



FOOTPATH/CYCLE TRACK SEVERANCE
FTC TOPIC PAPER NO. 2



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Introduction

1. The currently preferred route of the Eastern Bypass (now referred to in the Draft Local Plan as an “Eastern Movement Corridor”) directly affects four footpaths and a cycle track in Fordwich Parish. There is no indication in the plan as to how the proposed Eastern Bypass will allow continued use of these paths.
2. It is obvious that there would have to be diversions, bridges, safe crossings, or underpasses to enable pedestrian use. These will inevitably negatively affect the enjoyment and utility of these well-used and historic rights of way. In particular, the effects will include:
 - Noise
 - Pollution
 - Landscape degradation
 - Risk of accident
 - Increased inconvenience and length of route.
 - Reduction of their use for health, exercise, and recreation.
 - Destruction of historic routes
3. We also observe that there has been no assessment as to what impact these works (e.g. connecting footbridges, tunnels etc.) might have in terms of costing (see further FTC Costings Viability Topic Paper) or Landscape.

4. These footpaths are an important asset of connectivity to the Fordwich community (and others beyond the community), and every effort must be made to preserve, enhance, and encourage their use.
5. The Eastern Bypass is the worst option in terms of community severance – CCC officers have acknowledged in discussions with residents that they were not even aware that the proposed route cuts through Fordwich.
6. The concept of “community severance” is a well-recognised aspect of transport planning but has been effectively ignored by CCC in its selection of the currently preferred route. Severance, a concept commonly associated with such new transport infrastructure, is often defined as the creation of a physical and/or psychological barrier that divides people from local services or social connections within the community (Clark et al., 1991). As such, it has been shown to affect the health and well-being of residents through their use of local resources such as health services (Smith and Gurney, 1992; Mackett and Thoreau, 2015), their active travel (Smith and Gurney, 1992) and, although this has been less widely studied, influencing their social capital and feelings of community cohesion (Appleyard and Lintell, 1972, Hart and Parkhurst, 2011). In addition, the currently preferred route would sever historic routes important for the community and (inter) nationally.
7. The decision to include the currently preferred route in the Reg. 18 Draft Local Plan does not take account of and, indeed conflicts with the Canterbury Landscape Character Assessment and Biodiversity Appraisal dated October 2020, in the respect that development should only be permitted if continued to secure tranquillity and remoteness in the identified areas which are situated in and around the Fordwich footpaths and cycleways (see further, the FTC Landscape Topic Paper).

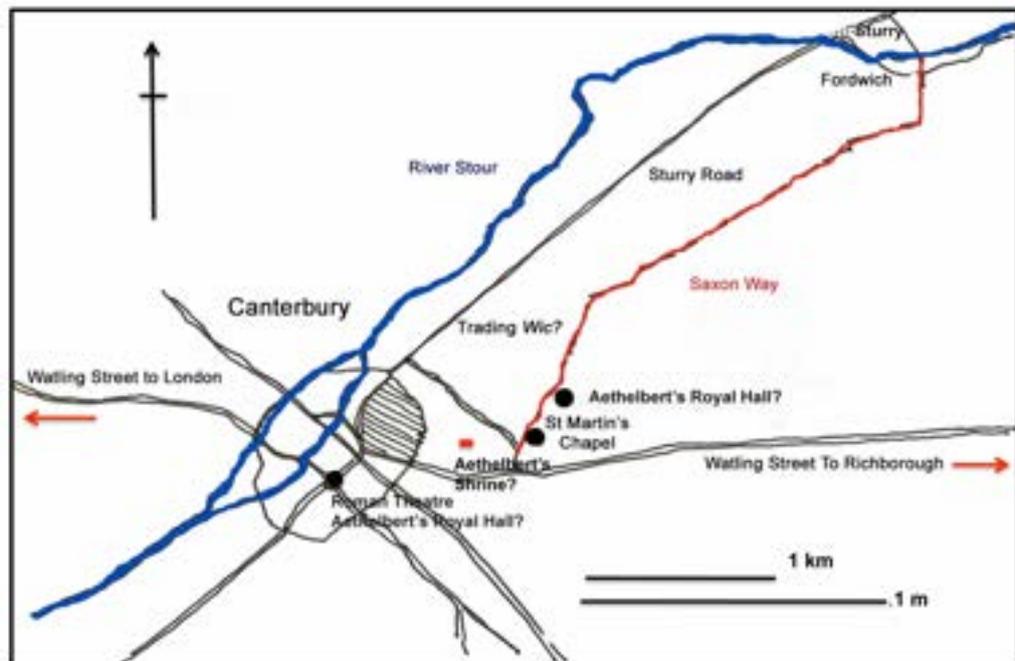
8. The currently proposed route is also plainly likely to discourage rather than encourage people to make a modal shift from car to walking and cycling in contrast to the purported aim of the transport policy of the Draft Local Plan.

Examples of pathways that would be severed

Path	Description
CC37	Route from Littlebourne to Stodmarsh Rd
CB164	Runs parallel to Moat Lane along the edge of Westfield
CC23	From Moat Lane by Fordwich House to St Martin's Church
Cycle track	From Fordwich Rd by the bridge to Canterbury. Part of National Cycle Route 1.

9. **CC37** is an old road, known as “Organ Lane” which is thought to be the continuation of the ancient sunken trackway of Well Lane which connects at Littlebourne to the Roman Road to Richborough.
10. **CB164** is a well-used footpath which allows walkers to avoid the busy Moat Lane, offers an attractive route to Stodmarsh Road and permits walkers to access a number of footpaths through Chequers Wood, the Golf Course and Old Park.
11. **CC23** is an ancient trackway, the medieval route by which stone from France was transported to build Canterbury Cathedral and St Augustine's Abbey. The blocks would be quarried in Caen, shipped across the Channel and then down the River Stour to Fordwich. From there they would be loaded onto carts and taken overland to Canterbury via St Martin's Church. The track may well be much older than this as it is a continuation of a way from Trenley Park Wood, forming part of Moat Lane, where it turns sharply to run parallel with King

Street and the river. The track is a classic “terrace way” which follows the drier 15m contour of the side of the Stour Valley running just above the line of springs. It may be of Iron Age origin. Blocking, diverting, damaging or degrading this path would be an irreversible loss to the World Heritage site with which it is closely connected. The importance of Fordwich's historic footpaths can be seen at Annex A, showing the Canterbury to Fordwich Pilgrim’s Loop. This part of **Pilgrim Walk [The “Old Way”]**, also known as “Saxon Way”, from Bekesbourne to Canterbury would also be severed. The Old Way is an ancient pilgrim route which runs from Southampton to Canterbury and cuts through Fordwich. (See further Annex B). The currently preferred route would also sever the Pilgrims Cycle Path¹; the public information for which highlights the Fordwich to Canterbury section which would be cut.



Map 14 The Saxon Way from Fordwich to Canterbury - late C6th

Fordwich is Augustine's likely landing-place near to Canterbury. The ancient Saxon Way path follows a hill above the Stour and would ensure arrival at St Martin's Hill dry shod. A wic or trading area for foreign merchants probably existed along the river.

¹ <http://www.gps-routes.co.uk/routes/home.nsf/RoutesLinksCycle/pilgrims-way-cycle-route>

12. The preferred route will also cut the national cycle network Sustrans Route 1 four times. This is a very popular route for cyclists, walkers, dog walkers and joggers and will need careful protection if it is not to be degraded by the new road crossing it.

Conclusion

13. A busy new road which cuts across these well-used and popular paths, some of which are very important historical features, will inevitably damage their value for recreation and exercise and contribute to community severance within Fordwich. The result must certainly mean a significant degradation of their value to Fordwich and the wider community. The impact on the historic environment would be a matter of local, national, and international concern.

East Canterbury strategic development area – concept masterplan



Key

- Site boundary
- Open spaces/ biodiversity opportunities- Indicative locations
- Opportunities for green corridors
- Community hub- Indicative location
- Proposed green gap
- Opportunities to improve cycling/walking access and safety
- Opportunities for new cycling/walking connectors
- Key sites
- - - - Eastern movement corridor
- Sites allocated in Local Plan 2017

 FOOTPATHS (ROW)