



Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway

**Maps and
detailed drawings
11 March 2013**

Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway

The long sought railway path from Rawtenstall to Rochdale has been gradually pieced together over the last 30 years starting shortly after the railway was finally closed in 1966. The Healey Dell section was opened quite early, and most recently the Whitworth Cycleway, which really sets the standard of surfacing required for a popular shared use route.

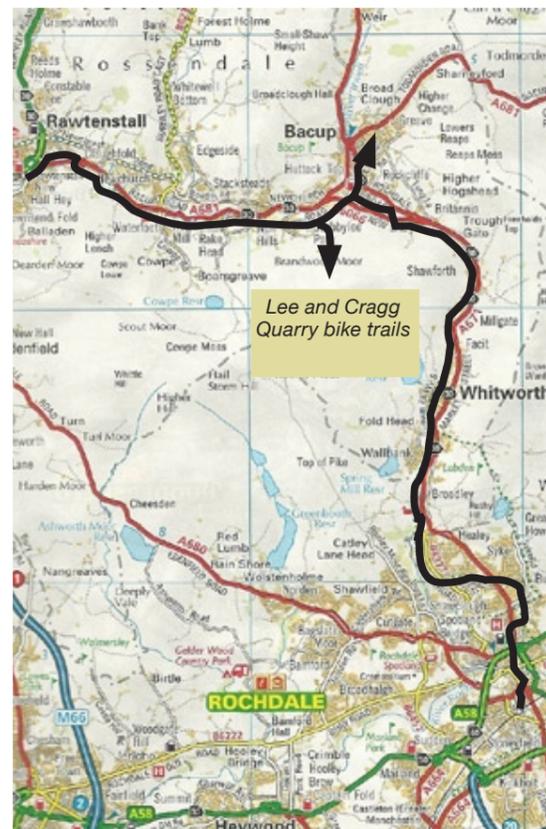


Now with the plans for a mountain bike centre at Futures Park to support the trails at Lee and Cragg Quarries, and the increased interest in cycling for everyday trips, particularly for school children, there is an urgent incentive to complete the whole. The Rossendale Cycle Forum published its proposals for the northern section in October 2012 and in the same month Rochdale allocated just over £90,000 to carry out the most pressing improvements on their section.

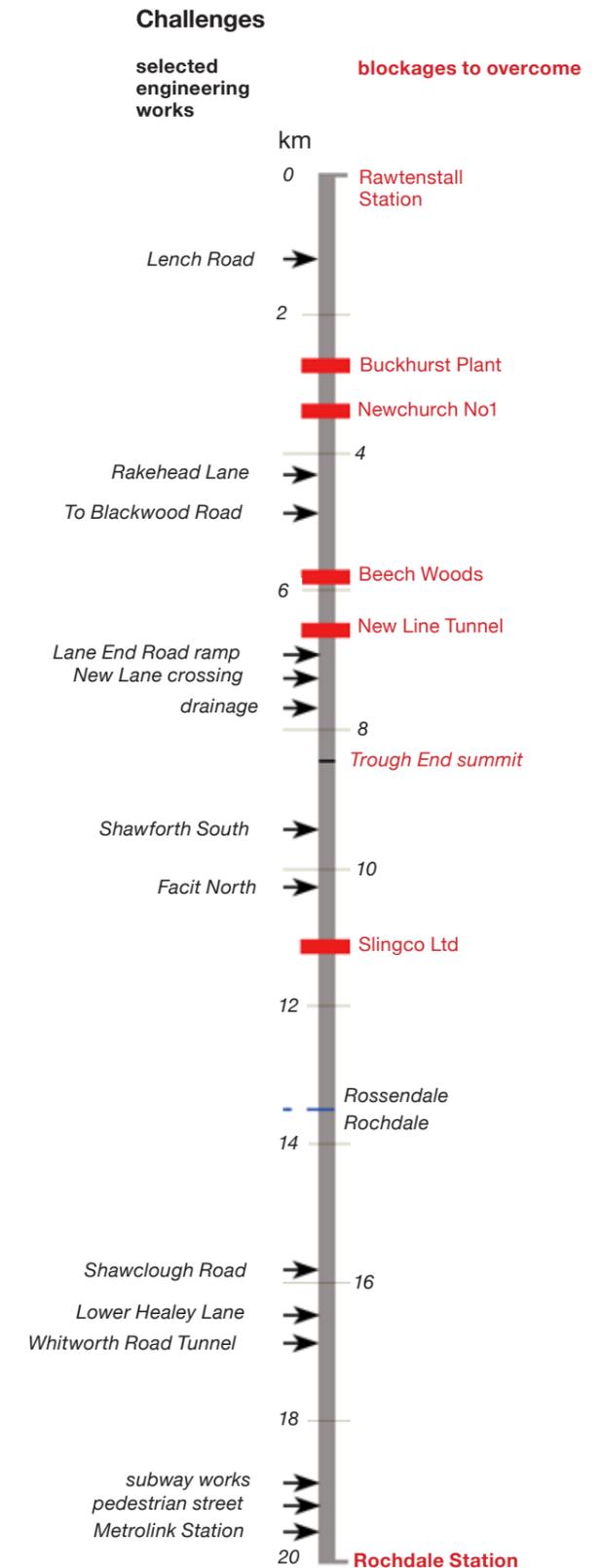
This note summarises the overall project and highlights the issues to be resolved.

The proposed route between Rawtenstall and Rochdale Railway Stations is 20 km long. It follows the corridor of the former railway all the way to the Common at Greenbank Road and Taylor Street. At this point the railway route is lost. The last 3.5 km divert to follow relatively quiet roads to the centre of Rochdale with its tram and railway stations and cycle hub.

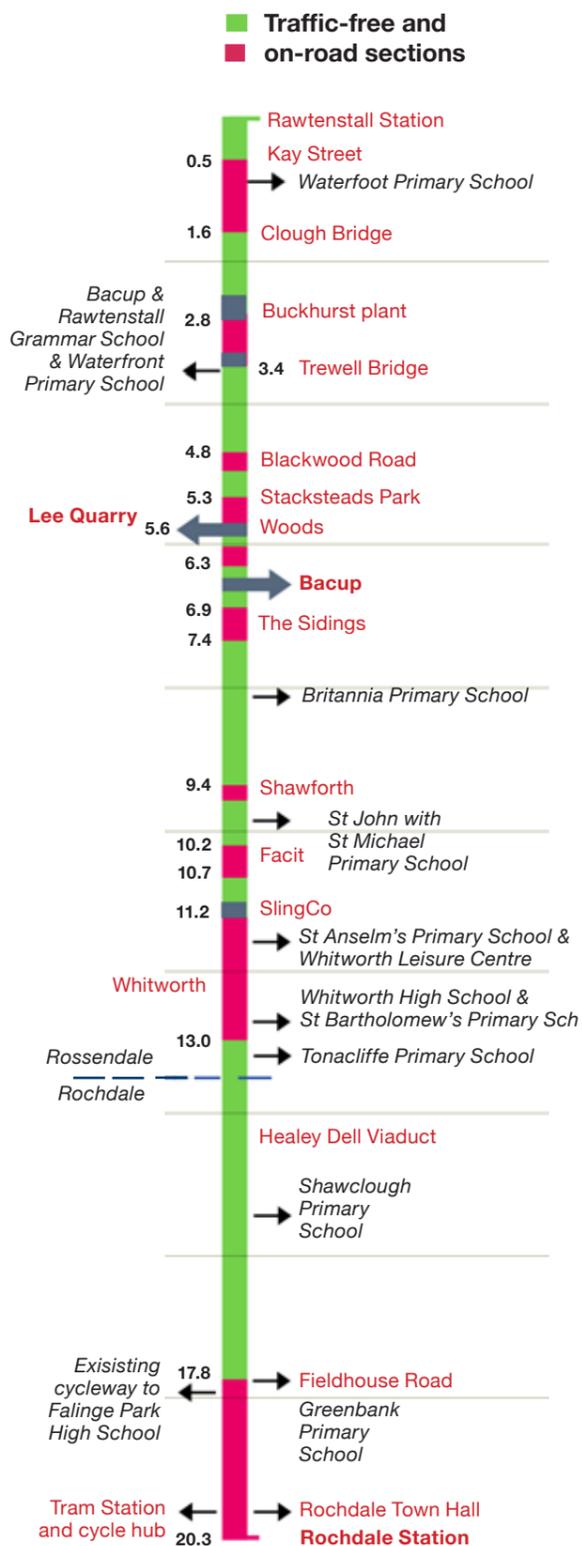
About 75% of the route is traffic free, mostly on the old railway where some 12km of route is already open to the public to some standard or another. Despite the length of old railway there are surprisingly few bridges left intact although numerous robust sandstone retaining walls testify to the railway achievement. There are four tunnels – Newchurch No1 – 140m, and No 2 – 250m at Waterfoot, Stubbye Lee 100m long under the main New Line for the only practical route to Bacup, and one 40m long under Whitworth Road in Rochdale. There are 2 minor road bridges over the railway in the Britannia area and two in the Healey Dell Nature Reserve as well as an unused one just south of Whitworth, and two river bridges, one over the Irwell on the approach to the Council Depot at Bacup and another over the Spodden at the south end of Whitworth. The Alan Fishwick Way crosses the Irwell on a low 5 arch viaduct in Cloughfold and then there is the magnificent Healey Dell Viaduct which must be ranked amongst the most spectacular and picturesque railway path bridges in the country.



This railway runs through an almost continuous built up corridor, hence its immense value as a communication route for local trips for both business and school commuting, but at the same time manages to draw a thread of green countryside together so that the overall impression is of an attractive countryside journey, with some memorable views of the hills and quarries either side of the valley.



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The quality of the route will depend very much on the arrangement of the connecting road sections linking each traffic free greenway. Remarkably these can all be achieved in a quite natural way without recourse to using the main road, and if the proposals shown here are achieved, the only significant main road crossings to be dealt with are the A6066 to New Line Reservoir, and Shawclough Road after Healey Dell. The final on road section to Rochdale Town centre will require some careful work to make the route really attractive for pedestrians and cyclists.



Most of the proposed route is in public ownership with relatively few negotiations required to achieve the vital continuity.

The private sections include around the boundary of Buckhurst Hire Plant Yard at Waterfoot in order to avoid using the main road, and the Slingco gap to the north of Whitworth. It is hoped that voluntary agreements can be reached with all these parties to make practical connections which can be seen as enhancements of their area.

The programme for completing the overall Rawtenstall and Rochdale route can proceed on a number of fronts. The detailed route can be agreed and land negotiations put in hand with a view to obtaining planning consents so that works can be initiated as and when funds become available. At the same time there are substantial sections of the railway route where work can start now, for example to make the Healey Dell to Greenbank Road section into a high quality path and route worthy of an urban greenway. The beautiful Britannia to New Line Reservoir section has been damaged by the lack of maintenance of the ditches, and consequent water erosion, as well as a recent small landslide on this section. Early work here would be valuable as most of the path remains intact. In parallel with these route redevelopments the forward planning

process could ensure that the corridor is built into all future developments and crucially that its links are continually improved and extended so that more and more of the communities, schools, work places and leisure facilities up the valleys can connect to use it for their everyday and recreational journeys.

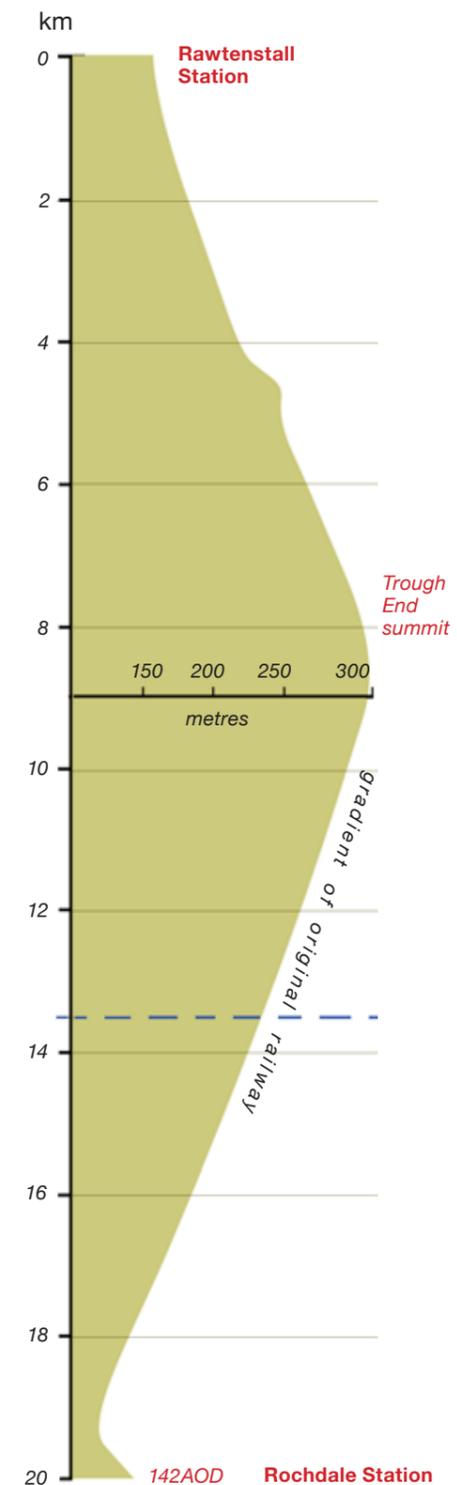
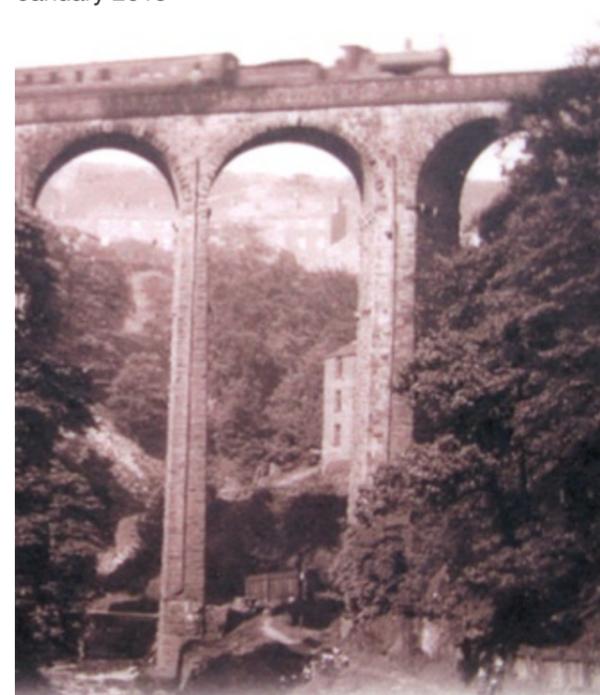
Over 100,000 visitors are forecast for each year to use the Lee and Cragg Quarries Mountain Bike area together with the extensive network of linking bridleways. It will also link with the Mary Towneley Loop. This centre will be a natural focus for the path building so that the public can reach it by bike and visitors to the centre have the choice of the rugged climb up to Lee Quarry or the easier gradients and the family centred routes offered by the railway path.

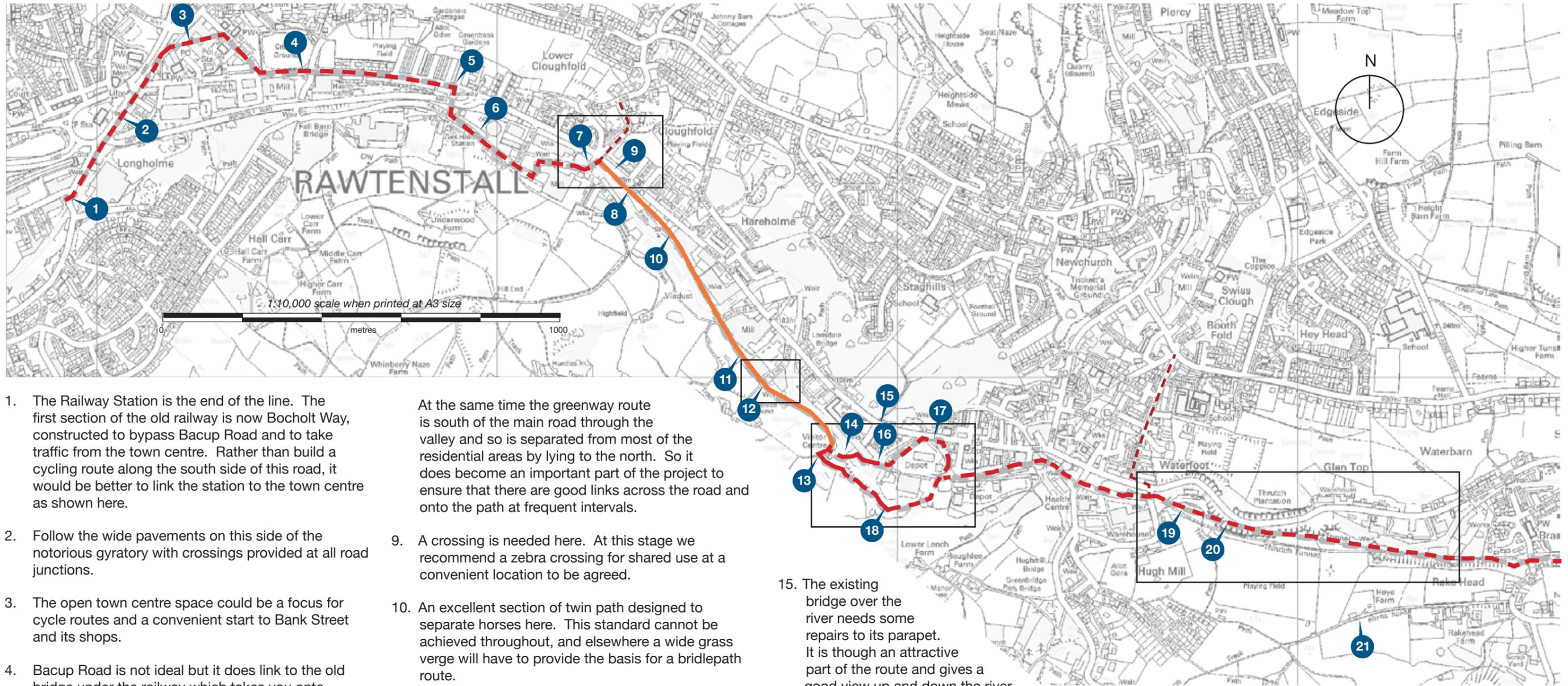
Current work is focussed on drawing up a detailed set of proposals to complete the overall route, reaching agreements with landowners and taking these forward into a firm programme for delivery.

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1. The Railway Station is the end of the line. The first section of the old railway is now Bocholt Way, constructed to bypass Bacup Road and to take traffic from the town centre. Rather than build a cycling route along the south side of this road, it would be better to link the station to the town centre as shown here.
2. Follow the wide pavements on this side of the notorious gyratory with crossings provided at all road junctions.
3. The open town centre space could be a focus for cycle routes and a convenient start to Bank Street and its shops.
4. Bacup Road is not ideal but it does link to the old bridge under the railway which takes you onto Fallbarn Road which is suitable for cycling.
5. There are some ghost lines here which could be adopted to include a turn right cycling logo.
6. Follow Falbarn Road, which needs some repairs to its surface to join the railway path at Hill End Lane.
7. This start of the Greenway deserves a prominent entrance feature, and one which makes quite sure that all the passing motorists know that there is an alternative way to travel.
8. The existing greenway, Alan Fishwick Way 1000m long, starts at Hill End Lane and follows the line of the old railway, at least to start with. Although this is a built up area, and factories crowd to one side, the other side of the path is often open hillside or woodlands which together makes this an attractive greenway route for much of its length all through to Rochdale.

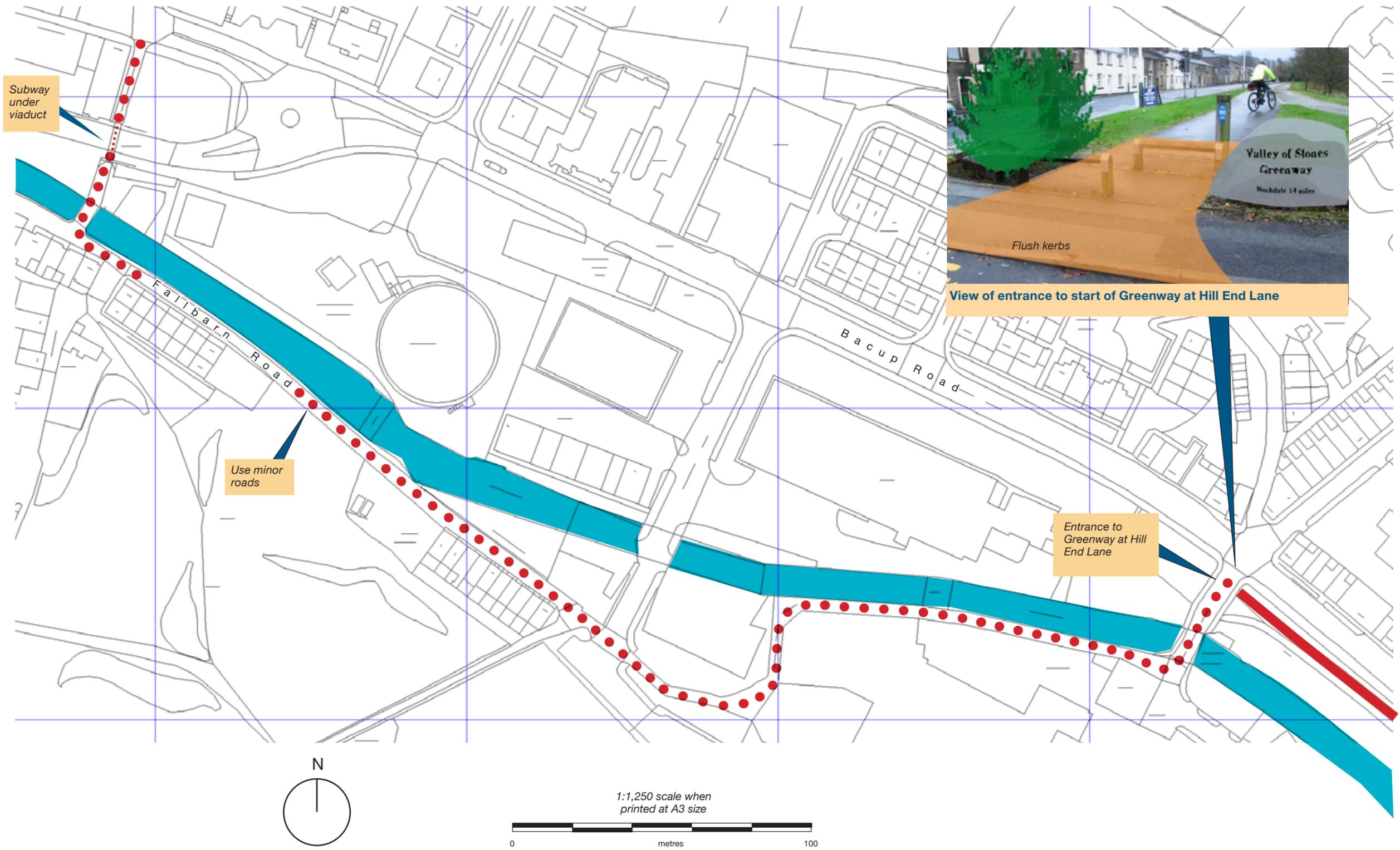
At the same time the greenway route is south of the main road through the valley and so is separated from most of the residential areas by lying to the north. So it does become an important part of the project to ensure that there are good links across the road and onto the path at frequent intervals.

9. A crossing is needed here. At this stage we recommend a zebra crossing for shared use at a convenient location to be agreed.
10. An excellent section of twin path designed to separate horses here. This standard cannot be achieved throughout, and elsewhere a wide grass verge will have to provide the basis for a bridlepath route.
11. Past Highfield Road the path is too narrow and needs widening to 2.5m with a good grass verge for 160m.
12. Because factories occupy the track bed the path rises up and crosses Lench Road at a sharp side slope which could be extremely dangerous in ice or wet conditions. The sketch shows how the introduction of an Ogee speed hump could result in a level passage for the cyclists
13. Former information centre with could be useful in the future.
14. The old stone setted road is now completely ruined and it needs to be rebuilt and tarmaced to reach Holt Hill Road.
15. The existing bridge over the river needs some repairs to its parapet. It is though an attractive part of the route and gives a good view up and down the river. It carries a public footpath which continues through the factory buildings.
16. It would be of benefit to the factory to divert the footpath along this alignment so that they could gate off the factory entrance (except for vehicular access to the field centre). Such a diversion would be possible if factory land adjacent to their building was made available by moving the boundary fence as shown in the detail.
17. Widen the footway for shared use across the old railway warehouse entrance and rejoin minor roads.
18. It may be possible to bypass the plant hire site with a path cut into the hillside as shown in the detail. This will not be particularly easy but it will be an attractive route with good views.

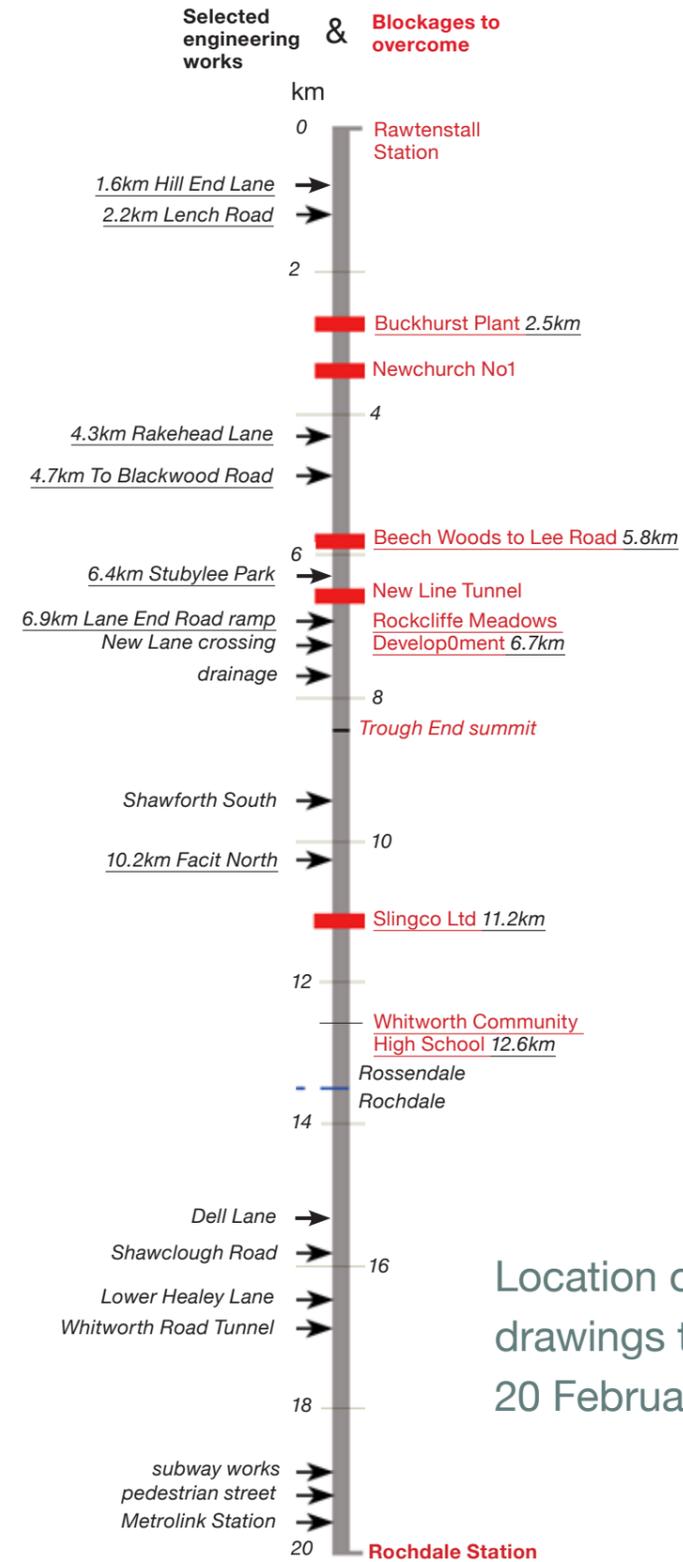
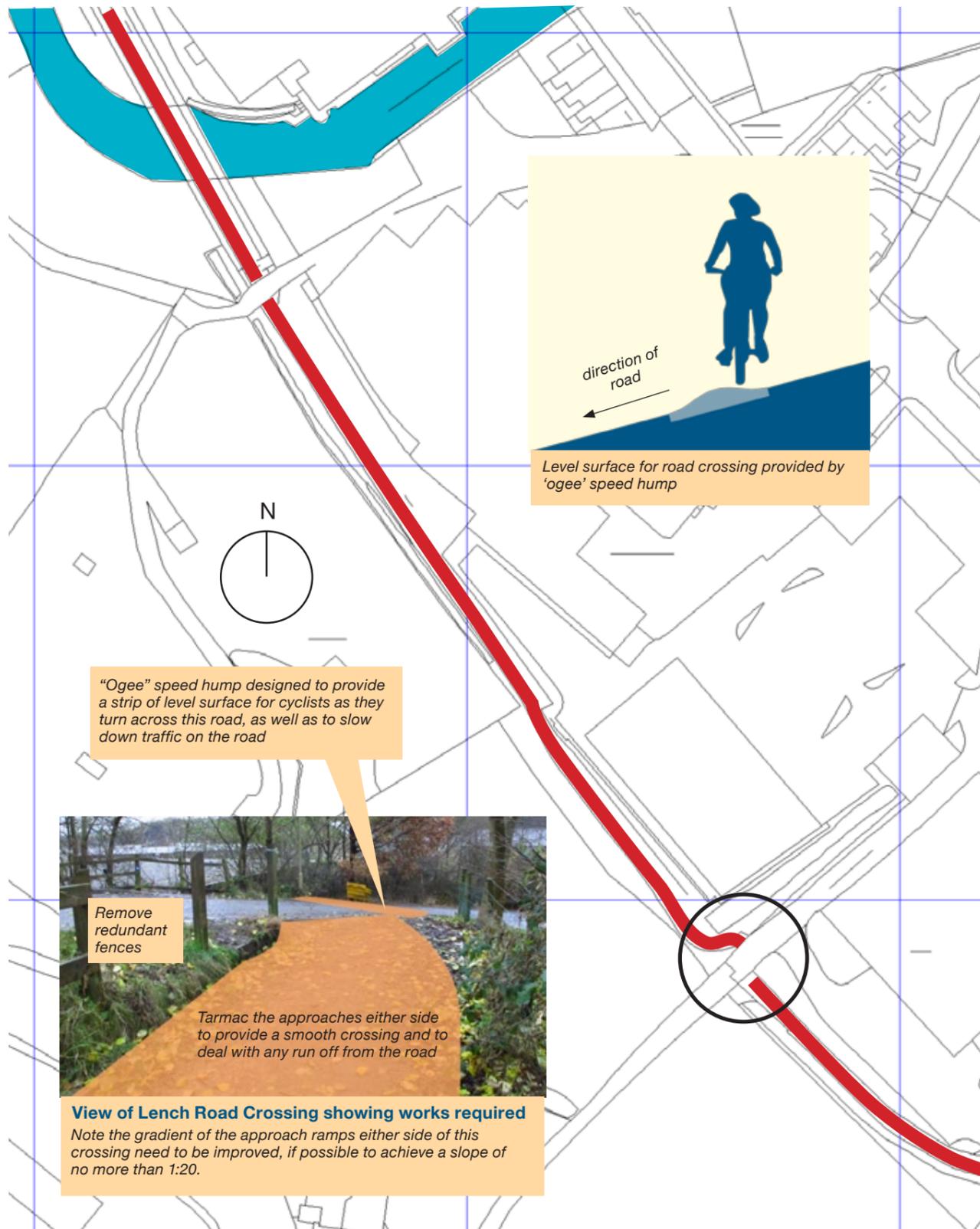
19. New 12m span bridge can be placed on retaining walls of former railway. This then leads straight into the first tunnel which is currently bricked up.
20. This section starts has two memorable tunnels, 140m and 230m respectively, separated by an open ledge 110m long. This leads through to an attractive woodland ride. These two tunnels are of a quite modest length, are straight with good visibility, and are soundly built through rock. The photographs in the detailed sketch show similar tunnels in Italy and Spain illuminated by modern LED units.
21. Royds Road is being developed as a suitable bridleway route to bypass the Newchurch Tunnels which are unsuitable for horses.

Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Railway Path and Greenway

1.6km : Link to Hill End Lane

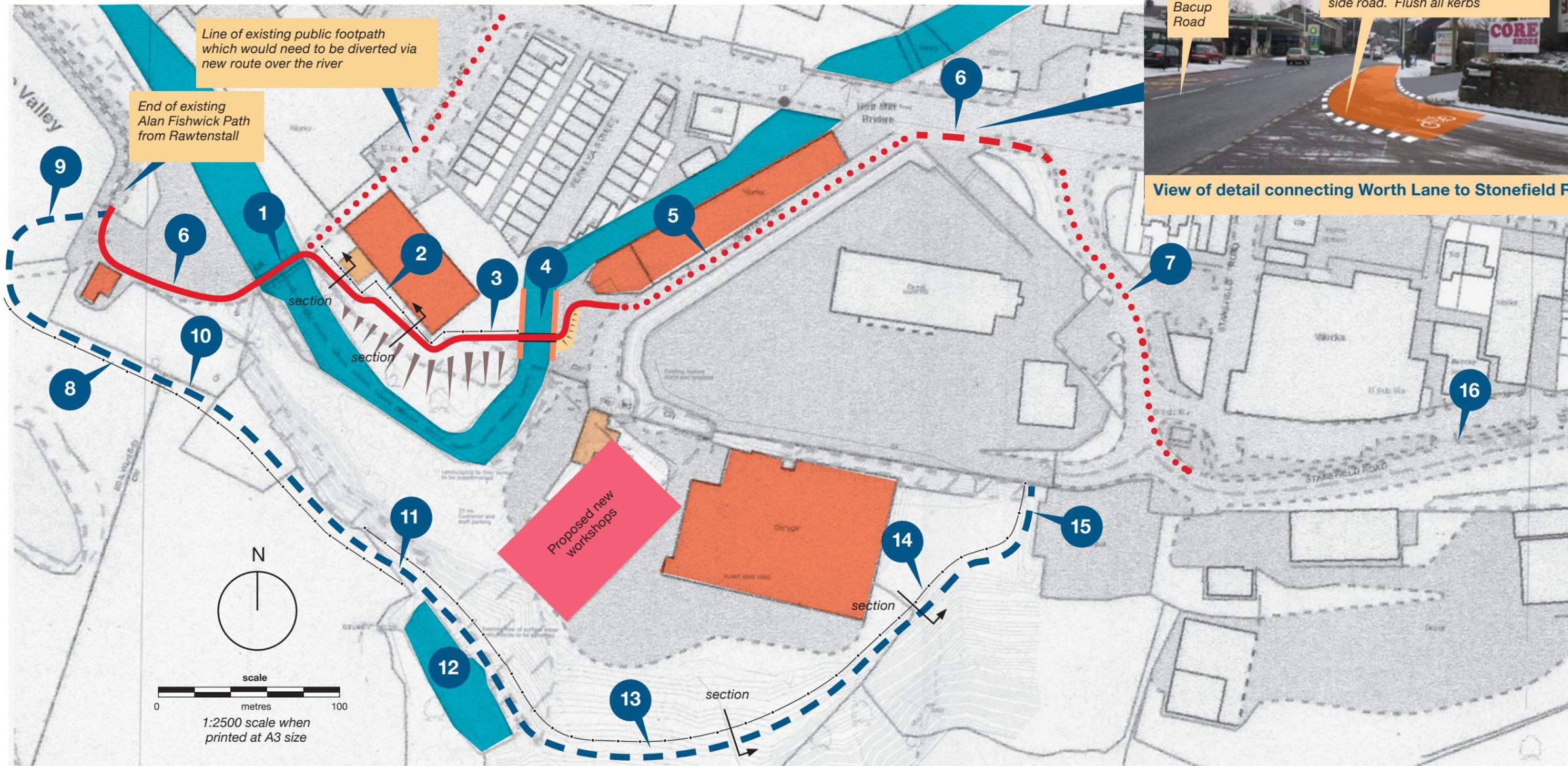


Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Railway Path and Greenway
2.2km : Lench Road Crossing



Location of detailed drawings to date - 20 February 2013

Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway

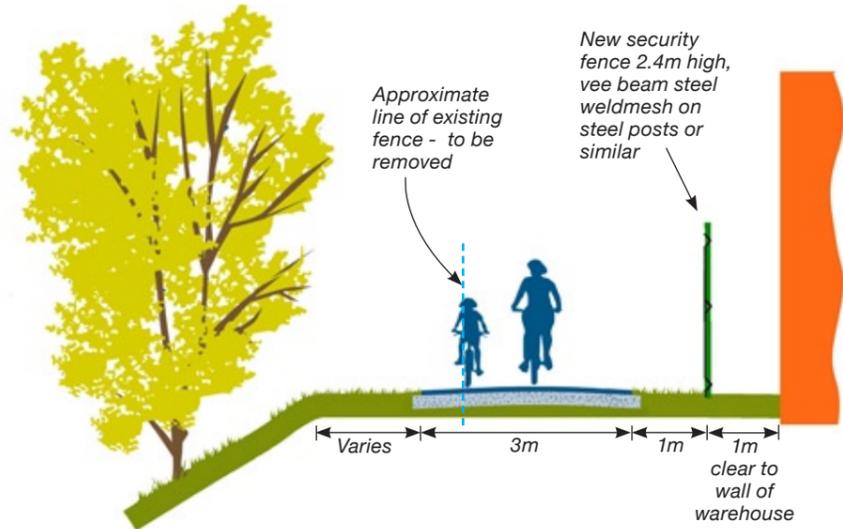


2.5km : Alternative Diversions at Gemini and Buckhurst Plant (Sections shown on following page)

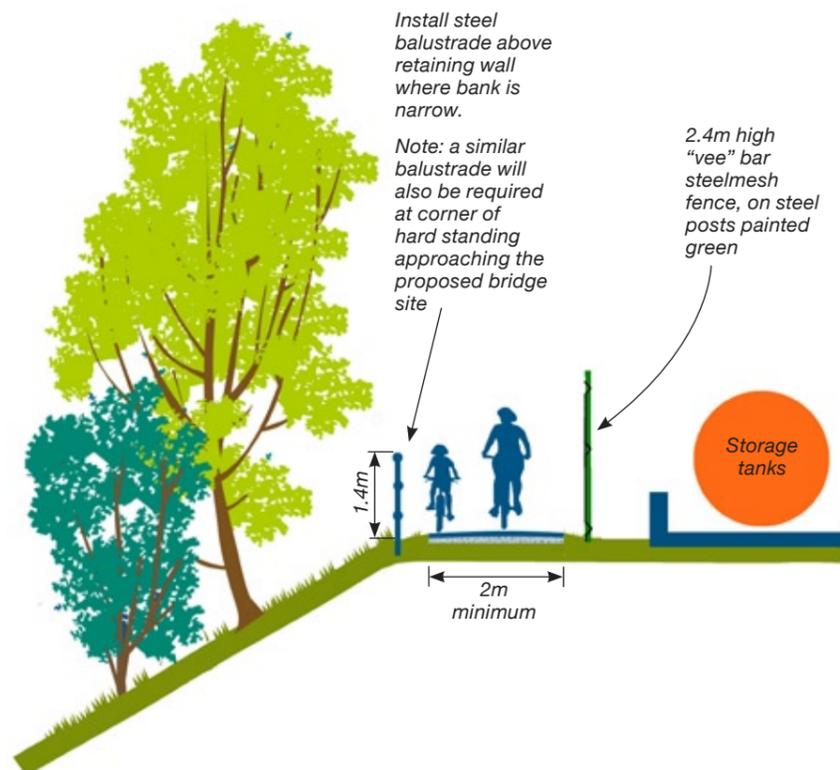
1. The existing bridge over the river needs some repairs to its parapet. It is though an attractive part of the route and gives a good view up and down the river. It carries a public footpath which continues through the factory buildings.
2. It would be of benefit to the factory to divert the footpath along this alignment so that they could gate off the factory entrance (except for vehicular access to the field centre). Such a diversion would be possible if factory land adjacent to their building was made available by moving the boundary fence as shown in the sketch. The new fence would need to be to an advanced specification and better than the existing chain link. For about 10m adjacent to the bridge a new steel parapet would be required above the retaining wall.
3. Cut off the corner of the storage yard by 2.5m to reach the bridge site as shown in the sketch.
4. Massive remaining railway piers remain to take a new 8m long bridge. Ramp down to join the road.
5. This road is narrow and used by Buckhurst Plant Hire but the total number of vehicle movements is small. However the width of the road may be considered a drawback to this route.
6. Widen the footway for shared use across the old railway warehouse entrance.
7. Rejoin minor roads.
8. Alternatively it may be possible to bypass the plant hire site with a path cut into the hillside as shown in the sketch. This will not be particularly easy but it will be an attractive route with good views.
9. Construct new zig zag ramp to 1:20 gradients and a generous width. This would augment or supersede the groundwork ramps already in place.
10. Follow the field edge with a culvert over the stream.
11. Drop down onto the lower ledge to line up with the embankment of the Flash.
12. This is an attractive pond but its overflow needs to be rebuilt and damage from erosion repaired.
13. Drop gently down the hillside at an even gradient. All through this site the path would need to be securely fenced off from the Buckhurst plant area.
14. On this corner some retaining works or revetments are required.
15. Rejoin the road at the start of the works entrance.
16. Follow minor roads through to the start of the next traffic free greenway section.

Gemini Option

View of path past Gemini Dispersions building



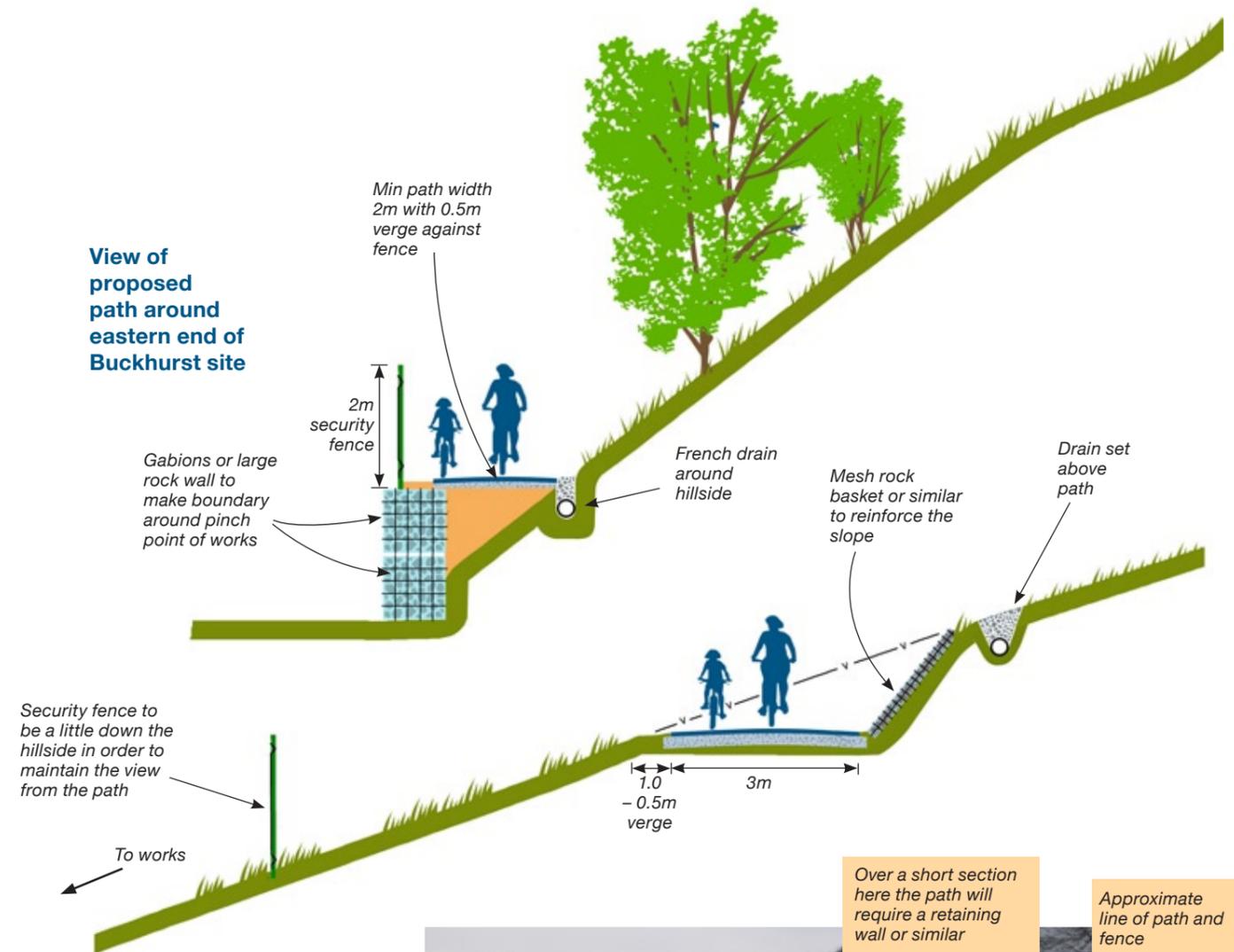
View of path at narrowest section past the tank storage area



View of path alongside Gemini Dispersions premises showing route of path and new fence line

Buckhurst Plant Option

View of proposed path around eastern end of Buckhurst site



View of path as it cuts around the hillside east of the "Flash" as it descends gradually to exit from Buckhurst Plant Hire land



View of possible route of path behind Buckhurst Plant Depot

Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway
2.5km : Alternative Diversions at Gemini and Buckhurst Plant

Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway : 3.5km : The Newchurch Tunnels

This is a particularly interesting section of the route where the railway infrastructure in the shape of the 2 tunnels remains intact. The combination we have here is especially fortuitous. At the west end one emerges from the tunnel to pass almost immediately over the river which is a nice contrast. And the potentially long tunnel is broken into two shorter sections with a rather scenic opening between them looking out onto a steeply wooded gorge with road and river running through.

1. The route approaches from Rawtenstall along the riverside lane beside the former coal yard.
2. It then crosses the route of the Mary Townley Loop with its protected Pegasus light crossing Bacupm Road nearby. A small piece of overgrown waste

ground gives plenty of scope for lining up the path to look through the barrel of the tunnel.

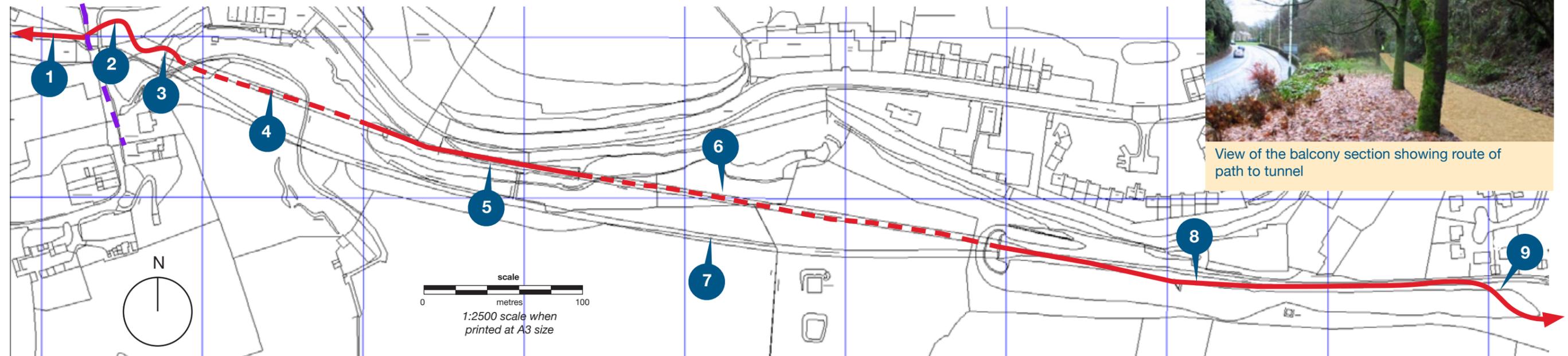
3. A short 10m span bridge can make use of the former masonry abutments so little more is required than to install a proprietary steel bridge. A slightly long span is required if one is to align the path with the tunnels.
4. Newchurch No. 1, 160m long. Both tunnels appear to be in sound condition, driven through hard rock, and need very little repair work. It is best to asphalt through almost full width to give as wide a surface as possible. Lighting is mostly LED based these days and the low power requirements to both tunnels can readily be supplied from the west end.

5. This open balcony section 130m long is a real feature of the route. Apart from its facing coldly north, it will be a good place to stop and view the surroundings for which a central feature may be appropriate. It should be cleared of undergrowth but the specimen trees kept.

6. Newchurch No. 2 tunnel is longer at 380m, but still with the comfort of looking straight through. There are a number of tunnels of this sort of length on popular paths in the UK.
7. The parallel unused tunnel has no real part to play in this project.
8. This is an attractive woodland section with a waterfall which could be treated as a feature. Construct the

standard 3.0m wide bitmac path through here taking care to dig open ditches for good drainage, and ease out any slopes in the gradient of the path.

9. Start of ramp described in Rakehead detail. Rakehead Lane is the works access for this whole tunnel section so the bridge at the western end need only be 2m wide which will help limit unauthorised use by vehicles.
10. The single bore Newchurch Tunnels are not suitable for shared equestrian use. So Proffitts have brought forward Royds Road as a bridleway route to bypass this section.



View of the balcony section showing route of path to tunnel

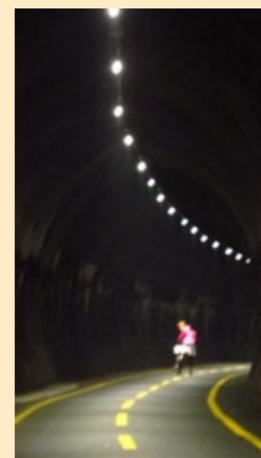


View of Tunnel No. 2 showing its spacious size and 4.6m width available

Selection of tunnel lighting solutions



1. Fluorescent lighting giving broad bands



2. LED strips are more closely spaced resulting in an even lighting



3. LED floor units result in an attractive effect



4. Often LED units are controlled by movement detectors switched on as the traveller passes through. This level of sophistication is probably not warranted on the relatively short tunnels here



View of retaining walls to carry new bridge

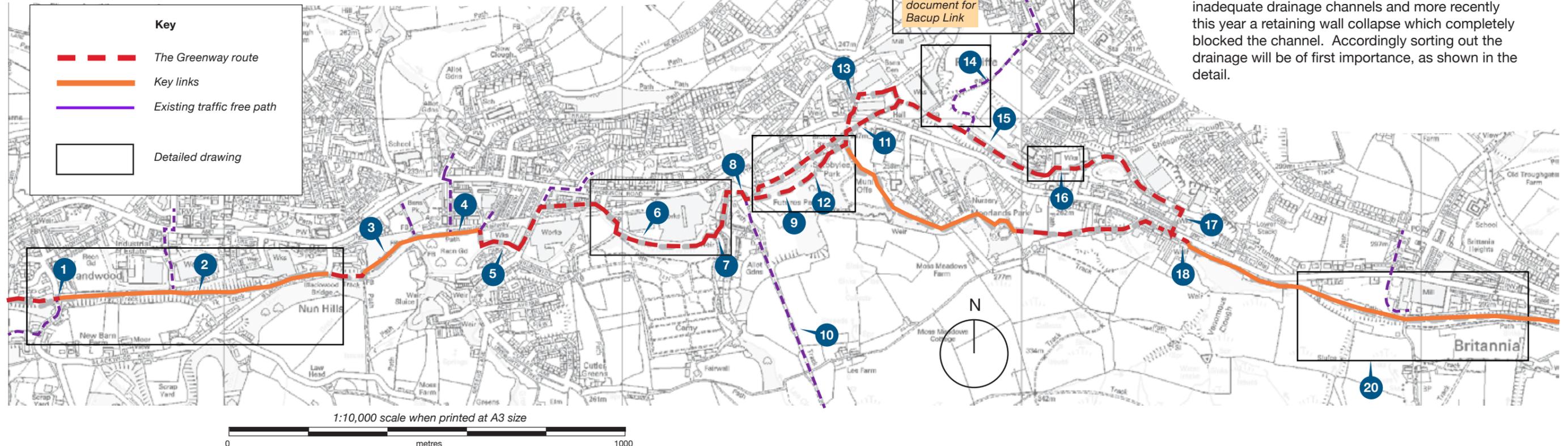
Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Railway Path and Greenway

1. Rakehead Lane Bridge has been infilled and so the path has to climb by 10m or so, with difficult gradients of 1:6. This gradient could be ameliorated by crossing the road as far downhill as possible, and by using the adjacent gulley to take the path on a longer route all with a view of achieving at least a 1:15 gradient, preferable 1:20. This is all shown on the detailed plan.
2. The existing path climbs steeply through woods to Blackwood Road. There seems to be no way through on the level where a factory blocks the level railway route. However the gradient could be considerably eased by constructing diagonally across the hillside as shown in the detail. This Rakehead and Blackwood section is the subject of a current project by Proffitts.
3. The path through the park has been reconstructed.
4. The existing path around the recreation ground needs to be doubled in width and a link through the railway embankment to Herbert Street housing made.
5. The connection to Fairholme Lane at the back of the warehouses beside the river needs to be formalised as part of any land exchange being considered by the Council.
6. The section from Fairholme Lane to Stubbylee Park is almost entirely lost. At least five bridges have been demolished and the line built over. The only traffic free option for this section is to construct a new path alongside the south side of the river at the bottom of beech woods leading up to the cemetery. The work for this is shown in the detail.

7. The owners of No 2 Lee Road are planning extensive work to their garden. This will allow for the path to come through at the original ground level and to be carefully fenced off as shown in the sketch. Some repairs may be needed to the high boundary wall, and one ash tree, which shades out the garden, needs to be removed.
8. A new link across this rough ground 60m long will need to be evenly graded to give an easy slope from Glen Street to the new Futures Mountain Bike Centre.
9. The new Centre is to open here in 2014 to cater for an estimated 100,000 visitors a year. Although provisionally aimed at servicing Lee Quarries above, this centre could also be a power house for promoting leisure and everyday cycling. For this it will be particularly important that the Rossendale and Rochdale Greenway is completed in either direction to give an easier route option for families and novices whilst other in their party are careering around in the quarries.
10. Main route to Mountain Bike circuits.
11. The New Line Tunnel forms the most direct route to Bacup and thence to Whitworth. The approach road and yard are currently used by Lancashire County Council Highways for maintenance vehicles and the 100m tunnel for storage of grit. It would be possible to fence a strip off the south side of the yard and to modify the existing gates to maintain complete security whilst allowing free passage for the public. The grit in the tunnel would though need to be stored elsewhere.

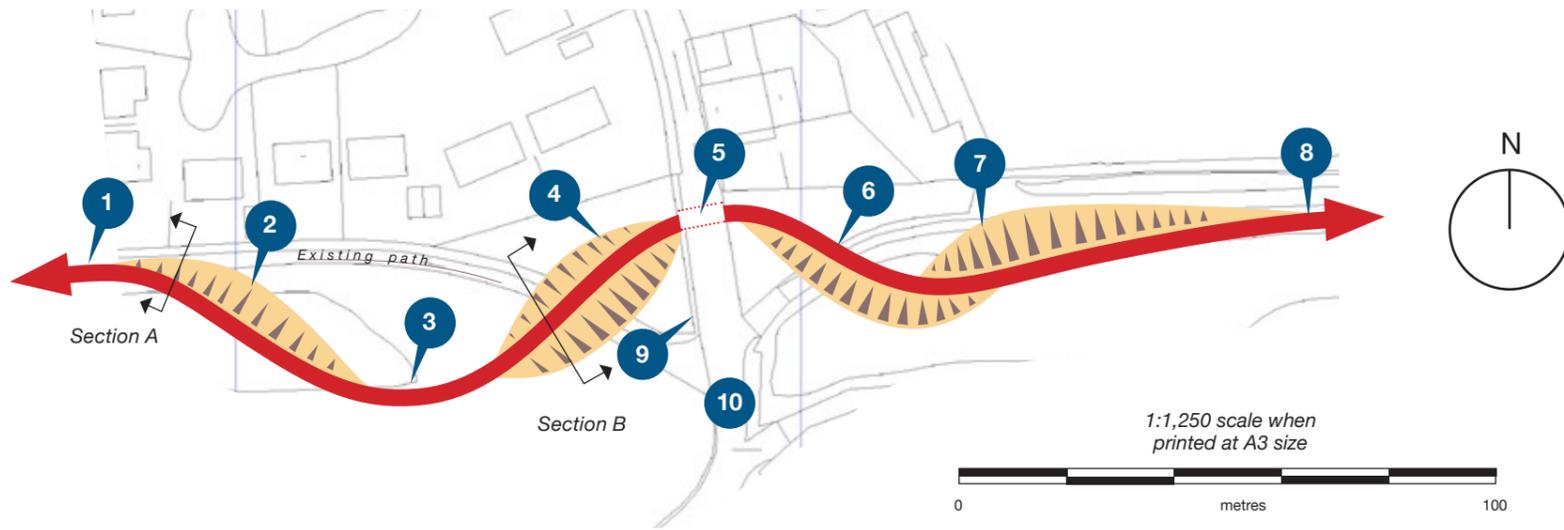
12. A link up to the drive in Stubbylee Park would also be a valuable part of the Futures Centre and would give this Victorian park a new focus and popularity. The ramp can be constructed entirely in earthworks. Although there will be some tree loss, this slope does overlook the Council Depot which is already industrial. Once the Park Drive has been reached this leads to an existing cycling route up to Lee Quarries, and one at a rather easier gradient than the direct tramway down (7). A route via the parks could also be the basis of a connection through to New Lines Reservoir although this does have the disadvantage of bypassing Bacup.
13. The crossing of New Line at this point is not particularly easy as there is no space for a central island. However should there a long delay in freeing up the Tunnel route, then a crossing is needed here to link to Bacup.

14. The final route through this housing site is to be determined, ideally as shown in the detail. It should be set out to easy gradients even if this means a circuitous route. But it is crucial if a good quality link to the centre of Bacup is to be achieved.
15. Follow the line of the old railway along the floor of the valley to Lane End Road.
16. Cut a zig zag ramp here and utilise the open space at the end of the warehouse unit to reach The Sidings which continue up the valley as a rather attractive road winding around a pocket of woodland to the south, as shown in the detail.
17. Use this cut through to reach the main road where a central island would make an appropriate crossing allowing the traffic to be negotiated one lane at a time.
18. Widen the link to the New Line Reservoir path. Once here we have reached the start of the virtually complete route to the Common in Rochdale – a considerable achievement.
19. An alternative or additional route would bring both Stubbylee and Monkheads Park into the route, but would not provide the crucial link to Bacup.
20. The Britannia Greenway is the last part of the climb up to the summit at Trough Gate at a level just short of 1000ft above sea level. It is also the only section in Rossendale which retains bridges arching over the track running below along its cutting. It is also the most surprising section because it is all but invisible from the nearby main road. The existing gravel path has been greatly damaged by washouts from inadequate drainage channels and more recently this year a retaining wall collapse which completely blocked the channel. Accordingly sorting out the drainage will be of first importance, as shown in the detail.



Map 2 of 6: Rakehead to Britannia

Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway 4.3km : Rakehead Lane Crossing



The Rakehead railway bridge remains but is infilled as are the approach cuttings either side. The existing rough path climbs steeply either side, and inexplicably crosses the road much higher up the hill than necessary and at a point where there is only limited visibility for traffic coming down the hill. The scheme shown here aims to achieve a 1:20 gradient on either side of the road with the minimum climb. It does not propose to reopen the bridge because (i) we have no idea of the condition of the bridge and (ii) we need to make a connection to this road for local access.

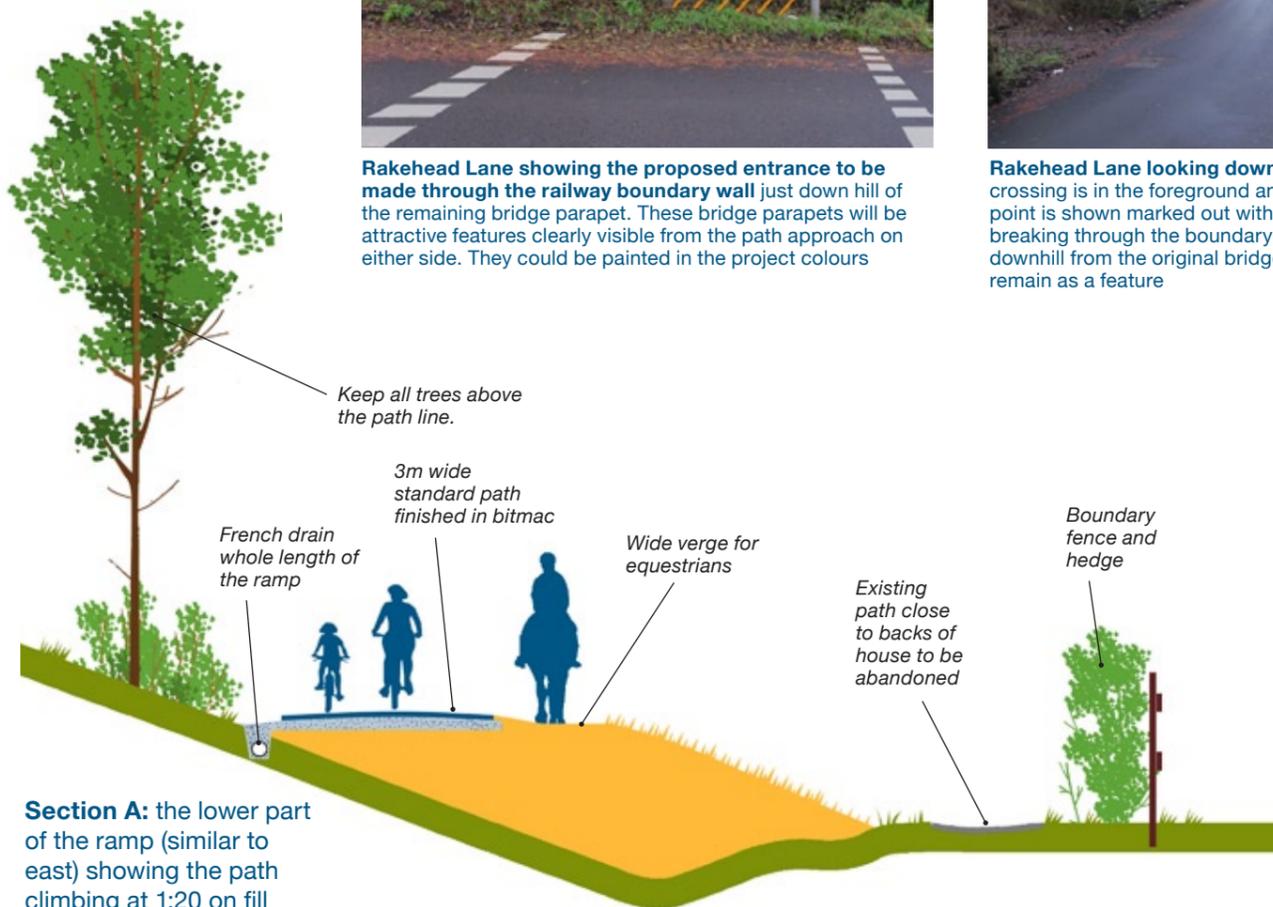
1. Path from the 2 Tunnels to be rebuilt to standard 3m width.
2. Veer away from the boundary (and nearby houses) to start climbing at 1:20 or less on fill as shown in the section.
3. In this area the path should be following the floor of the gully.
4. Cut through this area of fill on top of the original railway cutting as shown in the section. This material can be used for the lower sections of path built on fill, or mounded up in a heap on the line of the original to be abandoned path. It should NOT be removed from site.
5. The newly built ramp, over 100 long, should now reach the road at about plus 5.0m above the original track bed. Break through the boundary walls just downhill from the bridge parapets, make flush kerbs, and mark out the road crossing with "elephants footprints" to define route.
6. Veer into the hillside to win material if required and move to the path away from the neighbouring garden.
7. Construct lower level in fill to achieve 1:20 gradient. On this side the ramp will need to be about 80m long on account of the original railway itself having climbed over the section past the bridge.
8. The path continues in the standard section.



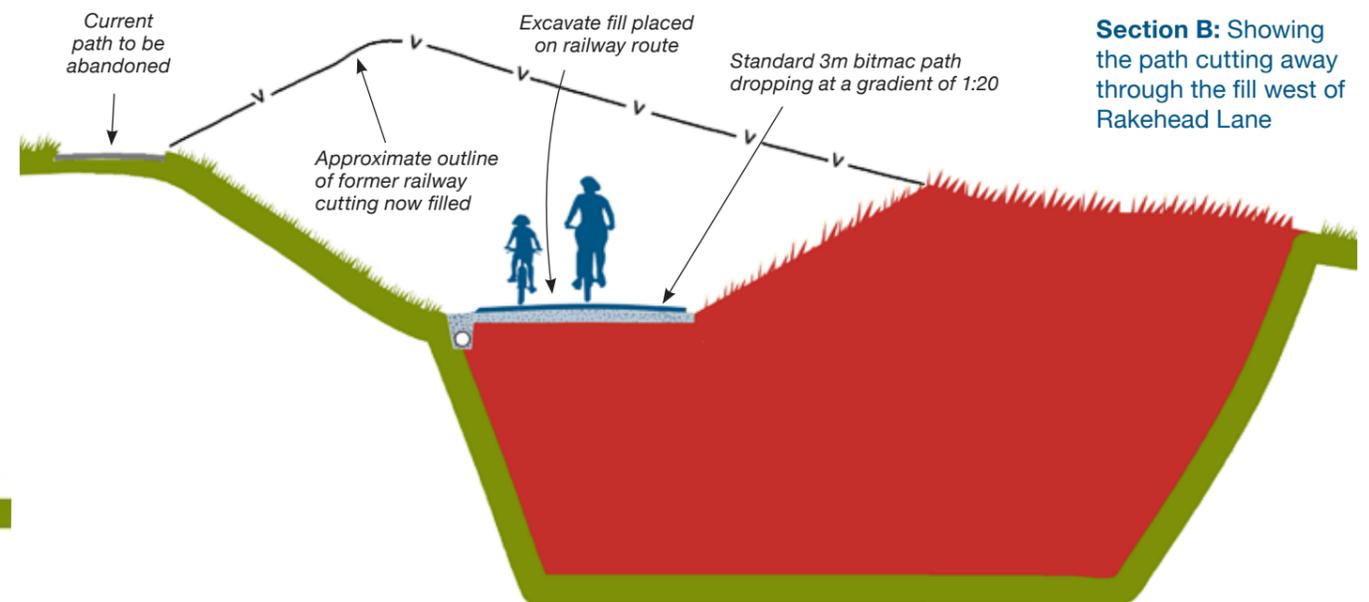
Rakehead Lane showing the proposed entrance to be made through the railway boundary wall just downhill of the remaining bridge parapet. These bridge parapets will be attractive features clearly visible from the path approach on either side. They could be painted in the project colours



Rakehead Lane looking downhill. The existing path crossing is in the foreground and the proposed crossing point is shown marked out with 'elephants footprints' and breaking through the boundary wall at a convenient point downhill from the original bridge parapet walls which can remain as a feature



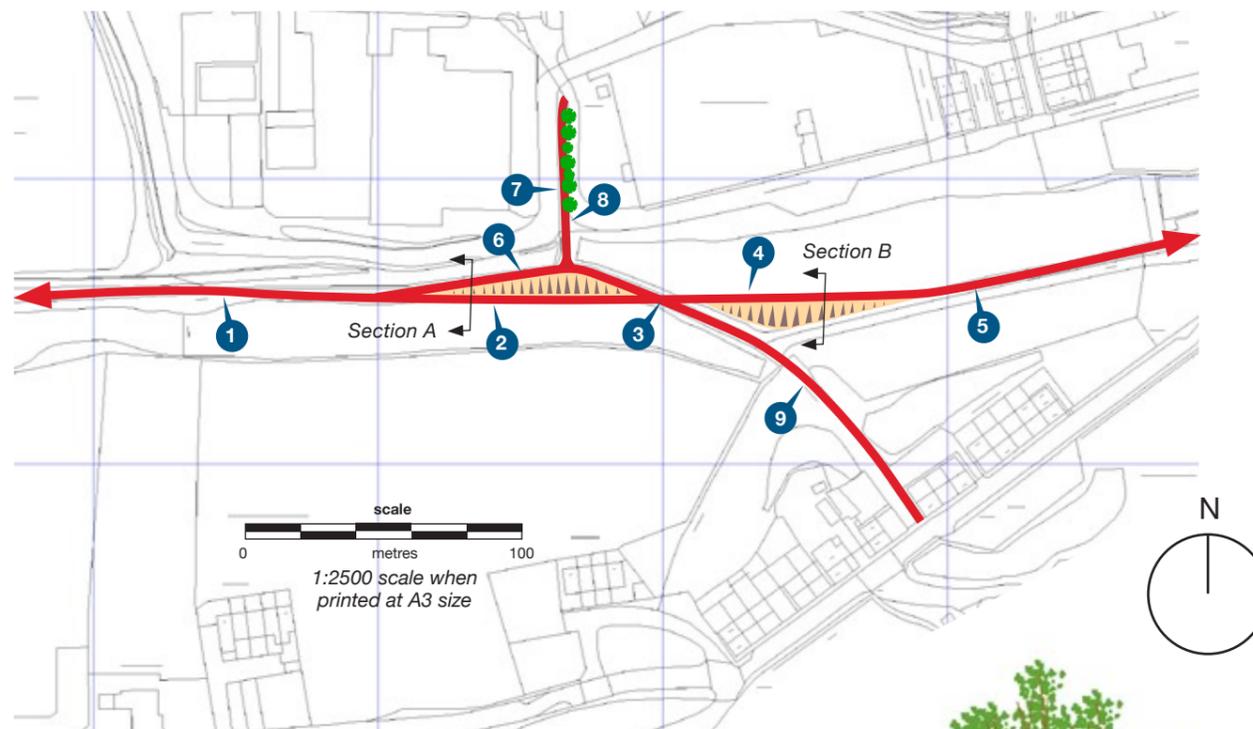
Section A: the lower part of the ramp (similar to east) showing the path climbing at 1:20 on fill



Section B: Showing the path cutting away through the fill west of Rakehead Lane

Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway **4.7km** : The climb to Blackwood Road - proposals to ease the gradient to 1:20

- Existing path along the railway corridor to be reconstructed to a 3m wide bitmac surface as shown in the standard path cross section.
- The existing path climbs steeply at a gradient of approximately 1:6. In order to ease this to the desired 1:20, the climb or ramp needs to be made some 3 times longer, namely 200m in length. The best way of doing this will be to ramp up as shown on a new bank (A) constructed with material won from the upper section (B) all made in cut for a balanced cut and fill operation.
- Intersect the existing path at grade so that it can still be used by pedestrians.
- This upper section needs to be excavated to provide material for the lower section. Note that the existing field gate edge path at the top could be abandoned.
- Route continues to join Blackwood Road on the level. Reconstruct this as in section C and remove the existing barriers.
- Maintain the lower path, but to a narrower width of 2m, to link to Baldwin Street for the valuable link to Rock Hill Road and a large residential area.
- This wide verge could be formalised with a path near the riverside and a line of trees to separate off the industrial loading area.
- Provide for this link through to Railway Street, Mark Street and Heath Hill Drive.
- This upper section of the path can be retained and improved for a direct link to the local housing.



Blackwood Climb showing ramp dropping down to the west as in section A with narrow path at foot of ramp leading to local access



Blackwood Climb showing route of upper section of path BB ramping up through fairly new woodlands. The trees up hill of the ramp to be removed and the excavated slope grassed.

Section A: The lower section of the Blackwood Climb

Keep all trees on the slope above the new ramp

Earthworks with compacted material excavated from the upper part of the climb, or from imported materials if available free of charge. Grass or plant this surface as required. The advantage of maintaining a grassed bank will be that this will provide welcome views over the valley

Scale 1:100

Section B: The upper section of the Blackwood Climb

Excavated material to go to build lower ramp. Grass this slope with fibre reinforcement if necessary

French drain whole length of ramp. It may also be advantageous to cut an open ditch in the edge of the field to prevent water eroding down the excavated slope

Keep all trees below the ramp

Wide verge for equestrians

2
1

2
1

Original formation 8 - 9m for double track railway

Ground drops away to the river

2m

3m

2m wide link path at the foot of the bank on line of old railway

Ditch or french drain on uphill side of path

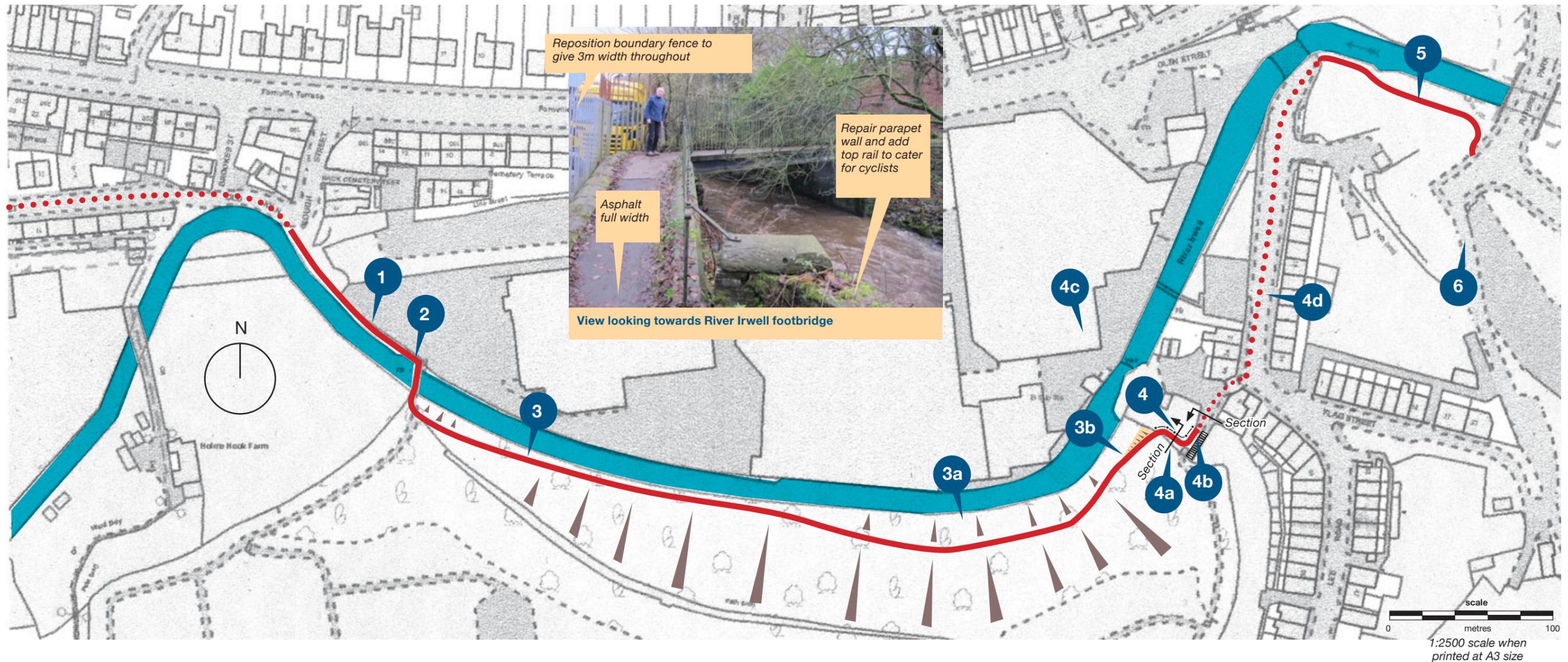
Section C: The standard path cross section

Grass up shoulder flush to path

3m

3m wide machine laid bitmac 60mm thick with central camber laid on 250mm thick compacted stone 3.5m wide, in turn laid on reinforced polypropylene fabric

Scale 1:50



The section from Fairholme Lane to Stubblee Park is almost entirely lost. At least five bridges have been demolished and the line built over. The only traffic free option for this section is to construct a new path alongside the south side of the river at the bottom of beech woods leading up to the cemetery.

1. Negotiate to slightly reposition this boundary fence in order to gain a little more width to the existing path.
2. Ease the gradients to the existing bridge which can be used for shared use.
3. Construct new path 250m along the largely level piece of land beside the river. Retain as many trees as possible. The cross section sketch shows the need for a balustrade rail beside the retaining wall to the river.

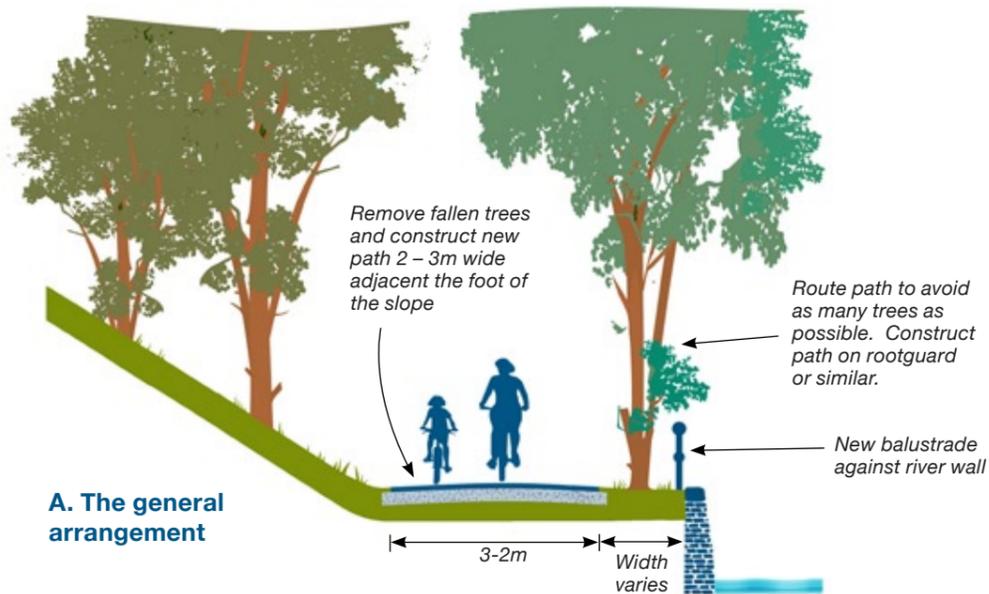
- 3a. Over a short section there is a rough, tumbled area which may be material tipped over from making the cemetery area at the top of the hill, and maybe partly a slipped area. It is covered by a tangle of trees and fallen rocks so it is difficult to see exactly what the best arrangement is. This is likely to be a combination of drainage, excavation and a small amount of retaining gabions or similar over a short length. The final path will need to climb a little as material has fallen over the original track, and this level change should ensure gradients are kept to 1:20.
- 3b. The path returns to bank level and regains a short section of the original alignment before ramping up to the level of Lee Road at the back of No 2's garden.

4. The existing flight of steps from the Cemetery emerges into Lee Road under a wide opening. The riverside route could connect to this provided details alongside the back yard where a raised fish pond has been built are carefully worked out and agreed.
- 4a. The owners of No 2 Lee Road are planning extensive work to their garden. This will allow for the path to come through at the original ground level and to be carefully fenced off as shown in the sketch. Some repairs may be needed to the high boundary wall, and one ash tree, which shades out the garden, needs to be removed.
- 4b. There is an unused garden plot beside the flagged path to the cemetery which makes for the best place for the route although people may wish to walk on the flags. The boundary fence and gate to No 6 should be renewed in iron work of the owner's wishes.

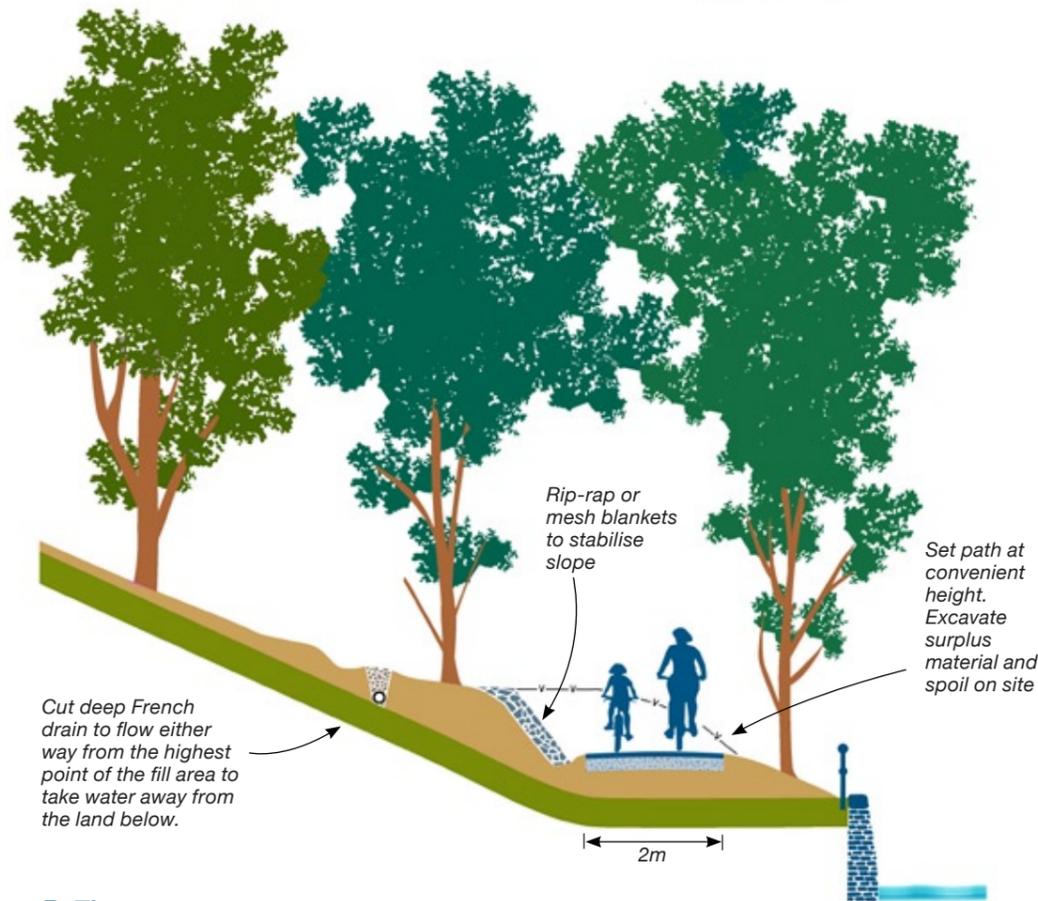
- 4c. The route then joins Lee Road via a wide stable area through the terrace housing.
- 4d. Lee Road itself is lightly trafficked and suitable for people to walk and cycle.
5. A new link across this rough ground 60m long will need to be evenly graded to give an easy slope from Glen Street to the new Futures Park Mountain Bike Centre.
6. A new centre is to open here in 2014 to cater for an estimated 100,000 visitors a year. Although provisionally aimed at servicing Lee Quarries above, this centre could also be a power house for promoting leisure and everyday cycling. For this it will be particularly important that the Rossendale and Rochdale Greenway is completed in either direction to give an easier route option for families and novices whilst others in their party are careering around in the quarries.

Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway **5.8km** : Proposed route at the foot of the slope below Fairwell Cemetery

Sections beside the river at the foot of the slope up to the cemetery



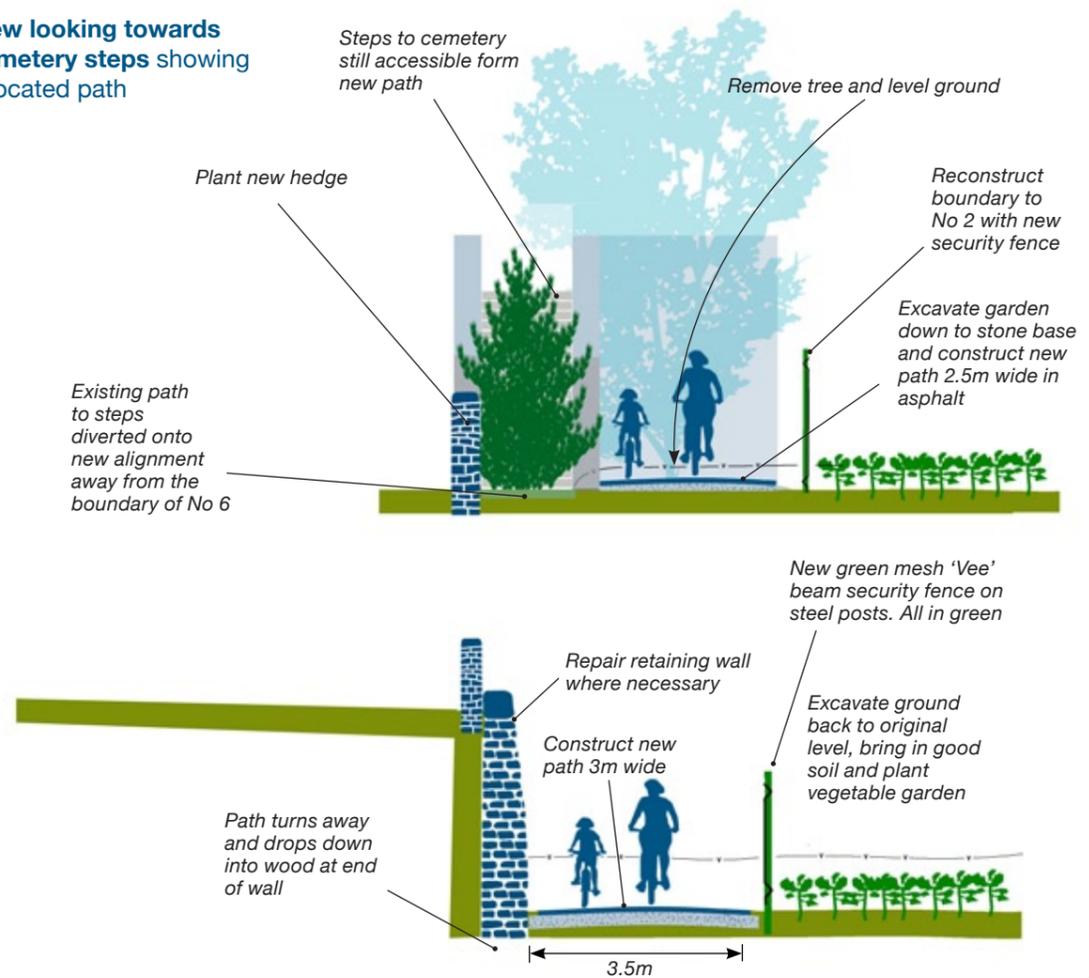
A. The general arrangement



B. The arrangement across the slipped area

scale 1:100

View looking towards cemetery steps showing relocated path

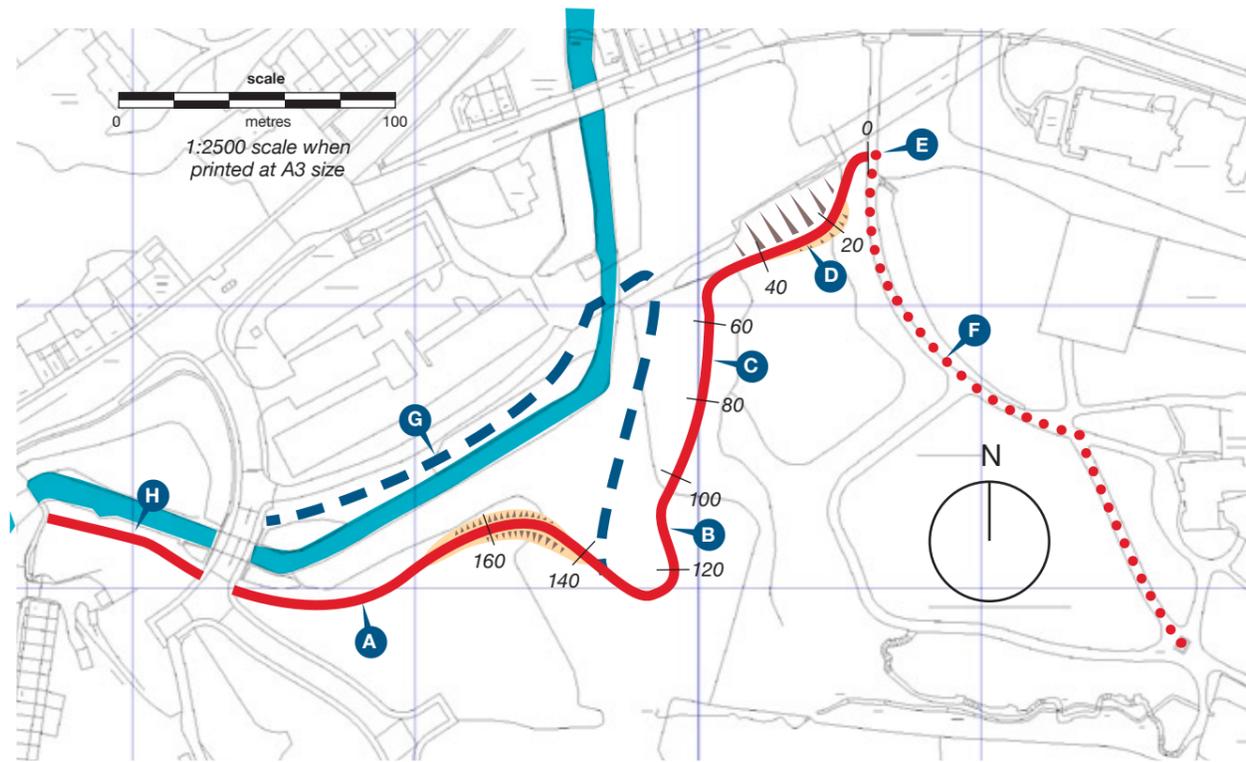


At back of garden of No 2 Lee Road showing path fenced off against the wall

scale 1:100



View looking towards cemetery steps



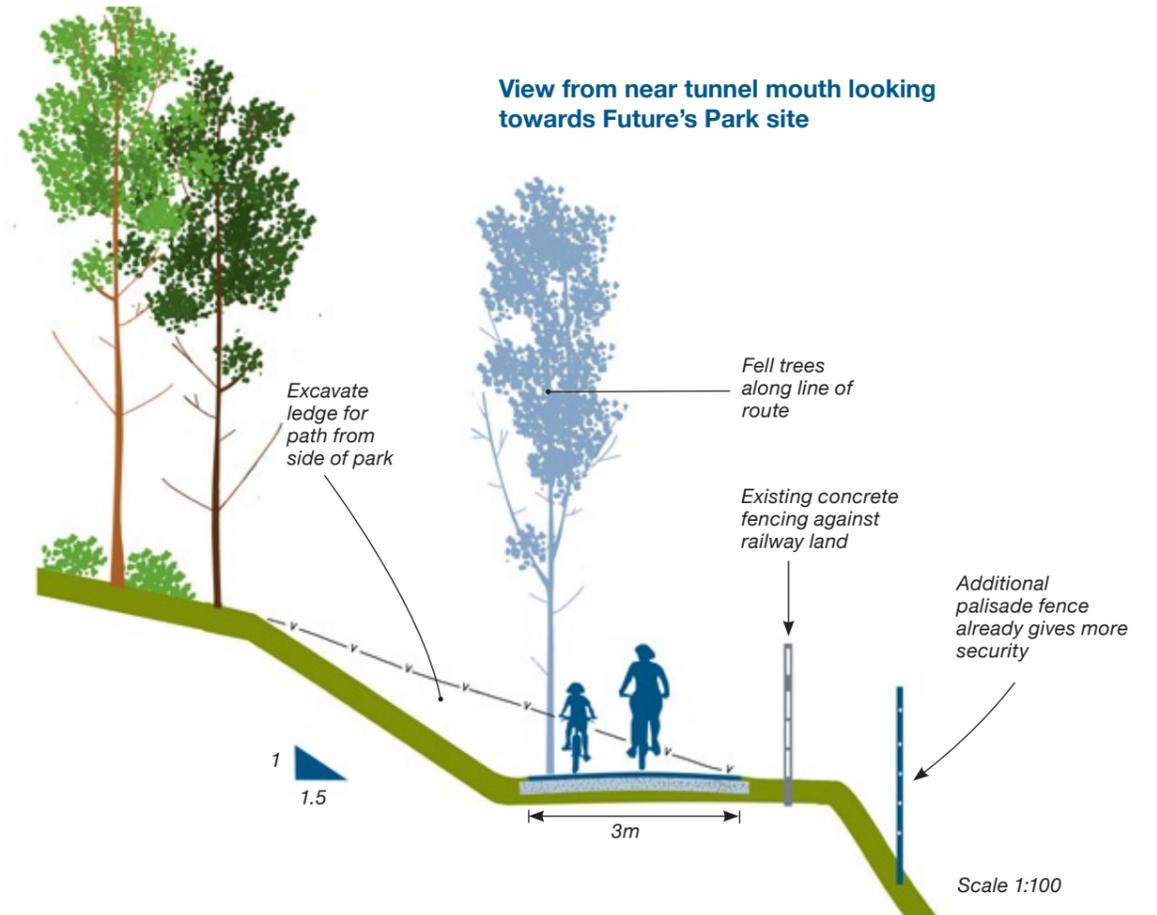
Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway 6.4km : Link from Futures Park to Stubblee Park

The Futures Park development will include a popular mountain bike centre which will act as a considerable magnet for visitors to this area. Whilst the primary purpose of the Centre will be to service the Lee Quarry and high level mountain bike routes, the Centre will also be able to offer the more family orientated Greenway and if linked to the Stubblee and Moorlands Park a yet further style of open air recreation. These two Parks deserve the wider reputation that this proposed Greenway access would provide.

At present the Parks are rather isolated from nearby residential areas and Bacup on account of lying south of the main road. This sketch shows the basic arrangement of a good link which would need to be designed as a woodland walk with a gradient of not more than 1:20 so as to be available to as wide a number of people as possible.

- A. The first part of the route needs to be integrated into Futures Park as a landscaped path. The path should be designed as a tree lined avenue and be built on a low causeway in order to be above any flooded area.
- B. The path should climb up through the woodlands avoiding as many trees as possible and keeping to an even gradient of 1:20. It should select a route of sufficient length to gain this gradient. Some tree felling will be necessary.

- C. In this area there is a lower "bench" of ground which may make a convenient route for the path. The open space of the park above appears to have been excavated, or at least levelled out of the hillside here so the edge of its slope is old fill.
- D. Around this edge the path will best be arranged in an excavated bench. This may mean the loss of the row of trees on the edge of the Park's field which should be replanted.
- E. Cut through level to the Drive as close to the headwall of the railway tunnel as possible in order to keep the overall climb to only 9 or 10 metres.
- F. The route through to the Parks, and to New Line Reservoir to rejoin the railway path.
- G. Alternatively construct the path in the land adjacent to the Council's access road to their depot and cross the river using the "spare" span before taking off into the woodlands. This short section within the depot could be securely fenced off for security.
- H. Proposed link to Lee Road and the Greenway to Rawtenstall.



View showing path dropping away through the woods at a gradient of 1:20. If the soil is adequate the path can be cut through on a low bench

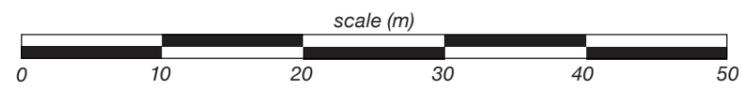
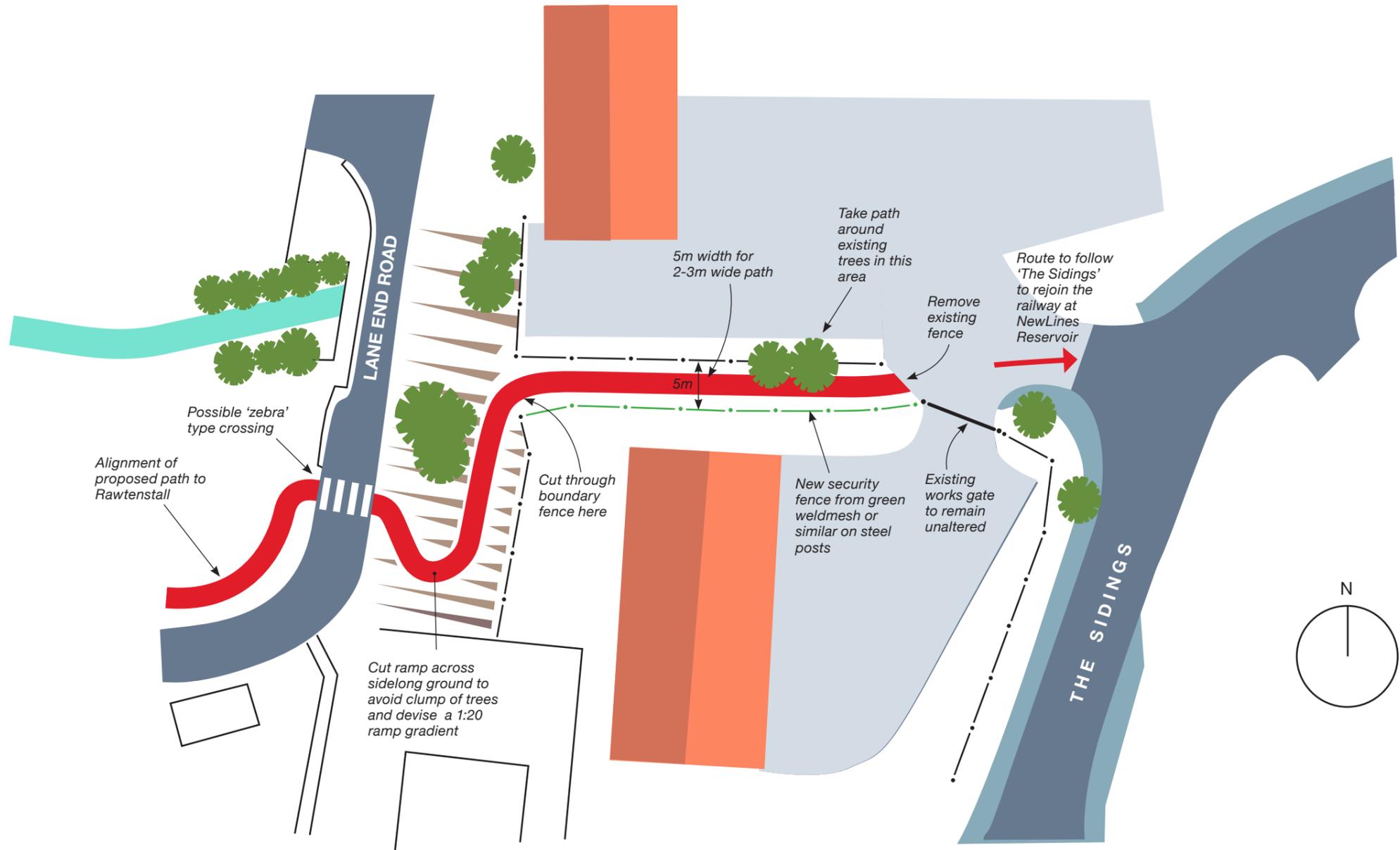


The entrance to Stubblee Park



Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway
6.7km : Bacup Link at Rockcliffe Meadows Development

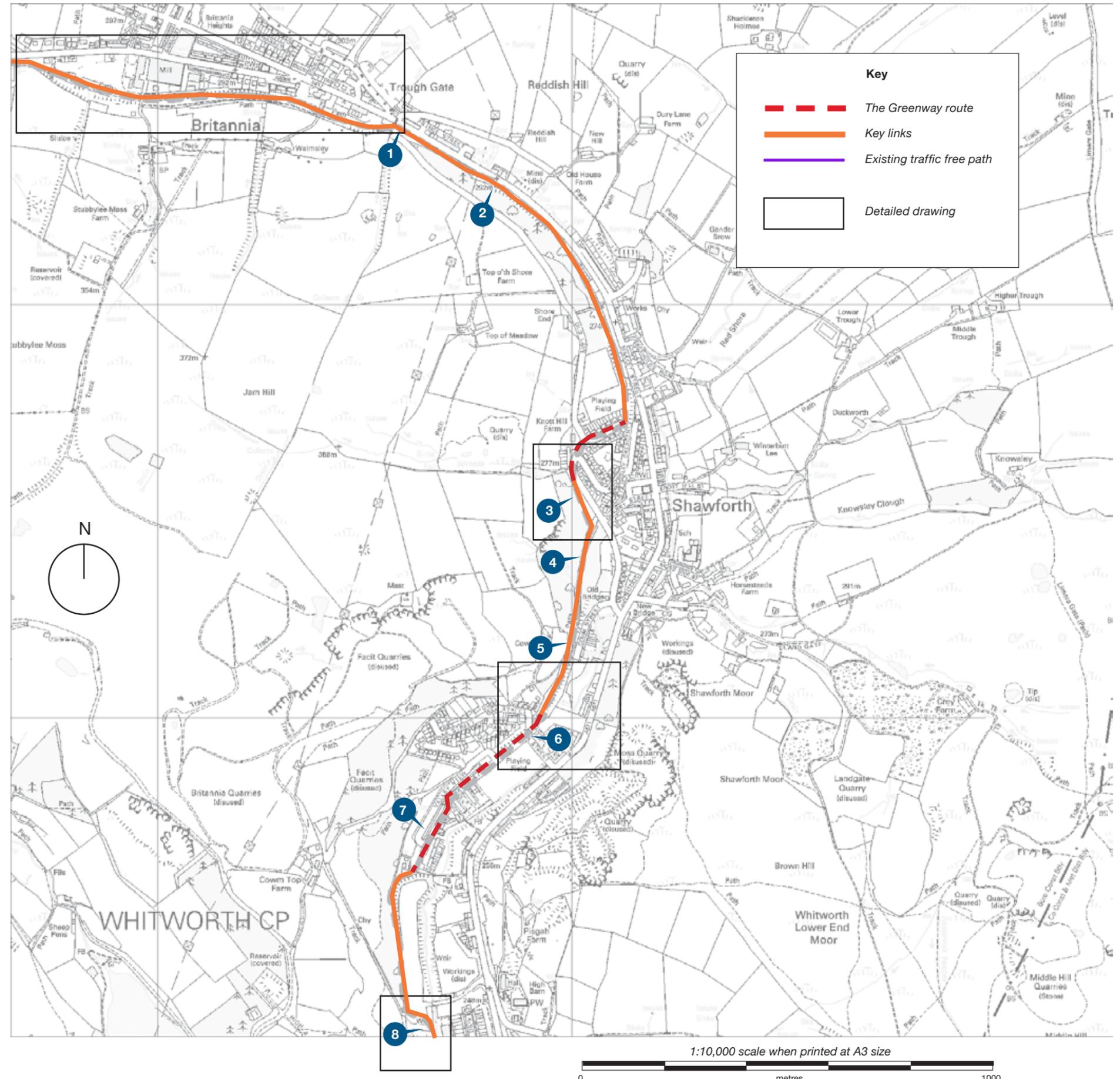
Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway
6.9km : proposed link from Lane End Road to The Sidings, Bacup



John Grimshaw 13 12 12

1. The summit needs a commemorative feature if possible a stone arch to commemorate passing from one side to the other or a small 15 foot high tower to enable one to stand at 1000ft above sea level. It may be worthwhile excavating out Old Lane to achieve this feature, although the summit would then be somewhat to the west of the bridge, whereas the original railway summit was to the east.
2. The Whitworth Greenway was constructed in 2008 to a very good standard and runs all the way through to Crown Parkway North in Whitworth. It is though interrupted by housing developments and the loss of the two key bridges over Old Lane in Shawford and Oak Street in Facit where minor roads are followed.
3. Here at Shawford, Old Lane drops down and then the new path climbs steeply up 7 or 8m to the line of the old railway. An almost level route could be created by building a new path along or close to the woodland boundary. This would make a real improvement especially for children and those in wheelchairs for example.
4. This short section winds behind a low hill which immediately transports one into the open countryside and away from all traffic and built up area. The surface all through is excellent and should be used as the standard throughout for the Rossendale and Rochdale Greenway, except that we would prefer not to see the use of concrete edgings which are urban in nature.
5. This agricultural track with its massive stone walls is a very visible reminder that we are in a country whose stone was the all consuming material of choice.
6. The connection here is much too steep. Most people would walk up Oak Street and its ramp, and would go too fast going downhill. A much better gradient could be readily excavated in the embankment and a zig zag ramp as shown in the sketch would have the advantage of also showing people down. At its foot it would be worth negotiating with neighbours to see if the ramp could avoid even the bottom section of Oak Street. And this route would also provide a very useful playing field access.
7. Springside is also the source of some flooding across the finished path to the south.
8. Slingco is one of the most significant barriers on the whole route (another being the Buckhurst Plant Hire Company at Waterfoot). It will be crucial to negotiate a route one side or the other of this important factory, to provide all the necessary quality security fencing and to promote the Company's support of the project through this crucial link.

At present the path goes out onto the main road with no way to complete the connection.



Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway : Repairing the Britannia Section

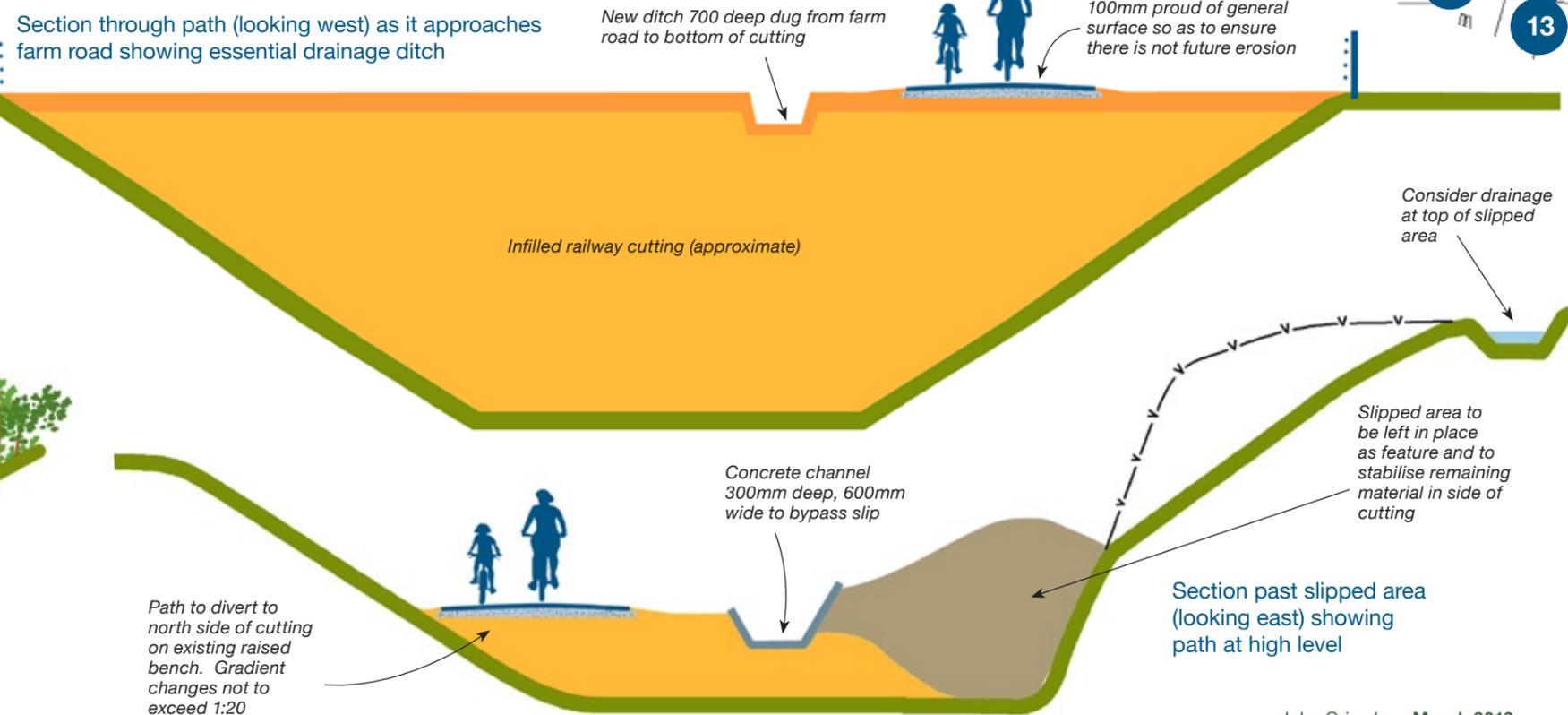
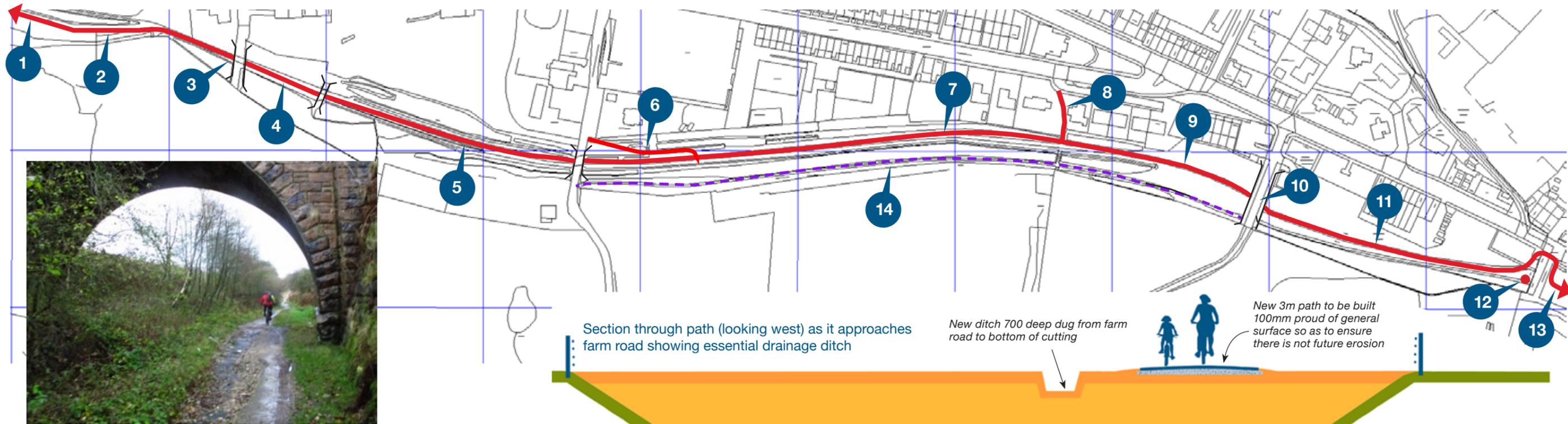
This is an attractive and rather unexpected section tucked away out of sight from the main road. This was the railway's final climb up to its summit which in fact was to the east of the Old Lane Bridge.

1. Route comes along the back of New Line reservoir and makes contact with this car park where it needs to be separated by bollards.
2. Reconstruct the lower path to 2.5m minimum width with grass verge for horses.
3. This is the most striking bridge over the whole route, yet it now only serves a field!

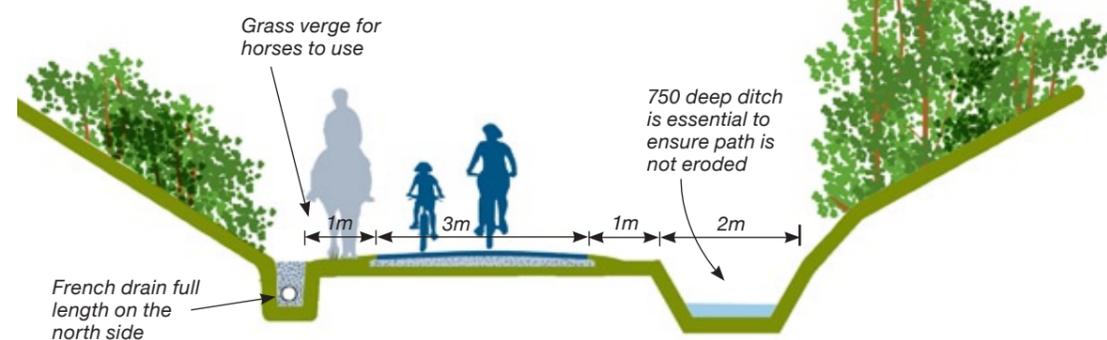
4. This lower section has a good, large and adequate drainage ditch although the path is greatly eroded from the flood caused by the slip further east.
5. This slip blocked the ditch and dammed the water. Treat this as a feature and shift the path to the higher side as shown in the sketch. But take great care to ensure that the water MUST return to the ditch, rather than damage the path. This should be via a short section of lined channel.
6. Reconstruct this ramp to be a single straight slope at 1:20 gradient.

7. The ditch here is completely inadequate and should be dug out as shown in the section.
8. Existing connection to be retained.
9. Ditch to the south of this path to make sure that all the water coming down the farm road flows into the ditch and away from the path.
10. Cross the farm road. This runs on the site of the former bridge over the railway station which was situated in a cutting below.

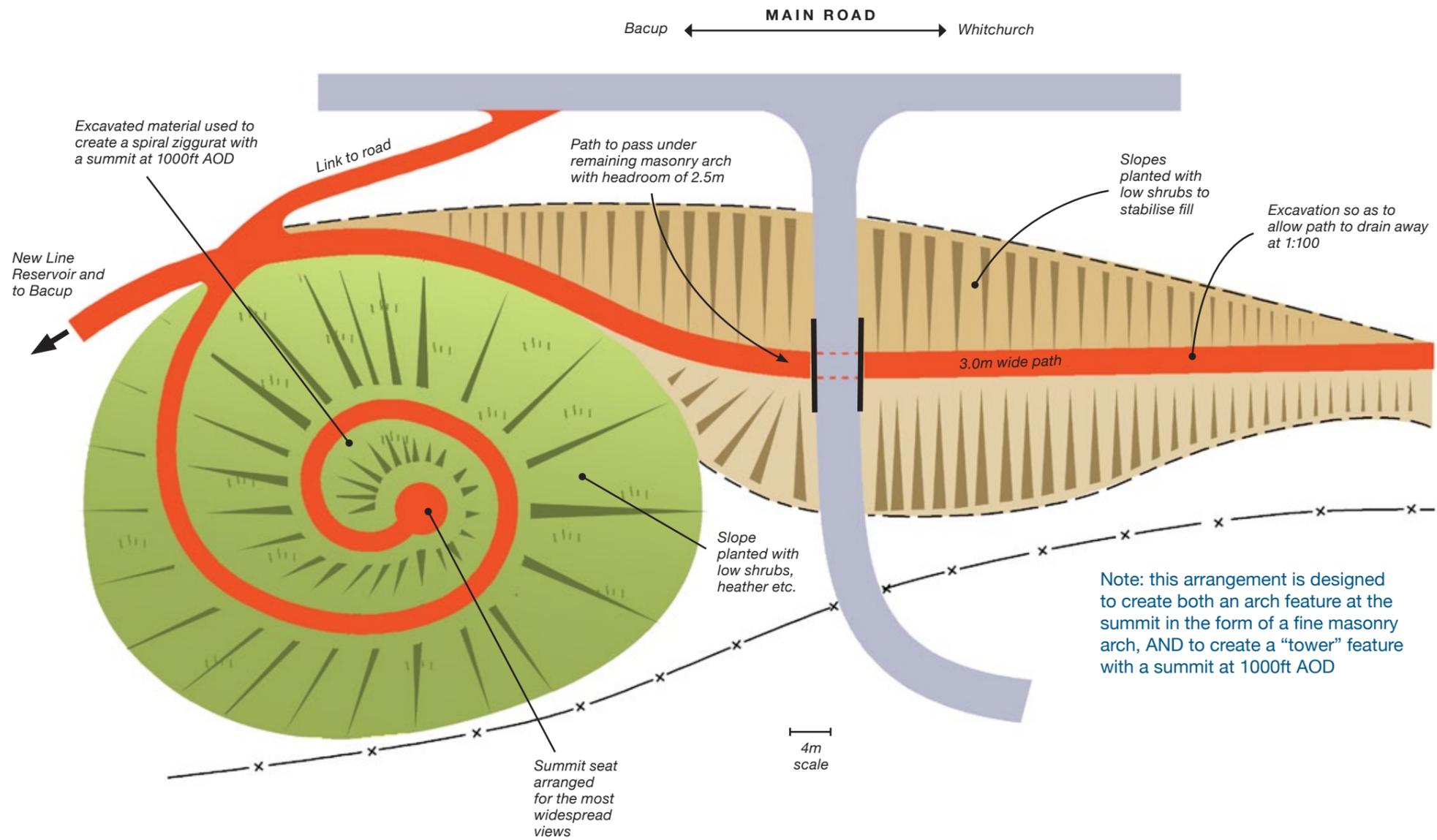
11. Construct through this flat area on a 200mm causeway to overcome any flooding.
12. Tower feature to 1000ft above sea level. The railway climbed to a height of 967ft above sea level so the centre of Old Lane bridge is approximately 985ft AOD. Thus a 15ft high tower feature would allow one to stand at the giddy height of 1000feet above sea level, which is remarkable considering that we are only 7 miles from Rochdale.
13. Start of the Whitworth Greenway.
14. Popular footpath along top of cutting.



Typical section (looking east) required for whole length east of the blockage



Rossendale and Rochdale Greenway : **Scheme for feature at Britannia Summit**



Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway

9.5km : Link at Old Lane, Shawforth, to create level route and bypass current steep ramp



Construct new path on a level alignment cross this open space and through the corner of the woodlands to rejoin the existing path at the top of the current steep access from Old Lane. This area is all the location of a former stone quarry with a tramway running back to a large stone crusher situated near the main line railway.

Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway : Link path at Slingco Ltd

Slingco Link - Typical section alongside river

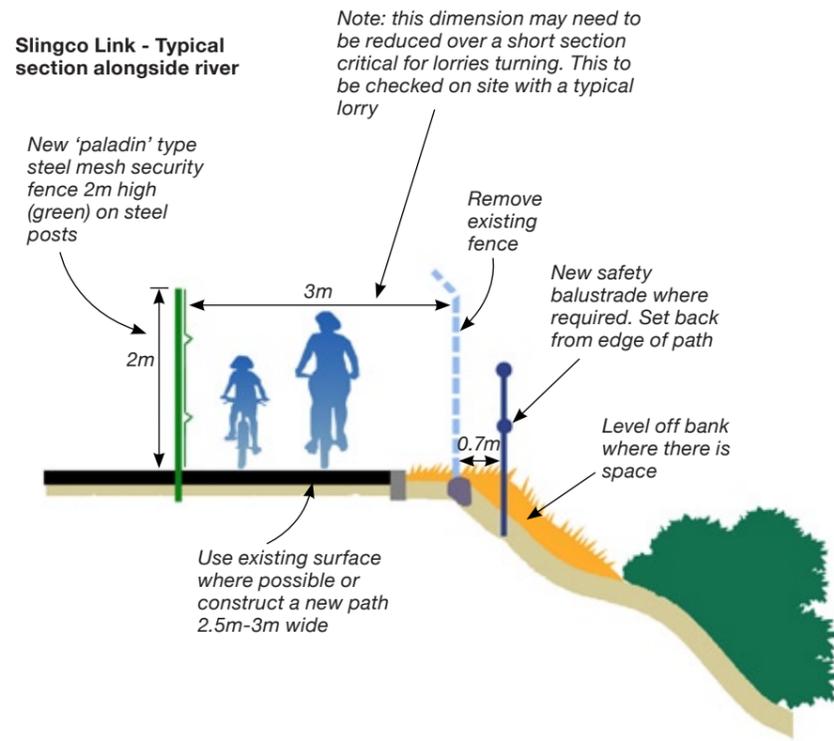
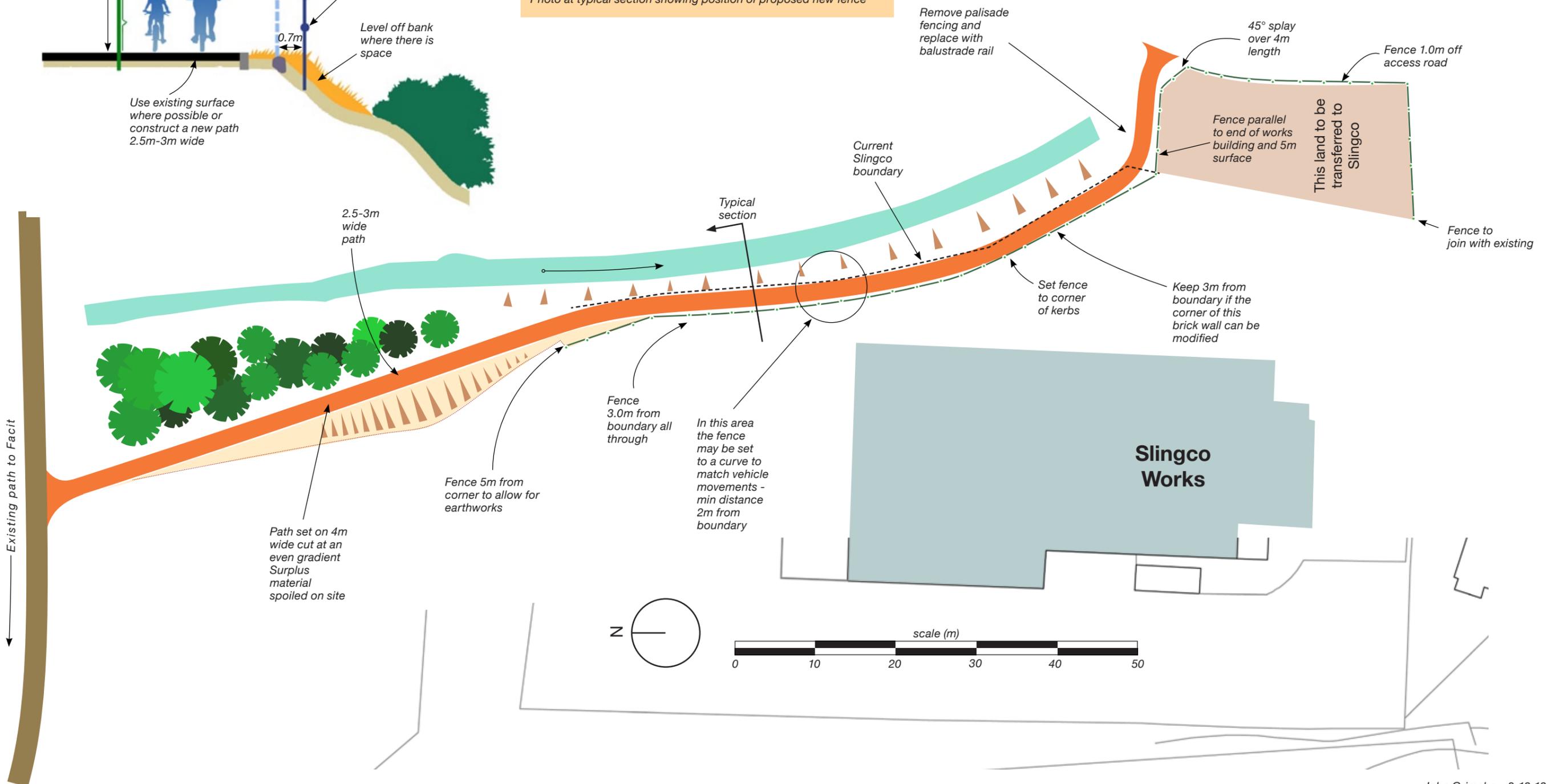


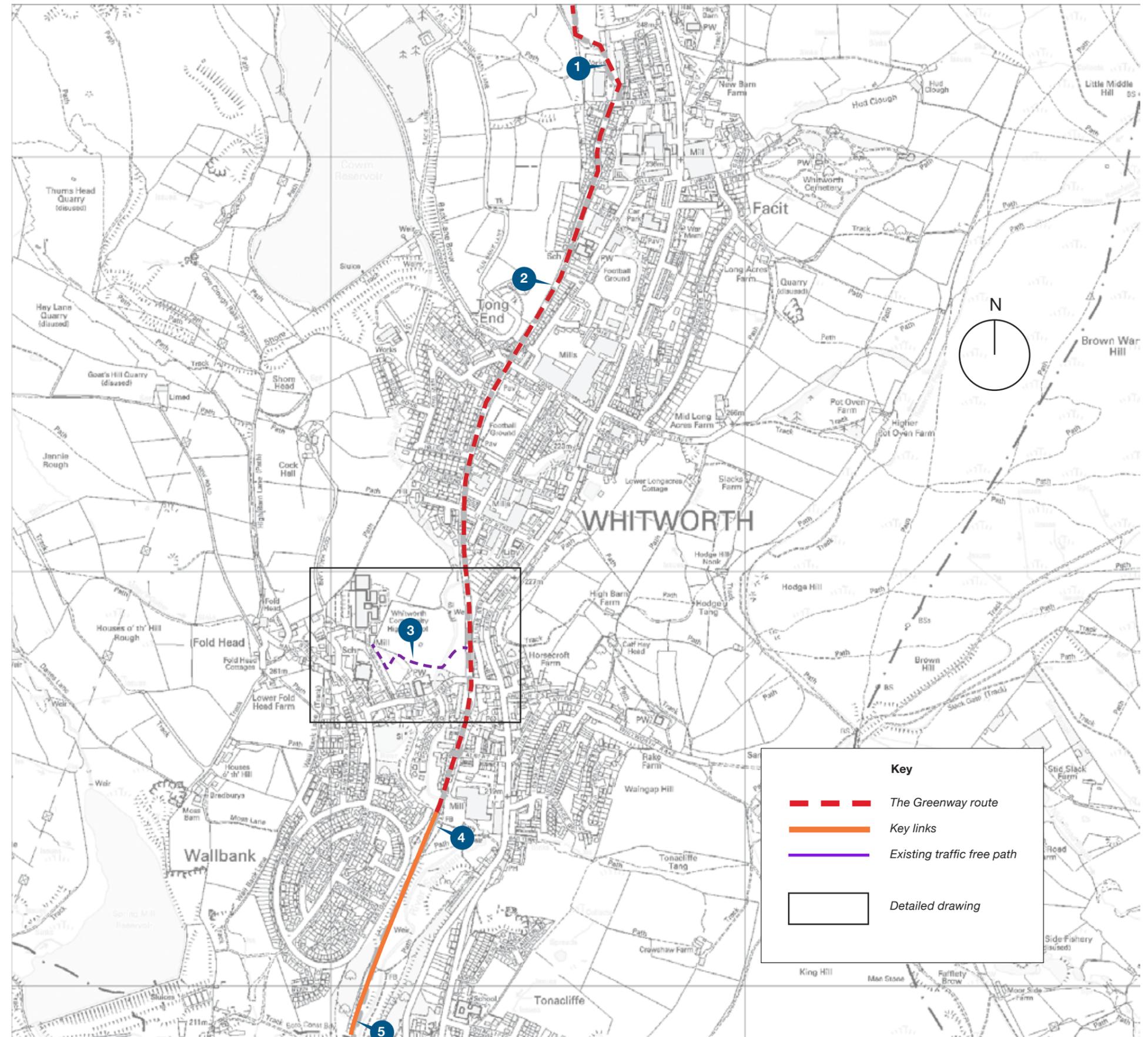
Photo at typical section showing position of proposed new fence



Steel mesh security fence detail



1. Slingco is one of the most significant barriers on the whole route (the other being the Buckhurst Plant Hire Company at Waterfoot). The proposals for this crucial link are shown in the sketch. At present the path goes out onto the main road with no way to complete the connection.
2. The route follows along the Crown Parkway which is built along the course of the railway with easy gradients. This is a long section on road and not much can be done about the situation except to
 - Minimise the traffic using the road
 - Making it all a 20mph road
 - Planting trees in all the possible verges to enhance a woodland avenue effect
 - And taking care to provide for a through route for walkers as well as cyclists. This might possibly follow a line nearer the riverside and take advantage of playing fields along the way.
3. This large Persimmon Housing development does give a very useful opportunity to make a connection through to Whitworth Community High School. The link is shown in the detail and would be a real advantage to pupils and staff.
4. The current path very sensibly ramps up to this bridge to make a valuable route to Wallbank, but it is very steep on the southern side. So the current reconstruction here to build the route under the bridge for a level way through is very welcome.
5. The start of the Healey Dell Greenway does need to be commemorated at this boundary.



Key	
	The Greenway route
	Key links
	Existing traffic free path
	Detailed drawing

1:10,000 scale when printed at A3 size



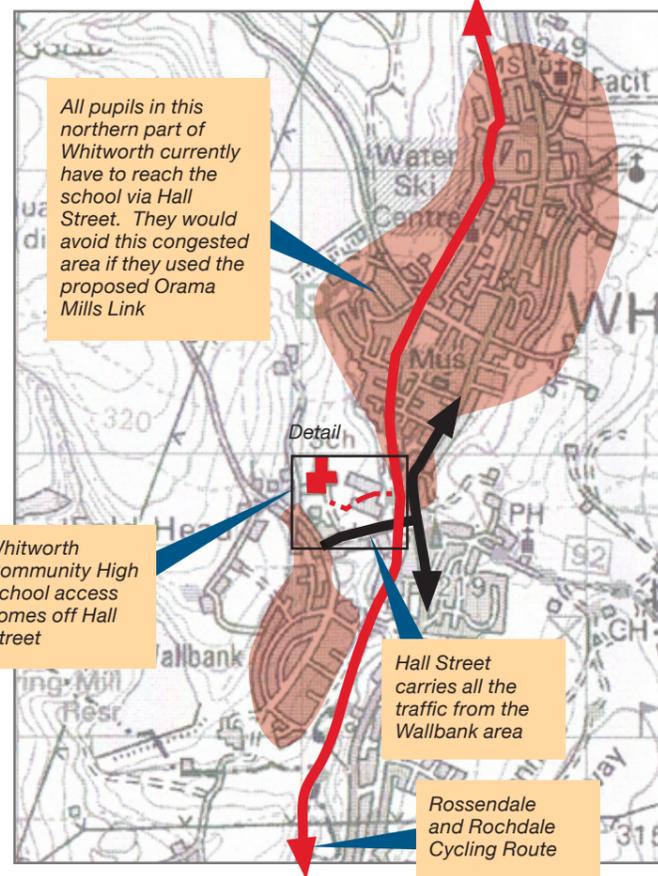


View of School Drive

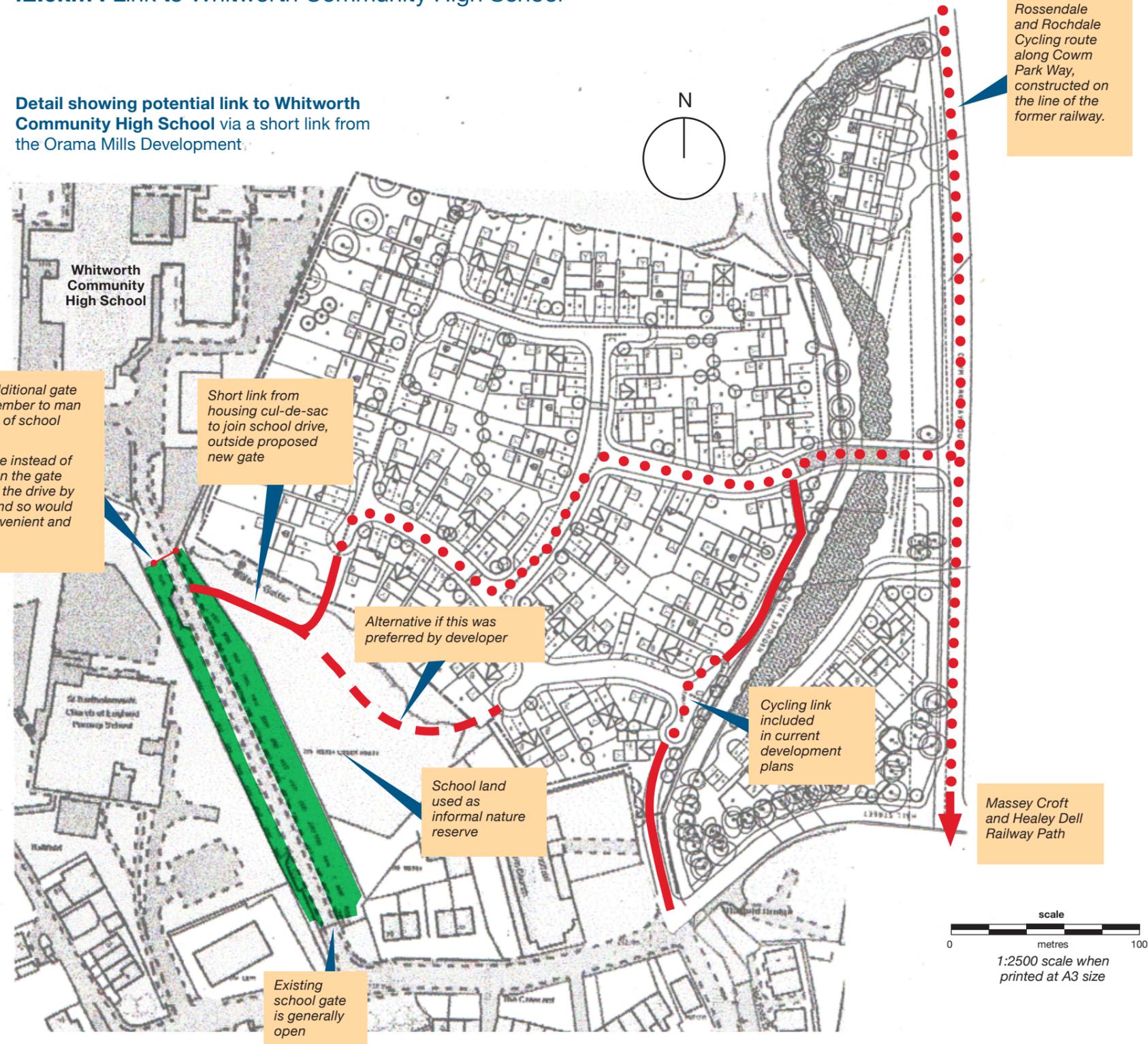
Rossendale and Rochdale Railway Path and Greenway 12.6km : Link to Whitworth Community High School

Detail showing potential link to Whitworth Community High School via a short link from the Orama Mills Development.

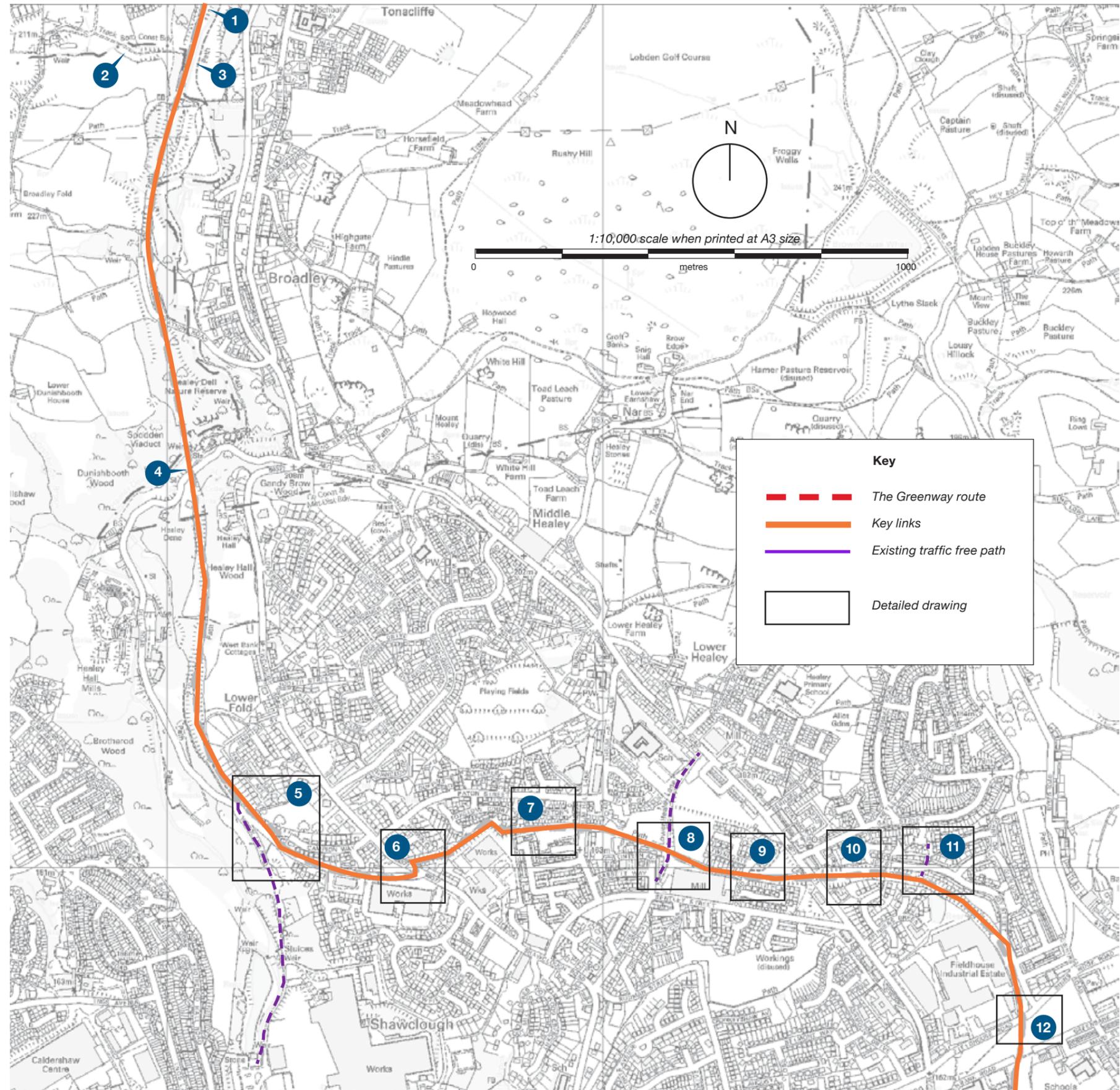
Map showing the significance of the Orama Mills link to Whitworth Community High School



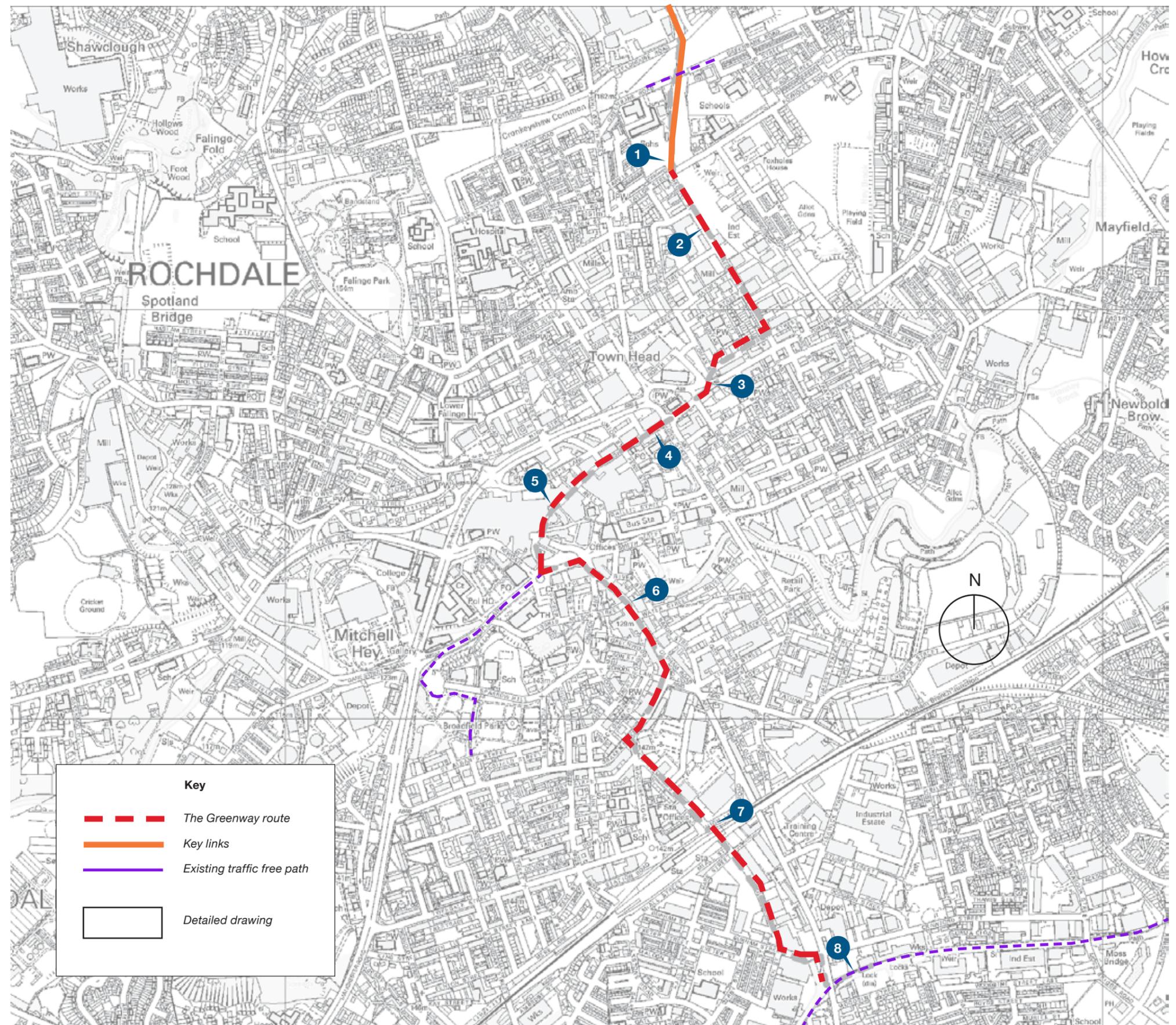
The effectiveness and popularity of the proposed Greenway will depend upon the convenience of access and links to it. Each development along the route offers the chance of enhancing the Greenway. Here at the Orama Mills site there is the added benefit of making a valuable route to Whitworth Community High School.



1. By any standard this is a memorable section of the route with its passage through the Healey Dell Nature Reserve and its highlight being the Spodden Viaduct. Some repairs are needed to the potholes in this first section.
2. The Mary Townley Loop uses a short section of the path at this point.
3. The boundary gate to Rochdale has a kissing gate across it. This is the first barrier across the route since Rawtenstall and its removal, although desirable, has to be considered carefully in the context of the management of the Nature Reserve. There are two others – under Station Road and at Dell Lane – and ideally all three would be opened up.
4. The Healey Dell Viaduct is a spectacular highlight of the whole route. The level of the surface needs to be carefully repaired at the manhole covers either end of the bridge and the surface throughout smoothed off. This is one of a number of repairs and improvements which Rochdale Borough Council is currently putting in hand.
5. A level connection to Dell Lane could be made by cutting through the boundary wall just before the start of Campion Way as shown in the sketch.
6. The Shawclough Road crossing is possibly the most difficult crossing on the entire project. A first stage solution is in hand, as shown in the sketch, but in the longer term a central island, with a zebra crossing and/or traffic lights are required.
7. There is a maze of nearby paths in the Foxglove Court and Betony Close area which need to be connected to the railway path by a good ramp. A signed route to Paton Street is required with dropped kerbs to that road.
8. At Lower Healey Lane a removed bridge has left steep ramps and difficult drainage. These issues can be resolved by lifting the path as shown in the sketch.
9. Oxford Way requires dropped kerbs in the short term and if possible a revised pavement priority crossing and the removal of restrictive access controls.
10. The Whitworth Tunnel often floods and proposals for dealing with this by running a causeway through are shown in the sketch.
11. A level access to Joy Street can be created at this point which would greatly improve access to this path, as well as provide a convenient works and maintenance access point.
12. The Fieldhouse Road crossing needs to be defined as shown in the sketch, and at the very least dropped kerbs installed and the crossing painted over the road.



1. The Railway Path Greenway ends on Foxholes Road where it would be appropriate to make an entrance gateway as the starting point for the whole greenway route to Rawtenstall.
2. Regent Street could be much improved by avenue tree planting.
3. Jermyn Street leads to existing toucan crossings over Yorkshire Street, the pedestrianised area in front of the church, and the toucan crossings over the main road (John Street) for the town centre.
4. Yorkshire Street needs to be made 2 way for cyclists.
5. This pedestrianised section could be available to cyclists before 10am and after 4pm as is the case with the foot streets of York. This leads direct to the town centre, and is clearly the best route for pedestrians.
6. Once the Metro works are complete it will be clear that the only practical route to the station must follow the same general alignment for the best gradient, the smoothest surface and the most direct route. Detailed arrangements and signing will be required to enable cyclists to use this route easily. There will also need to be a number of connections through to the new Council Offices, the bus station and other destinations in the centre of town.
7. The ideal route to join the canal would be via the station subway and existing bridges under the railway, and options should be tested against this long term aspiration.



1:10,000 scale when printed at A3 size

