



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)

Abbey Fields Cycle Route Proposals - Climate Change Team

Note. All font in blue should be removed and is for guidance only. All black font should remain.
Before completing this document please refer to our guidance on the completion of Equality Impact Assessments.

Appendix F

Service/policy/strategy/practice/plan being assessed: Abbey Fields Cycle Route Proposals

Business Unit/Service Area: Climate Change Team

Is this a new or existing service/policy/strategy/practice/plan?

New

EIA Review team – list of members:

Graham Folkes-Skinner; Dave Barber.

Do any other Business Units/Service Areas need to be included?

Human Resources

Date of assessment: 24 January 2023

Are any of the outcomes from this assessment likely to result in complaints from existing services users, members of the public and/or employees?

Yes

DETAILS OF SERVICE/POLICY/STRATEGY/PRACTICE/PLAN

Scoping and Defining

1. What are the aims, objectives, and outcomes of the service/policy/practice/plan?

The project is proposing a preferred cycle route across Abbey Fields in Kenilworth, connecting the northern and southern ends of National Cycle Network (NCN) Route 52. It will allow cyclists to share a route through the park with pedestrians providing a safer alternative to using the surrounding road routes. Allowing cycling in the park will mean pedestrians will be sharing the space with cyclists with the potential for conflict between these groups of users

2. Who are the customers?

Cyclists and pedestrians who are users of Abbey Fields

3. How has equality been considered in the development or review so far?

If the preferred route is agreed there will be detailed costings produced alongside a 6-week consultation with the community and any proposal to install a shared path across Abbey Fields will take into account equality needs

4. What is the reason for the change/development?

As mentioned above it will connect up NCN Route 52, alongside providing direct off-road connection for cyclists between the town centre and different part of Kenilworth, alongside the two leisure centres, namely Castle Farm and Abbey Fields

5. How does it fit with Warwick District Council's wider objectives?

It fits into the agreed Climate Change ambitions alongside the themes within WDC Business Strategy

6. Why might it be important to consider equality and the protected characteristics?

The proposal is to provide a shared cycling/pedestrian path which meets national design standards, but it is important that park users potentially could be of limited mobility and or vision and/or within a wheelchair. Also parks range from young to old

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Information Gathering

7. What sources of data have you used?

You must keep a record of any data you have currently used as supporting evidence

Over the history of the initiative there have been various consultations which includes the proposal to allow cycling within Abbey Fields, these are: -

- 1) Kenilworth Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2019 – Kenilworth Town Council
- 2) Feasibility Study of cycle route across Abbey Fields, Kenilworth – Sustrans 2016
- 3) “Fields for the Future” – Warwick District Council 2019
- 4) Kenilworth Town Council Cycling Strategy – Kenilworth Town Council
- 5) Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Consultation – WCC 2021.

8. What does the data you have tell you about your customers and about protected equality groups?

1) Kenilworth Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2019

This stated: -

- “Linking through Abbey Fields is a contentious issue as it is difficult to find a suitable safe route without mixing pedestrians and cyclists though the route ranked 4th out of 10 projects in the Questionnaire. A route will only be supported subject to it being shown to be safe for pedestrians and cyclists and having a minimal impact upon heritage assets” (Paragraph 5.41)
- “The aim should be to create safe cycling routes between the centre of Kenilworth and the external cycle paths to Warwick University, Sustrans route 52 and the proposed K2L...” (Annex A. Sustainable Transport. A.8)

2) Feasibility Study of cycle route across Abbey Fields, Kenilworth

A stakeholder meeting was held on 6 September 2016, which included residents, Warwick District Council (WDC); WCC; Kenilworth Town Council; Friends of Abbey Fields; Kenilworth Cycleways. Feedback was received both at the meeting and via email and a summary relevant to the protected equality groups is below: -

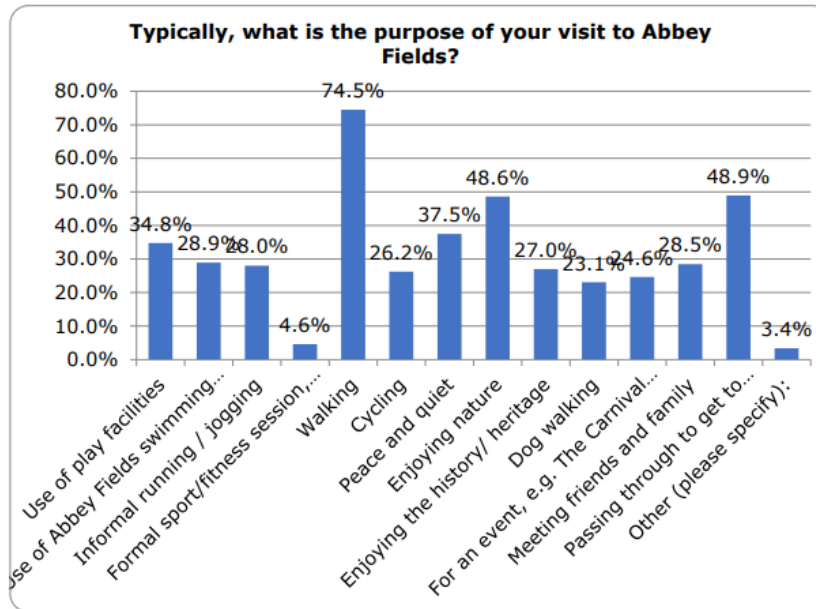
- “Safety issues with mixing pedestrians and cyclists”
- “There is a need for safe routes for children to learn to cycle and for families to enjoy the benefits of cycling”

- “Will there be lighting on the route?”

3) “Fields for our future” – Warwick District Council

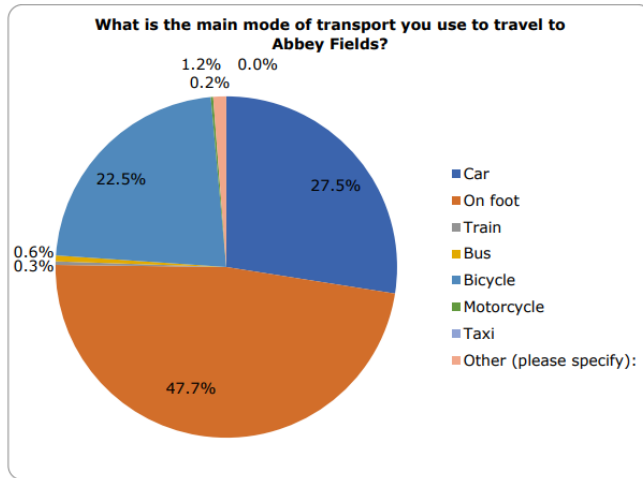
There was a public consultation carried out from 4 November 2019 until 9 December 2019 which involved seven drop-in events organised by WDC. There was also the opportunity to complete a consultation survey on-line. There were questions relevant to cycling and Abbey Fields

What is your purpose for visiting Abbey Fields? (889 people responded)



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What is your main mode of transport you use to travel to Abbey Fields? (895 responded)



Please give your thoughts on Cycling at Abbey Fields? (790 responded)

Those in favour of cycling at Abbey Fields (633 respondents)

Of the 633 respondents in favour of Cycling at Abbey Fields there is a clear view that a separate cycle path is needed for Abbey Fields as the existing path infrastructure is not wide enough to allow safe dual usage

Those against cycling at Abbey Fields (149 respondents)

Examples of their comments are below: -

“Do not allow cycling as it is a danger to walkers and children”

“I believe a cycle route should run around the eastern / south-eastern side of the park... linking Castle Farm to the green way... but not through the middle of the park!”

“I am a cyclist but believe Abbey Fields should remain cycle free.”

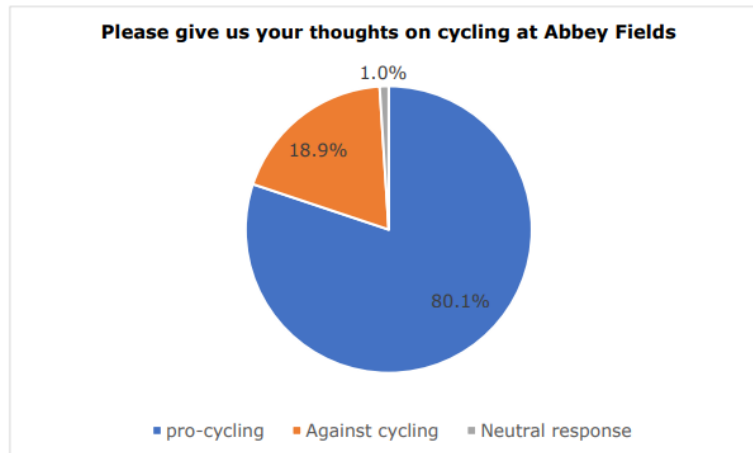
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“No bikes in/through the centre of the Fields due to children playing and walkers.”

“Perhaps a cycle path that connects the Greenway to the town centre avoiding the busy roads that runs discreetly up one side of the park.”

“Do not allow. Cyclists can push their bikes for that short distance.”

“A recipe for disaster! Will change AF forever losing the environmental qualities and peaceful attributes that reside there now”



4) Kenilworth Town Council Cycling Strategy

The relevant section of this strategy about a cycle route across Abbey Fields states: -

“The desire to create a cycle route through Abbey Fields enjoys considerable support locally. With the planned Leisure Developments at Abbey Fields and Castle Farm the idea has added importance as part of a potential green travel plan to service the new facilities. Whilst the issue has proved contentious with some people, removing restrictions on cycle access to this area of the town is seen as vital to facilitate East-West travel and form better connectivity.”

5) Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan Consultation – WCC 2021

Kenilworth Town Council Cycling Delivery Group submitted the comment about Abbey Fields from their Cycling Strategy, see above.

9. What do you need to know more about?

- If the preferred route is agreed there will be specific consultation about the route to understand any specific concerns
- Need to hear from local disability groups and National Institute for the Blind

10. How could you find this out and who could help you?

- Agreed 6-week public consultation
- Kenilworth Town Council could advise on local disability groups.

Engagement and Consultation

11. Who have you consulted with from protected equality groups?

None to date

12. Who else could you consult with?

Kenilworth Town Council

Friends of Abbey Fields

13. Who can help you to do this?

Senior Management

Monitor and Evaluate

14. Who have you consulted with from protected equality groups?

This will occur specifically during the 6-week consultation period

15. Analysis of impact and potential actions:

Protected characteristics from the Equality Act 2010	What do you know? Summary of data about/feedback from your service-users and/or staff	What does this mean?		What can you do? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate discrimination/mitigate negative impact • Advance equality of opportunity • Foster good relations
		Positive impacts identified (<i>actual and potential</i>)	Negative impacts identified (<i>actual and potential</i>)	
Age	Those who are likely to be more affected by the proposals are young children or older people. As a percentage of the overall population Kenilworth Abbey & Arden Ward has a higher proportion in the age group 65+ years (26% compared to 21% in Warwickshire)	By allowing cycling in Abbey Fields, it provides less confident cyclists, such as children or older people, a safe environment to cycle. Allowing cycling on this route in the park will provide an environment for older people to cycle safely and remain active. This may encourage more people to cycle and use Abbey Fields	Older people who feel vulnerable/less safe sharing sections of Abbey Fields with cyclists may stop using the park. Families with young children may consider the park's environment being less safe when sharing with cyclists and may stop visiting the amenity	The Cabinet Report entitled "Abbey Fields Cycle Route Proposals" – 8 March 2023, used a risk-based approach to assess two scenarios. Initially a risk assessment of the proposed considered how a cycle route can be introduced without any modifications to the existing layout of the park. From this, it was possible to identify areas where, if left unmodified, the risks to public safety would be unacceptably high and unsuitable for the introduction of a cycle route. The risk assessment was then repeated assuming that practicable mitigation measures had been carried out to reduce the level of risk. From this second assessment, it was possible to identify the residual risks and make a direct comparison between route options to determine which route, if any, present the lowest level of risk The high-level mitigation is described in the Cabinet Report alongside the appendices and if the preferred route is agreed further detailed design on mitigation will occur for further consultation. In addition to the above, it is recommended that the scheme will proactively seek to influence the behaviour of those using the park through a promotion of a Code of Conduct encouraging everyone to take account of and respect each other's needs. It is proposed to introduce "Code of Conduct" signs throughout the route.

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				Other mitigation measures that could be included is that WDC work with local cycle groups to enforce a self-management approach to cycling and to work with park users to highlight and challenge unacceptable behaviour by all users of Abbey Fields Also, we could also design a programme for the Rangers to have a heightened presence in Abbey Fields at specific times to engage with cyclists and deter unsafe use
Disability	People who are less mobile, have balance problems or have hearing or visual impairments may feel more vulnerable/less safe sharing Abbey Fields with cyclists	By creating an off-road cycle facility through Abbey Fields will provide people who do not feel confident in cycling with a safe route to use.	By allowing cycling along a route in Abbey Fields there is a risk that disabled people and other vulnerable groups are concerned for their safety and avoid using Abbey Fields Concerns raised through the various consultations related to the shared use environment and the safety of pedestrians.	See above
Sex	It is not considered that this protective characteristic will experience disproportionate, negative, neutral, or positive impact by the scheme to allow cycling in Abbey Fields			
Race	It is not considered that this protective characteristic will			

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	experience disproportionate, negative, neutral, or positive impact by the scheme to allow cycling in Abbey Fields			
Religion or belief	It is not considered that this protective characteristic will experience disproportionate, negative, neutral, or positive impact by the scheme to allow cycling in Abbey Fields			
Gender Re-assignment	It is not considered that this protective characteristic will experience disproportionate, negative, neutral, or positive impact by the scheme to allow cycling in Abbey Fields			
Pregnancy and Maternity	New parents but more particularly their young children may be more adversely affected than the general population as they may be less aware of their surroundings, potentially walking into the path of an approaching cyclist it left unsupervised	By allowing cycling in a section of the park, it provides less confident cyclists, such as families with young children, a safe environment to cycle	Women who are pregnant, may feel more vulnerable/less safe sharing sections of the park with cyclists may stop using the park. New parents with young children may consider the park's environment being less safe when sharing the route with cyclists and may stop visiting the amenity	See above

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Sexual orientation	It is not considered that this protective characteristic will experience disproportionate, negative, neutral, or positive impact by the scheme to allow cycling in Abbey Fields			
Marriage and Civil Partnership <i>(Note: only in relation to due regard to eliminating unlawful discrimination)</i>	It is not considered that this protective characteristic will experience disproportionate, negative, neutral, or positive impact by the scheme to allow cycling in Abbey Fields			

16. Outcomes of Equality Impact Assessment

Action	Timescale	Responsibility
If the preferred route highlighted in the Cabinet Report is agreed, detailed design of the route will be produced and then there will be a 6-week consultation period on the proposals before a further report is produced for WDC Cabinet with the conclusions. The consultation will involve speaking to the relevant groups highlighted in this EIA alongside Kenilworth Town Council and Friends of Abbey Fields Group	To be confirmed	WDC
The detailed design will ensure that all the mitigation requirements highlighted in the national standards for cycle infrastructure are met	To be confirmed	WDC
When the scheme and associated mitigation measures come into effect WDC will work with cycle groups to enforce a self-management approach to cycling, whilst engage with all park users to highlight and challenge unacceptable behaviour by cyclists	To be confirmed	WDC

Date of next review: Ongoing

Name and signature of Officer completing the EIA:

Graham Folkes-Skinner

Name and signature of Head of Service:

Dave Barber

NEXT STEPS: Once completed, share the document with your Head of Service to gain their signature.