

Bexhill to Hastings Link Road

Chapter 15A: Effects on Pedestrians, Cyclists and Recreational Users

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15A Effects on Pedestrians, Cyclists and Recreational Users

15A.1 Introduction

15A.1.1 This Chapter deals with the impacts of the Scheme upon recreational user groups and utility cyclists.

15A.1.2 Following the introduction, this Chapter considers Method of Assessment under the following sub-headings:

- Legal and Policy Framework;
- Study Area;
- Key Users;
- Significance Criteria;
- Consultations;
- Rights of Way Surveys; and,
- Survey and Count Limitations.

15A.1.3 The Chapter then considers Existing Conditions under the following sub-headings:

- Rights of Way Network
- Different recreational and utility Users

15A.1.4 The Mitigation Strategy is then described under the following sub-headings:

- The Greenway;
- Toucan Crossing;
- Retention of existing rights of way with minimal diversions where practicable and the provision of a convenient alternative where (one case only) would not be practicable; and,
- Creation of Path Link beside Queensway.

15A.1.5 Following the description of the Mitigation Strategy, impacts are considered under both the construction and operational phases of the Scheme.

15A.1.6 Construction impacts are considered under the following subsections:

- Severance; and,
- Noise and visual intrusion.

15A.1.7 Operational Impacts are considered under the following subsections:

Impacts on Shooters;

- Changes to Rights of Way and Permissive Paths;
- Improved Links and Safety Measures for Pedestrians, Cyclists and Recreational Users; and,
- Intrusion on Visual Experience and Tranquillity of Existing Rights of Way / Proposed Pebsham Countryside Park.

15A.1.8 This assessment is independent of the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park which is considered under Chapter 16: Combined and Cumulative Effects. Nonetheless in order to consider the proper context of the benefits of the Greenway, reference is made under the Mitigations Section to potential upgrading of existing Rights of Way within the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park. For this reason the proposed Greenway, which is part of the Scheme, is considered in relation to the existing and proposed rights of way through the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park.

15A.2 Method of Assessment

Overall Approach

15A.2.1 This chapter is based upon the guidance as laid out in the DfT's Transport Analysis Guidance (WebTAG), including the Journey Ambience Sub-objective, Physical Fitness sub-objective and the Economy Sub-objective. Within the Economy Sub-objective particular attention is drawn to paragraph 3.5.5 "*pedestrians, cyclists and others*". This chapter is also based on Section 3, Part 8 of the DMRB Volume 11.

Legal and Policy Framework

15A.2.2 During the development and assessment of the Scheme the following legislation and guidance documents have been used with regard to pedestrians, cyclists and recreational users:

- Wildlife and Countryside Act. 1981;
- Rights of Way Act 1990;
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
- John Riddall and John Trevelyan (2001) *Rights of Way – A Guide to Law and Practice*. Open Spaces Society and the Ramblers Association;
- Elizabeth Agate (2001) *Footpaths – A Practical Handbook*. British Trust for Conservation Volunteers;
- British Horse Society Policy Statements (1999);
- TK Associates and Pebsham Countryside Park Project (2006) *What do People Want? – Community Consultation Report*;

- Hastings Borough Council *Parks and Open Spaces Strategy –Summary Report*;
- Hastings Urban Bikes (2006) *A Cycling Manifesto*;
- Timothy Jemison Associates (2006) *Hastings Greenway: A Strategic Framework*;
- Owen Williams Consultants (2006) *Non-Motorised User Audit Report*. East Sussex County Council;
- Pebsham Countryside Park Project website (2006); and,
- Tim Gale for Rother District Council (2002) *The Promenade, Bexhill on Sea. Proposals for Improvements*.

15A.2.3 The national, regional, county and local planning and policy context in relation to pedestrians, cyclists and recreational users has been considered in more detail in Chapter 5: Policy and Planning.

Study Area

15A.2.4 The study into the impacts of the Scheme upon pedestrians, cyclists and recreational users covers all major rights of way and public open spaces in the immediate vicinity of the Scheme. The study area was based on a reasonable judgement of the impact of the Scheme on recreational users given the local topography. This took account of the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park and the Zone of Visual Influence (ZVI) of the Scheme. It largely consists of the basin of Combe Haven through which the Scheme extends, bounded to the west by Public Rights of Way near Cole Wood, to the north by Crowhurst village and to the east by the London to Hastings railway line and Queensway. The extent of the study area is indicated on Figure 15A.1

15A.2.5 The Scheme would be crossed by or lie adjacent to two Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs), one bridleway and a number of public footpaths and permissive footpaths including the 1066 Country Walk long distance footpath.

15A.2.6 The Scheme lies partially within and would improve access to the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park. Although this area is partly in public ownership, it is largely farmed and so access is restricted to a network of public rights of way and permissive routes. Except for Bexhill Down there is no public open space with unrestricted access within the immediate vicinity of the Scheme. However the landfill site on the south side of the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park is intended to be accessible to the public when it has been restored in 2008.

Key Users

15A.2.7 In terms of assessing the impact on pedestrians, cyclists and recreational users, the study has encompassed all major user groups impacted by the Scheme. The users consulted and studied were:

- Walkers and runners;

- Equestrians;
- Utility and leisure cyclists;
- Four wheel drive vehicular users;
- Trail riders;
- Game shooting;
- Fishermen; and,
- Clay pigeon shooters.

Significance Criteria

15A.2.8 The guidance as laid out in WebTAG and DMRB does not provide advice on significance criteria for effects on pedestrians, cyclists and recreational users. With regard to impacts on recreational and utility users in the vicinity of the Scheme the following significance categories have been used:

- Large Beneficial;
- Moderate Beneficial;
- Slight Beneficial;
- Neutral;
- Slight Adverse;
- Moderate Adverse; and,
- Large Adverse.

15A.2.9 A beneficial impact is defined as the enhancement of a user's recreational or utility experience due to the implementation of the Scheme e.g. through reduced severance or improved access. A neutral impact is defined as a negligible change in the user's experience due to the Scheme or else where adverse and beneficial impacts are deemed to balance. An adverse impact is defined as the degradation of a user's experience due to the implementation of the Scheme e.g. through increased visual intrusion or increased severance.

15A.2.10 In terms of construction the degree of negative impact would depend upon the duration and extent of disturbance to recreational and utility users. Since enhancement opportunities during the construction phase would not arise in relation to the Scheme, no beneficial examples in connection with this phase are set out in Table 15A.1.

15A.2.11 Significance has been assessed in regard to the Scheme's potential to change:

- The quality of the experience of the recreational and utility user through visual intrusion. This would be further influenced by the visual quality of the existing baseline, especially its urban or rural nature;

- The tranquillity of the experience of the recreation and utility user through changes to noise intrusion. This would be further influenced by the expectation of users and the degree of tranquillity of the existing baseline;
- Recreational access, journey time and severance for utility users. This would be influenced by the range of new recreational and utility links which connect those within the Scheme; and,
- Safety conditions for recreational and utility users. This would be influenced by the extent of motorised traffic on existing routes and links and potential conflict between different groups.

Table 15A.1 Significance Criteria for Recreational and Non-motorised Utility Users

Significance	Typical examples
Large Beneficial	<p>Remove a source of visual intrusion to a substantial length of path by the complete screening of an existing nearby busy major road or restore a seriously damaged element or feature of an otherwise outstanding landscape with substantial tree planting or other environmental improvement measures.</p> <p>Improve tranquillity by completely screening from a substantial length of path a nearby existing noise source from a busy major road.</p> <p>Remove substantial existing severance from an existing busy major road with no grade separated crossing points or introducing a network of paths with highly convenient crossing points.</p>
Moderate Beneficial	<p>Remove a source of visual intrusion to a moderate length of path by the partial screening of an existing nearby busy major road or restore a damaged element of an otherwise moderate quality landscape with some tree planting or other environmental improvement measures.</p> <p>Improve tranquillity by partially screening from a significant length of path a nearby noise source from a busy minor road.</p> <p>Remove significant existing severance from a busy minor road by introducing some paths with crossing points.</p>

Slight Beneficial	<p>Remove a source of visual intrusion to a short length of path by the partial screening of an existing lightly trafficked minor road or restore a damaged element or feature of an otherwise poor landscape by tree planting or other environmental improvement measures.</p> <p>Improve tranquillity by partially screening from a significant length of path a nearby existing noise source from a lightly trafficked minor road.</p> <p>Remove existing severance from an existing lightly trafficked minor road by introducing a new path with a convenient crossing point.</p>
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Significance	Typical examples
Neutral	<p>The Scheme would result in negligible changes for recreational or utility users or where beneficial and adverse impacts balance.</p>
Slight Adverse	<p>Increase visual intrusion to a short length of path by the removal of some screening of an existing lightly trafficked minor road or damage a small element or a feature of a poor landscape by the removal of some trees.</p> <p>Worsen tranquillity by removing partial screening of a few trees from a short length of path and so further expose it to an existing noise source from a lightly trafficked minor road.</p> <p>Increase existing severance from a new lightly trafficked minor road or close an existing little used path</p>
Moderate Adverse	<p>Increase visual intrusion to a significant length of path by the partial removal of screening of an existing busy minor road or damage an element or feature of a good landscape by the removal of some trees.</p> <p>Worsen tranquillity by partially removing screening from a significant length of path and so expose it to a nearby existing noise source from a busy minor road.</p> <p>Increase severance by introducing a new busy minor road or close a well used path.</p>

Large Adverse	<p>Increase visual intrusion to a substantial length of path by the complete removal of screening of an existing nearby busy major road or damage an outstanding landscape by the removal of substantial tree planting.</p> <p>Worsen tranquillity by completely removing screening from a substantial length of path and so expose it to a nearby existing noise source from a busy major road.</p> <p>Increase existing severance by introducing a new busy major road with no grade separated crossing points or close a network of paths with highly convenient crossing points.</p>
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Consultations

15A.2.12 In order to supplement the survey information as described below representatives of user groups and individuals were consulted in 2006 to determine the nature of recreational and utility use within the study area and define any difficulties encountered using the rights of way under the existing situation. These took place as a series of private meetings. The consultations were undertaken with representatives from the following Councils and organisations:

- East Sussex County Council;
- Hastings Borough Council;
- Rother District Council;
- Catsfield Parish Council;
- Crowhurst Parish Council;
- Battle Parish Council;
- Ramblers' Association;
- Hastings Ramblers;
- British Horse Society;
- Trail Riders' Fellowship;
- Pebsham Riding School;
- Hastings Urban Bikes (HUB);
- Bexhill Cycle Forum;
- Cyclists' Touring Club (CTC);
- Land Access and Recreation Association (LARA);
- Association of Rover Clubs;
- Hastings Runners;
- Hastings Greenway Trust;
- Upper Wilting Farm Educational Trust; and,
- Crowhurst Gun Club.

15A.2.13 In addition meetings took place with owners of stables and liveryes at:

- Acton's Farm;
- Bynes Farm;
- Oak Tree Farm;
- Worsham Farm;
- Buckholt Farm; and,
- Glovers Farm.

Rights of Way Surveys

15A.2.14 The methodology, whereby the study area for Rights of Way surveys and overall assessment of impacts on recreational users was selected, is described in the preceding section. The methodology for survey as set out below is based on extensive past experience of recreational surveys together with discussions with Local Authority Rights of Way Officers.

15A.2.15 Surveys were conducted in the spring of 2006 which involved both counting users on various routes and undertaking a face to face interview by a team of experienced interviewers. These interviewers were all given a thorough

briefing by the survey supervisor who in turn was given a day's on site training and briefing by the project team. Around 95% of visitors counted were also interviewed. Most of those not interviewed were runners. Copies of the survey questionnaire, a map and description of the survey locations and analysis of the survey findings are presented in Appendix 15A-A.

15A.2.16 The Spring surveys were carried out on Bank Holiday Monday 17th April, Sunday 23rd April and Wednesday 26th April. The surveys were carried out between 7.00 a.m. and 20.00 p.m.

15A.2.17 The Spring surveys were carried out at eleven locations on rights of way and permissive paths which are adjacent to, or would connect with the Scheme or else are in areas such as key access points to the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park which would therefore indicate the pattern of use in the study area (refer to Recreational Surveys in Appendix 15A-A).

15A.2.18 In addition, a one day survey was carried out on 31st October 2006 at the two locations of Bancroft Road Path and Chapel Path in Bexhill. In contrast to the other surveys these did not involve a questionnaire and were carried out during the week since the majority of users in this location were school children. The surveys were carried out between 7.00am and 18.30pm.

Survey and Count Limitations

15A.2.19 Surveys only provide a 'snapshot' on the particular days studied. Such surveys are not able to determine the level of suppressed demand to use recreational routes which may become more popular due to the presence of the proposed Greenway adjacent to the Scheme.

15A.3 Existing Conditions

15A.3.1 This section describes the existing network of public rights of way and permissive paths on which usage may change as a result of the Scheme. It also describes existing stables and liveries and presents the findings of surveys and interviews in relation to the attitudes and concerns of the various user groups. Only one area of public open space with unlimited access exists within the study area which is Bexhill Down. This is an area of urban open space between Bexhill and Sidley at the south east end of the Scheme and would be too far from the proposals to be significantly affected.

Rights of Way Network

15A.3.2 The area through which the Scheme passes has a network of BOATs, footpaths, bridleways and permissive paths as show on Figure 15A.1. The Scheme also approximately follows the northern perimeter of the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park to which access is encouraged although only along rights of way and permissive paths. These routes feed into the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park from the conurbation to the south, south-east and west and from the open countryside towards Crowhurst to the north. To the south they link further to the east-west seafront of Bexhill and

Hastings and to the north they link to a system of lanes and footpaths penetrating inland to the Weald. At the south-west corner of the study the Chapel Path and Bancroft Road Path cross the existing London Road.

15A.3.3 The Bexhill branch of the 1066 Country Walk crosses the Scheme and the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park from north to south. This is part of a network of well signed paths linking Battle to Pevensey, Bexhill, Hastings and Rye respectively. They in turn link to the South Downs Way to the west and to the Saxon Shore Way to the east.

15A.3.4 Interviews with users and the park warden together with the survey indicates that the main pattern of use for the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park is by local people who penetrate only a short way into the park and then return home. Thus the most consistently high counts were at Survey Point 11 near Glyne Gap with 171 on Bank Holiday Monday, 96 on Sunday and 159 on Wednesday. These were largely dog walkers exercising close to their homes on the south side of the park.

15A.3.5 Severance to this network of routes is especially severe to the east in the form of the busy Queensway and the existing London to Hastings railway between Crowhurst and St Leonards. To the south-east the logical route of a coastal cycle path is disrupted by the fact that no bikes are allowed along the promenade at Bexhill. There is a current lack of bridleways within the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park although this may be remedied in future by proposals to upgrade existing routes within the Park. There is also a lack of safe access into the Weald hinterland for equestrians since the country lanes are narrow, steep-sided and used by traffic.

15A.3.6 All rights of way are numbered on the Definitive Rights of Way Map, dated 1998 but subsequently incorporating all modifications up to summer 2006. This map including modifications is reproduced as Figure 15A.1 The Definitive Rights of Way Map is due for formal revision in 2007. Where there are two numbers for a single continuous route, this is because route numbers change according to whether they are in Crowhurst, Bexhill or Hastings parishes. The boundary between Crowhurst and Bexhill parishes is Combe Haven. Moving west to east along the broad line of the Scheme main rights of way, with their numbers according to the Definitive Map together with permissive paths are as detailed below:

Routes in the Vicinity of London Road

15A.3.7 Footpath 17 (Chapel Path) crosses the London Road travelling west to east and forms the southern boundary of Bexhill High School. Footpath 3b forms a southern spur to this path crossing the open space of Bexhill Down near the King Offa Primary School and the Drill Hall. Footpath 3a heads north from the junction between footpaths 3b and 17 to form the western and then the northern boundary of Bexhill High School before it links with Bancroft Road north-east of the school. Then Footpath 66 (Bancroft Road Path) heads east from the eastern end of the Bancroft Road cul-de-sac to cross the allotments before joining the London Road.

15A.3.8 On Bancroft Road Path 230 children and 123 adults were counted. These figures broke down to 127 eastbound children and 103 westbound children together with 59 eastbound adults and 64 westbound adults.

15A.3.9 On Chapel Path 771 children and 287 adults were counted. These figures broke down to 452 eastbound children and 319 westbound children together with 152 eastbound adults and 135 westbound adults.

15A.3.10 By far the busiest time was between 15.00 hours and 15.30 hours in the afternoon when 359 eastbound children and 57 westbound children were counted on Chapel Path and 66 eastbound children were counted on Bancroft Road Path. The second busiest time was between 8.00 and 9.00am when 220 westbound children were counted on Chapel Path and 49 westbound children were counted on Bancroft Road Path.

15A.3.11 Total movements on Chapel Path and Bancroft Road Path amounted to 1001 children and 166 adults.

Routes in the Vicinity of Glover's Farm

15A.3.12 Three statutory footpaths (6c,32b and 33) head off in a broadly easterly direction into the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park from the edge of Sidley in the vicinity of Glover's Farm. In addition there are two BOATs, one crossing the dismantled railway to reach Glover's Farm (81) and the other starting west of Glover's Farm and heading north towards Henniker Farm and Buckholt Farm (58). Finally there is the dismantled railway which is a permissive route on which walking is signposted and encouraged by Rother District Council which owns the land. Being wide, level and having been recently re-surfaced in part, this has particular potential for cyclists and disabled people along its length.

15A.3.13 Survey Point 7 was on this dismantled railway north-east of Glover's Farm where it crosses at an elevation over the north-south path between Glover's Farm and Acton's Farm. It indicated a high number of users with 139 movements counted on the Bank Holiday Monday.

Routes in the Vicinity of Acton's Farm

15A.3.14 A BOAT (76) approaches Acton's Farm from the west but before it reaches the farm it becomes a bridleway (34) heading north-east towards Crowhurst. At Acton's Farm it is joined by a footpath (31b) heading up from the south. South of Acton's Farm this forks to provide a link to Glover's Farm and another to Upper Worsham Farm.

15A.3.15 Survey Point 2 was on the bend in the BOAT (76) just west of Acton's Farm. This proved relatively popular on the Bank Holiday with 41 movements but had the lowest count of any survey point on the Wednesday with just 19 users. However the occupant of Acton's Farm has pointed out that large numbers of walkers travel regularly in summer through the farm on sponsored walks.

Routes South and North of Hillcroft Farm

15A.3.16 The bridleway from Acton's farm (34) becomes Bridleway 13 once it has crossed over Combe Haven into Crowhurst parish and then travels due north between Byne's Farm and Hillcroft Farm, ultimately linking to the lanes around Crowhurst near Hye House. It is not a very satisfactory route for equestrians since it does not provide a circuit without using the lanes which are potentially hazardous for equestrians, being narrow, blind and used by traffic. However a path (15) branching to the east just north of Hillcroft Farm links to the 1066 Country Walk and so provides an attractive circuit for walkers.

15A.3.17 Survey Point 3 at the crossing of Combe Haven showed a consistent fairly low use with 26, 22 and 23 movements on the Bank Holiday Monday, Sunday and Wednesday, respectively. Near the recently diverted footbridge a new permissive path alongside the Combe Haven watercourse has been opened by the Rural Development Service under the Department for Food and Rural Affairs' (DEFRA's) Agri-environment Schemes in agreement with the landowner at Hillcroft Farm. Since this is subject to change according to future DEFRA/landowner agreements, it is not recognised on the Definitive Map. It links directly to the 1066 Country Walk.

Routes South and North of Adam's Farm

15A.3.18 The Bexhill branch of the 1066 Country Walk (16) travels north-south between Hillcroft Farm and Adam's Farm linking Crowhurst to Little Worsham Farm and Bexhill. It also ties into the dismantled railway and so to Sidley.

15A.3.19 This section of the 1066 Country Walk is clearly popular especially at holiday times since the count at Survey Point 5 just south of Adam's Farm was 130 on Bank Holiday Monday dropping to 42 on Sunday and 31 on Wednesday. The highest count of all (174 for Bank Holiday Monday) was for Survey Point 4 where the 1066 Country Walk sets off south from Crowhurst. However almost a quarter of that number were not recorded penetrating as far as Combe Haven. North of Adam's Farm cyclists regularly use Swainham Lane which comes out on the Crowhurst Road roughly opposite the dismantled railway and north of the existing railway links to Breadsell Lane which is also used by cyclists.

Routes Near Upper Wilting Farm

15A.3.20 A footpath (22) turns south off Crowhurst Road immediately to the west of the railway and east of Upper Wilting Farm. This then links to the network of paths around the east and south east sides of the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park as well as to the unmanned level crossing over the railway which gives access to Hollington.

15A.3.21 Survey Point 8 to the east of Upper Wilting Farm showed this as a relatively little used path with totals of 6 movements on Bank Holiday Monday and 4 movements on the Sunday. The Ramblers' Association have long been

campaigning for a footpath along the west side of Queensway which would link the footpath system around Stonebridge Farm to the north to the path network on the east side of the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park via a short section of Crowhurst Road which crosses the railway. This is now formally part of the Scheme.

Different Recreation and Utility Users

15A.3.22 The area surrounding the Scheme together with the entire proposed Pebsham Countryside Park is used by a range of different recreational and utility user groups. The main groups are as follows:

- Walkers;
- Runners;
- Equestrians;
- Cyclists;
- Four wheel drive vehicular users;
- Trail bikes;
- Shooters; and,
- Anglers.

Walkers

15A.3.23 The majority of users of the rights of way and permissive paths are walkers. The survey showed 41% of those interviewed were dog walkers and 60% were either walkers or dog walkers.

15A.3.24 Visits tend to be brief and local. Those walking over two miles were only 11 % while 47% of visitors were there for less than an hour. Over 80% of those interviewed were visiting for under two hours. 74% of those interviewed arrived on foot. 2% arrived by horse and 3% by bicycle. Only 18% arrived by car together with 2% by motorcycle and 1% by rail. This means that 79% of visitors were non-motorised and 21% motorised. Therefore even assuming that none of the car drivers or motorcyclists were coming from close by, well over three quarters of visitors appear to be local.

Runners

15A.3.25 In addition to non-affiliated runners in the region, Hastings Runners have 220 members who use many footpaths and local roads within the study area on a regular basis. Their membership is drawn from Hastings, Bexhill and the surrounding countryside areas. They regularly use the 1066 Country Walk, the dismantled railway and routes through Acton's Farm. They generally go out in groups of 20-25 and in the summer as many as four groups can go out in the same week. They especially value off-road running and sometimes go to the Cuckoo Trail near Polegate where they find the combination of an off-road route and hard surface path ideal.

Equestrians

15A.3.26 Of those interviewed only 5% were equestrians. During the three days of surveys 17 riders were interviewed on the dismantled railway and 10 on the bridleway which passes through Acton's Farm. A total of 30 riders were counted over the three days.

15A.3.27 There are a large number of stables, livery and horse owners within the immediate vicinity of the Scheme, notably at Glover's Farm, Acton's Farm, Byne's Farm, Oak Tree Farm, Buckholt Farm, Upper Wilting Farm, Green Street, Worsham Farm and Pebsham Farm.

15A.3.28 At Acton's Farm there is a private stud for around 20 horses. The ponies tend to go to Hye House or through Hillcroft Farm, before turning back as Henley Down Road to the north is so dangerous for horses, being narrow and used by traffic.

15A.3.29 At Byne's Farm there is a livery for 16 horses and in summer over 12 horses renting the adjacent fields and stables. They tend to use the circuit through Hye House, Buckholt and Cole Wood.

15A.3.30 At Oak Tree Farm on Buckholt Lane there is a livery and riding school for a maximum of 15 horses. They ride on their own land, use a circuit riding up the BOAT to Buckholt Farm and thence north to Hye House. In addition they sometimes ride south along the quieter urban roads of Sidley to the sea.

15A.3.31 Buckholt Farm has a D.I.Y livery for 8 horses though could expand to 12. They mostly stay on the farm and ride round the woods, seldom venturing into Pebsham Countryside Park site. They had a farm ride whereby children were allowed to ride on a designated part of the farm but closed it down as it was difficult to police. They do allow some local riders to pay to use the straight mile which is not a BOAT or bridleway between Buckholt Farm and Watermill Lane.

15A.3.32 Upper Wilting Farm has a D.I.Y. livery. They have stabling for 22 horses and currently have 8 horses which are their own or belong to friends together with 3 New Forest foals. The horses mainly use the farm tracks. In addition they run a school farm (the School Farm Trust) with links to London University as well as taking occasional school groups from Reading. Boy scouts come in the summer and use the woods.

15A.3.33 Worsham Farm has one D.I.Y. livery together with four horses of their own and two rescue ponies. They have 12 stables and would very much like to expand but cannot because they have no access onto a legal bridleway other than the short section of BOAT between Little Worsham Farm and Upper Worsham Farm.

15A.3.34 Pebsham Farm is the location for the Pebsham Riding School which was started in 1993 at the encouragement of the local councils which promoted riding here under the North Bexhill Strategic Framework (East

Sussex County Council and Rother District Council, June 1992). It is the only disabled centre in the region. It is an outreach centre for Plumpton College licensed to train for National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ). It takes 100 disabled riders a week. In addition, Pebsham Farm teaches riding to 50 non-disabled riders as well as running 10 liveryes. They would like to expand but face a real problem in that like Worsham Farm they have no direct access onto a legal bridleway which can take them into the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park. Instead they can cross the A259 to go down to the beach or more commonly they have to box up the horses and drive them to the Cuckoo Trail, Bedgebury or Bewl Bridge Reservoir.

15A.3.35 At Glovers's Farm there is capacity for a maximum of thirty-five horses together with full and part liveryes. There are no statutory bridleways linking directly to Glovers Farm but BOAT 81 does have a direct link to the farm and travels in a westerly direction to tie into the network of roads within Sidley which further link to BOAT 58a feeding into the countryside to the north.

15A.3.36 At Highfield Stables, Green Street, Crowhurst there are ten horses. These seldom go south of the Crowhurst Road although they occasionally make a long journey to Sidley via Hillcroft Farm, Acton's Farm and Buckholt Lane.

15A.3.37 At Livery Farm, Green Street there is capacity for thirty two horses. This consists of 16 horses with DIY liveryes and holiday cottages catering for equestrian holidays with stabling for another 16 horses.

Cyclists

15A.3.38 During the autumn and winter of 2005-2006 a major public consultation was undertaken to identify the level of support for the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park project. Improved cycling was very popular, with horse riding a close second. A Strategy for Access was drawn up which is shown on the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park website (refer to Appendix 15A-A). This shows a series of proposed pedestrian circuits and key links. The map does not spell out which routes might be upgraded from pedestrian to cycling or equestrian routes but the Draft Park Development Strategy writes of "*local circuits to encourage local people to walk or cycle around parts of the park*".

15A.3.39 There is a great potential for cycling in the region, especially utility cycling although at present it is very much a minority activity. Of the 596 people interviewed during the survey only 4% were cyclists. Of these 1% were utility cyclists, 1% were mountain bikers and 2% were leisure cyclists. Hastings Urban Bikes (HUB) which was founded in 2005 has 70 members which means that it has less than 0.1% membership of a local population of 80,000 people. This means that it has one tenth the national average for modal proportion of cyclists which is 1%.

15A.3.40 The country lanes are dangerous for cyclists. The Bexhill Cycle Forum has been discouraged by its failure to persuade Rother District Council to allow cyclists on the promenade. This is because of a perceived problem that cyclists will prove a danger to pedestrians. A safe convenient coastal path

for cyclists remains a long way from completion and further north Queensway creates severance for east-west cyclists. Anecdotal evidence suggests that most cyclists in the region put their bikes in the car and take them out to more cycle-friendly areas.

15A.3.41 However plans are underway involving Sustrans to improve the beachside cycle link at Bulverhythe. The old tram track which is a BOAT near the garden centre at Glyne Gap has potential as a cycleway if the surface were restored. The Bexhill Youth Council got up a petition in support of improved cycle access at Bexhill. The proposals outlined in *Hastings Greenway: A strategic Framework* Timothy Jemison Associates (2006), though still largely aspirational, recommend cycle links at Hastings town centre, the Ore Valley, St Leonards, Hollington and Conquest. The cycle links promoted by Hastings Borough Council on its 2003 Cycle Map link to the 1066 Circular Cycle Route, the Brighton to Camber Coastal Cycle Route and in turn to the Garden of England Cycle Route which is part of the National Cycle Network.

Four Wheel Drive Vehicular Users

15A.3.42 There is not a major issue concerning four wheel drive vehicles in the study area. There are no BOATs which create circuits and so local four by four vehicles tend to go further into Sussex beyond the study area. The few four by four drivers in the area tend to belong to the South Coast Landrover Group. The longest BOAT (58) leads to Buckholt Farm but then drivers would have to turn round at the farm and the landowner does not report any major use. There is a short easterly branch of this BOAT which stops short of Acton's Farm but, if they hear drivers trying to continue along the bridleway to Hillcroft Farm, the landowners state that they block access and send them away. The same applies to drivers attempting a circuit from the short BOAT near Pebsham Farm and in this area on the south side of the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park the warden has blocked access to four by four drivers and trail riders near the Reprotect Fuel Pellet Plant.

15A.3.43 Land Access and Recreation Association (LARA) have stated that they would like a dedicated site in the proposed park, perhaps near the landfill site which would help to siphon off any potentially destructive activity. Drivers and bikers used to have a 28 day site at Marley Lane. This operated under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order, 1995, which allows 28 days for activities without the need for formal planning consent. However it was discontinued 2 years ago.

Trail Bikes

15A.3.44 There are rather more trail bikers in the area than four by four drivers especially on the south side of the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park and along the dismantled railway. Again landowners and the warden have effectively discouraged many of them.

15A.3.45 The Trail Riders' Fellowship does not condone illegal scrambling. However they are very keen to promote a dedicated site for trail riders within the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park. This would be ideally both for

motorcross (i.e. scrambling in dirt areas) and trials riding which is much slower and more skilled, with the riders following a small circuit which negotiates barriers.

Shooters

15A.3.46 Game shooting takes place at Glovers Farm and Pebsham Farm with more informal shooting taking place throughout the local valleys. A commercial game shoot takes place north of Acton's Farm.

15A.3.47 Clay pigeon shooting has taken place on the widened area of railway abutment just south of Adam's Farm since the 1960s under the auspices of the Crowhurst Gun Club. This has 25 full members and has a permit to shoot 28 days a year. It therefore meets every fortnight on a Sunday together with two extra days which often include an evening in summer. Access is down the track along the old railway past Adam's Farm and conveniently distant from any other recreational users who might otherwise be hurt if they came within approximately 30 metres of the shoot. The Gun Club does not own the land but has permission from the owner whose late father was a founder member of the club.

Anglers

15A.3.48 There are no Angling Clubs but some informal fishing takes place in Combe Haven.

15A.4 Mitigation Strategy

Introduction

15A.4.1 This section outlines a mitigation strategy against potential adverse impacts of the Scheme on pedestrians, cyclists and recreational users. The proposed mitigation includes good environmental design elements such as the underpass for Chapel Path, the provision of a Greenway parallel to the Scheme for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians, underpasses and footbridges where existing rights of way cross Scheme, a toucan crossing where the Greenway ties into Queensway and the provision of a separate footpath link along the west side of the Greenway immediately north of the Scheme linking to the Toucan Crossing.

15A.4.2 These strategies are conceived as integral to the Scheme rather than bolt-on mitigations and are described in detail in this section and summarised in the following Table 15A.2.

Table 15A.2 Summary and Mitigation Strategy

Mitigation	Description
Chapel Path and Bancroft Road Path	Underpass provided for both routes at Scheme crossing with Chapel Path.
Greenway	The Greenway would provide a new main link for non-motorised users mainly on the south side of Scheme. Traffic signals would be provided at the junction with Crowhurst Road with a phase for Greenway users.
Toucan Crossing	A new Toucan Crossing where Crowhurst Road and Greenway link meet Queensway would provide safe east-west crossing
Retention of existing rights of way	No existing rights of way would be permanently severed by Scheme since alternative crossings and diversions would be provided wherever rights of way cross the Scheme
New path link beside Queensway	A new path along the western side of Queensway would link the path from Stonebridge Farm to the proposed Toucan Crossing
Construction	Where paths would be temporarily diverted due to construction, the diversions would be clearly signed and in some cases manned as appropriate.

Chapel Path and Bancroft Road Path

15A.4.3 An underpass would be provided at the point where Chapel Path crosses the Scheme and this would also serve Bancroft Path which would be closed where it crosses the route of the Scheme. Users of Bancroft road Path would be able to use London Road on the east side of the Scheme and the new path on the west side of the Scheme to access the Chapel Path Underpass Further north and west.

The Greenway

15A.4.4 The Greenway would provide a main link for non-motorised users mainly following the south side of the Scheme. Over different sections the Greenway would take the form of a combined route or two separate routes. One would be hard surfaced for cyclists and pedestrians. The other would be a gravel/soil reinforced path for equestrians. Extensive iterative design of the Greenway together with landform and noise mitigation for the main Scheme

has been undertaken to reduce potential noise and visual impacts upon users of the Greenway and the surrounding footpath network.

15A.4.5 Both routes would tie into the Sidley conurbation at the top of Glover's Lane and to Queensway just south of the eastern end of the Scheme. Both routes would be 3 metres wide with additional verges. The pedestrian/cycle route would be separated from the Scheme by a substantial area of land which would be planted up/and or mounded so that cyclists and pedestrians do not suffer undue intrusion from the new road. Where the Greenway ties into other existing routes barriers would be designed to minimise risk of access for four wheel drive vehicles, trail bikes and fly tippers.

15A.4.6 The detailed route of the Greenway in relation to the Scheme is shown on Figures 3A.2 to 3A.9. The following paragraphs describe the Greenway in broad terms working from west to east.

15A.4.7 Heading north from Glover's Lane the route splits, cyclists and pedestrians going to the east and equestrians to the west. Pedestrians and cyclists would cross the Scheme as part of Glover's Farm Overbridge.

15A.4.8 At Acton's Farm the bridleway would merge with the existing bridleway which runs towards Hillcroft Farm. The cycle/pedestrian path would follow parallel to the bridleway until they merge to run adjacent to each other at Hillcroft Farm Overbridge. At Hillcroft Farm Overbridge the combined route runs round the southern edge of the existing ridge.

15A.4.9 Between Hillcroft Farm Overbridge and Adam's Farm Overbridge and where they cross the Bexhill branch of the 1066 Country Walk the two routes would be combined. At this point the Greenway would be 2 metres above existing ground level in order to cross the Powdermill Stream. Therefore the 1066 Country Walkway would climb to join the Greenway and then descend again to its original route.

15A.4.10 Between the Adam's Farm Overbridge and Decoy Pond Underbridge the routes would be combined. However just east of Decoy Farm Underbridge the route splits. The cycle path detours to the south in a small loop due to the steepness of the slope which would be involved if the cycle path were to head straight up the hill. The equestrian route would remain closer to the Scheme ascending the steep slope directly. After this loop the routes would merge to form a combined route. They would turn sharply right away from the Scheme near the Gas Valve Compound north of Upper Wilting Farm. Here they would continue south still combined between the Crowhurst Road and Upper Wilting Farm. They would then merge with the Crowhurst Road at the railway bridge where there would be traffic signals to allow users to cross the road safely.

Toucan Crossing

15A.4.11 There would be a Toucan Crossing at the point where the Crowhurst Road and associated Greenway link meet Queensway. This would allow safe crossing for non-motorised users to link to Chuchwood, Hollington

and the rest of St Leonards. This should in time facilitate further safe links towards Tesco's and the hospital if the overall Greenway Strategy comes into operation.

Retention of all Existing Rights of Way

15A.4.12 No rights of way which are crossed by the Scheme would be permanently severed, with diversions provided where required. At the south western end of the Scheme within Sidley an underpass would be provided under the road for Chapel Path. At the confluence of paths near Glover's Farm, the Glover's Farm Overbridge would be provided. Where the BOAT crosses the Scheme west of Acton's Farm the Acton's Farm Overbridge would be provided. Where the Bridleway leading to Hillcroft Farm crosses the Scheme the Hillcroft Farm Overbridge would be provided. Where the 1066 Country Walk crosses the Scheme there would be an underpass beneath the road. The Crowhurst Road would pass under the new road so that non-motorised users may continue to use it alongside traffic. All bridges affecting BOATs and Bridleways would be designed so that surfacing, and visual barriers to traffic from the bridge and its approaches, would make it appropriate for use by equestrians together with other users.

Creation of Path Link beside Queensway

15A.4.13 A new path link as long discussed with the Ramblers' Association would be provided on the western side of Queensway between the path leading down from Stonebridge Farm and the proposed Toucan Crossing at the end of the Crowhurst Road/Greenway link. This new path is incorporated within the Scheme and crosses the link road at the junction with Queensway via a pedestrian crossing.

New Routes which Link to the Greenway

15A.4.14 The proposed Pebsham Countryside Park would involve the creation of new walking, cycling and riding routes which would link into the Greenway. This would greatly improve the usefulness of the Greenway. However, these proposals are not part of the Scheme and the exact proposals for the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park in relation to cycling and pedestrian use have not been finalised.

Construction Mitigation

15A.4.15 The permanent bridges would be built as advanced works and as soon as practically possible users would be diverted onto them. During construction of the bridges, path users may have to cross a haul road at grade but these points would be appropriately signed and fenced. Best practicable means would be used for silencing machinery. Dust suppression measures would include bowsers in hot dry weather.

15A.5 Construction Impacts

Disruption to the Local Path Network

15A.5.1 Construction impacts would partly concern the potential temporary disruption of existing rights of way by the Scheme. Potential delays and diversions would be at the Chapel Path/Bancroft Road Path, the BOAT/bridleway network at Glover's Farm, the BOAT/bridleway system at Acton's Farm, the Bridleway south of Hillcroft Farm and the 1066 Country Walkway.

15A.5.2 The haul route has the potential to temporarily sever the 1066 Country Walk and all other pedestrian routes which cross the Scheme. While the haul road would go under the advance bridges, there would be a requirement to allow site vehicles to cross existing paths. These points would be appropriately signed and fenced and would give priority to works traffic along the route of the Scheme.

15A.5.3 Chapel Path would be severed while the Chapel Path underpass is being constructed. During this time the Bancroft Road crossing would remain in use or else pedestrian users would need to use the controlled crossing at the traffic lights at London Road/Belle Hill.

15A.5.4 In the case of the Glover's Farm network, the Acton's Farm rights of way and the Bridleway south of Hillcroft Farm it is proposed that the respective overbridges are all built in advance of closing the rights of way and therefore there would be little disruption to path users.

15A.5.5 In the case of the 1066 Country Walkway it would be necessary to temporarily stop that section of the Walkway which crosses the Scheme at the height of the construction period and divert users to the east of Adam's Farm.

15A.5.6 Two main site compounds would be required from the duration of the works, one at Queensway and one at Belle Hill. In addition a third would be required for part of that time to the west of Crowhurst Road. None of these compounds would have an impact on rights of way or permissive paths.

15A.5.7 The Greenway would be constructed separately to the main carriageway and would involve separate resources. It would have similar temporary impacts upon the BOAT/bridleway system at Acton's Farm, the bridleway south of Hillcroft Farm and the 1066 Country Walkway although of a lesser magnitude.

Noise and Visual Intrusion

15A.5.8 The main construction impact would comprise noise disturbance and visual intrusion associated with works in the proximity of the rights of way and other paths.

15A.5.9 In the case of the Glover's Farm network, the Acton's farm rights of way and the bridleway south of Hillcroft Farm there would be a reduction in tranquillity and visual quality for approximately two years (estimated between 2008 and 2010) due to major construction activity within the surrounding valley.

15A.5.10 Diversions during construction would not be lengthy. The main impact would therefore be disturbance to the tranquillity and visual quality of the rights of way in the immediate vicinity of the Scheme over a two year period. Therefore the impact on recreational and utility users during construction would be moderate adverse at worst. A summary of the construction impacts is provided in Table 15A.3.

Table 15A.3 Construction Summary Impact Table

Element in Scheme	Impact described	Score
Haul Route	Bridges would be built as advance works and paths diverted over them. During the construction of the bridges (6-9 months) appropriate signed and fenced crossing points would be provided.	Moderate adverse
Chapel Path/Bancroft Road	Temporary diversion from Chapel Path to Bancroft Road crossing or traffic lights. Temporary adverse impact on visual quality and tranquillity	Moderate adverse
Glover's Farm network	Crossing built in advance. Temporary adverse impact on visual quality and tranquillity	Slight adverse
Acton's Farm rights of way	Crossing built in advance. Temporary adverse impact on visual quality and tranquillity	Slight adverse
Bridleway south of Hillcroft Farm	Crossing built in advance. Temporary adverse impact on visual quality and tranquillity	Slight adverse
1066 Country Walkway	Temporary diversion required. Temporary adverse impact on visual quality and tranquillity	Moderate adverse
Site Compounds	No changes to rights of way	Neutral

15A.6 Operational Impacts

Introduction

15A.6.1 This section outlines the potential impacts of the Scheme on pedestrians, cyclists and recreational users during operation. The impacts are broadly fourfold:

- Impacts upon Shooters and Anglers;
- Physical changes to existing rights of way;
- Improved links and safety measures such as the Greenway and Toucan Crossing; and,
- A diminution of the recreational experience in the vicinity of the Scheme due to noise and visual intrusion affecting users on the rights of way.

Impact on Shooters

15A.6.2 The Scheme would result in the reduction in area available for shooting within the Combe Haven valley and on Glovers Farm. The Scheme would also involve land take from the old Bexhill Waterworks site which is currently used for informal shooting. The commercial shoot to the north of Acton's Farm would be unaffected by the Scheme.

15A.6.3 Clay pigeon shooting on the widened area of the railway abutment just south of Adam's Farm would cease as a result of the Scheme. This area of land would be acquired for landscape purposes and the continuation of shooting would not be compatible with the adjacent Scheme or the Greenway. ESCC would make every effort to facilitate the relocation of the Crowhurst Shooting Club which currently uses this site, although no suitable alternative site has yet been identified. The Scheme would therefore have a moderate adverse impact upon recreational shooting activity within the study area.

Changes to Rights of Way and Permissive Paths

15A.6.4 Bancroft Road Path would be closed but a short convenient diversion would be available to the Chapel Path Underpass. The four rights of way crossed by the Scheme near Glover's Farm, Acton's Farm, south of Hillcroft Farm and at the 1066 Country Walk would all remain broadly on their existing routes which in the case of the first three would be followed by the Glover's Farm Overbridge, the Acton's Farm Overbridge and the Hillcroft Farm Overbridge. The 1066 Country Walk would also broadly follow its existing route but would pass beneath the new road in underpass. Therefore the effect on users in terms of changes to rights of way and permissive paths would be neutral.

Improved Links and Safety Measures for Pedestrians, Cyclists and Recreational Users

15A.6.5 The Greenway would provide a very useful link especially for utility cyclists between St Leonards and Bexhill with the Toucan Crossing providing a much needed safe crossing of the Queensway. The creation of the path link beside Queensway would also provide a long called for improvement to the pedestrian network. Therefore the effect on recreational users from improved links would be moderate beneficial.

15A.6.6 The only well used east-west cycle route in the region is along the promenade and this is made relatively difficult by the busy Bexhill-Hastings coast road. There is currently no easy east-west traffic free route for utility cyclists between northern St Leonards/Hollington and Bexhill. The Greenway would remedy this problem and in particular provide a safe direct cycle link between the populations of Bexhill and Sidley to the south-west and the expanding employment areas of the Churchfields Industrial Estate and Castleham, both located near Queensway, together with the Conquest Hospital a little further to the north which is a major employer. Residents in Hollington, Churchwood and St Leonards would be able to more easily cycle to Bexhill and Sidley.

Intrusion on Visual Experience and Tranquillity of Existing Rights of Way / Proposed Pebsham Countryside Park

15A.6.7 Although the proposed landscaping and noise screening would do much to minimise the potential impact of the Scheme, the tranquillity of the recreational experience would be substantially reduced in the immediate vicinity of the new road. This would especially affect the northern edges of the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park, the southern end of the valley leading down from Crowhurst as well as the paths near Glover's Farm, the Bridleway near Acton's Farm, the Bridleway south of Hillcroft Farm and the 1066 Country Walk. This is especially relevant since, when asked about the attractions of the area in the Recreational Survey, the largest number of interviewees responded 'peace and quiet' (48%) and the second largest responded 'scenery' (21%). The central and southern part of the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park would be much less affected.

15A.6.8 The recreational experience of walking along the 1066 Country Walk between Crowhurst and the Scheme would be enhanced by the new landscape ponds and wetland areas proposed in what is currently an extensive arable field to the west side of the path. This would create considerable visual and wildlife interest where there is at present just ploughed farmland.

15A.6.9 In order to assess noise and visual impacts the following locations assessed in the rights of way survey have been specifically considered. In the assessment of survey points, the visual descriptions are based on the Opening Year (Year 1). Noise descriptions compare noise levels immediately before opening with noise levels in the Design Year (Year 15). This provides a worst case assessment.

15A.6.10 At Survey Point 1 at the junction of BOAT 58 and BOAT 76 the main views are looking east from the edge of the woodland and all that can be seen is the secluded valley with no houses or roads visible. The Scheme, which would be in cutting to the east of this point, would not be visible due to the woodland and the bend in the lane. At this survey point the existing noise level is around 30dB which is very quiet. After 15 years, the noise level would be around 44dB which is a level at which normal conversation is not masked by background noise.

15A.6.11 At Survey Point 2 just west of Acton's Farm where there were 41 movements on the Bank Holiday, the views are presently of the tranquil valley to the east and the wooded slopes to north and west. Following the Scheme, the views to the east would be dominated by the road, although it would be in cutting. If the walker proceeds a short distance in an easterly direction along Bridleway 34 they would be on the bridge over the new road with dominating views of the Scheme. At this survey point the existing noise level is around 31dB which is very quiet. After 15 years following the opening of the Scheme, the noise level would be around 52dB which is the level of normal conversation. If the visitor proceeds a short distance to the east he would be on the footbridge over the new road where the noise level would be around 65dB which is equivalent to a busy office.

15A.6.12 At Survey Point 3 where the bridleway crosses Combe Haven and intersects with the permissive path which links to the 1066 Country Walk the present view is of the tranquil valley with only occasional glimpses of distant vehicles on the Crowhurst Road. Following the Scheme it would look along part of the route to east and west including a section of slight embankment. Current views to the north would be obstructed. The existing noise level at this survey point is around 34dB which is quiet. Fifteen years after the opening of the Scheme, the noise level would be around 49dB or less which is around or below the level of normal conversation.

15A.6.13 At Survey Point 5 on the 1066 Country Walk south of Adam's Farm where there are currently tranquil views in all directions, the viewpoint would be from the bridge providing an alternative route to the long distance footpath over the Scheme. The 1066 Country Walk would pass under the Scheme at this location. The existing noise level at this survey point is around 31dB which is very quiet. After 15 years of the Scheme the noise levels would be around 53dB which is the level of normal conversation.

15A.6.14 At Survey Point 8 just south of Upper Wilting Farm the main views are to the south-west across the valley. These would be unaffected by the Scheme. However the views to the west and north would now have a distant view of the new road. The existing ambient noise level at this location is around 67dB which is equivalent to a busy office. Compared to remoter locations point 8 is relatively noisy due to existing traffic and train noise. Fifteen years after the opening of the Scheme the noise would reduce to around 63dB due to reduction of traffic on the adjacent section of the Crowhurst Road. This benefit would also be obtained in the Opening Year of the Scheme.

15A.6.15 At Survey Point 4 just south of Crowhurst the only views potentially affected are those looking south into Combe Haven and these would have

minimal views of the Scheme. At Survey Point 4 the existing ambient noise level is around 58dB which is equivalent to or slightly above normal conversation. Compared to the remoter locations this point is relatively noisy since it is located beside the Crowhurst Road. Fifteen years after the opening of the Scheme the noise would be slightly reduced compared to the baseline due to reduction of traffic on the Crowhurst Road.

15A.6.16 At Survey Point 6 on the Dismantled Railway in the south part of proposed Pebsham Countryside Park there are currently views towards Crowhurst and the north heavily filtered by existing vegetation. The Scheme would largely be out of sight except where it is glimpsed through gaps in the trees. At Survey Point 6 the existing noise level is around 34dB which is quiet. During the Design Year (Year 15), the noise level at this location would be around 39dB which would be quiet.

15A.6.17 At a short distance to the north of Survey Point 7 on the dismantled railway there are currently open views to the north-west across the valley. Following the Scheme there would be fairly dominant views of the new road. The existing noise level at this location is around 34dB which is quiet. Fifteen years after the opening of the Scheme the noise level would be around 53dB which would be equivalent to normal conversation levels.

15A.6.18 At Survey Point 10 there would be no change in visual effect. From this point the Scheme would be sufficiently far away that there would be only a minimal noise increase.

15A.6.19 At survey Point 11 the Scheme would be so far away that there would be no visual impact and no perceptible noise increase.

15A.6.20 At Survey Point 9 there would be no change in visual effect. At this point the existing noise level is around 58-65dB which is relatively noisy due to the fact that it is immediately above Queensway. Fifteen years after the opening of the Scheme the dominant noise element of the Queensway traffic would still be present and so there would be no significant change.

15A.6.21 At Chapel Lane and Bancroft Road a busy urban townscape would only receive relatively little additional noise from the Scheme and so there would be no change in relation to tranquillity.

15A.6.22 The overall effect on tranquillity and visual quality for recreational and utility users on existing rights of way and permissive paths within the study area would be moderate adverse. However by year 15 the impact on visual quality would change from moderate to slight adverse as landscape planting forms an effective visual screen.

15A.6.23 The reduction in traffic on the local road network within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the north as a result of the Scheme would have a beneficial impact upon pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians and would help to offset the adverse noise and visual impacts upon non-motorised users closer to the Scheme.

15A.6.24 Table 15A.4 gives the operational impact of the Scheme on the path network together with impacts on shooters and anglers.

Table 15A.4 Operational Summary Impact Table for Recreational and Utility Users

Right of way/area	Impact	Score
Chapel Path/Bancroft Road Path	New underpass prevents severance although minor diversion for Bancroft Road path. No change in tranquillity/visual quality	Neutral
Routes in the vicinity of Glover's Farm	No severance Reduction in tranquillity/visual quality Improved links/safety through Greenway	Neutral
Routes in the vicinity of Acton's Farm	No severance Reduction in tranquillity/visual quality Improved links/safety through Greenway	Neutral
Routes south and north of Hillcroft Farm	No severance Reduction in tranquillity/visual quality Improved links/safety through Greenway	Neutral
Routes south and north of Adam's Farm	No severance Reduction in tranquillity/visual quality near the road. However improved visual quality in valley north of the road due to wetland creation Improved links/safety through Greenway	Moderate beneficial
Routes near Upper Wilting Farm	No severance Only slight reduction in tranquillity/visual quality Improved links/safety through Greenway	Moderate beneficial

Right of way/area	Impact	Score
Area around Queensway	Improved links and reduced severance/safety through Toucan Crossing and new path down western side of Queensway No change in tranquillity/visual quality	Moderate beneficial
Lower Combe Haven north of landfill	Tranquillity/visual quality unchanged No impact on nearby links/severance	Neutral
South area of proposed Pebsham Countryside Park near Glyne Gap	Tranquillity/visual quality unchanged No impact on nearby links/severance	Neutral
Game shooters / Clay pigeon shooters	Reduction in area available for shooting within Combe Haven valley. Loss of clay pigeon shoot south of Adam's Farm and shooting at old Bexhill Waterworks site	Moderate adverse
Anglers	No changes	Neutral

15A.7 Conclusions

15A.7.1 The rights of way survey together with extensive personal interviews has established that the study area is popular with pedestrians, the vast majority of whom live locally and make relatively short journeys. There are many equestrians in the area but little use is made of the study area due to the limited bridleway network and the safety concerns on the local road network. There is a clear need for improved facilities for all users but particularly for cyclists and equestrians.

15A.7.2 Construction activity would cause a temporary adverse impact to visual quality and tranquillity on a number of rights of way and permissive paths, together with temporary diversions at Chapel Path, Acton's Farm, Hillcroft Farm Bridleway and the 1066 Country Walk. The overall construction impact of the Scheme upon pedestrians, cyclists and recreational users would therefore be moderate adverse.

15A.7.3 The severance of the Scheme to existing rights of way would be minimal especially with the provision of well designed footbridges and underpasses.

15A.7.4 The Greenway associated with the Scheme would provide a real benefit for pedestrians, cyclists and recreational users, especially if linked to new paths within the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park and a wider network of green links as part of the larger Greenway strategy.

15A.7.5 The new footpath along Queensway would provide a much needed pedestrian link to the north and the proposed Toucan Crossing on Queensway would improve the safety for people crossing that busy road.

15A.7.6 However, the fact that the Scheme would create inevitable intrusion in what is at present a tranquil hidden valley on the northern edges of the proposed Pebsham Countryside Park crossed by a Bridleway and the 1066 Country Walkway must reduce the benefits of what would otherwise be a very positive Scheme for pedestrians, cyclists and recreational users.

15A.7.7 The Scheme would have a moderate adverse impact upon recreational shooting within the study area as a result of the reduction in land available for such activities within the valleys surrounding the Scheme and the direct loss of clay pigeon shooting on land to the south of Adam's Farm and shooting at the old Bexhill Waterworks site.

15A.7.8 On balance, the Scheme would have a Slight Beneficial operational impact on pedestrians, cyclists and recreational users during the Opening Year; rising to moderate beneficial by the Design Year as planting matures to better integrate and enclose the Scheme.