

Parishes to Town Project: Graveney & Goodnestone to Faversham

1. Introduction

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.

This briefing paper concerns walking and cycling routes around Graveney & Goodnestone, including a cycle route between the Sportsman and Faversham.

2. Summary status and recommendations

There are several needs and opportunities in the area:

- 1) Reduce traffic speeds in Goodnestone and Graveney – consider 20mph speed limit
- 2) Walking:
 - a. A safe walking route between Graveney and Goodnestone is a high priority for the Parish Council (see figure n)
 - b. A safe walking route between Graveney village and church is desirable (figure)
 - c. Enhance walking routes into Faversham, particularly from places nearer to the town.
- 3) Cycling:
 - a. Sustrans is undertaking a feasibility study for creating an active travel route, with a particular focus on cycling, between the Sportsman and Sandbanks Road.
 - b. Sustrans is also considering improvements to the section from Sandbanks Road to Faversham as part of its “Paths for Everyone” vision.

Further discussion required with Parish Council and/or other community leaders about alternatives for enhancing footpaths in and around the villages and on the possibility for a lower speed limit.

Work on the cycling alternatives awaits Sustrans output.

3. Key considerations

The speed and volume of motor vehicles through the villages and the lack of safe routes make walking or cycling unpleasant and unsafe. As well as a walking route between Graveney and Goodnestone, the community needs improved walking / cycling routes into Faversham. Existing and potential routes are shown in Figure 3.

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a. Walking

Possible walking routes between Graveney and Goodnestone and to Graveney church are depicted in Figures 6 and 7. Land ownership will be a key consideration in order to identify the actual routes in detail. An alternative example from South Perrott in Dorset – an on-road footpath / pavement is shown at Figure 8. Important to note is that this is on an A road with more traffic than Head Hill Road.

FURTHER DISCUSSION REQUIRED ABOUT POSSIBLE ROUTES AND INTERVENTIONS NEEDED

As part of its work to prevent the permanent loss of rights of way, The Ramblers have identified a number of 'lost ways' that appeared on old maps, but which appear have been missed from the current definitive maps. Such 'lost ways' around Graveney and Goodnestone are shown for information in Figures 9 and 10 in case they are of interest.

b. Cycling

National Cycling Network Route 1, which runs through the Parish, is an important strategic consideration, since it links Dover to Dartford, via Canterbury, Whitstable and Sittingbourne. Figure 3 shows the current National Cycle Network around Faversham with potential strategic additions shown as red, dotted lines.

- The Faversham to Sandbanks Road section does not meet national government standards (LTN 1/20): it has a poor surface and an indirect routing around the sewage farm at Abbey Fields. While the route along the creek is well-used, funding restrictions, land ownership, short implementation deadlines and limited design guidance compromised the 1990s' design. Sustrans recognises these flaws and aims to improve the route under its 'Paths for Everyone' vision.
- From Sandbanks Road to Seasalter, the route does not meet LTN 1/20 standards: Motor traffic trying to avoid the A299 makes Seasalter Road a busy cut-through. As part of its aim of making the National Cycle Network off-road wherever possible, Sustrans is conducting a feasibility study for developing / enhancing NCN 1. This aims to provide a **direct, safe, high-quality route** to the Sportsman in Seasalter to connect the rapidly expanding population of Faversham with the beach and to form part of a high-quality commuter route to Whitstable.

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 LTN 1/20.

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4. Further consideration (outside project scope)

Creating a safe cycle route to Whitstable along Monkshill Road and Seasalter Lane and either ZR507/CW2 or Dargate Road would avoid the dangerous alternative taken by some of cycling along the Thanet Way! This brings the additional benefit of creating a circular leisure route Faversham / Seasalter / Monkshill Road with a possible link into the new 'Cantii Way', which uses the Crab and Winkle route between Canterbury and Whitstable and would benefit residents of Dargate and Yorkletts. Issues include the need for traffic calming on Monkshill Road and upgrading CW2 to a bridleway, or similar.

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

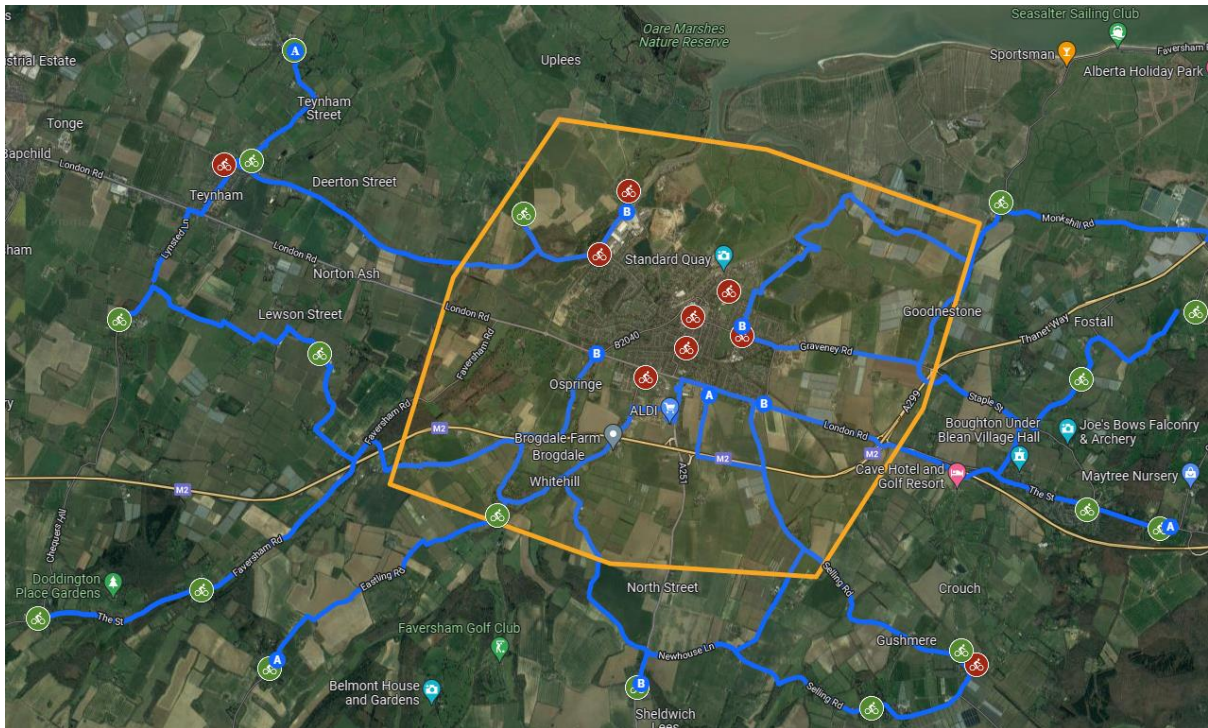
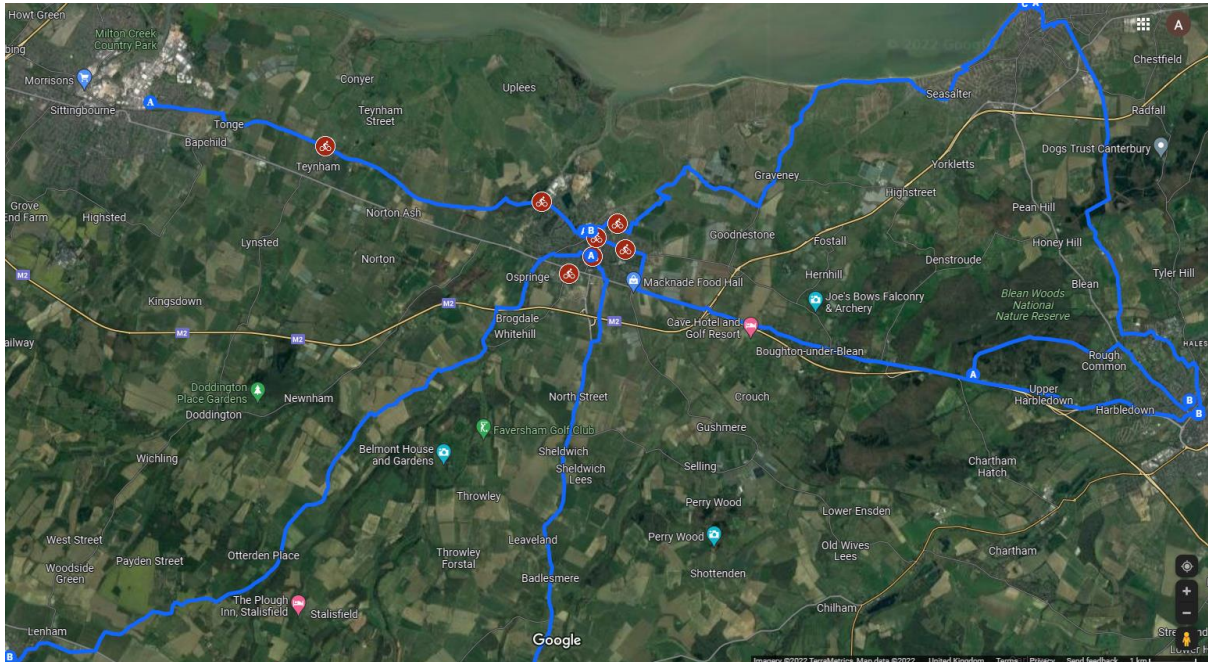


Figure 2: Potential inter-urban network from Faversham (illustrative)

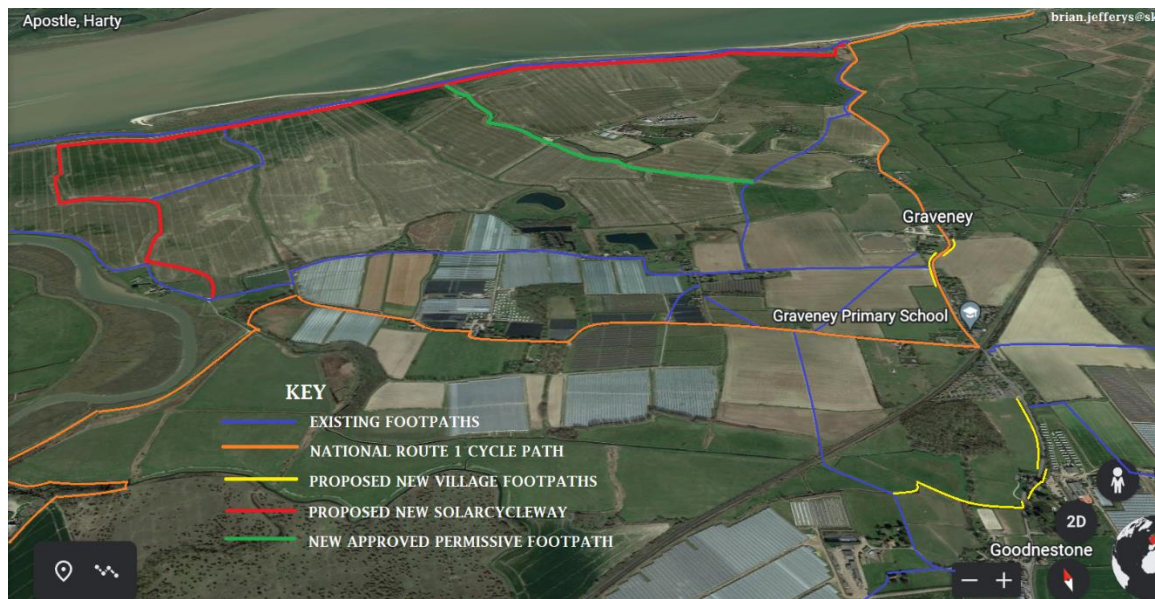


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Figure 3: National Cycle Network – current (blue, yellow) and potential (red dotted)



Figure 4: Aerial view of existing and potential active travel routes



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Figure 5: PROW map showing NCN1 and indicative new walking routes

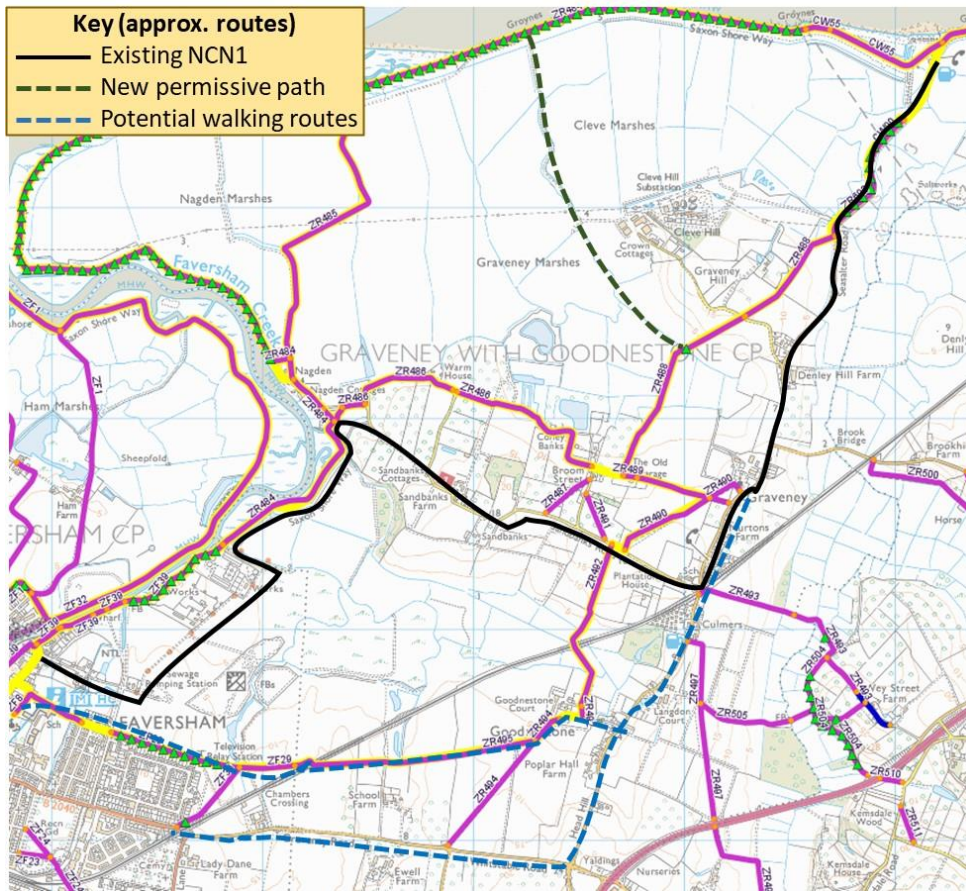


Figure 6: Aerial view of possible footpaths Graveney to Goodnestone



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Figure 7: Aerial view of possible footpaths Graveney to Graveney church

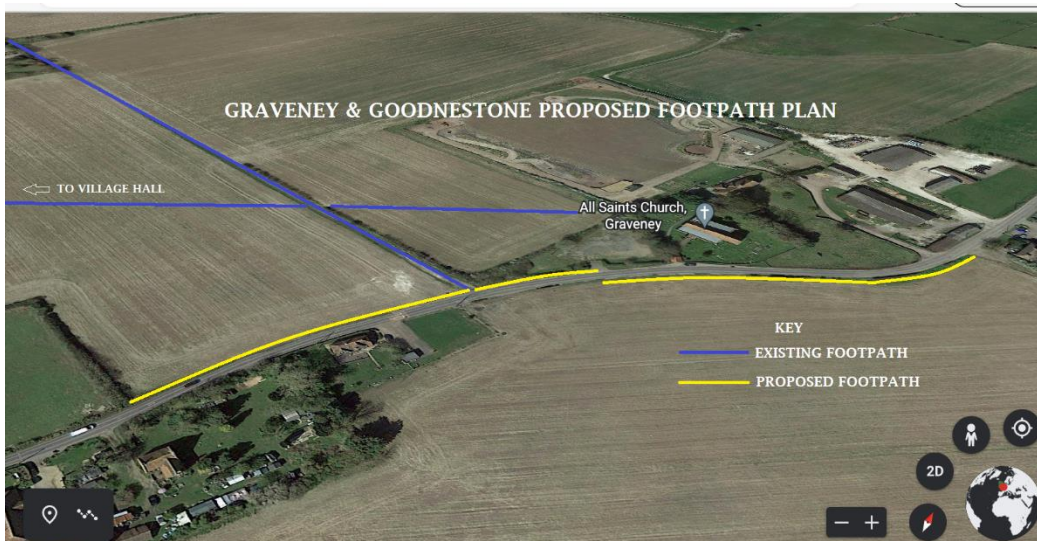


Figure 8: Example of on-road footway in South Perrott, Dorset



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Figure 9: Possible “lost way” north of Sandbanks Road¹

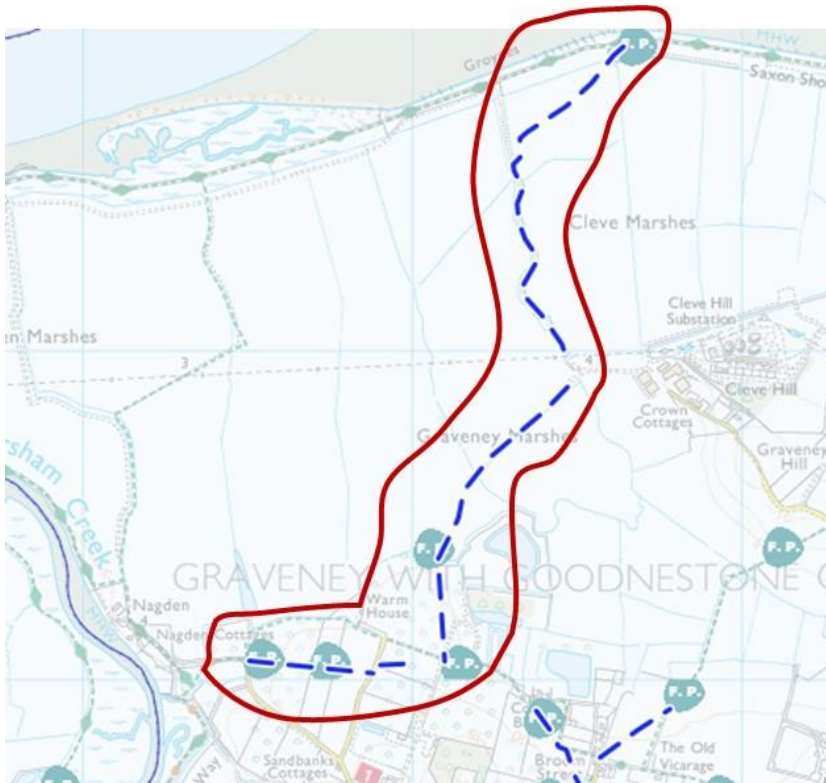
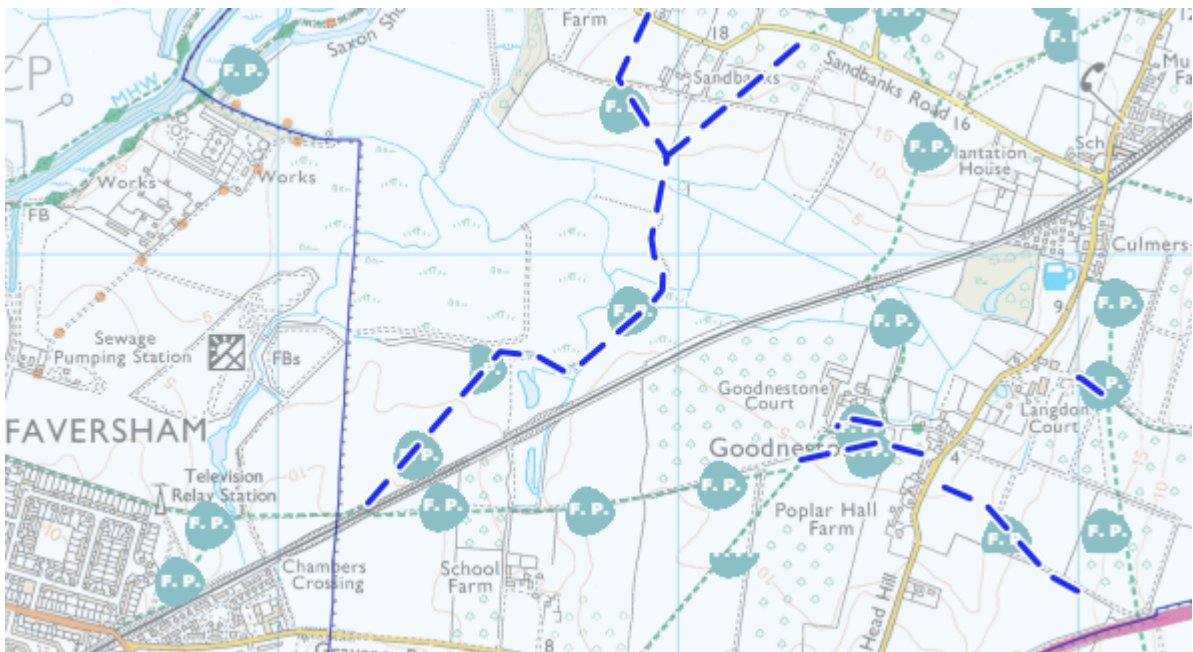


Figure 10: Possible “lost ways” south of Sandbanks Road²



¹ The Ramblers [‘Don’t Lose Your Way’](#) project

² The Ramblers [‘Don’t Lose Your Way’](#) project