

Parishes to Town Project: Boughton to Faversham

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Eastern Area Committee of Swale Borough Council approved a project to identify a network of cycling and walking routes to link Faversham and the surrounding communities (Figure 1). Some of the potential cycle routes in and around Faversham form part of a wider strategic network (Figure 2) linking up with Sittingbourne (and on to Medway), Canterbury, Whitstable (to Herne Bay and Thanet) and Lenham. The countywide Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP) needs to also consider links to Ashford and Maidstone.
- 1.2. Boughton is important because it could generate a significant number of cycling journeys to Faversham and to Canterbury and it sits on the strategic route Canterbury to Faversham, which is a missing link the National Cycle Network (see Figure 3).

This briefing paper concerns potential cycle routes from Boughton to Faversham.

2. Summary status, recommendations, next steps

- 2.1. Parish Council and local community asked to:
 - 2.1.1. Consider a speed limit of 20mph through Boughton and, potentially Dunkirk
 - 2.1.2. Decide which cycle route or routes between Boughton and Faversham (Figure 4) to pursue and identify issues and solutions:
- 2.2. Option 1 (likely best) follows Watling Street, with variants west of Brenley Corner.
 - 2.2.1. From Boughton to Brenley Corner, the route is already reasonable and requires few, minor improvements;
 - 2.2.2. Any major changes to Brenley Corner need to await National Highways plans for the junction, although small improvements, such as better signing, rephasing of signals should be possible, depending the route selected...
 - 2.2.3. ...from Brenley Corner to Faversham. Alternatives exist both north and south of London Road, but multiple issues need resolution.
- 2.3. Option 2 via PROW ZR496 is not currently deliverable, as it requires National Highways to implement a safe crossing point of the A299. In the longer term it is a potentially attractive, largely off-road route, connecting new housing on Love Lane.
- 2.4. Option 3 via Nine Ash Lane, PROW ZR 633 and Selling Road or Salters Lane is currently used as an indirect, relatively quiet route to avoid Brenley Corner / Watling Street. Reducing the speed and volume of motor vehicles would be needed to make this a solution. Further analysis of this option would likely rule it out, subject to further information from the Duchy of Cornwall about plans for Selling Road.

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3. Key considerations

- 3.1. Boughton has good potential for cycling into Faversham: it has a larger population, the route is relatively flat and lies on the strategically important route to Canterbury. West of Brenley Corner, the speed and volume of motor vehicles along Watling Street makes cycling unpleasant at best and, at worst, not safe. Fully segregated infrastructure is required, either on or off-road.
- 3.2. To qualify for government funding and to enable routes to be used by all, cycling infrastructure needs to be high quality and fully accessible to all type of cycles, including cargo bikes, assisted cycles etc. Any short-term design compromises which are needed to implement a route initially must be addressed soon thereafter to bring the route up to current UK government approved standards (LTN 1/20).

4. Further consideration (outside project scope)

- 4.1. Building a cycling connection between Faversham and Boughton is an important first step of a plan for a network of commuter routes between Faversham, Canterbury and Whitstable and a wider inter-urban network. It would also open up a pleasant circular leisure route of around 25 miles, using the existing successful Crab and Winkle route and would be a useful adjunct to the newly opened Cantii Way, a 145 mile circular route in East Kent.

Such a route needs to integrate with Canterbury City Council's LCWIP and with KCC's county-wide LCWIP (KCWIP).

5. Proposed interventions

- 5.1. A copy of the current list of interventions suggested is included at Figure 5. A link to a map showing interventions in Figure 6 is here. This list is not definitive and will need expanding / amending over time, depending on the routes selected and a more detailed examination of specific issues and barriers.

6. Detailed commentary

- 6.1. Four main alternatives (with variants) exist for creating a Boughton/Faversham cycle route
- 6.2. Option 1 (labelled B1 in Figure 4) uses Canterbury Road from Stockers Hill to Brenley Corner and then London Road to Love Lane:
 - 6.2.1. Possible enhancements to The Street, include 20mph speed limit, plus 30mph buffer zone on the northern approach.
 - 6.2.2. Minimise flares on Stockers Hill / Canterbury Road junction to protect cyclists
 - 6.2.3. Little needed on Canterbury Road from Stockers Hill to Chalkley Road:

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- 6.2.3.1. Segregated cycling infrastructure on Canterbury Road between Brenley Corner and Stockers Hill desirable but not essential; surface could be improved
- 6.2.3.2. The 'cycle' area needs proper maintenance – regular sweeping.
- 6.2.4. From Chalkley Road to Brenley Corner, a complete redesign is needed. Segregated, protected contra-flow cycle path, plus crossing and better signing.
- 6.2.5. Making the crossing of the A2/A299 fully compliant with current design standards needs a complete remodelling of Brenley Corner. An interim solution could include re-phasing / synchronising the signal to shorten the wait time for pedestrians and cyclists. Whether to re-route the current northbound route (which requires cyclists to make a significant detour and then mix with, slow-moving, traffic on the roundabout) depends on which routes are chosen to Faversham. If north of London Road or Homestall lane is chosen, consider re-routing those cycling northbound counter-clockwise (to the north and east).
- 6.2.6. From Brenley Corner, the route along London Road into Faversham is inadequate. Off-road alternatives to the north (B1a) or to the south (B1b) of Watling Street as far as Love Lane depend on landowner permission.
 - 6.2.6.1. Much of the land to the south of Watling Street is subject to development by the Duchy of Cornwall, which is keen to promote cycling. Solutions needed:
 - At chalkpit, to avoid need for diversion
 - At railway bridge, where no space available on south side
 - to cross road at some point in order to access central Faversham.
 - 6.2.6.2. From Brenley Corner, a tarmac surface still exists for a short way to the north of London Road. Thereafter, subject to landowner co-operation and detailed design issues, it may be possible to link up to the ZR496 via:
 - a new link running from London Road to the east and north of the chalkpit
 - one of the tracks leading to ZR496 – see below – or
 - a route inside the hedge parallel with London Road
 - 6.2.6.3. A third possibility (B1c) links into an upgraded PROW ZR496 in anticipation of a safe crossing of the A299. This would involve either using a traffic-calmed Homestall Lane or one of the tracks running north-south to London Road. This has the great advantage of making more of the route off-road and links directly with the new Love Lane developments. Again, landowner intentions need to be assessed and ZR496 would need to become a bridleway.
- 6.3. Option 2 (labelled B2) uses an upgraded PROW ZR496 and ZR600 or (better) Chalkley Road. Without a proposal from National Highways for a safe crossing of the A299, which currently severs the PROW, no further work on this option is currently planned.

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- 6.4. Option 3 (B3) uses Nine Ash Lane, Brenley Lane, PROW ZR633 and Selling Road (B3a) or ZF38 and Salters Lane (B3b) to reach Canterbury Road. This is currently the route used by cyclists who are deterred by Canterbury Road and Brenley Corner. It is not direct, the surface on ZR38 is not ideal (ZR 633 is OK) and some drive too fast along the lanes. Reducing the speed and volume of traffic on these lanes would make this an attractive short-term option and would have the advantage of providing a partial link to Selling. No further work proposed on this route pending confirmation about Duchy of Cornwall plans.
- 6.5. Option 4 (B4) is the current route used by some cycling to Faversham town centre along Homestall Lane and Graveney Road. It would require traffic calming of Homestall (including the possible removal of motor vehicles, which would be politically charged) and a segregated route along Graveney Road (relatively expensive). However, it has the benefit of being the quickest route directly to Faversham town centre and would also serve Graveney and Goodnestone residents.
- 6.6. From the Canterbury Road / Love Lane junction to the centre of Faversham, the route is largely covered by the Faversham LCWIP, but it's worth noting the options available as they may impact the preferred route from Boughton.
 - 6.6.1. Love Lane and Whitstable Road. Links to new developments on Love Lane and Graveney Road. Would require traffic calming and/or segregated infrastructure and a suitable crossing at the railway bridge(s) (Options B1c or 2 above is better)
 - 6.6.2. Long Bridge via Love Lane and Windermere or Canterbury Road and Blenheim Ave or Preston Ave. A major, costly project to redevelop the Long Bridge, it should not be dismissed as it could be an iconic landmark and bring significant benefits for both pedestrians and cyclists in both existing houses and new developments. (Options 1 or 2 above are better)
 - 6.6.3. Canterbury Road and Preston Grove or the Mall. Canterbury Road is currently too busy, polluted and unsafe for cycling and further work is needed to identify a safe and convenient cycling option. (Option 3 above is better)

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Figure 1: Parishes to Town cycling network (blue, illustrative) and walking extent (yellow)

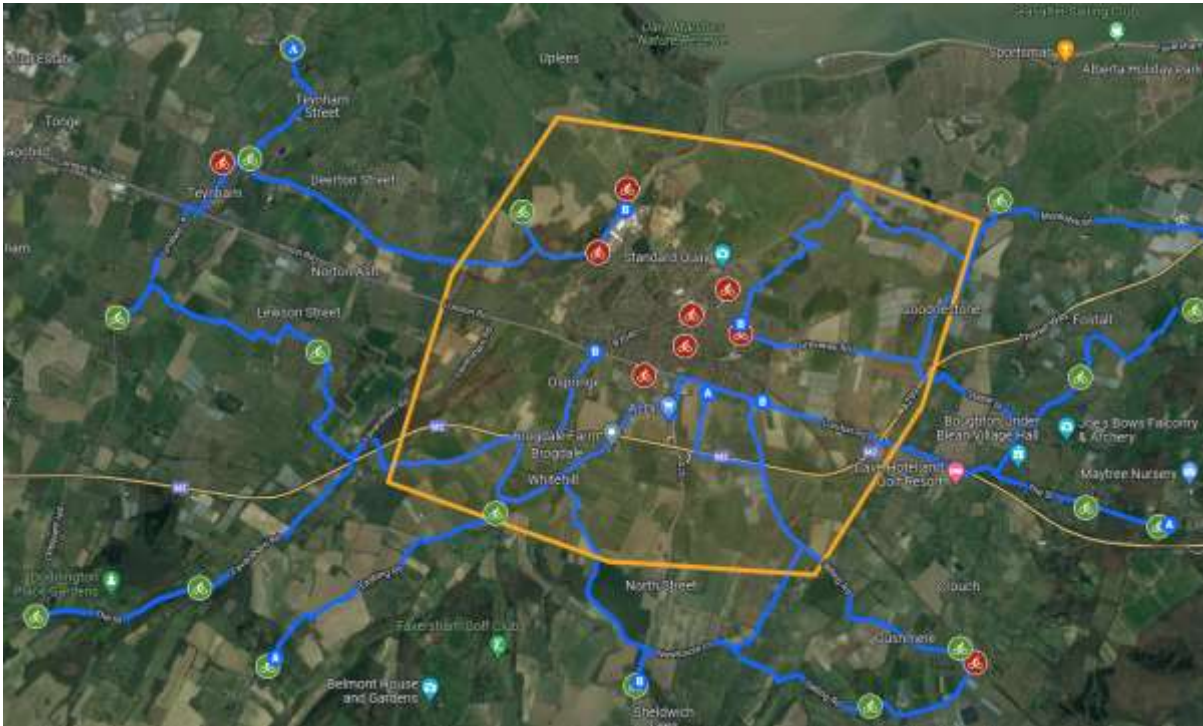
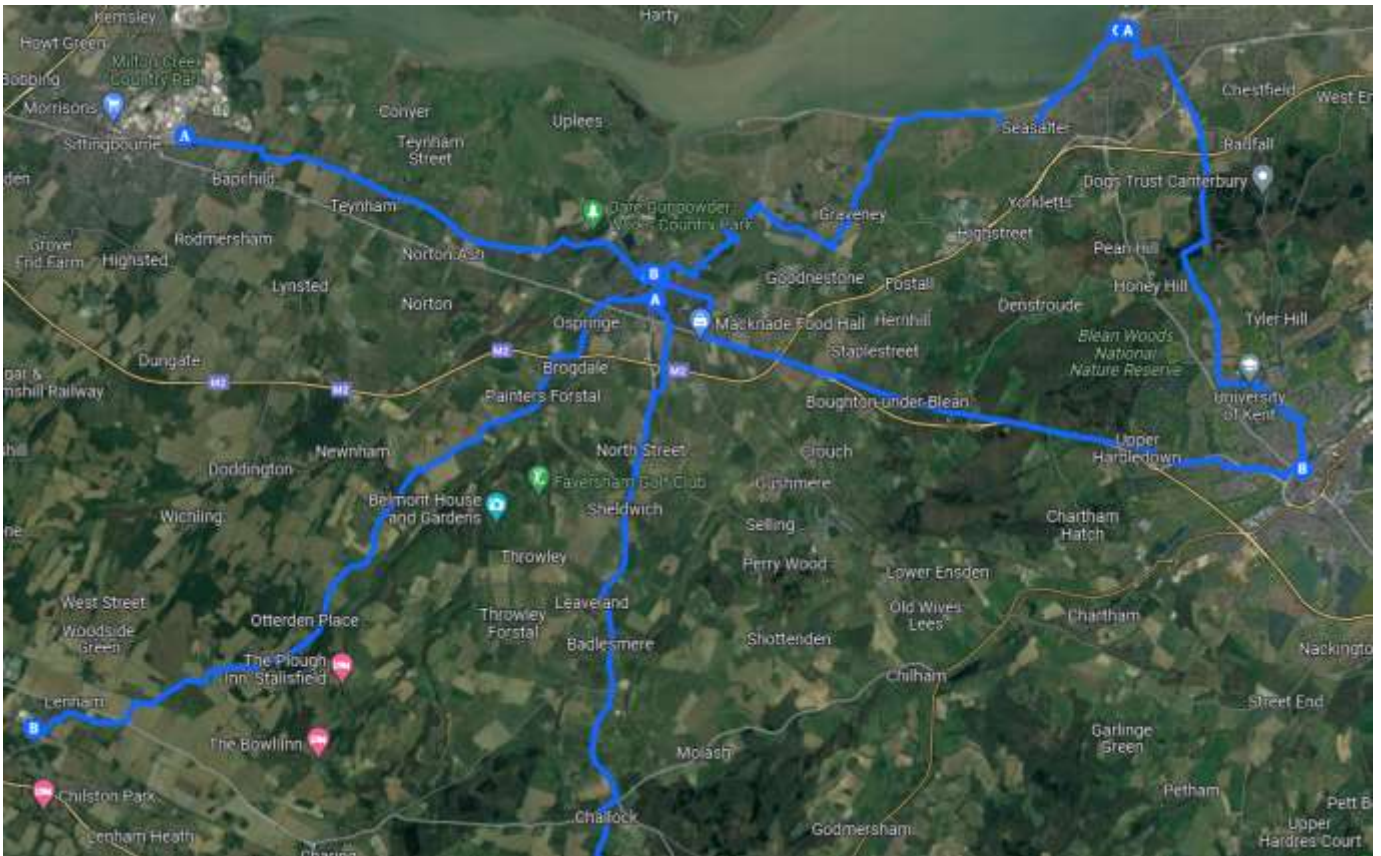


Figure 2: Potential inter-urban network from Faversham (illustrative)



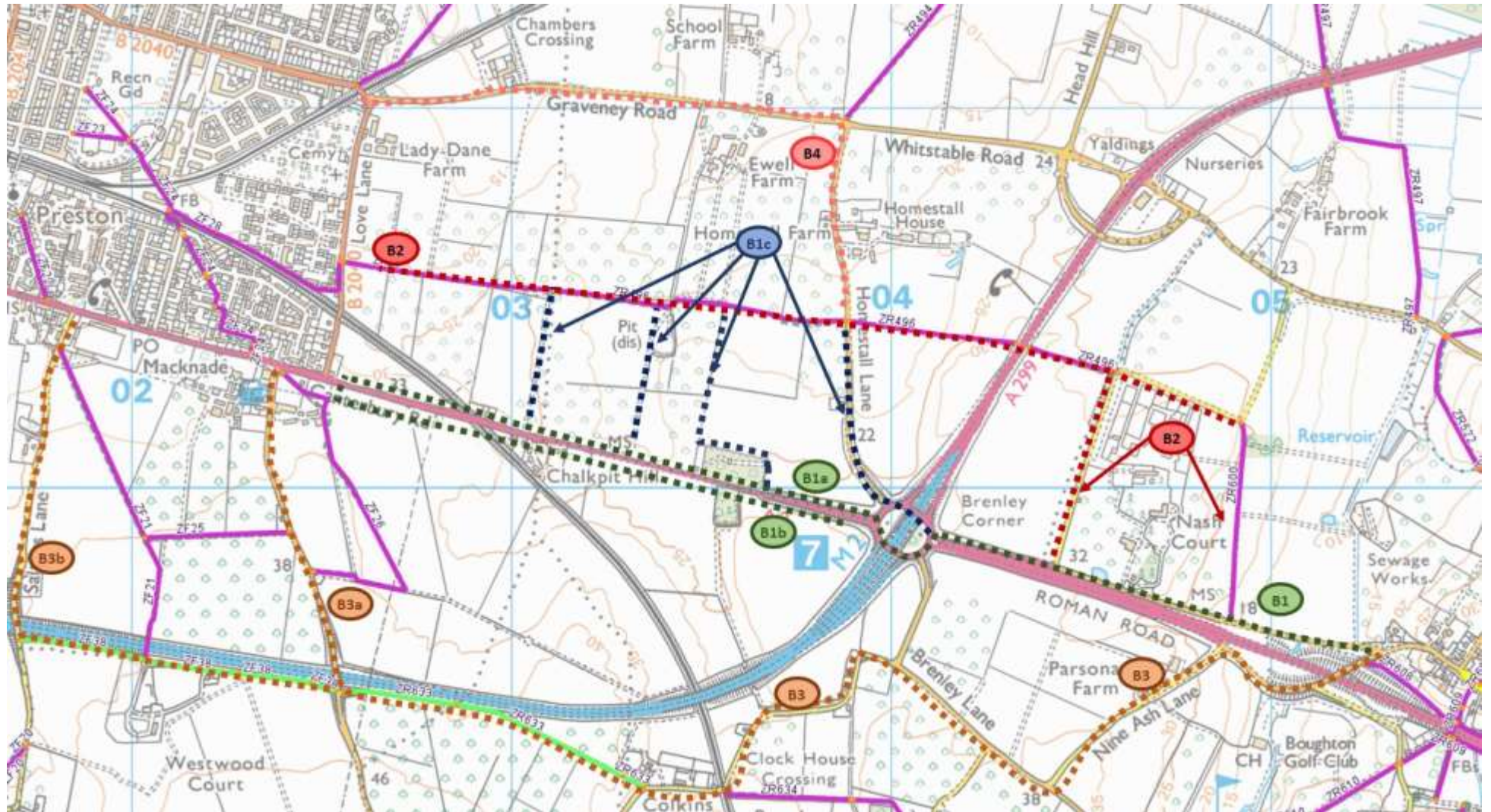
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Figure 3: National Cycle Network – current (blue, yellow) and potential (red dotted)



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Figure 4: Boughton to Faversham cycle route alternatives



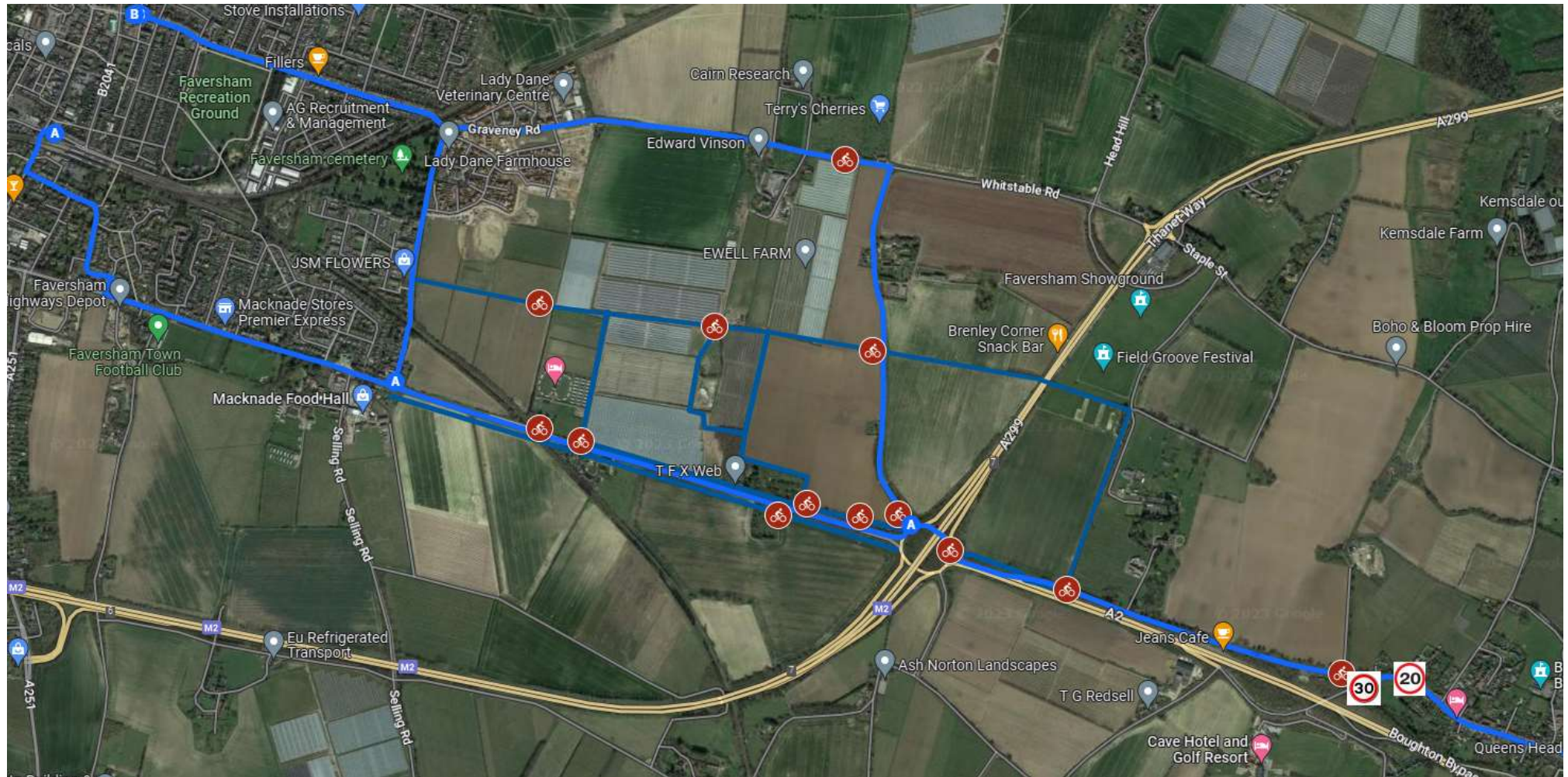
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Figure 5: working list of interventions

Parish	Item	Issue	Issue / solution	Location	Comment
Boughton	1	Taffic speed	20mph	Replace existing 30mph limit in Boughton	From existing gateway at South plus enhance gateway
Boughton	2	Taffic speed	30mph	From current 30mph to Canterbury Road / Stockers Hill jn	buffer zone, plus gateway and signs to indicate cycle route
Boughton	3	Junction safety	Remodel	Junction of Canterbury rd/Stockers Hill	Minimise flare on entry/extra
Boughton	4	Multiple	Multiple	Canterbury Road to Brenley Corner	Lower priority: Minimise carriageway widths / meximise pavement / add cycle lane? 40mph? Maintain - regular sweeping...
Boughton	5	Multiple	Multiple	Canterbury Rd @ Chalkley Rd	Redesign, new signs etc to link to off road route on north east of carriageway
Boughton	23	Multiple	Multiple	Brenley Corner	Complete redesign needs National Highways plan. Interim: rephase lights to respond quicker to cyclists. Possibly route cycles to east and north (rather than south and west) depending remaining route into Faversham
Boughton	24	No cycleway	Remodel	Brenley Corner / London Road North	Possibility of using existing concrete surface
Boughton	25	Land ownership	Land ownership	North of London Road	Investigate attitude of landowner to using land inside hedge or tracks to reach ZR496
Boughton	26	Surface quality	Resurface	on ZR496	Severe flooding observed - solution needed
Boughton	27	No cycleway	Upgrade / uprate	ZR496	Footpath crosses field - landowner might resist upgrade to bridleway or similar. Could be bargaining chip to using north south track to connect to London Road
Boughton	28	Taffic speed / vol	Traffic calming	Homestall lane	Homestall Lane not currently usable by many cyclists - would need significant reductions in vehicle numbers and speeds
Boughton	29	No cycleway	Cycleway	Graveney Road	Segregated route needed - would benefit Graveney and Goodnestone residents as well
Boughton	30	Surface quality	upgrade	ZR496	Concrete path ends, would need upgrading to make usable for cycles
Boughton	31	No cycleway	Land ownership	new link from London Road to ZR496	Linked to #24 diversion towards ZR 496
Boughton	32	No cycleway	upgrade	Chalkpit needs solution	Depends on Duchy of Cornwall plans
Boughton	33	Access	Cycleway	London Road railway bridge	Potential to use footbridge. Barrier removal

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Figure 6: Map of possible interventions



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Figure 7: Boughton route images



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ZR496 from Homestall Lane

and looking towards

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Route to Long Bridge not inviting...