

The Thetford Loops Stage 1



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Final

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1. Introduction

The idea of the Thetford Loops came as part of the Urban Design Framework Study completed by Roger Evans Associates in 2009. Essentially, it would be a cycling and walking route that passes by and takes in the various and numerous attractions that Thetford has to offer as well as providing a safe and convenient way for cyclists and walkers to get around the town for every day journeys.

The original route resulted from a desk top study. The idea and draft route was part of the Thetford Area Action Plan (TAAP) Preferred Options Consultation held between February and April 2009.

The consultation exercise resulted in some very helpful comments for all the draft policies in the TAAP. With regards to the Thetford Loop, there was general support if it is going to be designed and put in place in the right way, having regard to various issues such as illegal motorcycling and litter. A summary of these comments can be found in Appendix A.

Further work was required to check the route as drawn by Roger Evans Associates¹ in terms of feasibility, technical issues, phasing and to determine the cost.

This report was completed by Capita Symonds on behalf of Breckland Council after a series of site visits in August and September 2009. It aims to check the feasibility of the route and offer alternatives or extensions to the loop as well as identifying potential work required.

It is anticipated that the report will be passed to experts who can look into any technical issues and cost the numerous sections of the loops as well as assess for safety.

Ultimately, this report will be evidence base for policies and site proposals in the Thetford Area Action Plan.

In January 2010, the Loops were displayed at the MTF Open Days and received much interest and support.

¹ Urban Design Framework for Thetford, Roger Evans Associates, 2008.

2. The Loops

We have had many comments about extensions to the loops. As such, there are now 5 Loops for consideration. See the map on the following page.

It is felt that routes within the A11 are multi-functional and not only serve recreational uses, but perhaps journeys to work or school – every day uses. The routes beyond the A11 are more recreational.

The Loops are, in no particular order:

- **The Northern Loop**

This is the original Loop as proposed by Roger Evans Associates¹.

- **The Southern Loop**

One common comment about the original Loop was that it did not include the South of Thetford. This new Loop takes in Barnham Cross Estate and Redcastle Furze as well as the attractions of the Red Castle itself and Barnham Cross Common.

- **The BTO Loop**

The BTO has a great presence in Thetford and there is a beautiful reserve just on Thetford's door step. This Loop includes the reserve and takes users passed the BTO Offices. This route is more of a leisure route. The route around the reserve is for walkers only.

- **The Thetford Forest Loop**

Access to the Forest from the town is a well known issue and highlighted in the recent consultation. This Loop could help get walkers and cyclists into the Forest and onto the popular recreational cycling and walking tracks in the High Lodge area.

- **The Croxton Village Loop**

There are 2 crossings further north which would get users to the busy A134 – a road heavily used by HGVs and not ideal for recreation. As such, the path to Croxton is used to get users to the pretty village and then to Thetford using the quieter Croxton Road.

We received other comments about including other attractions in the Thetford area:

- **Two Mile Bottom (Thetford Forest and Thetford Rugby Club)**

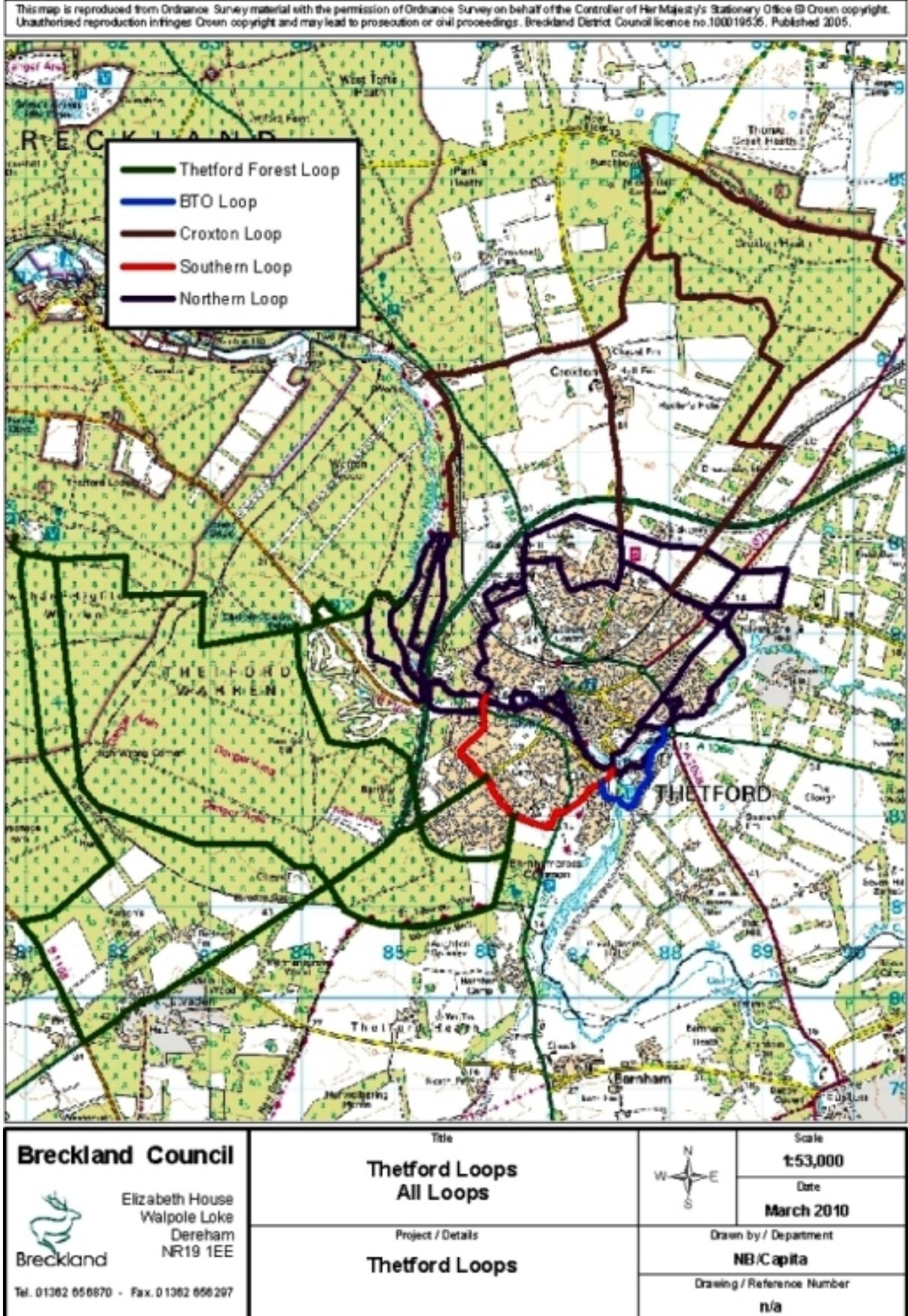
The Croxton Loop does go near to Two Mile Bottom, but does not include it. It could be signed as an extension near to the Chicken Litter Power Station, but this extension has not been investigated on site.

- **Lynford Lakes, Hall and Arboretum**

These have not been included as part of the Croxton Loop. Lynford Hall is beyond Mundford and is a fair distance from Croxton (Approximately 10Km). This has not been investigated on site.

3. The 5 Loops in detail

Each Loop has been split into sections and is discuss in more detail below. Potential work has also been identified. Detailed maps are in the appendices. The following overarching map shows all the Loops together and how they interact. See Appendix C for more detailed drawings of the Loops.



4. The Northern Loop

- Description

This route passes through the Town Centre and its lovely central riverside area, then heads north to take in the proposed new developments. It crosses the A11 and takes in the Forest. Any improvements on this route will help Thetford residents in their daily activities.

- Details

Section 1: Town to the footbridge near Canon's Close

Starting the route at Town Bridge, there are 3 options.

Option A: Use the Haling Path which already accommodates cyclists and pedestrians. This is on the west side of the river and away from the main attraction in the area, the Priory. The path also needs some work doing which will cost in the order of £450k. It is worth noting that the Vision² work suggests a potential walking and cycling route on the north of the river. This does not exist at the time of writing the report, but if feasible and implemented could fit in well with the Loops.

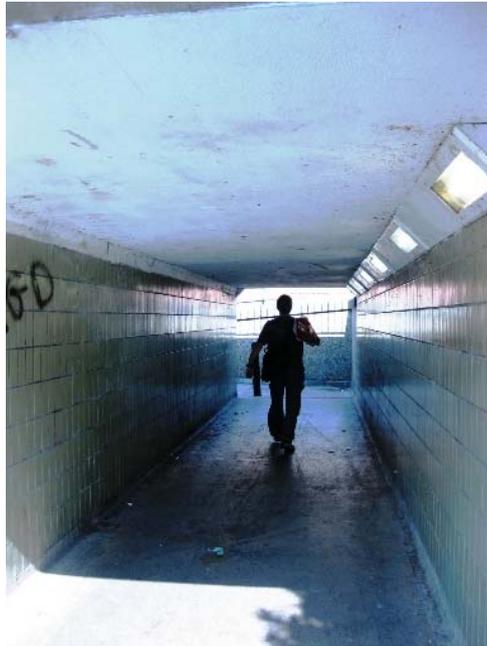
Option B: Uses the subway near to Iceland, at the end of Minstergate. Cycling is not permitted and as such cyclists will need to dismount. It is felt that it is not unreasonable to ask cyclists to dismount at certain points on the route. Subways are not attractive to many users due to the enclosed space and not being able to see round the corner. Improvements to the subway could be investigated – there is a proposal for the bus interchange to be moved to this area and links to and from the interchange, such as this subway, could be looked at as part of that work.

Good lighting, and regular and managed maintenance of the subway would help to reduce the fear of crime but solving the issue of natural surveillance would require complete redevelopment.



Picture 1: Minstergate Underpass – looking from Minstergate

² The Vision Work is being produced by Urban Delivery. The Vision work was at its early stages when this report was written.



Picture 2: Mintergate Underpass – the enclosed space and lack of visibility around the corner might deter some users.

Option C: Uses the St. Nicholas Street/London Road junction. This is signalled at the moment with pedestrian refuges. This junction is also en route to the Railway Station and is likely to require some improvements as part of the bus interchange work and cyclists and pedestrians could be accommodated in that work.

Options B and C then join the paths near to the Priory and the Abbey Estate north of the river. There are some barriers which are slightly awkward for cyclists on this route which could be reconsidered.

Norfolk Police ACLO³ made the following comments: *'A number of motor cycle inhibitors have been placed at access points from the housing estates to try and prevent motorcycles from getting onto the water meadows. This has been a serious problem in the past and one that is extremely difficult to police. Any decision to remove these should therefore not be taken lightly. The inhibitors are clearly designed to impede motor cycles but they appear to be wide enough for cycles to get through. If this is the case I would recommend that they should remain.'*



Picture 3: Barriers on this section of the Loop.

³ Architectural Liaison Officer.

The main attraction along this section is the Priory. It might not be desirable to have cycling around the site of the priory, so cycle stands would need to be provided.

To summarise, the Loops should be signed from the Town Centre and also the Bus Station. It could be the case that one route is signed 'via the river' and another one signed 'via the Priory'.

Section 2: Footbridge at Canon's Close to Canterbury Way Bridge

The Haling path ends, and the footbridge will need to be crossed to get to the north side of the river. At the moment there are barriers and signs instructing cyclists to dismount. On the north side of the river, again there are signs saying '*cycle route ends*' and '*cyclists dismount*'. The route is a footpath and as such cycling is not allowed. A conversion order or TRO to legally allow cycling would be needed.



Picture 4: '*End of cycle route*' and '*cyclists dismount*' signs at footbridge.

The path continues on the north side of the river. The path might need siding out⁴ in places and the vegetation that is over hanging the path, cut back.

Near to the weir there are boat launches. There could be potential for short term measures to allow usage. The Environment Agency would need to be approached.



Picture 5: Boat Launches.

⁴ A surfaced path is often narrowed by grass for example. Siding Out means removing this grass to make the path its original width.

Near to Canterbury Way, the path heads up the bank to cross the road. The crossing is in a 20mph zone. There are however tracks implying that pedestrians and cyclists continue under the bridge to the other side of the bridge. The bridge is low so if this option is chosen, warning signs might be required or any path designed in such a way as to allow for adequate clearance.

A route under the bridge seems desirable as this route is an obvious desire line and is the most direct. It is felt that this is the limit beyond which any surfacing should reflect the rural setting of the path.

The Norfolk Police ACLO made the following comment however:

'Plans show alternative routes as the path reaches this bridge. The route shown going under the bridge offers little opportunity for natural surveillance, even if lit. As such; the route that crosses the road would be the preferred option with regards to the principles of designing out crime. Consideration should be given to using robust (accredited 'Secured by Design') bollards at the crossing point to prevent vehicle access on to the path.'



Picture 6: Over or under Canterbury Way?

Section 3: Canterbury Way Bridge to A11

On the flood plain, close to the river, there is an informal path (an un-surfaced dirt trod) which follows the river past the Sewerage Treatment Works towards the A11 underpass. This has way markers and is the Little Ouse path to Brandon. Cycling is possible at the moment, but the path is a dirt trod and undulating and for the most part users would need to travel in single file. The A11 underpass is surfaced and fenced from the river. Any improvements in surfacing should reflect the rural setting of the path, possibly reflecting the Forestry Commission's standards.



Picture 7: The Little Ouse path between Canterbury Way and A11 underpass – an un-surfaced informal path.

Section 4: A11 to Railway underpass

Once under the A11, walkers and cyclists will split. Walkers will follow the narrow and winding Little Ouse Path next to the river, whereas cyclists will travel into the forest, using the forestry tracks.

Walkers would pass the Kingfisher Lakes and follow the Little Ouse Path. The Lakes are privately owned.

It was originally envisaged that this section of the Loops would take users to the blocked underpass that goes under the railway. It is totally blocked with vegetation and impassable in its current state. Furthermore, the land the other side of the railway is private farm land. The landowner has raised concerns regarding walkers and cyclists using the land and potential Health and Safety issues as a result of conflict with the Farm operations – such as high pressure irrigation equipment operating in Summer. As such, although being the preferred option for the route of the Loops, it is not being pursued at the current time.



Picture 8: Overgrown and blocked railway underpass.

Section 4 is now 2 mini loops as well as an access to the Croxton Loop.

The route takes users into this part of the Forest and loops back towards the Little Ouse and the A11 underpass.

There is also a path over the Abbey Heath Weir to other parts of Thetford Forest. A path could be signed and in parts created that takes users to the south side of the Little Ouse as it goes under the A11. Once to the east of the A11, a new link would need to be created to Brandon Road. At the moment, this area is overgrown and close to some wet woodland.

Section 5: Canterbury Way/Little Ouse Bridge to Mundford Road.

As discussed in the previous section of the report, due to the concerns over conflict between Loop users and the farm operations, Section 4 is now a mini Loop to Thetford Forest and a way of accessing the Croxton Loop.

To connect to Section 6 of the Loops, the route of the Northern Loop is as follows.

Canterbury Way is used to travel around the Abbey Estate to Gloucester Way. The road is 20mph and suitable for cycling. There are footways to cater for pedestrians.

At the end of Gloucester Way, paths are used to get to the railway bridge. These paths could require legal conversion to allow cycling. There are also some redundant barriers which seem to serve no purpose which could be removed. The railway bridge seems wide enough for cycling, but there are small steps at both ends. These steps could potentially be converted to a ramp. Parents with push chairs were seen using this bridge, so improvements could benefit that user group.



Photograph 9: The bridge over the railway with small steps.



Photograph 10 – the path towards Brunel Way on the east side of the railway tracks.



Photograph 11: redundant barriers?

Option A: This route uses the existing road around Brunel Way Industrial Estate to Mundford Road.

Option B: This route would go through the Thetford Enterprise Park – an employment allocation yet to be built.

Both options take users to Mundford Road. This road is busy with many HGVs using it. As such, a new link could be provided on the west side of the road that caters for walkers and cyclists. Such a link would benefit those using Mundford Road to get to the TEP.

Furthermore, Mundford Road could be difficult to cross. There is to be a roundabout built at the junction of the TEP entrance and Wyatt Way. Pedestrian refuges could be added to the arms of the roundabout to cater for Pedestrians and Cyclists on the Loops, towards Section 6.

The previous version of Section 5 suggested a route along the tracks and hedgerows from the overgrown underpass to the A134, then a bridge over the A11 to get to near to the Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument area, linking to Section 6.

Section 6: Mundford Road to Croxton Road

The following sections are more for every day uses rather than solely recreational.

Option A: The route would take users through the Industrial Estate, through the Ladies' Estate to Croxton Road. There are footways and shared use paths on this route. These shared use paths lead to Croxton Road. Croxton Road would then be used to get to the next section.

No improvements are required. Travelling through an Industrial Estate could be seen as unattractive both in terms of conflict with potential larger vehicles and also in terms of visitor attractions. However, this route is available now where as option B, discussed below, would only be provided in the next few years. It is felt that as HGV and traffic use is light and only possibly during normal working hours, this route is certainly suitable at present. The legal status of the signed shared use routes will need verifying.

The Norfolk Police ACLO made these comments:

'Efforts should be made to widen the path between the two adjacent industrial premises; in order to improve the opportunity for natural surveillance. Consideration should also be given to upgrading the lighting of the footpath all the way from St. Helens Way through to Croxton Road; to BS5489 as described in Section 1. Once again; overhanging branches that hinder the effectiveness of street lighting should be removed and efforts should be made to ensure that this essential maintenance is continued.'

Option B: There could be a need for a road/route of some kind that runs from Croxton Road to Mundford Road near to the A11 – provision for cyclists and pedestrians should be included.

If a road is not required, provision for cycling and walking should still be included as a result of the development to the North of Thetford.

There might also need to be water infrastructure work required so waste water from the urban extensions can be treated at the Sewerage Treatment Works – there could be potential for a route to be provided for pedestrians and cyclists as part of this work if the road as described previously is not provided.

This option would pass the recently scheduled Iron Age Religious Site at Gallows Hill and new development to the north of Thetford.

The route shown on the maps is indicative and the exact route is dependent upon any strategic transport recommendations from the Stage 2 Transport Study and the masterplans.

To summarise, Option A is suitable for the short term with Option B being preferable in the medium to long term.

Section 7: Croxton Road to Norwich Road

Option A: This section would use Joe Blunt's Lane which is an already established path, used by cyclists and walkers. It is part of the Regional Cycle Route 30.

Between Croxton Road and the railway, the Lane is of varying widths and is not surfaced. There is an existing high railway underpass. It is only a footpath so conversion or a TRO is required.



Picture 12: Joe Blunt's Lane – Croxton Road to Railway



Picture 13: Railway underpass on Joe Blunt's Lane

From the underpass east, the Lane is wider and easier to cycle on although it is not formally surfaced. There is a footpath that runs between the houses and the hedge to the south of the lane – Collingwood and Cunningham Walk.

At the Norwich Road end of this surfaced path there are 3 barriers – 2 seem to be not needed. This is also the case on the other side of Norwich Road on the path leading to Tesco's.



Picture 14: Joe Blunt's Lane
Railway to Norwich Road

Picture 15: Footpath running
parallel to Joe Blunt's Lane



Picture 16: Three barriers near Norwich Road.
The two nearest seem to serve no real purpose and could be removed.

Norwich Road can be crossed by pedestrians using the existing pedestrian refuge.

Cyclists could join the road to turn right at Kilverstone Road. Alternatively, cyclists could use the pedestrian refuge – short lengths of the footways on both sides of Norwich Road would need a TRO to allow cycling and possible widening. Depending on which option for Section 8 is used, either Kilverstone Road or a route through Tesco would take the user to Section 8.

Any improvements to Joe Blunt's Lane should be included within the Masterplan work for the Urban Extensions. Alternatively, as a potential route to school, Sustrans could be approached with regards to any funding they have.

There are suggestions that Rosemary Musker High School could need expanding. Joe Blunt's Lane travels along the northern extent of the school. Any extension would need to consider Joe Blunt's Lane.



Picture 17: Taken from Joe Blunt's Lane/Norwich Road, looking south to the pedestrian refuge.

Option B: This is a medium to long term route that would follow any links within the new development to the north of Thetford. The route is indicative and should be designed in whilst masterplanning. Initial thoughts suggest a new bridge could be built to cross the railway for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians.

Section 8: London Road to Nun's bridges

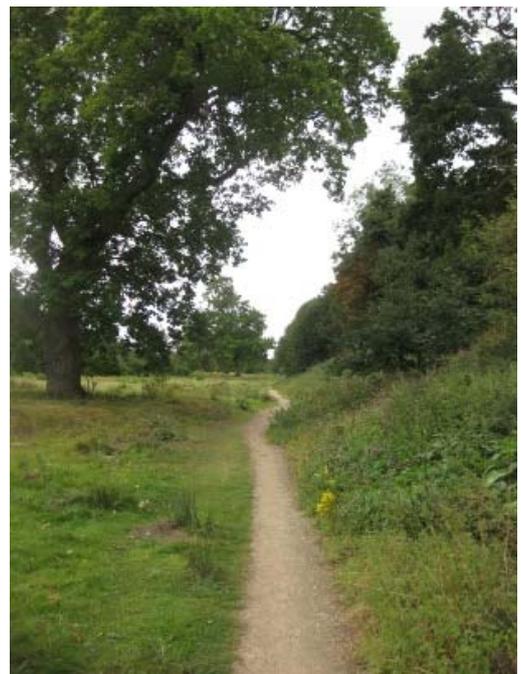
Option A: The original plans show a route through Tesco that follows the river to the east of Cloverfields.

The route through Tesco would lead to Charlock Road. Valerian Rise, Confrey Walk and then Chervill Walk could be used to get to a path that is surfaced and runs by the wooded area to the east of Cloverfields. This is a windy route to access the path and there could be a link provided from Charlock Road to Comfrey Way through the existing verges.

The route to the east of the wooded area starts at Chervill Walk, but there is a gate that is currently locked.



Picture 18: Locked gate at Chervill Walk



Picture 19: Surfaced path east of wooded area



Picture 20: The main path (A) often has more direct informal un-surfaced paths (B) coming off it.

The path is surfaced but would need siding out at some points. There are also sections of informal paths that could be improved to a similar standard as the existing main path.

There is also an informal un-surfaced path that runs within the wooded area parallel to the path to the east of the wooded area. This could be used as well.

The existing path leads to Champion Road which is used to get to another path off Fennel Road. This path is surfaced and follows the river. It leads to near Hurth Way, then joins the winding roads of the culs de sac on Cloverfields to Hurth Way.

A route that leads directly to Hurth Way and up to the bridge would be ideal, rather than using the roads to get to the Rosecroft Way/Hurth Way junction. There is a difference in height that would need to be addressed. See Picture 19.



Picture 21: Access onto path from Fennel Way



Picture 22: Taken from the bridge on the east of Hurth Way on the north side of the river. Looking at a small informal path that links the existing surfaced path from Fennel Way to Hurth Way. There is a height difference and these barriers.

Hurth Way is a busy road and would need to be crossed. There is already a toucan crossing further north of the bridge over the river – at the end of Green Lane. If the above route along the river is used, crossing Hurth Way would need to be investigated.

Once over Hurth Way, there is a green area bound by the river, Hurth Way and Castle Street with picnic benches. There are barriers similar to those shown in Picture 19 that need to be crossed to get to this green area. Once at Castle Street there is a pedestrian bridge to cross the river. Castle Street is then used to get to the Castle Mound and Nun's Bridges.



Picture 23: Taken from west side of Hurth Way looking towards Castle Street.

Option B: From Norwich Road, either Kilverstone Road or a route through Tesco is used to get to Green Lane. Kilverstone Road is likely to be improved as a result of becoming potentially surrounded by dwellings. Any improvements to the road should be part of the Masterplan and should take cyclists and pedestrians into account. Currently the road is suitable for cycling to Green Lane. There are some footways and verges for pedestrians. Alternatively, as per Option A above, pedestrians and cyclists could be directed through Tesco to Green Lane which is a more direct route.



Picture 24 Green Lane between Kilverstone Road and Tesco



Picture 25 Green Lane from Tesco to Hurth Way
Green Lane is an existing shared use path that is surfaced and leads directly to the town centre. It would need siding out to improve the width. There is a Toucan crossing at Hurth Way.

The Norfolk Police ACLO made these comments:

'Green Lane and the areas around it have often been subject to incidents of Criminal Damage, Anti Social Behaviour and the misuse of motor vehicles. With numerous points of access it also provides an ideal escape route for offenders. The whole of Green Lane should be lit using unbroken white light as described in Section 1 to BS5489. Low level bushes, trees and hedges either side of the path should also be pruned and cut back to make the whole path more open, removing potential cover for offenders.'

The stretch of Green Lane between the Tesco access and Kilverstone Road is grassed and should be improved as a result of the proposed development and included in any Masterplan.

Castle Street is crossed and Castle Lane used to get to Nun's Bridges. The main attraction on this stretch is the Castle Mound – cycle stands could be provided here.

There is an attractive route that follows the river to Nun's Bridges and runs close to Arlington Way. This is unsurfaced at the moment. This route would be for pedestrians. There are numerous paths in this area, so signing would be required to aid users. The surface could be improved but reflect the rural nature of the surroundings.



Picture 26: The route by the river near Arlington Way.

Option B, the Green Lane route, is in place at the moment and requires minimal work. It is more direct and could be used for every day uses. Option A would have a different feel to this section of the route but could potentially require a lot of work.

It is suggested that Option B is promoted in the short term and Option A is a medium to long term aspiration that could be provided as a result of the development to the north east near to Kilverstone Hall and St Andrew's Church and any development at Kilverstone Hall – for example the proposed Trident business park.

Section 9: Nun's Bridges to the Town Centre.

This route uses an already established route – Spring Walk, Bridges Walk and Butten Island. The status of these routes will need checking with regards to legally allowing cycling. TROs might be required.

The following improvements have been put in place:

- Railing replaced along concrete pathway edging with bow topped railings to match local design
- Sluice painted
- Surfacing of concrete section and newly laid timber edged pathway from sluice to Bridges Walk
- Railings and gates installed between Bridges walk and betting shop corner
- Level of Butten Island pathway raised, edged and resurfaced with water movement facilities
- Run off from 3 cornered bridge made wheelchair friendly

The Town Centre can then be accessed from this area. Cycle stand provision will be required at various convenient and obvious locations in the Town Centre.

If it were desirable for the route to pass through the town centre, the ban on cycling would have to be revoked. Cycling could be permitted before 11am and after 4pm for example.

The Northern Loop - Potential work

Section 1

- Haling path improvements.
- Subway improvements – potentially part of bus interchange work,.
- St. Nicholas Street/London Road improvements – potentially part of bus interchange work.
- Potentially remove barriers

- Cycle stands at the Priory – English Heritage will need to be approached.

Section 2

- Investigate status of the paths. TRO might be required.
- As a result of the above, signs could be removed.
- Vegetation cut back and path sided out.
- Clearance signage and/or route improvements if route under the bridge is promoted.

Section 3

- Consider an appropriate surface for the informal path with potential link down from Canterbury Way.

Section 4

- Consider an appropriate surface for the Little Ouse Path.
- Determine ownership of the various tracks mentioned and discuss access rights.
- Sign different routes for different uses.
- Consider routes to the south of the Little Ouse and the surfacing requirements.
- Links onto Mundford Road.

Section 5

- TROs on the paths.
- Potentially remove barriers
- Improvements to the Bridge – small steps at the moment.
- Link within the land allocated for TEP.
- Links along Mundford Road
- Provision for pedestrians and cyclists at the roundabout.
- Links towards the Gallows Hill Scheduled Monument

Section 6

- Option A: Warning signs through Industrial Estate could be needed.
- Option B: Any utility, transport work, masterplan for the urban extensions and Gallows Hill Religious Site should take pedestrian and cyclist traffic from Mundford Road to Croxton Road into account.

Section 7

- Improvements to Joe Blunt's Lane and change status to allow cycling.
- Remove redundant barriers on both sides of Norwich Road
- TROs to allow cycling on footways to and from existing pedestrian refuges.

Section 8

- Option A: Link from Charlock Road to Comfrey Way. Investigate ownership of the path to the east of the wooded area. Side out existing path. Improve informal paths. Link to Hurth Way. Crossing Hurth Way. Link from Hurth Way to green area and to Castle Street.
- Option B: Pedestrian and Cycle improvements on Kilverstone Way and on the first stretch of Green Lane. Could be included in the Masterplan and part of the urban extensions.
- Cycle stands at Castle Mound.
- Improvements to surface of route by river near to Arlington Way

Section 9

- Check status of the walks in the area – TRO might be required to allow cycling.
- Revoke town centre cycling ban – perhaps at certain times
- Cycle stand provision in town centre.

5. The Southern Loop

- Description

This Loop passes through the Town Centre and the attractive central river side areas before heading to the southern estates of Thetford. This Loop takes in Barnham Cross Common, Kimm's Belt and the Red Castle. Any improvements on this route will help Thetford residents in their daily activities.

- Details

This Loop shares sections 1, 2 and 9 as described in the Northern Loop section of this report.

Section 1: Spring Walk to Bury Road

From Spring Walk, Nun's Bridges Road is used. This route passes Barnham Cross Common. The information panel at the Common indicates some paths around the Common. The Barnham Cross Common Committee is in the process of refreshing the management plan for the Common and also looking at access. The Loop should fit into the recommendations of that report and from the Committee. Rights of access on commons conferred by CROW Act are limited to pedestrians only and as such cycle stands could be provided.



Picture 27: Barnham Cross sign showing some walks.

Section 2: Bury Road to Kimm's Belt

The route crosses over from Nun's Bridge Road over Bury Road to Bracken Road. There is a path with dropped kerbs. The surface could be improved.



Picture 28: Link over Bury Road to Bracken Road – the surface could be improved.

Bracken Road leads to the path that runs in between Barnham Cross Common and Charles Burrell High School to Kimm's Belt. There is a short path that links Bracken Road to this path.

The Path (not registered or highways maintained) is used to travel towards Kimm's Belt.

The status of the off road links as described above will need to be checked.

Section 3: Kimm's Belt to the Abbey Estate

Kimm's Belt is an already accepted walking and cycle route with an adequate surface for all users. It is registered as a maintained cycleway. There are shared use links from the end of Kimm's Belt to London Road. A pedestrian refuge exists to aid crossing of London Road. There are then shared use links onto St. Martin's Way.

St Martin's Way and St. John's Way are then used to access Mackenzie Road. At this junction an informal un-surfaced path is well used by pedestrians and cyclists and passes through the trees to Brandon Road. It is often used by parents with push chairs on journeys to/from school. The surface can get muddy and difficult to pass. The Norfolk Police ACLO recommended that *'The proposed formalisation of this section should include BS5489 white lighting that as well allowing the user to see the path they are walking on, also enables them to see into trees either side of the path'*

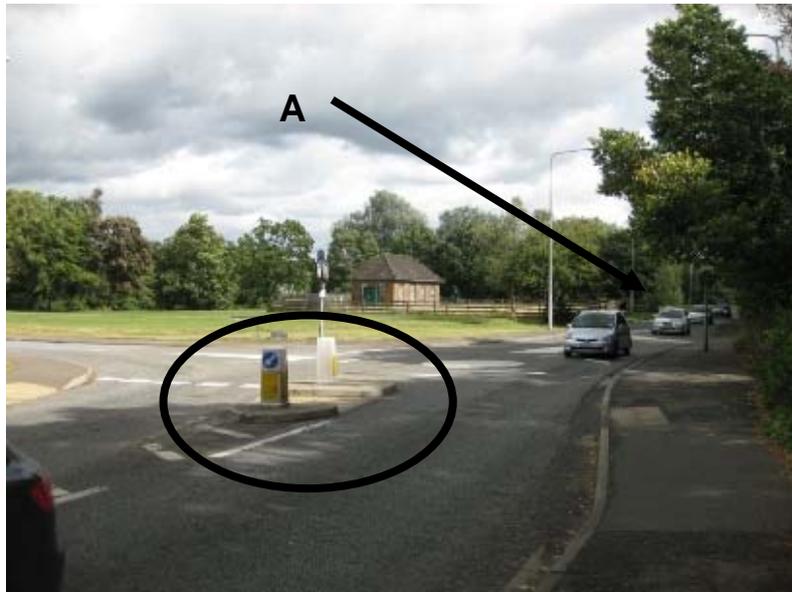


Picture 29: Informal route from Mackenzie Road through the trees to Brandon Road.

This route passes the Red Castle. There could be scope for interpretation boards at this location.



Picture 30: Looking from the trees over Brandon Road at the desire line (A).



Picture 31: The pedestrian refuge (circled) is not on the desire line (A)

Users of this route have been seen to cross Brandon Road at point A on picture 27 and 28, just before the roundabout. There is a pedestrian refuge further to the west, but this is not on the desire line, so people tend not to use it. At point A however, visibility is poor as you look towards the direction of the town centre. People seem to cross at A rather than at the formal pedestrian refuge as it is more convenient. As part of this Loop there could be an opportunity to improve the situation, be it a pedestrian refuge or signing with associated dropped kerbs.

Once Brandon Road is crossed, the Northern Route can be joined or the user can head towards the Priory and the Town Centre.

Southern Loop - Potential work

Section 1

- Cycle Stands at Barnham Cross Common

Section 2

- Check status of the off road links described in this section. TRO's might be required to legally allow cycling.
- Some surface improvements could be required.
- The redundant metal pole in the middle of the path near Kimm's Belt could be removed.

Section 3

- Route from Mackenzie Road to Brandon Road through the trees could be improved.
- Crossing could be improved on the desire line over Brandon Road.
- Interpretation Board at Red Castle.

6. The BTO Loop

- Description

Thetford has an abundance of birdlife and also the BTO headquarters. This Loop takes in the nature reserve of Nunnery Lakes which is a lovely walk around lakes which are home to many species of birds. The route is marked with seating and even a hide to observe the birds. This route also passes the BTO headquarters themselves.

- Details

This route would start as the Northern Loop crosses Castle Street. The BTO Loop heads along Arlington Way. There is a short link from the end of the cul-de-sac which joins an un surfaced route. The BTO reserve is signed with an interpretation board. Cycles could be left near the sign, but cycle stands would be required.

The route is already signed from the BTO to the centre of Thetford. The route over the river, passes Nightingale Way, along Nunnery Place towards Nun's Bridge Road is followed. Here the user can either join the Southern Route or head towards the Town Centre along Spring Walk.

The BTO Loop - Potential work

- Liaise with BTO about this route.
- Cycle stands if cycling is not permitted around the reserve.

7. The Thetford Forest Loop

- Description

Thetford Forest is a beautiful area on the doorstep of Thetford. It is however the other side of the A11 - a dualled and very busy route. This Loop provides access to Thetford Forest and links into existing cycle and walking routes towards High Lodge.

- Details

Option A: Is an off road route to Thetford Warren Lodge. See Northern Loop Section 4 to Abbey Heath Gauging Station. The weir is then crossed using the existing bridge. Narrow, winding, muddy paths lead from the west side of the river to wider and better tracks further into the forest.



Picture 32: Looking towards the weir on the west side of the river – narrow muddy path.

The paths on this first part of the route would need improving – there are also some fallen trees.

The aim would be to use the tracks to get to Brandon Road near to the Thetford Warren Lodge access. This route would have to be signed well as there is potential to get lost.

Once at Thetford Warren Lodge, the various cycle or walking routes could be used to get to High Lodge.

Near to the golf course, although the OS maps show some tracks, these are not present on the ground. Satellite images show that there is potential to travel around Thetford Golf Course and reach Brandon Road. This section would need further investigation and liaison with the golf course and Forestry Commission.

Brandon Road is a busy route and as such some assistance to cross the road might be required.

Option B: Forestry Commission indicate in their Access and Tourism Strategy an aspiration for a Green Bridge over the Brandon Road. The Loop could use this Green Bridge although the main reason for a Green Bridge in this location is to connect biodiversity. An alternative could be an underpass of some kind.

Option C: Forestry Commission indicate in their Access and Tourism Strategy a route from Barnham Cross Common skirting the south of the town, crossing the A11 and joining the Forest's existing routes.

It is unclear how the A11 will be crossed. The exact route is not known. Although there are tracks in the area, there is also an area used for MOD training and is a Danger Area.

Option D: This would use the Boundary Belt footpath to the A11. The A11 would need to be crossed to access Forest Tracks near to Olley's Farm. The landowner and farmer will need to be contacted with regards to using routes near to the farm to get to the forest paths to High Lodge. This is a peaceful route that runs along the edge of the Barnham Cross Estate then along the edge of Barnham Camp, through forested areas, to the A11. In the short term, before the dualling, crossing the A11 seems possible at this point as the visibility along the A11 in both directions is good. This crossing is not part of the plans for the A11 dualling however.



Photograph 33: Boundary belt path, just south west of Barnham Cross



Photograph 34: Boundary Belt Path scenery, near to the A11.



Photograph 35: Access to Olley's Farm.

Option E: The plans for the dualling of the A11 show that a new arm will be added to the existing roundabout near to Sainsbury. This would be the access for the Rifle Range and Olly's Farm. This

route could be used to get to Forestry Tracks. The roundabout is a busy one and as such this route is not ideal, but will be an option.

Option F: The future dualling of the A11 between Thetford and Five-ways will result in a shared use path being provided from Thetford to near to Elveden. From Elveden onwards, the new route that bypasses Elveden will result in a quieter route through Elveden. The B1106 could then be used to access High Lodge. Vehicle speeds on the B1106 could be a concern however.

Note that a route next to Brandon Road from Thetford, over the roundabout and in the verge towards Warren Lodge was initially suggested but discussions with NCC Officers has led to the removal as an option. The Road is currently an accident black spot.

To summarise: There are 5 options to access the Forest, but all need work of some kind. The work required varies greatly from a green bridge to crossing at grade the Brandon Road. Further discussions are required with regards to getting to the Forest/

The Thetford Forest Loop - Potential work

- Option A: Improvements to the paths near to the Gauging Station. Comprehensive way marking to avoid users getting lost. Further investigation into getting to Brandon Road. Liaison with Forestry Commission and Thetford Golf Course. Crossing provision over Brandon Road.
- Option B: A Green Bridge or underpass.
- Option D: Formation of a new route from Barnham Cross Common to existing routes in the Forest.
- Option E: Possible path improvements and help in crossing A11.

8. The Croxton Village Loop

- Description

This loop crosses the railway close to the Chicken Litter Power Station and uses a wide un surfaced path towards Croxton Village. It then travels to Thetford.

Note that the proposed Biomass Power Station could be a destination on this section. A route to near the station could be provided as well as interpretation boards. The potential for this has already been mentioned to the Power Station's agents.

- Details

Section 1: Overgrown Railway Underpass to A134

From the underpass, there are 3 possible routes. The first is to continue along the Little Ouse Path, the second along a wide track within the trees and the third along the open space next to the railway fence.

It is recommended that the middle route, between the trees is used as this offers a different walking and cycling environment compared to the rest of the route. This route is suitable for walking and cycling. It is not surfaced however and the ownership and access rights will need to be checked and access permission sought if required. This path then deviates towards the railway.

The railway can then be crossed at an existing un-manned level crossing. It is awkward for a cycle to pass through the pedestrian gates at the moment. There are metal barriers as shown in the picture below which make it difficult for even a pedestrian to pass through. These could be removed. The larger vehicle access could also be used.



Picture 36: Metal Barrier hinders use of the level crossing.

Once across the railway, a route to the east of the tracks will take users to the entrance of the Chicken Litter Power Station. It might be desirable if this route is chosen to liaise with the Power Station operators in order to make delivery HGVs aware of pedestrians and cyclists. Warning signs could also be provided.

The A134 is a busy road and will need to be crossed to get to the path towards Croxton Village. A pedestrian refuge with associated links and/or warning signs could help pedestrians and cyclists cross this road.

The Thetford Forest Access and Tourism Strategy has aspirations for a Green Bridge to cross both the railway and the A134. This could be used when in place, but in the mean time, using the level crossing over the railway is possible, but crossing the A134 is an issue that needs further investigation.

Section 2: A134 to Croxton Village

There is an existing and promoted path that is fairly wide. In parts it is grass, in other parts it is used by farm vehicles on occasion and their wheel tracks have removed the grass. It is suitable for walking in its current state although it is a footpath at the moment and will need to be made into a bridleway with landowner consent. It is signed as part of the National Cycle Network Route 13.



Picture 37: Mundford Road to Croxton Road path – Near to Mundford Road



Picture 38: Mundford Road to Croxton Road path – Croxton End

Section 3: Croxton Village to Thetford

Option A: This route passes through Croxton Village which has a 30mph speed limit and footways. Beyond the village, National Speed Limit applies and there are no footways. This route is suitable for cycling – it is signed as a regional and national cycle route. But pedestrians would have to walk in the road or on the verge as it stands.



Picture 39: Croxton Road.

Option B: Two longer alternatives exist which could be more for recreation. This could be more of a recreational route.

From the end of Section 1, the road directly opposite is followed until the route off to the south of the road, into some forest. A series of tracks through Croxton Heath are used to get to the Sheep Walk, but the railway track. The Sheep Walk follows the railway and passes under the A11. The underpass has ample room for pedestrians and cyclists with fencing between the path and the tracks.

As part of the Masterplan work, a route should continue to Joe Blunt's Lane.



Picture 40:
Underpass under
A11 by the railway
en route to the
Sheep Walk

Option C: Opposite the above route to the south of the road, there is an existing footpath that heads north to the Devil's Punchbowl. The route would then follow the Hereward's Way to the east, near to Wretham Heath Nature Reserve, then uses tracks to meet the Sheep Walk as described above.

All three options could feasibly be included as they all offer something different.

The original idea would have followed some farm tracks towards the Sheep Walk, however concerns were expressed by the landowner with regards to conflict between users and farm operations. As such, this option has not been taken forward.

The Croxton Village Loop - Potential work

Section 1

- Check ownership and status of all routes described. Permission might need to be sought from the landowners and agreements produced over usage and access.
- Some kind of surfacing if desired/required.
- Consider the barrier arrangement at the level crossing. Changes might make it easier to use by pedestrians and cyclists.
- Liaison with Power Station regarding pedestrians and cyclists and any potential conflict with delivery HGVs.
- Pedestrian refuge with associated links and/or signage for crossing the A134.

Section 2

- Some kind of surfacing if desired/required.

Section 3

- If desirable or required, a footpath could be provided between Croxton Village and Thetford.
- Identification of the status of the tracks from Croxton to the Sheep Walk. Potential liaison with landowner re allowing cycling along these tracks.
- Route within the Northern Development Area to provide for continuation of the Sheep Walk.

9. General Issues

- **Design**

Some of the proposed routes are not surfaced and are narrow in parts. Walkers and cyclists could still use these routes. They would not be fully DDA compliant. It might also not be desirable to have lengths of concrete or tarmaced surfacing in the country side. There are alternative surfaces which are more suitable for rural areas and passing places could be provided if width is adequate.

Forestry Commission standards would apply within the Forest and could be repeated if appropriate on other parts of the Loops.

Any surface used should have a low maintenance factor – i.e. require little maintenance in future years.

In general terms, Loops inside the A11 are likely to have both recreational and every day uses, whereas outside of the A11, the routes are recreation only – surfacing could reflect the potential usage.

- **Status of routes**

The status of the various sections of the route needs to be researched to check if cycling is legally allowed.

Conversion orders, TROs or changing a route to bridleways will need to be required in different areas. Different statuses have different surfacing requirements.

Some sections of the route could be on private land. Landowners would need to be approached regarding permission for the Loop to pass through their land and also to provide bins, seating, interpretation boards and even improvements to the route.

The Forestry is a managed forest with felling of various parts. The status that any route takes will need to reflect changes in the layout of the forest with regards to felling and planting.

- **Users of the Loops**

The route will obviously be used by walkers and cyclists. There could be runners using the route as well. It is unclear as to whether there will potentially be Horse riders using the route. This could have design implications and as such is an issue to consider.

Further more, consideration should be made regarding the usage of the route by disabled people and consequently any specific requirements.

The FC vision would be that more challenging routes would be based upon the existing cycle trail infrastructure in Thetford Forest and that the Thetford Loops would be orientated to more general (family) use allowing existing and new Thetford residents to access the Public Forest Estate on foot or by bike.

- **Preventing illegal motorcycling and any Anti Social Behavioural issues**

This is a concern raised as part of the consultation. Ways to prevent this would need investigating. There would be associated enforcement issues.

The Police Architectural Liaison Officer will be consulted.

The possibility of motorcycle ‘traps’ will be considered.

The Forestry Commission and Police share an officer who could be contacted with regards to the Loops.

- **Cycle Stands**

Any cycle stands that are provided should be of the Sheffield Stand variety and placed in convenient locations. Cycle stands could be provided at the various attractions/destinations along the routes.

- **Bins and dog bins**

It is Forestry Commission policy to not have bins in the forest.

Within the urban area, Thetford Town Council could provide bins in appropriate locations and liaise with Cerco with regards to emptying.

The idea of sacrificial areas where dogs are predicted to go to toilet could be provided. For example fenced woodchip areas –this could provide fuel for the Biomass power station if appropriate.

- **Benches, seating and picnic tables**

Benches and seating would be welcomed in convenient places. The type and style would be appropriate to the setting. There could be the potential to use Memorial benches. These would need maintaining.

- **Maintenance and ownership.**

Maintenance and ownership is likely to fall to the body who owns the land or has responsibility for that particular section. For example it could be Forestry Commission, Thetford Town Council, Breckland Council or Norfolk County Council.

There are issues such as regular inspections of the route and revenue to maintain the route which require further investigation. This could be helped by the initial design being one that requires low maintenance. Typical maintenance costs of such a route could be estimated.

The project needs to be viable and sustainable in the long term. Funding for the future maintenance needs to be investigated.

- **Lighting**

The following comment was received from Norfolk Police Architectural Liaison Officer:

'As a link to two large housing estates; this section is an important and well used route. Consideration should be given to using this opportunity to improve the lighting here to lighting that complies with BS 5489. Such a move would be in line with the Norfolk County Council long term plan to improve all of Norfolk's street lighting to this standard. Lighting should be directed down to reduce light pollution and should be white halide lighting which offers better colour rendition than yellow sodium. This also gives the area a safer feel and subsequently helps reduce the fear of crime. Overhanging branches that hinder the effectiveness of street lighting should in any case be removed and efforts should be made to ensure that this essential maintenance is continued' and 'Lighting in wooded areas must not leave dark areas near to the pathway in which a potential offender could hide.'

- **Branding**

Schools could be involved in designing the branding. The brand could be used for signing, leaflets and on the interpretation boards.

- **Signing and way markers**

The routes will need signing with way markers. Comprehensive signage would help prevent users getting lost and wondering off the track.

The Loops could be signed from various parts of the town such as the Bus Interchange and the Train Station.

- **Leaflets and advertisement**

Leaflets and posters could help promote the Loops. These could be available at Tourist Information Offices.

- **Interpretation Boards**

There are already some interpretation boards around the town. A similar format could be used around the Loops, informing users of the attractions or flora and fauna they are seeing or likely to see.

Both Thetford Town Council and Forestry Commission have different specifications and have used boards in the past. More could be provided at the start of the route and at various places around the Town such as at the bus interchange and train station. Boards could be more sporadic in provision around the Loops themselves.

- **Annual event**

The Loops could provide the basis for an annual event, such as a 10km run or bike ride.

- **Art**

There is an opportunity for public art as part of the route. This could range from the style of the benches to larger pieces of art around the trail, perhaps in the Forest. Sustrans and Forestry Commission could be approached about this issue.

- **10,000 trees in 10 years**

The emerging Vision work as mentioned previously in the report has suggested a potential project for the Town. It would be the planting of trees in the Town and along the routes of the Loops.

10. Opportunities

- **Forestry Commission Work**

The FC are keen on promoting links between Thetford and the Forest. Some of the sections of the Northern, Croxton and Thetford Forest Loops are in the Forest.

One key issue is that of maintenance of routes.

- **Little Ouse Path**

Both the FC and the Brecks Partnership have mentioned improving the Little Ouse path surface. Some of the sections of the Northern, Croxton and Thetford Forest Loops could benefit from or facilitate the improving of the Little Ouse Path.

- **Central Riverside Work**

The improvements as described previously were completed to a standard that would accommodate cycling. These improvements could be added to - parts of the Spring Walk, Bridges Walk and Button Island route could need TRO's to legally allow cycling.

- **Development**

Links from the development to the north are crucial. As Thetford is a Healthy Town, walking and cycling are to be promoted. Parts of the Northern Loop could serve as vital walking and cycling links to and from the development areas. As such, the potential development in Thetford is a huge opportunity to implement the Thetford Loops.

Landowners are working in conjunction with the Council to produce Masterplans for the Urban Extensions. The Loops should be accommodated in that work.

Furthermore, as a result of the proposed urban extension to the north of Thetford, the Thetford Enterprise Park and also the proposed Biomass Power Station, the Mundford Road Roundabout might need improving. Any improvements should take into account pedestrians and cyclists.

Discussions will be held with the landowners on this document and how they could be involved in implementing the Loops.

- **Bus interchange**

Improvements to the underpass and junction as per Northern Loop Section 1 could be included within plans for the bus station

- **Safer Routes to School**

Some of the routes within the A11 are on routes to school and improvements could help the school run.

- **Local Transport Plan**

Some improvements could be included as part of the Local Transport Plan for forthcoming years, although it is understood that there are many schemes competing for limited funding which could be reduced in future years.

- **SUSTRANS**

It is understood that Sustrans have funding available for improvements to routes to school – some sections of the various loops could be part of safer routes to school routes. The funding they provide is 50% of the total.

11. Phasing

The route might need to be developed in phases – some sections would cost more than others and some will be easier to implement than others.

The exact details of phasing will be investigated as part of or as a result of the next stage of work which will look into the technical aspects of the proposed route as well as the costings of the potential work, but initial thoughts are:

1. Route near to Redcastle improved (aid school run)
2. Central routes along Spring Walk etc – legally allow cycling
3. Improvements to access to Little Ouse and on to Thetford Forest
4. Multi-functional route improvements
5. Recreational route improvements.

12. Habitats Regulation Assessment

Because the route heads into Thetford Forest, there is potential to affect the European protected species. A Habitats Regulation Assessment will be undertaken for the Thetford Area Action Plan including the Loops. This could result in changes to the Loops as and/or the requirement or mitigation measures. Note that most of the route is within the A11 and follows already established paths and walks outside the A11.

13. Involvement of other bodies.

There are other stakeholders or interested parties which could be involved in various ways:

- Thetford Town Council
- Brettenham and Kilverstone Parish Council
- Croxton Parish Council
- Forestry Commission
- TIMBER
- Norfolk County Council
- Breckland Council
- Thetford Access Group
- Landowners – Northern Extension.

14. Next Steps

<u>Task</u>	<u>Who?</u>	<u>Contacted?</u>
Investigate the status of the routes in terms of access rights.	NCC	Yes
Send report to Landowner Masterplanners	NB	Yes
Contact Bus Interchange designers		
Send report to Sustrans	NB	Yes
Send report to ACLO	NB	Yes
Contact FC and Police shared officer		
Contact BTO	NB	Yes
Send report to Croxton and Kilverstone and Brettenham Town Councils	NB	Yes
Investigate the technical aspects of the proposed route.		
Stage 1 Safety Audit		
Estimate the cost of the potential work.		
Suggest phasing.		
Assessment as part of the TAAP Habitats Regulation Work.		
Add to Evidence Base for the TAAP and refresh draft policy.		
Show at January's MTF consultation/information events	NB	yes

Appendix A - Thetford Loop extract from TAAP Preferred Options report.

Policy / Para Ref:	Policy TH14 – Thetford: The Thetford Loops
<p>Summary of Comments Received (see section 3 for a more detailed summary)</p>	<p><u>Principle</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is a good idea • Short walks will encourage cheap family days out • Good idea but does it replace the river valley parkway concept that was central to the green infrastructure strategy? The central riverside area proposal seems to be a watered down version of the latter. • This could provide the basis for a spatial framework • Involve users at a very early stage. • Benches and bins etc needed along route • Could include some easy routes and perhaps more challenging ones too without conflicting with each other • Concern re shared use and conflict between pedestrians and cyclists. • This will become another motor bike track and area for fly tipping. • Not needed and will not be used and will be overgrown and untidy in a very short time. • Should undergo appropriate assessment to assess the impact of disturbance upon all three Annex 1 birds of the Breckland SPA (stone curlew, nightjar, woodlark). • How policed for safety, cleaned and maintained and how will these issues be funded? <p><u>Route</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't include Batten Island / spring walks within this loop • Indicative route is on agricultural land – issues re farming practices. Farmers need to be contacted. No consideration has been given to the increased burden of health and safety issues facing the land occupier. • Loop could have spurs to include Barnham Cross Estate and Common and Redcastle. Needs to link with the Country Park. Include Two Mile Bottom. Access to High Lodge & Lynford Hall. • The loop also features the Kingfisher Lake perhaps this could revert to a common use as it. • Near BTO land: land is marshy, has drainage ditches and is, therefore unsuitable as a footpath. The BTO is constantly maintaining the land and the hedges; to allow a footpath across the water meadows would undo all their good work. It is unreasonable to expect the BTO to relinquish land for walking or cycling. Cause disturbance to wildlife. <p><u>Green bridges</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At present cyclists, runners and walkers heading in the direction of High Lodge have to brave the A11/A134/B1107 roundabout. A bridge somewhere at this point needed. • Care that this is not prioritised over other more low cost proposals to enhance biodiversity. Whilst an attractive bridge will be vital from a public access viewpoint, there may be very little gain for biodiversity unless there are further green areas leading from the bridge.
<p>Initial MTF Response to Comments Received</p>	<p>Mixed views, although more people in favour than against. Agree that if it is to go ahead it needs to be planned, implemented and maintained properly.</p> <p>All comments gratefully received and will need considering further.</p> <p>In principle, MTF welcomes the broad support and will continue to support the idea, but acknowledge there are a number of issues to resolve and detailed</p>

	design matters to overcome.
Issues to Resolve / Additional Work Needed / Way Forward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further design and feasibility work is needed. Consider all comments above during further loop related study work. AA, consultation and routing issues are particularly important issues in the first instance. • The feasibility of a Green Bridge needs to be investigated, and if unviable a 'plan B' solution to crossing the A11 needs to be found. • Need to liaise directly with a number of respondents, especially landowners which are potentially affected by the scheme.

Appendix B - Other routes in the area

Around Thetford there are many National and local routes, many of which are historical.

St Edmund Way – A route across Suffolk, using the Stour Valley Path (East Anglia) to Sudbury and Long Melford and then going via Lavenham and Little Welnetham to Bury St Edmunds, burial place of the martyr King Edmund slain by the Danes in 869, along the waymarked Lark Valley Path (13 miles and included on OS mapping) to the Icknield Way Path at West Stow before striking over the Brecks to Thetford and the Hereward Way. The route goes through Thetford and follows the Little Ouse and ends in Brandon.

Hereward Way – The Hereward Way links the Viking Way (at Oakham) with the Peddars Way near to Knettishall Heath. The route Starts/ends at Roudham Heath and passes to the North of Croxton. It joins the St Edmund Way to Brandon. It passes close to Lakenheath Station.

Icknield Way Path - The path is 105 miles long, linking the Ridgeway Path to the Peddars Way. St Edmund Way acts as a link to the Icknield Way from Thetford.

Angle Way - starts to the east of Knettishall Heath – near to start of Peddars and Icknield way. The Way was devised by the RA, and together with the Peddars Way, Norfolk Coast Path and Weavers' Way, forms the 227-mile Around Norfolk Walk. From Great Yarmouth the route goes by Breydon Water, along and near the River Waveney, passing around Oulton Broad, Beccles and Bungay, and Harleston and Diss, to its source, and then by the Little Ouse from its source very close by through heathland and marsh to Knettishall Heath in the Suffolk Brecks. Less than a mile onwards west across the heath the coincident start of the Peddars Way and finish of the Icknield Way Path are reached.

Regional Cycle Route 30 (Two rivers) - starts at Lowestoft and joins National Cycle Route 11 near to Downham Market. to the west links National Cycle Route 13 to 11. The route leaves Thetford via Croxton Road after entering via Kilverstone Road.

National Cycle Route 13 - The route heads north out of Thetford, passing through the edge of Thetford Forest. It briefly joins the ancient Roman "Peddars Way" National Trail and then passes through the market towns of Watton and Dereham. North of Dereham the route takes in the pretty village of Gressenhall, with the excellent Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse Museum a short distance from the route. From Gressenhall the route continues northwards to join National Route 1 at Gateley, near Fakenham.

Peddars Way and Norfolk Coast Path - The Peddars Way & Norfolk Coast Path starts in Suffolk at Knettishall Heath Country Park and follows the route of a Roman road to Holme-next-the-Sea on the north Norfolk coast. At Holme the Peddars Way meets the Norfolk Coast Path as it runs from Hunstanton to Cromer. The route passes Thetford 10km to the east.

Little Ouse Pathway - A gentle 10 miles/16.25 km walk through the Little Ouse valley linking Thetford and Brandon. Often following the old towpath.

Iceni Way - A route from Breckland to the Coast. It starts at the meeting point of Peddars Way with the Angles Way and goes to Thetford. It then goes to Brandon (some of this section is coincident with the Little Ouse Path, a 10 mile path included on OS mapping) and continues along the Little Ouse to join the Great Ouse at Brandon Creek and, in part using the Fen Rivers Way, proceeds to King's Lynn. From here an inland route via Sandringham is taken to the coast near Snettisham and then the coast is followed to link up with the Norfolk Coast Path at Hunstanton. There are also links with the Icknield and Nar Valley Ways.

There are 4 walks near to High Lodge the Orange route (1mile), blue route (1mile), yellow route (3miles) and the easy access route that follows the sculpture trail. <http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/INFD-77fkcw>

Thetford Forest does have many other walks, but these are much further from Thetford.

Lynford Lakes: [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/pdf.nsf/pdf/fce-Lynford-1024.pdf/\\$FILE/fce-Lynford-1024.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/pdf.nsf/pdf/fce-Lynford-1024.pdf/$FILE/fce-Lynford-1024.pdf)

St Helens, Near Santon Downham: [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/pdf.nsf/pdf/fce-st-helens.pdf/\\$FILE/fce-st-helens.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/pdf.nsf/pdf/fce-st-helens.pdf/$FILE/fce-st-helens.pdf)

High Ash off the A1065: [http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/pdf.nsf/pdf/fce-HighAsh-1024.pdf/\\$FILE/fce-HighAsh-1024.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/pdf.nsf/pdf/fce-HighAsh-1024.pdf/$FILE/fce-HighAsh-1024.pdf)

There are many cycle routes in Thetford Forest. All routes offer cyclists the opportunity to explore deep into the forest. The Green and Blue Routes follow forest roads and tracks. The Red Route winds through the forest on single track, but avoids the slopes, twists and turns of the Black Route. The Black Route retains its dramatic characteristics and is more unpredictable.

[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/pdf.nsf/pdf/thetford-bike-map.pdf/\\$FILE/thetford-bike-map.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/website/pdf.nsf/pdf/thetford-bike-map.pdf/$FILE/thetford-bike-map.pdf)

Appendix C: Loop Drawings.