

LAND AT SANDY

LANDSCAPE, TOWNSCAPE AND VISUAL ISSUES STUDY

EXTRACTS FOR CBC GREEN WHEEL MASTERPLAN 2014

August 2017



Central Bedfordshire Council

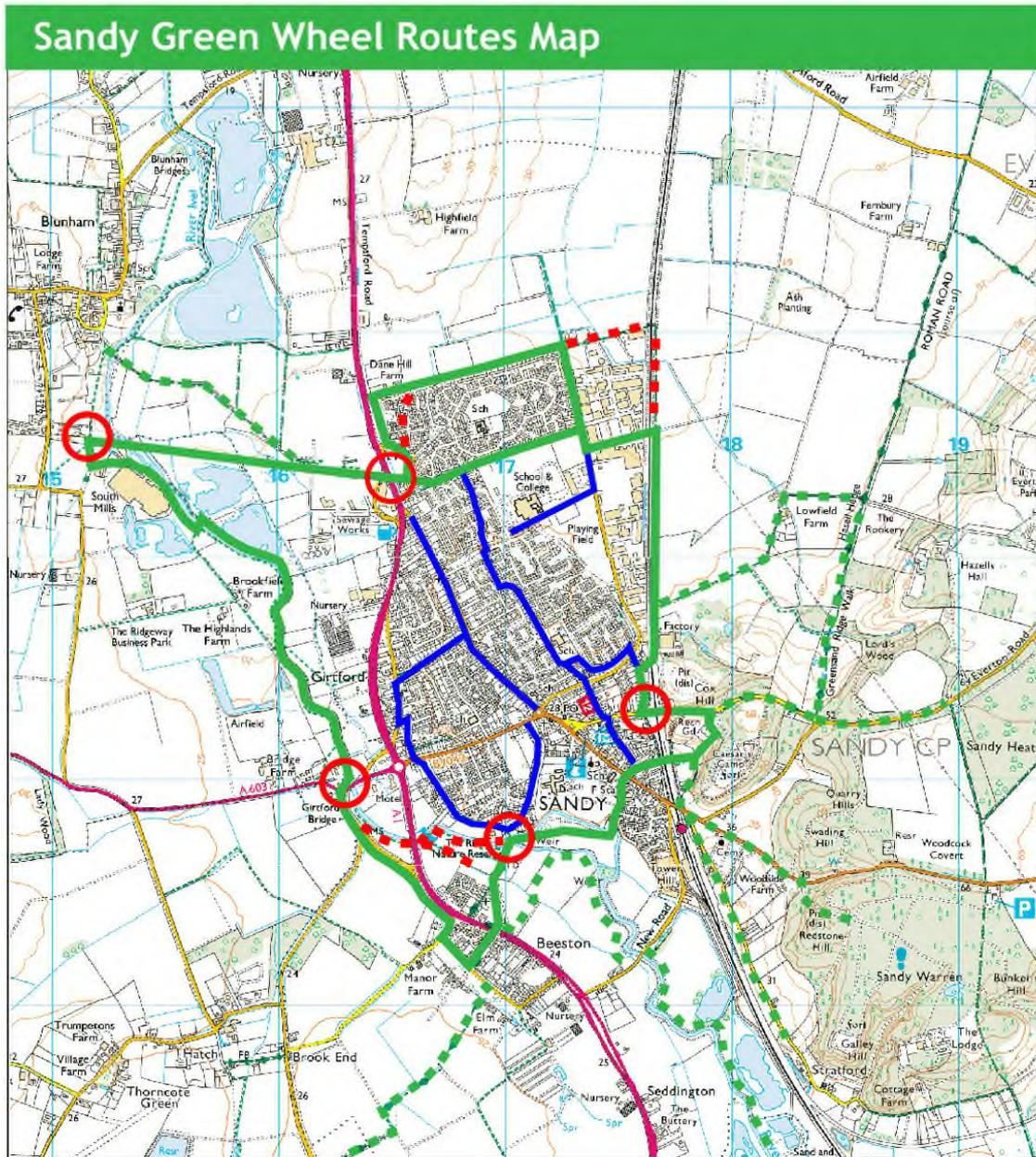
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Sandy Green Wheel

Masterplan 2014



Figure 1 Sandy Green Wheel Routes Map



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Sandy Green Wheel Routes Map

- Green Wheel 'Main' Rim Routes
- Green Wheel 'Alternative' Rim Routes
- Green Wheel 'Spoke' Routes
- Green Wheel 'Wider' links
- Key access and information points

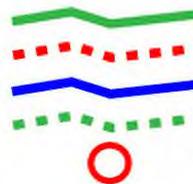
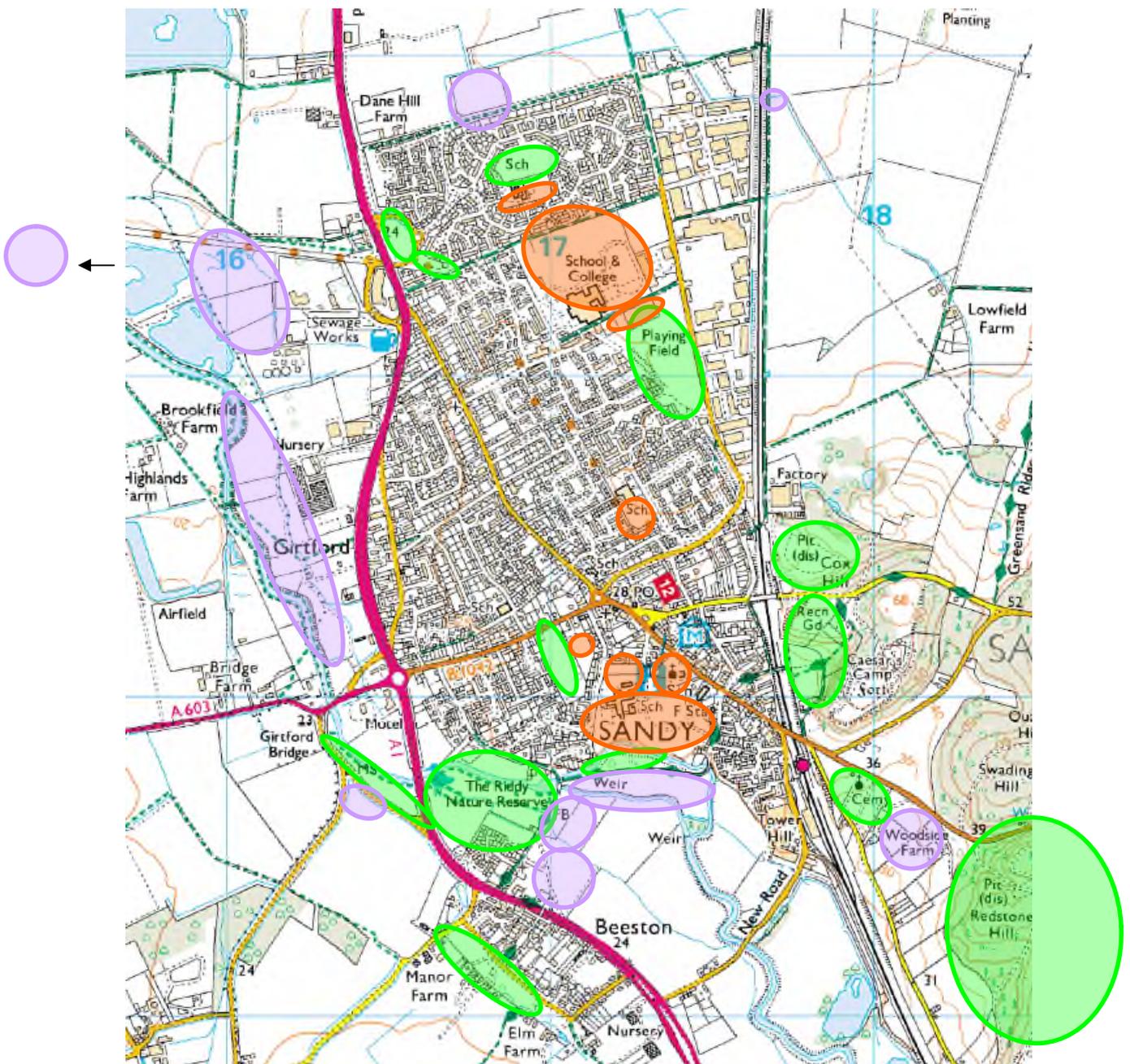


Figure 3 Existing and Potential Green Space Provision



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	Freely accessible public green spaces
	Other green spaces; incl school grounds and sports clubs
	Potential new green spaces

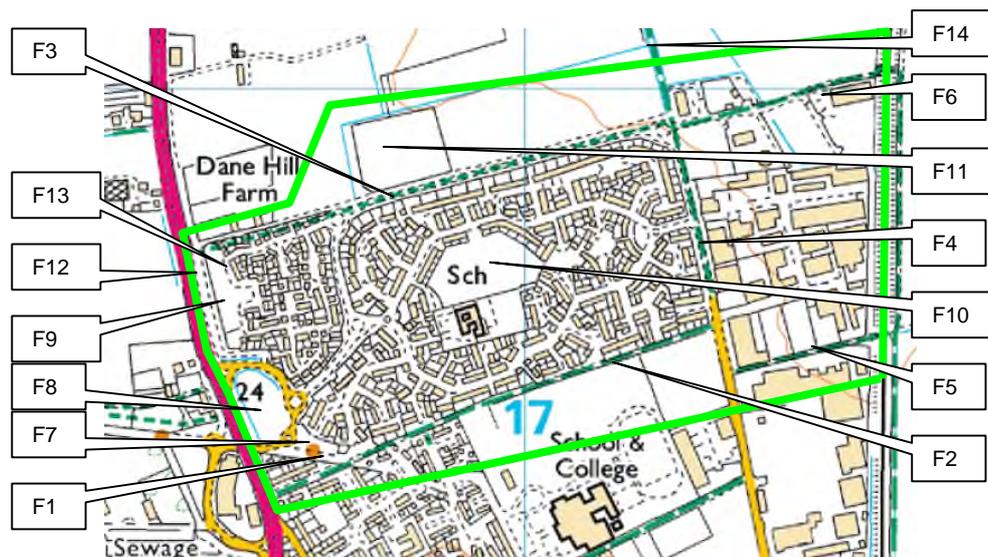


10 'FALLOWFIELD'

This area is bounded by the A1 in the west and the Eastcoast Mainline in the east.

NCN Route 51 utilises the Girtford Underpass to enter Sandy, from the west, under the A1. Two options exist through this section for the Sandy Green Wheel – an 'inner rim' using existing Public Bridleways; and an 'outer rim' requiring the upgrading of a Public Footpath. The proposed inner rim measures approximately 1.3km, the outer rim measures approximately 2.1km. There are also 2 options for crossing the Eastcoast Mainline: a footbridge (which has Public Bridleway status) over the railway; and a track carrying a Public Bridleway which passes beneath the railway further south.

Figure 6 Fallowfield key components



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F1	NCN Route 51	F8	Balancing Pond Green Space
F2	Public Bridleway 22	F9	Goldfinch Drive Green Space
F3	Public Footpath 24	F10	Fallowfield Recreation Ground
F4	Public Bridleway 21 / Sunderland Rd	F11	Sunderland Road (north) Meadows
F5	Public Bridleway 23	F12	Dane Hill Farm private road
F6	Public Bridleway 25	F13	Goldfinch Drive
F7	Avocet Close / The Harriers Green Space	F14	Possible links to Tempsford



10.1 Primary public access route(s) forming the Green Wheel within Fallowfield

10.1.1 F1 NCN Route 51

NCN Route 51, provides access for the Green Wheel from the west under the A1 into the Fallowfield area. Route 51 continues along Public Bridleway 22 before heading south along Waverley Avenue towards the town centre. The route is a 2.5m wide tarmac path with NCN route signage.

10.1.2 F2 Public Bridleway 22

In conjunction with NCN Route 51 and Public Bridleway 23, Public Bridleway 22 provides a proposed 'inner rim' for the northern section of the Green Wheel. The bridleway passes through an 8-12m wide corridor, with areas of managed and unmanaged grass, scrubby areas; and towards the eastern end a number of semi-mature oak trees. The used surface of the bridleway is generally compacted gravel and just 0.5 – 1m wide, with grass encroachment reducing the available width. However, the grass either side of the path is mown to give an overall accessible width of 4m.

Proposed improvements:

- Restore path to 3m wide with appropriate multi-user surface
- Enhance landscaping along length of corridor through the appropriate planting and management of wildflower and shrub areas; and specimen trees

10.1.3 F3 Public Footpath 24

Public Footpath 24 provides a proposed 'outer rim' for the northern section of the Green Wheel. Initially a private road and farm track in the west, it becomes a field edge path across the northern edge of Fallowfield, running parallel to Sunderland Road. The line of used route varies from definitive line of the Public Right of Way, particularly along the central section where most users follow a route further into the adjacent meadow. The used path is on compacted earth and is 0.3 – 0.5m wide, but there is scope both within the road verge and the field margin to create a wider surfaced path, which would require upgrading to Cycletrack or Public Bridleway status.

Proposed improvements:

- Upgrade status of path from Public Footpath to Cycletrack or Public Bridleway
- Undertake appropriate planting, possibly in the form of an avenue of trees, to enhance the urban : countryside interface.
- Road crossing modifications near Sunderland Road / Beamish Close roundabout to increase safety and ease of use for users moving between the east-west and north-south routes.

10.1.4 F4 Public Bridleway 21 / Sunderland Rd

Public Bridleway 21 / Sunderland Rd will be used by the Green Wheel for both the inner and outer rim options as it provides access to the currently preferred crossing of the Eastcoast Mainline. The legal line of the Bridleway is along the road, but in practice the 2m wide pavement is used by cyclists as well as pedestrians.



The inner rim would utilise 85m of this route, linking Public Bridleways 22 and 23. The outer rim would utilise 460m of this route, linking Public Footpath 24 and Public Bridleway 23. Of this 460m, only the southern 125m (including a road junction with Tyne Rd) currently has a surfaced pavement (on the eastern side); however there is a grass verge along the remainder of the eastern side of the road which has the potential for a surfaced path to be created.

Proposed improvements:

- Create surfaced cycletrack on grass verge along eastern side of Sunderland Rd between Beamish Close and Public Bridleway 23.
- Seek to formalise cycle use of existing pavement sections.

10.1.5 F5 Public Bridleway 23

Public Bridleway 23 links Public Bridleway 21 / Sunderland Road to Public Bridleway 25 on the eastern side of the Eastcoast Mainline via an underpass below the railway. Public Bridleway 23 passes between industrial units within a 10-12m wide corridor which includes a ditch along its southern edge. The bridleway follows a 2.5 – 3m wide farm track which although largely compact is uneven and contains several large potholes. The underpass beneath the railway is 3.1m wide and 2.7m high, providing a suitable and safe link for the Green Wheel. However, the underpass is prone to flooding / becoming muddy in wet weather.

Proposed improvements:

- Enhance track surface through levelling and pot-hole filling
- Increase maintenance of grass verges and undertake tree / shrub pruning to make the route more open and reduce incidents of fly-tipping
- Improve drainage / surfacing of underpass to reduce flooding
- Consider formalising use of bridge walls for authorised graffiti / public realm.

10.2 Green Wheel linkages within Fallowfield

10.2.1 F1 NCN Route 51

NCN Route 51 provides access for the Green Wheel from the west under the A1 into the Fallowfields area. Route 51 continues along Public Bridleway 22 before heading south along Waverley Avenue towards the town centre.

10.2.2 F6 Public Bridleway 25

Public Bridleway 25 is identified as providing an alternative route in the north east of the Green Wheel. The bridleway leads from the junction of Public Footpath 24 and Public Bridleway 21 / Sunderland Rd to a bridge over the Eastcoast Mainline. Although the Public Right of Way continues as a Public Bridleway over the bridge, it is only a pedestrian bridge and as such is impassable for horses and useable by cyclists only by carrying bikes over it. If the bridge is replaced in the future, it should be replaced with a bridleway bridge which would then enable it to be the preferred route for the Green Wheel. In the short term, the bridge could be improved to a degree for cyclists by the provision of wheel-gulleys along the edge of the steps to allow for the pushing of bikes. The bridleway follows a roadside pavement on



Beamish Close and then a field edge path on compact earth which has the space available to be widened and surfaced if considered appropriate.

Proposed improvements:

- Divert the bridleway/ outer rim around north of Beamish Close industrial units to enhance the setting of the route taking it away from the traffic.
- The land to the north of the Beamish Close industrial units is allocated for future development. Should this development be brought forward, opportunities should be sought for enhancing the condition and setting of the bridleway and upgrading the footbridge over the railway for use by cyclists; and if possible, horses.

10.3 Existing green spaces within Fallowfield

10.3.1 F7 Avocet Close / The Harriers Green Spaces

These 2 areas of amenity grassland are located on the northern side of NCN Route 51 in the south west corner of Fallowfield. The Avocet Close green space in particular is in a high profile location as the entrance to Sandy for uses of NCN Route 51 from Bedford and to vehicles accessing north Sandy from the A1.

Proposed improvements:

- Create a Green Wheel 'Gateway' feature including signage and information boards.
- Enhance the amenity green space for people and wildlife through the planting of either, a wildflower meadow, a community orchard or specimen trees.

10.3.2 F8 Balancing Pond Green Space

This green space adjacent to the A1 measures approximately 150m x 70m and contains a balancing pond measuring approximately 75m x 35m. The pond is fully vegetated with no open water, except in times of flood. Local dog walkers have created a circular path around the perimeter of the pond. This site has the potential to provide a link for the outer rim of the Green Wheel.

Proposed improvements:

- The raised land surrounding the balancing pond could be enhanced through the planting of appropriate specimen trees and / or shrubs; and the management of the grassland as a wildflower meadow.

10.3.3 F9 Goldfinch Drive Green Space

This area of amenity grassland with trees and shrubs utilises a large bank which shields the Fallowfield estate from the A1. An attractively landscaped area which requires little, if any, enhancement.

10.4 Other Green Wheel assets within Fallowfield

10.4.1 F10 Fallowfield Recreation Ground

This recreation ground is dominated by a large area of amenity grassland. Play areas and seating are located adjacent to Maple Tree Lower School, away from the residential properties bordering the site. A circular tarmac path follows the perimeter of the site, with a handful of young trees planted alongside.



Although not on the route of the Green Wheel, this site is the main green space within the Fallowfield area; and will be a particularly popular destination with young families using the Green Wheel.

Proposed improvements:

- Identify and sign the main links between the Green Wheel and the recreation ground.
- Consideration to be given to enhancements such as: additional seating, leaving perimeter grass areas longer/ managing as wildflower areas; and planting additional specimen trees.

10.5 Potential new green spaces within Fallowfield

10.5.1 F11 Sunderland Road (north) Meadows

The land to the north Fallowfield is primarily in agricultural use; currently with a mix of arable fields and grass meadows, the latter managed for hay. A square meadow measuring approximately 2.25 hectares and bordering Sunderland Road is used by local walkers, as evidenced by a worn path around its perimeter. This use is unauthorised, but demonstrates a demand for such an area in the north of the town.

10.5.2 It is acknowledged that any long term future residential development of Sandy could be directed to the land north of Sunderland Rd, between the A1 and the Eastcoast Mainline; including the current hay meadows. However, any such development would be required to provide amenity green space, play provision etc.

Proposed improvements:

- Identify land ownership and discuss opportunities for formalising use of the meadow, which may include purchasing / leasing
- Explore opportunities which may arise to allocate this land as GI ahead of development.

10.6 Missing links / barriers to the Green Wheel within Fallowfield

10.6.1 F8 Balancing Pond Green Space

There is a missing link of approximately 400m between NCN Route 51 at the Girtford Underpass and Public Footpath 24 at Dane Hill Farm.

This site could provide a path for the southern part of this missing link for the outer rim of the Green Wheel, with either a surfaced path through the site (around the pond); and / or by extending the existing roadside pavement around the eastern side of the site.

10.6.2 F12 Dane Hill Farm private road

This private road has the potential to provide an ideal route for the northern part of the missing link between NCN Route 51 at the Girtford Underpass and Public Footpath 24 at Dane Hill Farm.

At over 4m wide, with a concrete surface and little traffic, this road could be a significant link for the Green Wheel



Proposed improvements:

- Seek consent for the road to be used as part of the Green Wheel; and install any associated signage.
- Should consent be given, explore possible landscaping opportunities

10.6.3 F13 Goldfinch Drive

An alternative option is to use Goldfinch Drive and its associated green space (F9). This would still require the use of the first 75m of the private road, but would then utilise a newly created link between the private road and Goldfinch Drive across the amenity green space.

Proposed improvements:

- Creation of a surfaced path, with associated access structures, across the southern part of the amenity area to link the Dane Hill Farm private road to Goldfinch Drive.

10.7 Potential new Green Wheel linkages From Fallowfield

10.7.1 F14 Potential Links to Tempsford

Opportunities to create links from the Green Wheel to/ from Tempsford should be explored. Currently, Bridleway 21 is the only PRow leading north from Fallowfields; however this is a dead-end Bridleway, extending only 0.5km of the 3km distance between Fallowfields and Tempsford.



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