed crossings and links in sites 1 to 4 rely on on-road cycling. The appropriate thresholds for on road cycling are 2500PCU at 20mph, or 1000PCU at 30mph in rural areas (Figure 8). The existing speed limits on roads connecting to the A35 are 40mph. Efforts should be made to reduce speeds on these links to an appropriate level.

5.5 Utilities

Desktop C2 searches show several communications utilities running along the A35 alignment. The accuracy of desktop records is insufficient to determine whether these services are within the existing carriageway or verges, nor is depth information provided in most cases. If shallow ducts are present in the verge area this may conflict with proposed carriageway widening. Further investigations - potentially including site-based surveys - will be necessary to inform future design stages.

There is no record of electrical or gas utilities in the project extents.

The C2 searches can be found in **appendix 5**

High Level Cost Estimates

6 High Level Cost Estimates

The site options have been costed using Sustrans' internal Cost Estimation Tool. These estimates are high-level only and can be impacted by a number of project-specific factors.

Works costs are derived from multiple sources, including rates published by local authorities, and historical project costs. All historical rates are adjusted to 2024/2025 using the Construction Output Price Index (Infrastructure).

Biodiversity offsetting is set at the highest 30% rate, however the specific local context may attract higher than usual ecology costs.

Optimism Bias is set at 46% for a feasibility stage design, in line with Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) Unit A1.2.

Additional contingency of 10% is applied to both external and time costs.

Design and management costs are estimated as a proportion of works costs. However, the chosen delivery method can vary these rates.

VAT at 20% is applied as a line item and is included in cost totals.

Onward connections either side of the crossing points – path upgrades or on-road cycling improvements – are excluded from the costings. In particular, Site 2 would require 260m of path improvements to connect to existing forestry paths.

Location	Work costs	Total costs
Site 1: Rhinefield Ornamental Drive/A35 junction	£145,919	£425,183
Site 2: Lyndhurst Road/A35 Junction	£112,297	£327,880
Site 3: A35/Holmsley Passage and road	£245,741	£714,069

Table 3 High level cost estimates

Works costs include installation, contractor preliminaries, and surveys.

Total costs include ecology, biodiversity offsetting, comms, project management, design, optimism bias, and contingency.

The full detail for the high level cost estimates can be found in **appendix 6**

Active Travel England Route Check

7 Active Travel England (ATE) Route Check

This section demonstrates the application of the ATE Route Check¹ to crossings and routes. The tool is a 'scheme review' tool used for assessing the design quality of linear street or path schemes, used in both urban and rural contexts²

As an Excel-based tool, it uses multiple tabs to categorise and structure the design assessment process. The figure below summarises the input and output tabs

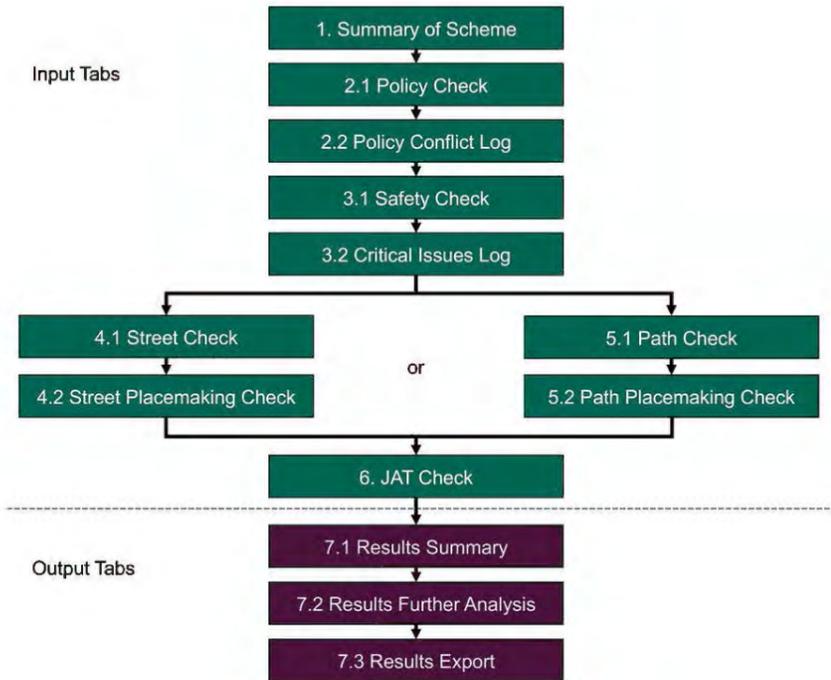


Figure 14 ATE Route Check input and output

The various components of the ATE Route Check for this study, along with brief descriptions, are outlined below:

- **Policy Check:** Evaluates how effectively the existing conditions and the proposed design align with the six active travel policy principles.
- **Safety Check:** Assesses and scores both the existing conditions and proposed design against 16 defined safety metrics. Each metric has the potential to be identified as a critical issue if it poses a significant safety concern.
- **Street Check:** Assesses and scores the existing situation and proposed scheme design against 26 metrics categorised under accessibility, comfort, directness, attractiveness and cohesion.
- **Street Placemaking:** Assesses and scores the existing situation and proposed scheme design against 26 street

1 [ATE Route Check Tool](#)
2 [ATE Route Check Tool User Manual](#)

placemaking metrics, categorised under social activity, personal security, character and legibility and the environment.

- **Junction Assessment Tool Check:** It contains the Junction Assessment Tool Check, which assesses and scores pedestrian and cycle movements at certain types of junction for both the existing situation and proposed scheme design.

Cycle movement can be categorised as:

- **Red:** Suitable only for confident existing cyclists, and may be avoided by some experienced cyclists. Conditions are most likely to give rise to the most common collision types.
- **Amber:** Likely to be more acceptable to most cyclists, but may still pose problems for less confident or new cyclists. The risk of collisions has been reduced by design layout or traffic management interventions.
- **Green:** Suitable for all potential and existing cyclists. The potential for collisions has been removed, or managed to a high standard of safety for cyclists.

Pedestrian movement can be categorised as:

- **Black:** Where an obvious pedestrian desire line is somehow blocked, or not accommodated by the physical presence of a crossing.
- **Red:** Where there is some form of crossing, but it is not fully accessible and/or does not sufficiently protect pedestrians.
- **Amber:** Have some form of crossing provision, but it doesn't fully meet the needs of everyone walking and wheeling.
- **Green:** These are movements where the potential for conflict with motor traffic has been almost entirely removed by the provision of fit-for-purpose controlled crossings, or uncontrolled crossings that fully meet the requirements of traffic speed, volumes and geometry.

- **Street Check Level of Service ATE Score:** It summarises the final score for the existing situation and proposed scheme design.

For this study the ATE check was divided in three sections according to geographical location:

- Sites 1 and 2: Junctions at Rhinefield Ornamental Drive and Lyndhurst Road with A35
- Site 3: Route section at A35 from Holmsley Drive to Holmsley Road
- Site 4 Route section at Station Road

In the following pages there is an overview of the ATE Route Check results. For a detailed breakdown, please refer to **appendix 7**

7.1 Site 1 and Site 2: Junctions at Rhinefield Ornamental Drive and Lyndhurst Road with A35

For this section of the feasibility study, the two junctions were assessed using the Junction Assessment Tool (JAT) Check, which is part of the ATE Route Check. As neither junction includes route sections, the other components of the ATE Route Check were not applied.

Site 1: Junction at A35/Rhinefield Ornamental Drive

Existing Layout

There is no dedicated infrastructure for pedestrians or cyclists. Furthermore, there are no footways or cycle facilities along Rhinefield Ornamental Drive or Bolderwood Arboretum Ornamental Drive, limiting safe and accessible active travel in the area.

Most movements are rated red. Movement labelled 'A' is rated black, reflecting a significant safety concern.

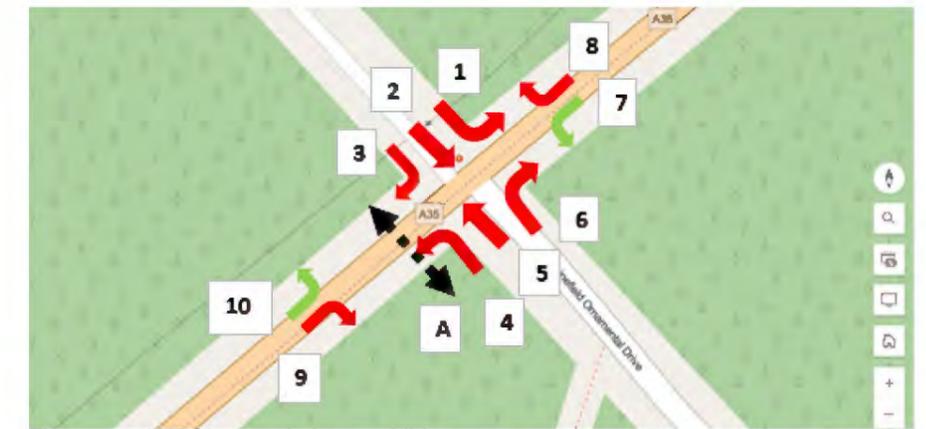


Figure 15 JAT Site 1 existing conditions

Proposed Layout

The new layout proposes an uncontrolled crossing on the southwest side of the A35. This enhances movement for cyclists and pedestrians, reclassifying their movements as amber and green.

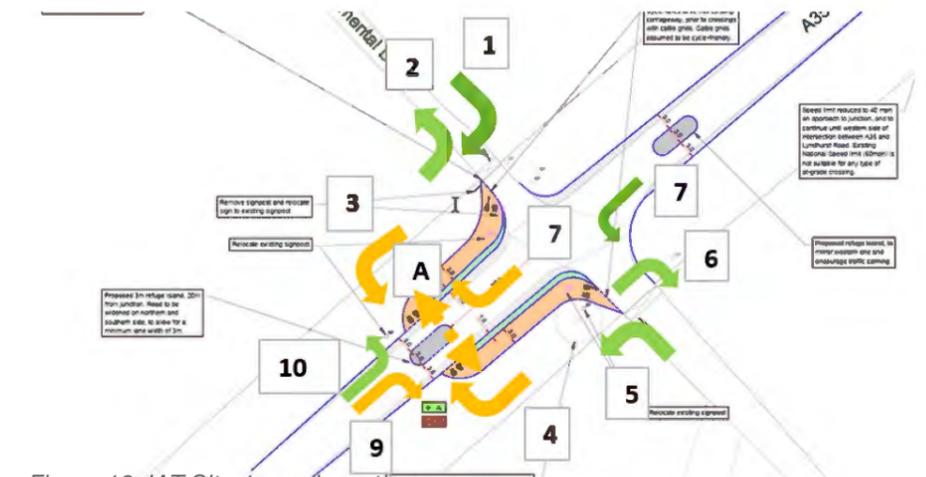


Figure 16 JAT Site 1 new layout

JAT Score

There is a net difference of 50% in walking and wheeling and 60% in Cycling summarising a 59% considering all modes.

A considerable increment in scoring for the proposed layout would be possible by providing a controlled crossing due to high traffic volumes in A35

Modes	Existing Layout	Proposed Layout	Net difference
Walking & Wheeling	0%	50%	50%
Cycling	20%	80%	60%
All	18%	77%	59%

Table 4 Site 1 JAT score

Site 2: Junction at A35/Lyndhurst Rd

Existing Layout

The site requires users to cross the A35; however, there is currently no dedicated infrastructure for pedestrians or cyclists. While gates are present on both sides of the road, the absence of crossing facilities results in cycle and pedestrian movements being rated black. Other movements are scored red or amber, depending on whether a single lane of the A35 must be crossed.

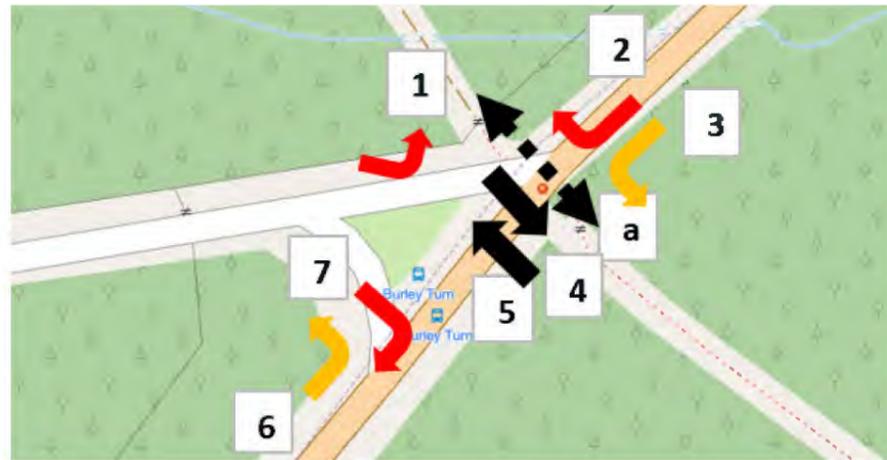


Figure 18 JAT Site 2 existing conditions

Proposed Layout

Provision of a cycle lane in Lyndhurst Rd plus a uncontrolled crossing turned some scorings from black to amber.

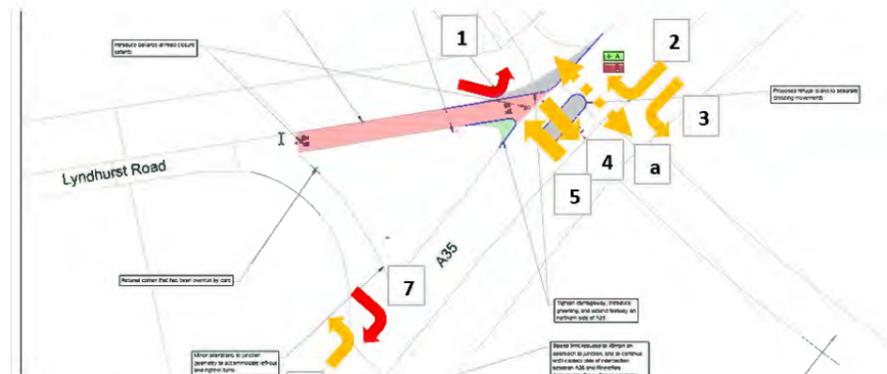


Figure 17 JAT Site 2 new layout

JAT Score

There is a net difference of 50% in walking and wheeling and 21% in Cycling summarising a 25% considering all modes.

A considerable increment in scoring for the proposed layout would be possible by providing a controlled crossing due to high traffic volumes in A35.

Modes	Existing Layout	Proposed Layout	Net difference
Walking & Wheeling	0%	50%	50%
Cycling	14%	36%	21%
All	13%	38%	25%

Table 5 Site 2 JAT score

7.2 Site 3 Route section at A35 from Holmsley passage to Holmsley Road

Policy Check Results

Four policy conflicts were identified within the existing infrastructure: barriers to walking, wheeling and cycling; inappropriate surface materials due to the absence of footpaths; insufficient lighting; and missed opportunities to connect the route to a wider network. The first two issues were addressed by providing a shared path along the A35. However, the remaining two—lack of lighting and the absence of network integration—were not resolved. This is due to the scheme's rural location, where street lighting is not typically provided, and there is no existing walking or cycling network to connect the route to.

Safety Check Results

The proposed design will likely improve safety, with a net improvement of 65% compared to the existing infrastructure. Seven critical issues were identified in the current conditions, all of which are addressed in the proposed scheme.

Street Check Results

The proposed design will likely improve route quality, with a net improvement of 57% compared to the existing infrastructure.

Street Level of Service

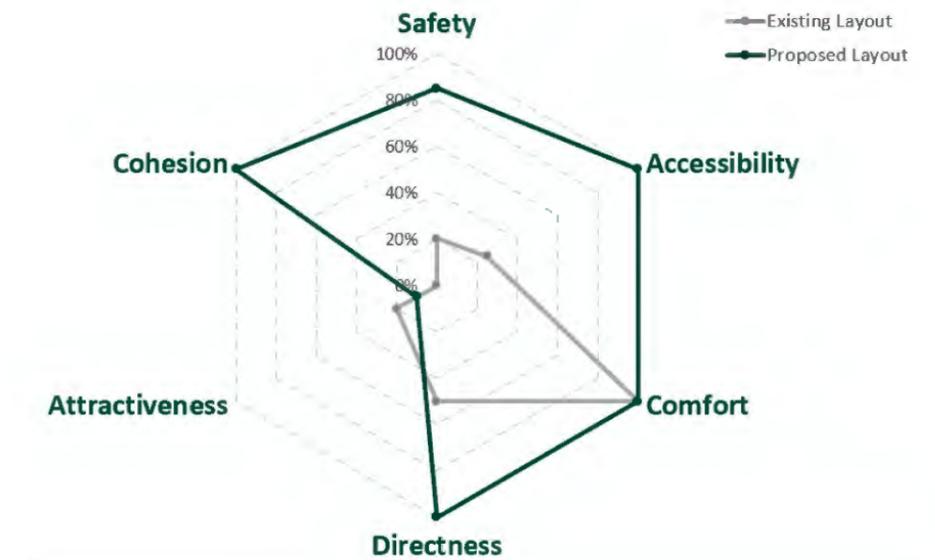


Figure 19 Site 3 Street Level of Service

Street Level of Service by transport Mode

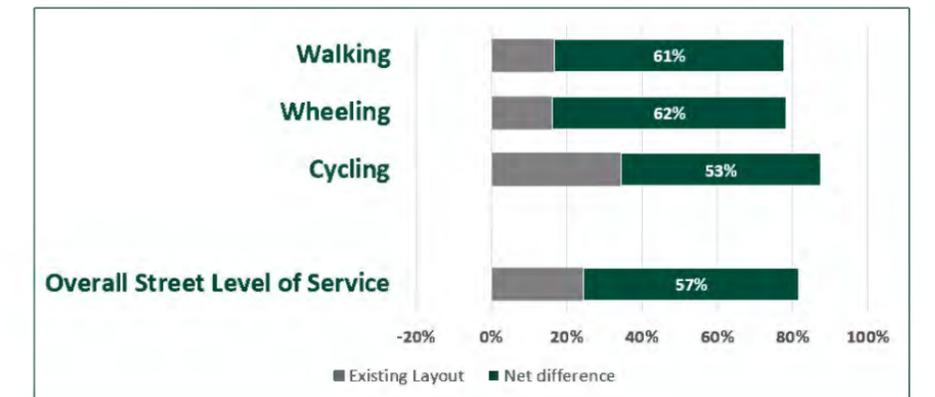


Figure 20 Site 3 Street Level of Service by transport mode

Street Placemaking Check Results

The proposed design will likely improve quality of the place, with a net improvement of 19% compared to the existing infrastructure.

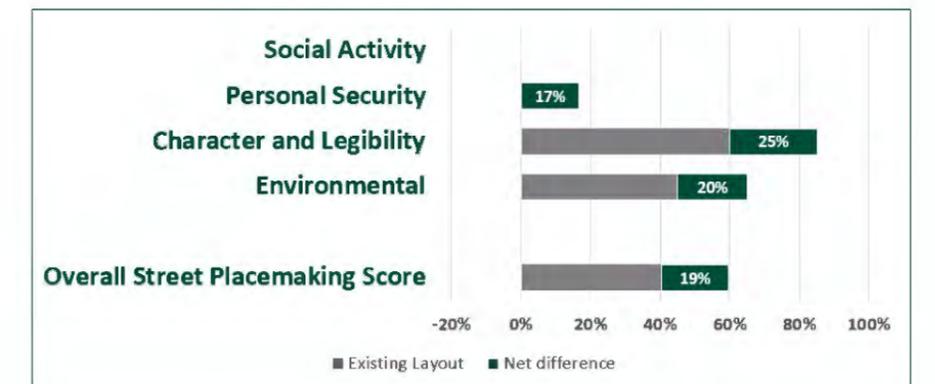


Figure 21 Site 3 Street Placemaking check results

Junction Assessment Tool Check

Existing Layout A35/Holmsley Road junction

There is no dedicated infrastructure for pedestrians or cyclists. Furthermore, there are no footways or cycle facilities along Holmsley Road or A35, limiting safe and accessible active travel in the area.

Most movements are rated red. Movement labelled 'A' is rated black, reflecting a significant safety concern.

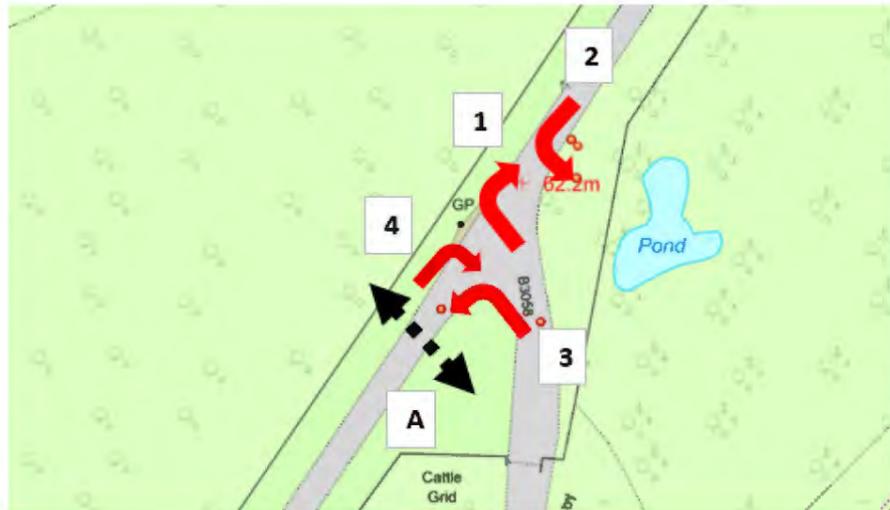


Figure 22 JAT Site 3 junction 1 existing conditions

Proposed Layout A35/Holmsley Road junction

Provision of a shared path along the A35 plus a uncontrolled crossing with a central refuge, turned the black pedestrian movement in amber and most of the red movements to amber.

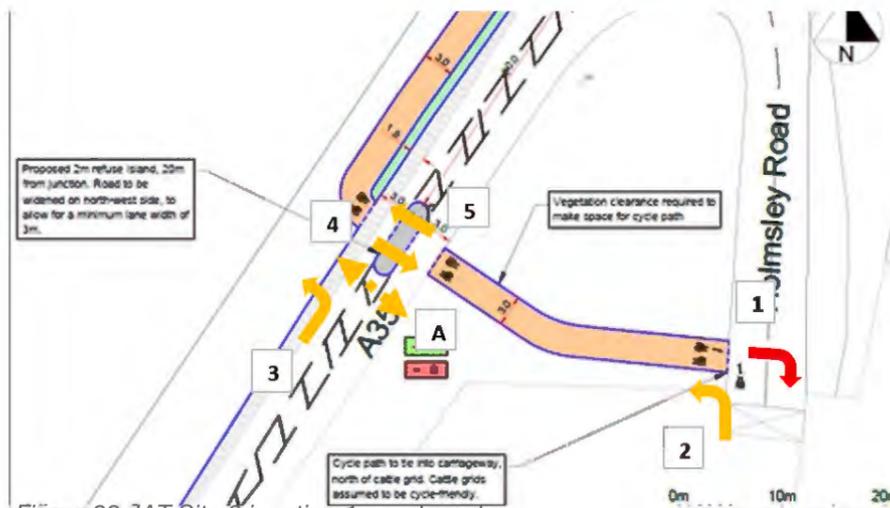


Figure 23 JAT Site 3 junction 1 new layout

JAT Score

There is a net difference of 50% in walking and wheeling and 40% in Cycling summarising a 42% considering all modes.

Modes	Existing Layout	Proposed Layout	Net difference
Walking & Wheeling	0%	50%	50%
Cycling	0%	40%	40%
All	0%	42%	42%

Table 6 Site 3 Junction 1 JAT score

Existing Layout A35/Holmsley Passage junction

There is no dedicated infrastructure for pedestrians or cyclists. Furthermore, there are no footways or cycle facilities along Holmsley Passage or A35, limiting safe and accessible active travel in the area.

Most cycle movements are red with the exception of the turn left from A35 to Holmsley Passage as it is assumed low motor traffic speeds and volumes. There are no pedestrian movements identified.



Figure 24 JAT Site 3 junction 2 existing conditions

Proposed Layout A35/Holmsley Passage junction

Provision of a shared path along the A35 plus a link to Holmsley passage, turned movement 3 from red to green.

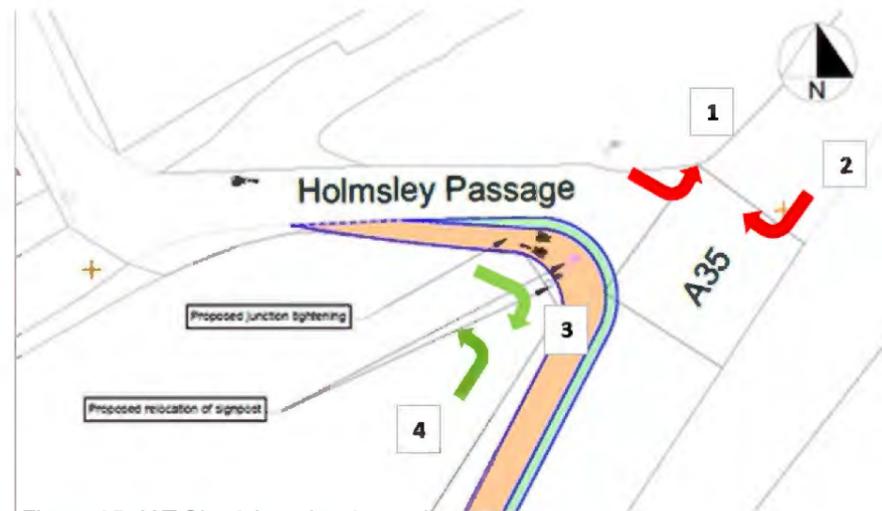


Figure 25 JAT Site 3 junction 2 new layout

JAT Score

There is a net difference of 13% in Cycling and overall.

Modes	Existing Layout	Proposed Layout	Net difference
Cycling	25%	38%	13%
All	25%	38%	13%

Table 7 Site 3 Junction 2 JAT score

7.3 Site 4 Route section at Station Road

A design option has not been produced at this stage for Site 4 (see section 5) due to site limitations. This route assessment only considers the existing situation.

Policy Check Results

Four policy conflicts were identified within the existing infrastructure: barriers to walking due to lack of cycling infrastructure and footpaths, wheeling and cycling; inappropriate surface materials due to the absence of footpaths and insufficient lighting.

Safety Check Results

Seven critical issues were identified in the current conditions, most of them related to the lack of cycling walking and wheeling infrastructure and high motor traffic speed and volume.

Street Check Results

The current overall ATE Score is 25% being comfort for cycling the highest as currently cyclist use the road which has a smooth sealed surface.

• Street Level of Service

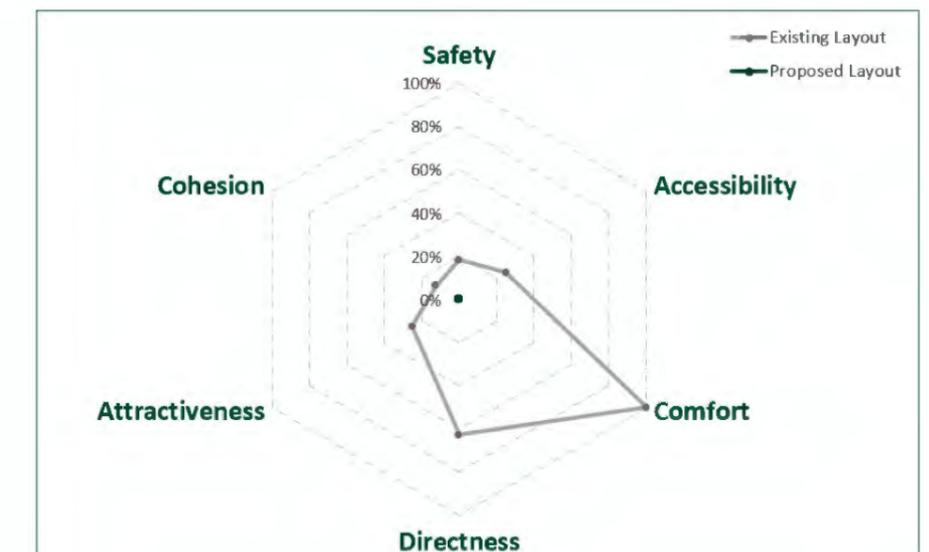


Figure 26 Site 4 Street Level of Service

• Street Level of Service by transport Mode

Mode	Existing Layout
Walking	19%
Wheeling	18%
Cycling	36%
Overall Street Level of Service	25%

Table 8 Site 4 Street Level of Service by transport mode

Summary and Next Steps

8 Summary and next steps

8.1 Summary

This study assessed 3 options for the provision of uncontrolled crossings of the A35. The assessment has been carried out in line with guidance from ATE using LTN1/20 core design principles. However, it recognises that constraints are presented by carriageway and verge space, and the impact that controlled or grade-separated crossings would have on the rural environment and National Park landscape. The recommendations seek to strike a balance in order to improve safety and comfort for route users whilst being sensitive to the local environment and realistic around available space. At time of publication, ATE rural design guidance has not been published, and it is strongly recommended that this is taken into account once available.

Sustrans considers all three options feasible, however site 3 faces additional challenges due to its significant impact on the adjacent verge, resulting in greater habitat loss within the SAC/SPA/Ramsar designation. To offset this, greater compensation would be required to restore lost habitat elsewhere on the New Forest highways estate. It is Sustrans' recommendation that the designs for locations 1 and 2 should be prioritised, as these options address severance and issues of user safety and comfort while minimising environmental impact and cost.

The study also assessed the feasibility of segregated walking and cycling facilities along the Old Railway (or "Holmsley Straight Mile") Due to space limitations on both sides of the carriageway, this site is considered to be unfeasible, as construction would require unacceptable levels of tree and habitat loss. Less intrusive measures may, however, be introduced to reduce vehicle speeds, which could include a series of traffic-calming build-outs on the existing carriageway. An appropriate intervention will need to be developed with the local community and input from local bus services which use the route, to ensure local support. Any intervention would require wider traffic volume reductions at a network level in order to be effective.

8.2 Next steps

Engage with stakeholders

The required stakeholders will vary depending on which site option is taken forwards, however stakeholders may include, but are not limited to:

- Highway authority
- Local councils
- Verderers
- Local businesses and residents
- Public transport operators

- Emergency services
- Ecologists
- Archaeologists
- Arboriculturists

Ecology surveys

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) should be produced in the first instance, once proposals for each site are confirmed. The PEA will map the habitats present within the site and identify the presence of any protected or notable species and make recommendations for further surveys. As all designs will result in habitat loss within nationally and internationally important designated sites, it is essential that further surveys and consultation with Natural England take place at an early stage, and mitigation measures for habitat loss are considered. See "Ecological review" for more details.

Topographical survey

A topographical survey will need to be produced in order to fully understand both natural and man-made constraints at each site, and to inform further surveys or investigation required.

Trees

To safeguard the habitats adjacent to the sites, an Arboriculture Impact Assessment will be required as well as adherence to an Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) and Tree Protection Plan (TPP) to prevent damage to boundary features and retained trees.

Speed limits

The study concluded that grade-separated crossings are not feasible within the National Park and that the existing National Speed Limit (60mph) is not suitable for any type of at-grade crossing. A reduction of speed limit at the junctions on the A35 is required to make them safer and more comfortable for all route users. The highway authority should take steps to implement a reduction in speed limit at the approach of each junction, and should also consider an overall reduction of speed limit on both the A35 and the Old Railway (site 4). Speed limit changes should be supported by appropriate physical features to ensure a genuine decrease in vehicle speeds.

Review of ATE rural guidance

As of June 2025, ATE have not published the anticipated Rural Design Guidance. It is expected that this guidance will be available within the coming months. Due to the rural nature of the study area and location within numerous designated sites, the designs will need to be reviewed against this guidance prior to implementation.

It is not expected that the updated guidance will fundamentally affect the outcomes of this study.

Promotion

Once new crossings are in place, it is important to actively promote them via the NFNPA, HCC and the New Forest Cycle Working Group. Targeted outreach will encourage route users to explore improved routes and links in the wider cycling network in the forest, increasing awareness and adoption. Highlighting benefits such as enhanced safety and accessibility can help to encourage more people to opt for walking and cycling in the forest over motor vehicle use.

Appendices

9 Appendices

- **Appendix 1: Heritage and archaeology**
- **Appendix 2: Ecological review**
- **Appendix 3: Design Options**
- **Appendix 4: Automatic Traffic Counter data**
- **Appendix 5: C2 searches**
- **Appendix 6: High Level Cost Estimates**
- **Appendix 7: ATE Route Check**