Grovesend Road to Gillingstool – Addendum to EQIA

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Project no:	WECASG04
Attention:	DP
Company:	South Gloucestershire Council
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1.1 Introduction

This document provides an addendum to the Grovesend Road to Gillingstool Active Travel Corridor Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) to further assess the section of the route along Gillingstool, between Streamside Walk and Knapp Road.

The addendum considers design amendments made following an Active Travel England design surgery, during which it was recommended that the proposed shared-use path be upgraded to a segregated pedestrian and cycle facility.

To facilitate a clear comparison, the scheme between Streamside Walk and Knapp Road have been divided into smaller sections. Each section and its associated layout will be assessed individually in turn.

Table 1 below, presents a record of the pedestrian and cycle flows using Gillingstool in both directions in 2026. This demonstrates a street used by both pedestrians and cyclists at a low rate with assumed peak walking time around school drop off and pick up times.

Table 1. Pedestrian and cycle flows on Gillingstool (west of Knapp Road)

Location	Pedestrians		Pedal Cycles	
	Peak Hour Friday 0800-0900	**12 Hour** Friday	**Peak Hour** Sunday 0930-1030	**12 Hour** Sunday
Gillingstool west of Knapp Road	47	329	23	94

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1.2 Design options summary

1.2.1 Streamside Walk to Pearce Close

1.2.1.1 Shared use option

Figure 1a illustrates the section of the scheme between Streamside Walk and Pearce Close, where the proposed bidirectional active travel facility adjacent to Gillingstool is provided as a shared pedestrian and cycle facility, shown by the orange line.

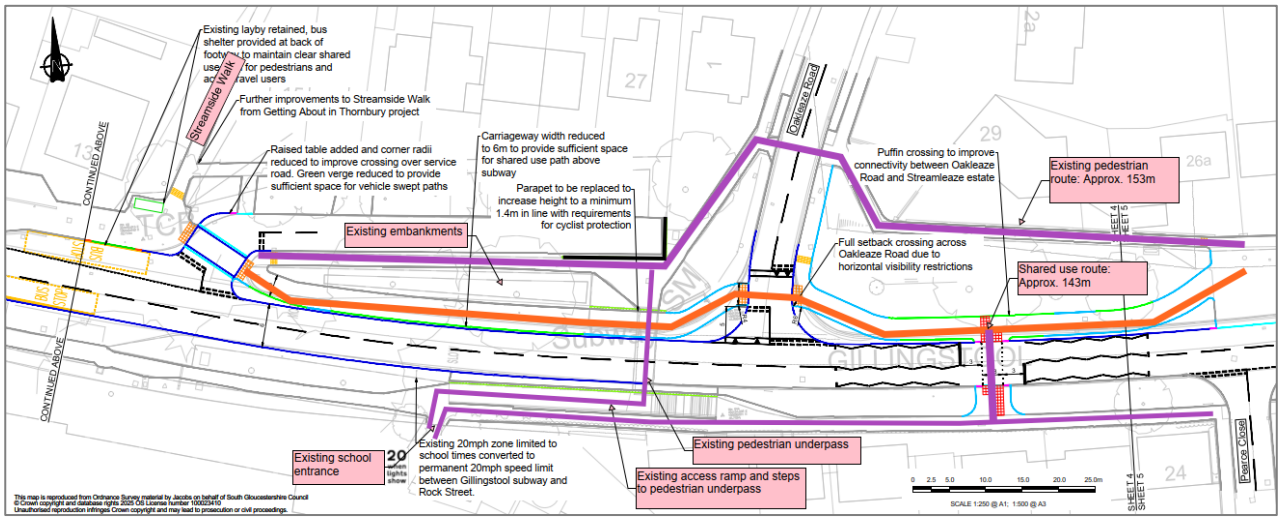


Figure 1a: Streamside Walk to Pearce Close – Shared Use Option

There are two key pedestrian desire lines within this section that are particularly important, shown by the purple lines. The first is the existing pedestrian route between Streamside Walk and Oakleaze Road, which follows the existing cul-de-sac and lower-level footway connecting to the pedestrian underpass beneath Gillingstool. Pedestrians continue eastwards along the lower-level footway before travelling northwards to the Oakleaze Road crossing point and onwards towards Pearce Close. While the existing footway is of an adequate width and surface standard, it is not the most direct route, measuring approximately 153 metres in length, requiring users to navigate changing gradients and incorporating several 90-degree turns.

By comparison, the proposed shared pedestrian and cycle facility would provide a more direct route of approximately 143 metres, with a continuous 3 metre-wide path and no sharp changes in direction. Due to its improved visibility and more direct alignment, the new facility is likely to become the preferred walking route. Enhanced passive surveillance from passing road users is expected to improve perceptions of personal security, whereas the existing lower-level route includes a short section that is not visible from the adjacent carriageway and may therefore be perceived as less safe.

The second key pedestrian desire line relates to connectivity between the proposed facility and the two adjacent primary schools via the proposed signal-controlled pedestrian crossing. This would provide a significant benefit for people walking and wheeling to and from the two schools. In addition to improving accessibility for all active travel users, the route offers a shorter and more attractive alternative to the existing underpass connection. The provision of a safe, at-grade crossing of Gillingstool may also encourage greater levels of cycling to school, particularly among children, compared with the existing grade-separated underpass arrangement.

1.2.1.2 Segregated option

Figure 1b shows the same section of the scheme as Figure 1a; however, in this option the shared-use pedestrian and cycle facility has been fully converted into a segregated cycle track, with pedestrians directed to use the existing footway network.

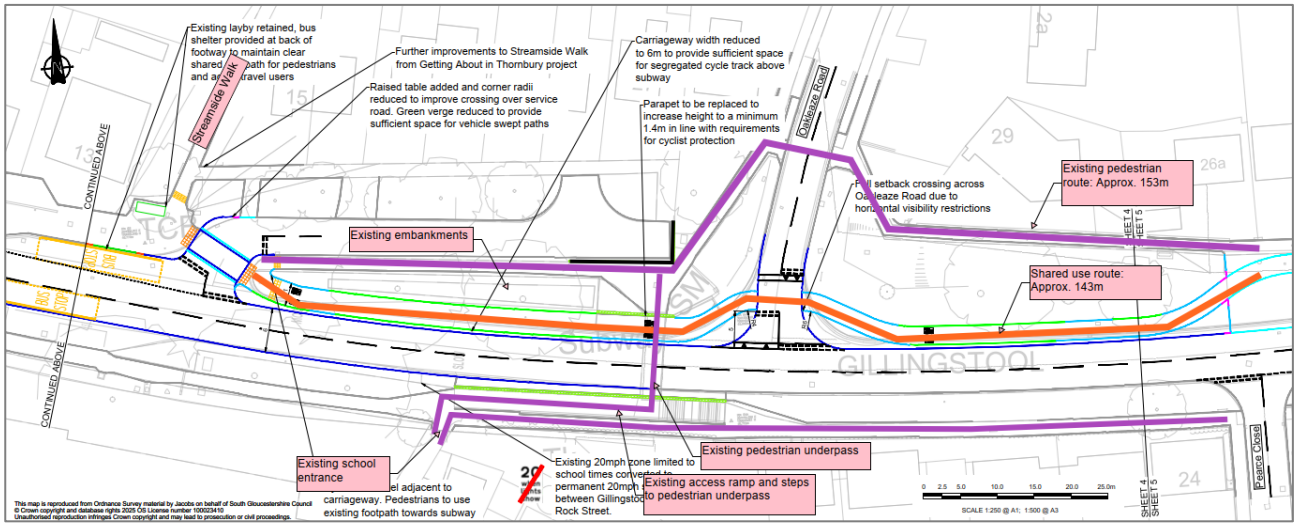


Figure 1b: Oakleaze Rd and Gillingstool Subway – Segregated Cycle Track Option

The proposed signal-controlled crossing has been removed from this option due to concerns regarding potential impacts on the adjacent mature trees and the requirement for a new footway connection on the northern side of Gillingstool. As a result, pedestrians are required to use a longer route via the existing narrow footways, with the pedestrian underpass remaining the only formal crossing facility available at this location.

The set-back crossing at the junction of Gillingstool and Oakleaze Road would remain unchanged from the existing proposal, as there is currently no provision within UK highway regulations for a zebra crossing that serves cyclists exclusively.

Given that pedestrians typically favour the most direct and convenient route available, there is a high risk that some users may choose to walk along the segregated cycle track rather than follow the longer footway route. This behaviour may be particularly prevalent during periods of higher-than-normal pedestrian flows, such as school drop-off and pick-up times, when the cycle track may appear to offer a more attractive and direct pedestrian route.

Consequently, the intended segregation between pedestrians and cyclists may not be fully achieved in practice. This could result in conflicts between the two user groups and reduce the effectiveness of the proposed segregated arrangement, particularly if pedestrian demand for direct at-grade connectivity remains high.

1.2.2 Pearce Close to The Black Horse

1.2.2.1 Shared use option

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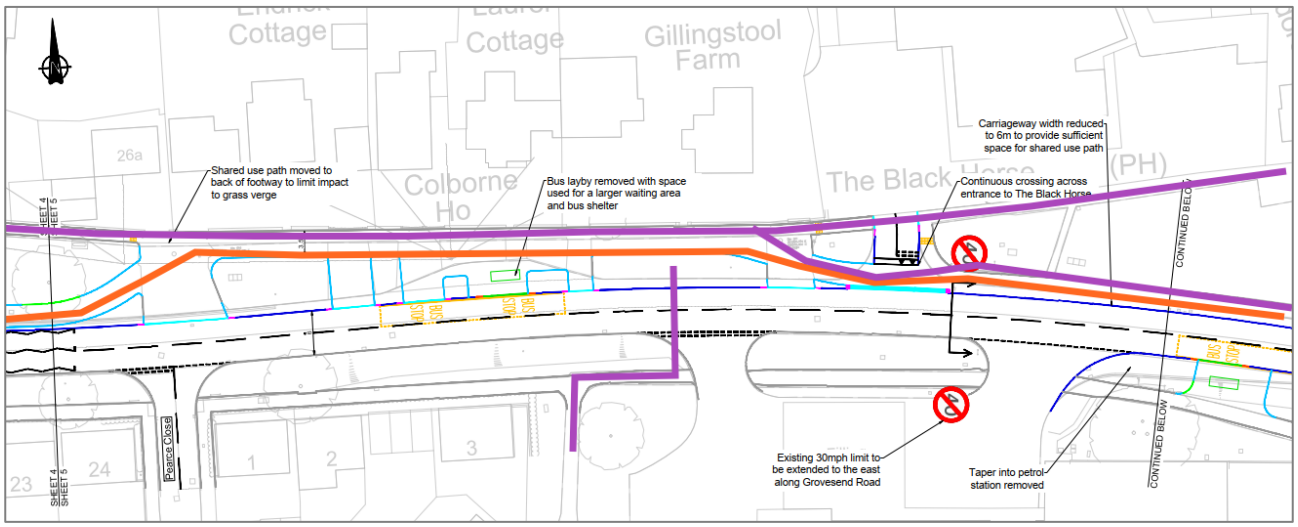


Figure 2a: Pearce Close and Black Horse Public House – Shared Use Option

The purple lines show the pedestrian routes available within this section. These routes either follow the existing footway provision along the rear of the highway boundary or utilise the proposed shared-use path adjacent to Gillingstool, which is created through the widening of the existing footway. This layout provides adequate pedestrian connectivity and accommodates key desire lines in all directions.

1.2.2.2 Segregated option

Figure 2b illustrates the same section of the scheme as Figure 2a. However, in this option the shared-use pedestrian and cycle facility has been fully converted to a segregated cycle track, as indicated by the orange line, with pedestrians directed to use the existing footway provision located at the rear of the highway boundary, shown by the purple line.

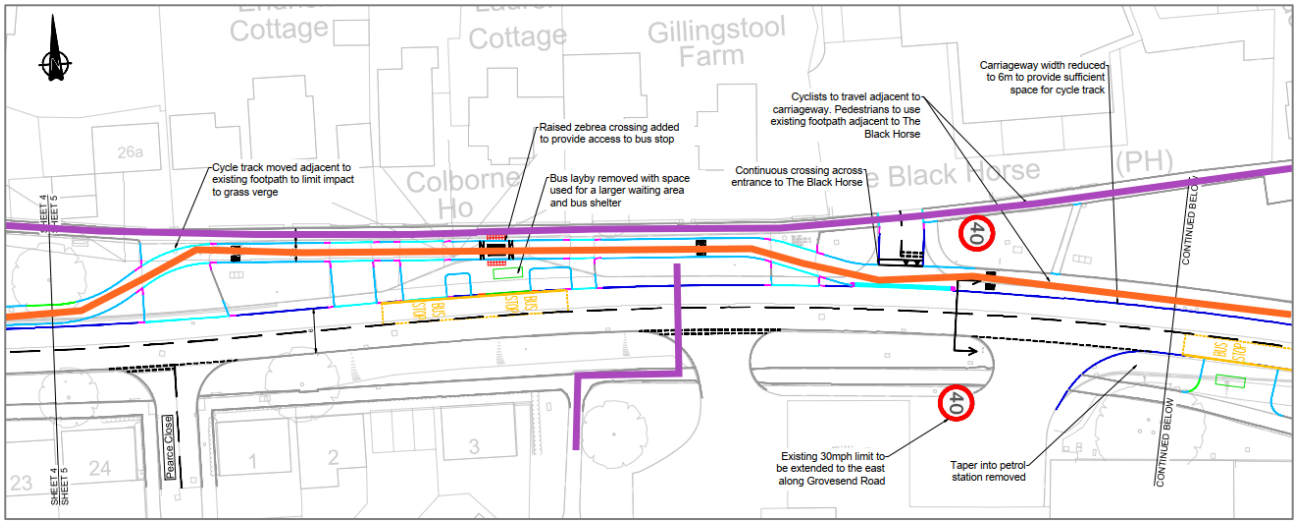


Figure 2b: Pearce Close and Black Horse Public House – Segregated Cycle Track Option

Under this arrangement, pedestrian movements are largely restricted to the existing rear footway network. This presents accessibility challenges for users wishing to access the westbound bus stop, as there will be no direct pedestrian link between the footway and the bus stop without crossing or walking along the segregated cycle track. Provision of a parallel footway adjacent to the cycle track is constrained by the existing embankment, which slopes down towards the rear footway. Consequently, accommodating both facilities would likely require the construction of a retaining wall, resulting in additional engineering complexity and cost.

The proposed layout therefore provides less direct pedestrian connectivity than the shared-use option and may not fully accommodate established pedestrian desire lines, particularly for bus users. This could disproportionately affect those with reduced mobility, people travelling with pushchairs, and users carrying luggage or shopping.

As pedestrians typically favour the most direct and convenient route available, there is a risk that some users may choose to walk along the segregated cycle track instead of following the longer designated footway route. This behaviour may be particularly common during periods of low cycle activity, when the cycle track is perceived as a more convenient walking route. As a result, the intended segregation between pedestrians and cyclists may not be fully realised in practice, potentially leading to conflicts between user groups and reducing the effectiveness of the segregated facility.

1.2.3 The Black Horse to Knapp Road

1.2.3.1 Shared use option

Figure 3a illustrates the section of the scheme between the Black Horse Public House and Knapp Road, where the proposed bidirectional active travel facility adjacent to Gillingstool is provided as a shared pedestrian and cycle facility, as indicated by the orange line.

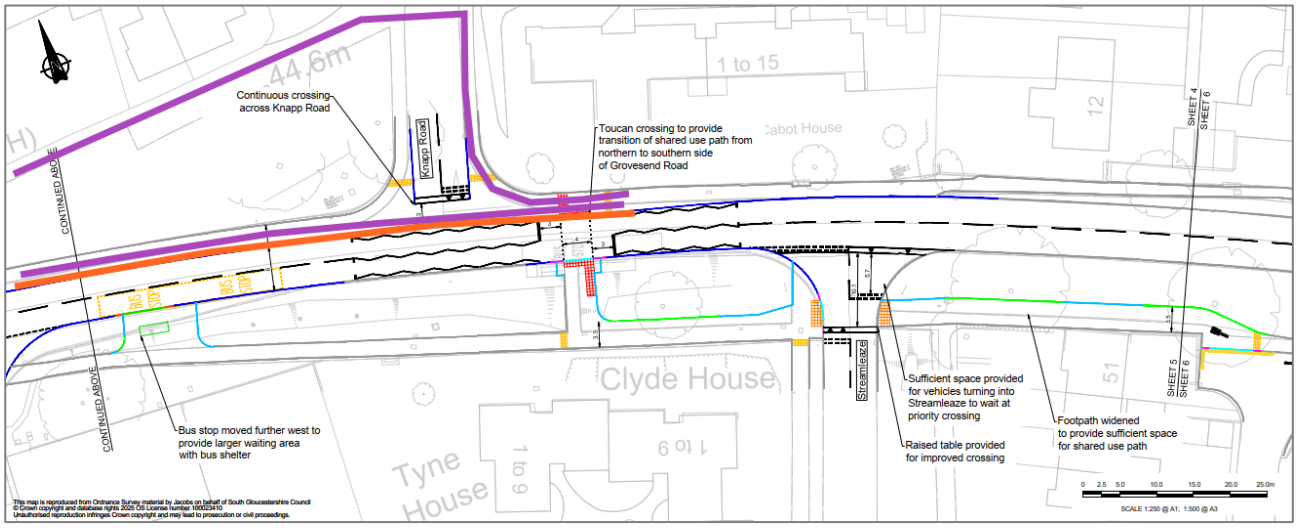


Figure 3a: Black Horse Public House to Knapp Road – Shared Use Option

The purple lines show the pedestrian routes available within this section. These routes either follow the existing footway provision located along the rear of the highway boundary or utilise the proposed shared use path adjacent to Gillingstool, which would be created through the widening of the existing footway.

The shared-use arrangement provides pedestrians with a choice of routes and accommodates a range of existing desire lines. The widened facility adjacent to Gillingstool offers a direct, convenient, and accessible walking route with good visibility and passive surveillance from the adjacent carriageway. At the same time, pedestrians who prefer a quieter route separated from cyclists can continue to use the existing footway network located to the rear of the highway boundary.

This arrangement is expected to improve overall connectivity for pedestrians while maintaining flexibility in route choice. The provision of a wider shared-use facility is also likely to benefit people wheeling pushchairs, mobility aids, bicycles, and other wheeled devices by providing additional space and reducing existing constraints associated with narrower footways.

From an Equality Impact Assessment perspective, the shared-use option provides an inclusive arrangement that accommodates both pedestrian movement and cycling activity while maintaining access to existing pedestrian routes throughout the corridor.

1.2.3.2 Segregated option

Figure 3b illustrates the same section of the scheme as Figure 3a. However, in this option the shared-use pedestrian and cycle facility has been fully converted into a segregated cycle track, as indicated by the orange line, with pedestrians directed to use the existing footway provision located to the rear of the highway boundary, shown by the purple line.

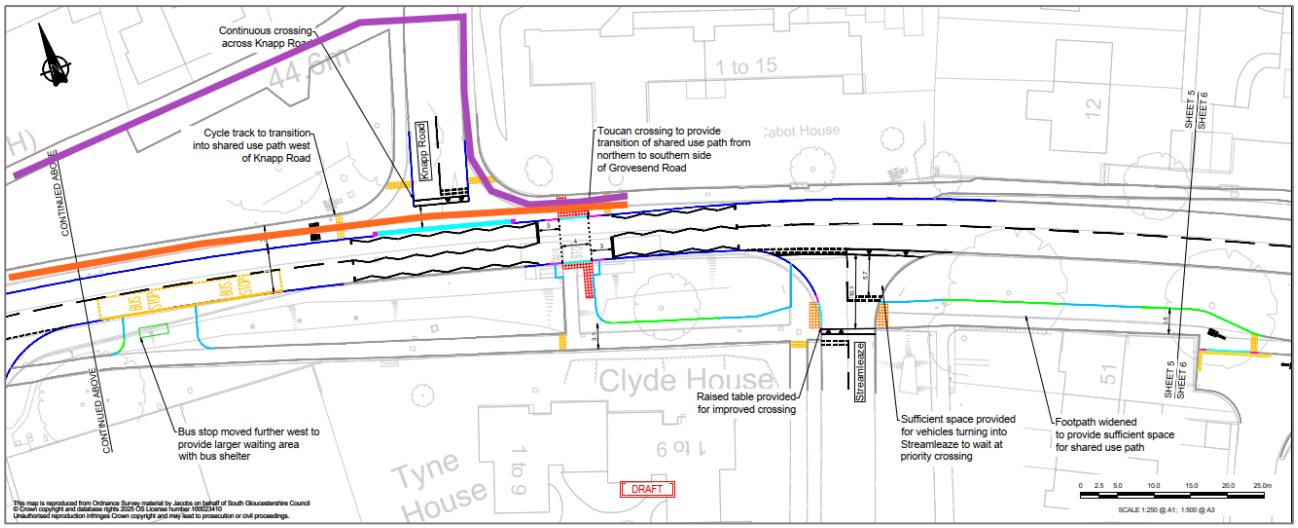


Figure 3b: Black Horse Public House to Knapp Road – Segregated Cycle Track Option

Under this arrangement, pedestrian movements are restricted to the existing rear footway network. This may create accessibility challenges for users wishing to access the westbound bus stop, as there is no dedicated pedestrian route between the footway and the bus stop without crossing or walking along the segregated cycle track. The provision of a parallel footway adjacent to the cycle track is constrained by the existing topography, with the embankment sloping down towards the rear footway. Consequently, accommodating both a cycle track and footway at this location would likely require the construction of a retaining wall, resulting in additional engineering complexity and cost.

Compared with the shared-use option, this layout provides less direct pedestrian connectivity and may not fully reflect established pedestrian desire lines. The requirement for pedestrians to remain on the rear footway network is likely to increase walking distances for some journeys, particularly for bus users and those seeking to travel along the most direct route adjacent to Gillingstool.

As pedestrians typically favour the most direct and convenient route available, there is a risk that some users may choose to walk along the segregated cycle track instead of following the designated footway route. This behaviour may be particularly evident during periods of low cycle activity, when the cycle track may be perceived as a more attractive and direct walking route. Consequently, the intended segregation between pedestrians and cyclists may not be fully achieved in practice, potentially resulting in interactions between user groups and reducing the effectiveness of the segregated arrangement.

From an Equality Impact Assessment perspective, the segregated option may have a greater adverse effect on pedestrians, particularly those with reduced mobility, people travelling with pushchairs, and users accessing public transport, due to the reduction in direct and convenient pedestrian connections compared with the shared-use alternative. Section-specific disparities, impacts and issues

1.3 Assessment

This section assesses the potential impacts of the design options between Streamside Walk and Knapp Road on people with protected characteristics from a sectional design perspective. This approach recognises that pedestrian desire lines may vary between user groups, as different protected characteristic groups can have distinct accessibility requirements and may therefore interact with the proposed infrastructure in different ways.

Table 2 presents an assessment of the likely effects of the scheme on selected protected characteristic groups, including age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, and sex. These groups have been assessed from a pedestrian perspective, reflecting their interaction with the proposed pedestrian environment and associated desire lines. While these groups share a number of common characteristics and accessibility considerations, any distinct requirements or differences between groups have been identified and assessed separately where appropriate.

The assessment is informed by the available evidence base and supporting research, together with additional analysis of the travel behaviours, accessibility requirements, and characteristics of these groups.

Table 2. Assessment of impact of options on protected characteristic groups on a sectional design perspective

Sectional Design	Shared Use	Segregated cycle/footway	Shared Use	Segregated cycle/footway
Figures 1a & 1b: Streamside Walk to Pearce Close Figures 1a & 1b gives two potential walking route options. The first is the existing pedestrian route that follows the cul-de-sac adjacent to Gillingstool, down to the underpass and back up to the road crossing of Oakleaze Road, with a total distance of 153m. The second is the more direct route of the new shared use facility next to Gillingstool that goes over the underpass, with a total distance of 143m.	Pedestrians who walk at slower speeds, irrespective of age, disability, sex, race or other protected characteristics, may be less able to comfortably share space with cyclists on a shared-use facility. The speed differential between pedestrians and cyclists may discourage some users from choosing the shared-use route, particularly those who are less confident or require additional time to react to approaching cyclists. Similarly, younger children may have a reduced ability to assess and respond to interactions with cyclists. As a result, these groups may be more likely to continue using the existing pedestrian-only desire line. Other pedestrians may be more likely to use the shared-use facility due to its more direct alignment and improved connectivity. The provision of a new signal-controlled pedestrian crossing of Gillingstool would provide all users with an additional crossing option and improved route choice. This crossing location will help to connect off-road path systems to the north and south of Gillingstool. The inclusion of seating along the pedestrian-only route could further support those who require	Under this option, pedestrians, irrespective of age, disability, sex, race or other protected characteristics, would be directed to the existing pedestrian-only route, while the new active travel route would be reserved for cyclists. Compared to the new active travel route, the existing pedestrian-only route is circuitous and includes changes of level that are likely to create difficulty for older people, people with disabilities, pregnant women and people using pushchairs. Furthermore, the route is set back from the road and includes a section at the level of the subway underpass where pedestrians cannot easily be seen. Coupled with the commonly held association between subway underpasses and anti-social behaviour, this lack of natural surveillance is unlikely to be attractive to many people with protected characteristics including women, older people, children, and LGBTQ+ individuals. While the pedestrian-only route would be the intended desire line for all pedestrians, some users may still be attracted to the cycle track because it offers a more direct alignment. The proposed signal-controlled pedestrian crossing of Gillingstool has been removed due to the potential risk of damage to adjacent tree roots.	Positive impact.	Negative impact. All pedestrians will be pushed to the outer edges of the highway on 2m wide footways. The additional at-grade crossing has been removed.

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Sectional Design	Shared Use	Segregated cycle/footway	Shared Use	Segregated cycle/footway
	regular rest opportunities, helping to maintain the attractiveness and usability of this route for slower walkers and mobility-impaired users.	Instead, a new footway link would be provided to connect users to the existing crossing location, maintaining pedestrian connectivity while avoiding impacts on the trees.		
Figures 2a & 2b: Pearce Close to The Black Horse Public House Figures 2a & 2b provide a single parallel route for approximately 90m as it passes next to the eastbound bus stop.	Pedestrians who walk at slower speeds, irrespective of age, disability, sex, race or other protected characteristics, may be less comfortable sharing space with cyclists on a shared-use facility. The speed differential between pedestrians and cyclists may discourage some users from using the route, particularly those who are less confident or require additional time to react to approaching cyclists. Similarly, younger children may have a reduced ability to assess and respond to interactions with cyclists. Under this option, these users would share a 3.5 m wide shared-use path with cyclists over a length of approximately 90 m. Additional seating could be provided along the route to support users who require regular rest opportunities, including older people and those with mobility impairments, thereby improving accessibility and user comfort.	All pedestrians regardless of age / physical ability / race or gender will be directed towards the existing pedestrian route, with a width of 2m, whereas the adjacent segregated cycle track will be 2.5m wide. For all other pedestrians, the adjacent 2.5m wide cycle track may become an additional temporary footway overspill area, placing all users at risk of collision. This will be the only fully segregated pedestrian and cycle facility where both modes will be side-by-side.	Negative impact	Positive impact
Figures 2a to 3a & 2b to 3b: The Black Horse Public House to Knapp Road	Pedestrians who are slower on their feet regardless of age / physical ability / race or gender are less able to move out of the way of cyclists on shared	All pedestrians regardless of age / physical ability / race or gender will be directed towards the existing pedestrian route that follows the rear of	Positive impact	Negative impact.

Sectional Design	Shared Use	Segregated cycle/footway	Shared Use	Segregated cycle/footway
The existing footway continues to follow the highway boundary past The Black Horse Put towards Knapp Road, whilst the new active travel route follows the highway alignment of Gillingstool. This is where pedestrians will make a route choice based on final destination rather than the choice of available pedestrian infrastructure.	footways. Many slower walking pedestrians will avoid shared use paths due to the higher speed differential from passing cyclists. Young children who are walking will equally not have the cognitive ability to risk assess approaching cyclists. All pedestrians regardless of protected characteristic groups are likely to make their choice or route based upon destination rather than infrastructure. Cyclists heading east / west past The Black Horse Public House to and from Knapp Road are likely to continue on the footway along the highway boundary edge, as this is the most direct desire line.	the highway boundary before it links onto Knapp Road. All cyclists will continue on the segregated cycle track that follows Gillingstool. All pedestrians and cyclists regardless of protected characteristic groups are likely to make their choice or route based upon destination rather than infrastructure. Compared to the new active travel route, the existing pedestrian-only route following the rear of the highway boundary is circuitous and introduces a change of level for some routes, which are likely to create difficulty for older people, people with disabilities, pregnant women and people using pushchairs. Furthermore, the route is set back from the road and not visible to road users at some times of year due to the presence of thick vegetation. This lack of natural surveillance is unlikely to be attractive to many people with protected characteristics including women, older people, children, and LGBTQ+ individuals. For pedestrians in general, the conversion of the footway along the road to a cycle-only facility represents a loss of longstanding pedestrian facility and is therefore a downgrade of provision from the existing situation.		All modes are severally impacted, and full segregation may not be adhered too.

Sectional Design	Shared Use	Segregated cycle/footway	Shared Use	Segregated cycle/footway
		It is likely that pedestrians will ignore measures here and continue to walk on the cycle track as the current provision is a footway, as this is the main desire line along Gillingstool and it links in with bus stops etc. Careful design is required to direct pedestrians away from the segregated cycle track from The Black Horse Public House to the junction of Knapp Road / Gillingstool.		
Summary impact			**Positive impact**	**Negative impact**

Based on the considerations set out above it is considered that a shared use option presents a more positive impact to protected characteristics for the following reasons:

- It has more natural surveillance, remaining near to the road without visual obstructions. This will make the facility more attractive to some people with protected characteristics including women, older people, children, and LGBTQ+ individuals.
- It provides a shorter and more direct route with less change in level for pedestrians. This will make the facility more attractive to people with mobility impairments including older people, people with disabilities, pregnant women and people using pushchairs.
- It includes an additional crossing between Oakleaze Road and Pearce Close. This provides a more attractive alternative to the subway for any people concerned about natural surveillance or with mobility impairments. Furthermore, this crossing helps to connect off-road path systems to the north and south of Gillingstool.
- It retains the existing pedestrian facility between the Black Horse Public House and Knapp Road.

On balance, and having regard to the considerations set out above, the shared use option is considered the most appropriate option for this section of the scheme. This reflects the relatively low pedestrian and cycle demand observed along Gillingstool, together with the likelihood that some pedestrians would choose to use the new active travel facility regardless of the route designation.

It is acknowledged that the local population includes a relatively high proportion of residents aged 65 and over, which may increase concerns regarding potential interactions between pedestrians and cyclists. However, the proposed shared use facility would comprise a new 3.0 m wide route located predominantly adjacent to the carriageway, whilst the existing footway would be retained separately to the rear of the highway boundary. This provides users with a choice of routes and an alternative pedestrian-only facility for those who may be less comfortable sharing space with cyclists.

Available survey data indicates relatively low levels of pedestrian and cycle activity along this section of Gillingstool, with peak 12-hour flows of approximately 329 pedestrians and 94 cyclists, albeit recorded on separate survey days. Given these usage levels, a shared-use facility is considered a proportionate and practical solution that balances user needs with the physical constraints of the corridor.

More confident cyclists are likely to continue using the carriageway, which will likely have lower vehicular speeds as a result of the proposed scheme as a result of the traffic calming impacts of a narrower carriageway, additional pedestrian crossings, and reduced speed limits. Less confident cyclists, children and family groups are expected to benefit from the off-carriageway route. This is likely to reduce interactions between cyclists and motor traffic, helping to improve perceived safety and accessibility for a broader range of users. The retention of the existing footway, alongside the provision of a new shared-use facility, is therefore considered to provide an appropriate level of accessibility and route choice for all users.

1.4 Preferred Options to be taken forward

Figure 1a (shared use path) is the preferred choice as this provides increased pedestrian route choices with an additional signal-controlled pedestrian crossing giving users the option to avoid the underpass.

Figure 2b (segregated path) is the preferred as this gives pedestrians and cyclists their own space. However, this section of full segregation is very short and it is prudent to keep the same infrastructure along the corridor. Therefore, Figure 2a (shared use path) will be taken forward for consistency.

Figure 3a (shared use path) gives all users a route choice depending upon their final destination.

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1.5 Actions to be taken forward

- Proceed with the shared pedestrian/cycleway option between Streamside Walk and Knapp Road. This option provides the best overall balance of accessibility, safety and deliverability, offering a 3.0m wide shared-use facility.
- Explore the options of improving all the footway links down to the underpass and adjacent to the shared use paths on both sides of Oakleaze Road by either widening where possible and or re-surfacing the footway to make this route as attractive as possible by removing all the existing defects (if any).
- Review pedestrian desire lines throughout the corridor and, where feasible, provide additional connections across grass verges to improve permeability and enable more direct pedestrian access between both sides of the road.
- Review the proposed continuous footway treatments across side roads and consider the inclusion of rain gardens at key conflict locations. These features could help provide visual cues for visually impaired users when navigating crossing points, while also discouraging inappropriate parking by local residents at critical pedestrian crossing locations.
- Continue engagement with South Gloucestershire equality and accessibility groups throughout the detailed design process to ensure that the needs and concerns of protected characteristic groups are appropriately considered and reflected in the final scheme design.

1.6 EqIA outcome

Outcome	Response	Reason(s) and Justification
Outcome 1: No major change required.	*X*	The scheme in its original format of a shared use pedestrian cycle facility, as it is anticipated that many pedestrians will use it as a path due to low cycle usage.
Outcome 2: Adjustments to remove barriers or to better promote equality have been identified.		
Outcome 3: Continue despite having identified potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality.		