

# The Strawberry Line: Dulcote Quarry Link



*Wells Cathedral from The Park*

Greenways & Cycl routes Ltd  
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This report describes proposals for a link to Dulcote Quarry to connect the Charlie Bigham development with Wells and to extend the Strawberry Line project further east towards Shepton Mallet.

## Background

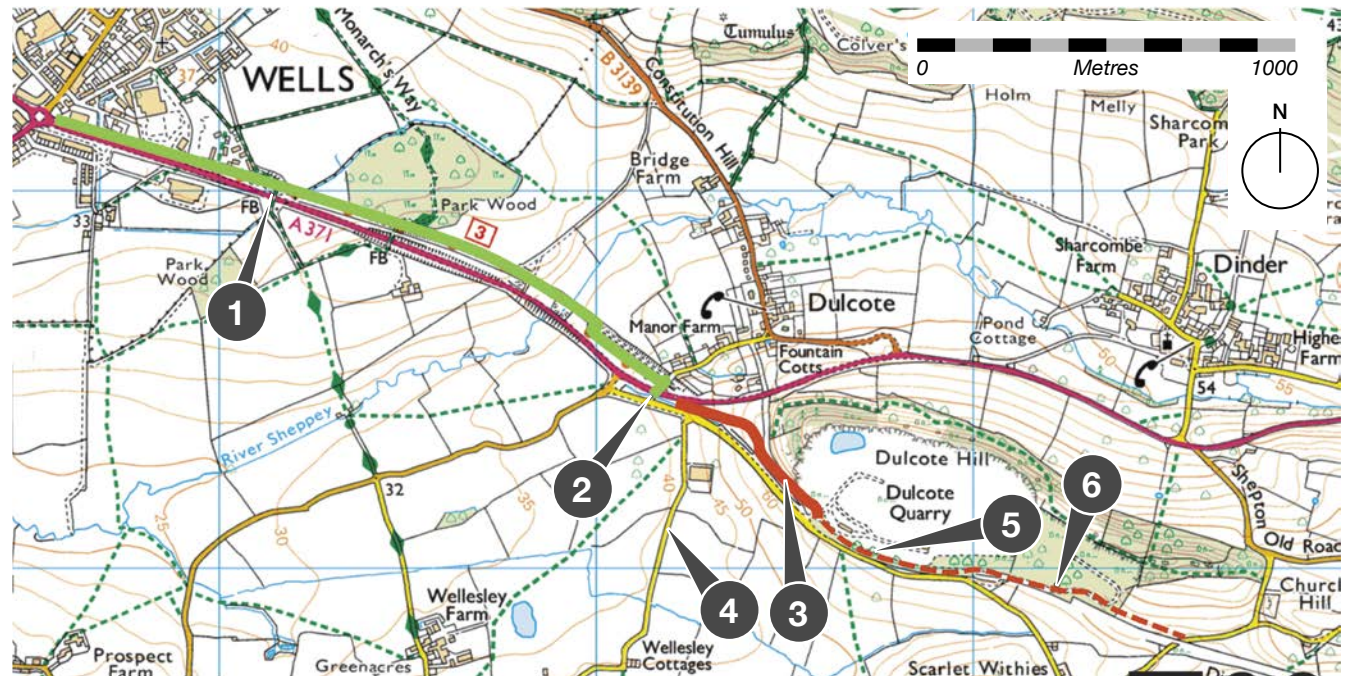
The Strawberry Line is the name of the former railway which ran along the foot of the Mendips from Axbridge to Wells and took its name from its seasonal produce shipped away by rail to London and elsewhere.

Since its closure in 1966 sections of the line have been developed as a popular traffic free greenway – the Strawberry Line Trail.

The most significant of these sections is the one running from Axbridge to Yatton where it connects with the mainline station. Other important sections connect Axbridge to Cheddar, and Wells to Dulcote.

## Map 1: Location Map

- 1 Existing Strawberry Line path to Dulcote (1.70kms)
- 2 Existing underpass to cross A371
- 3 Proposed link to Dulcote Quarry (0.56kms)
- 4 Signed National Cycle Network route 3 to Glastonbury
- 5 Aspirational extension along old railway to Recycling Centre (0.45kms)
- 6 Further aspirational extensions past Recycling Centre to reach Church Hill and Shepton Old Road





## Map 2: Background map showing the Strawberry Line from Yatton to Shepton Mallet

North Somerset Council are well advanced in their plans to open a further section of the Strawberry Line from Yatton and Clevedon, whilst the Strawberry Line group of volunteers want to see Cheddar and Wells joined, as well as Wells to Shepton Mallet, in order to make a popular alternative to the A371 for cyclists and pedestrians. The traffic levels on this main road are now so heavy that none but the most experienced and foolhardy would choose to cycle along it.

At the present time, in the ongoing race to tackle climate change, it is ever more important and urgent to open the Strawberry Line so that local people can walk or cycle local journeys rather than using the car, and so that visitors can visit or holiday here in a sustainable way.

The Dulcote Quarry Link makes for a very useful extension of the Strawberry Line. Its development is proposed by the Strawberry Line Group working with Greenways & Cyclerroutes, who are a local charitable company dedicated to developing traffic free paths.

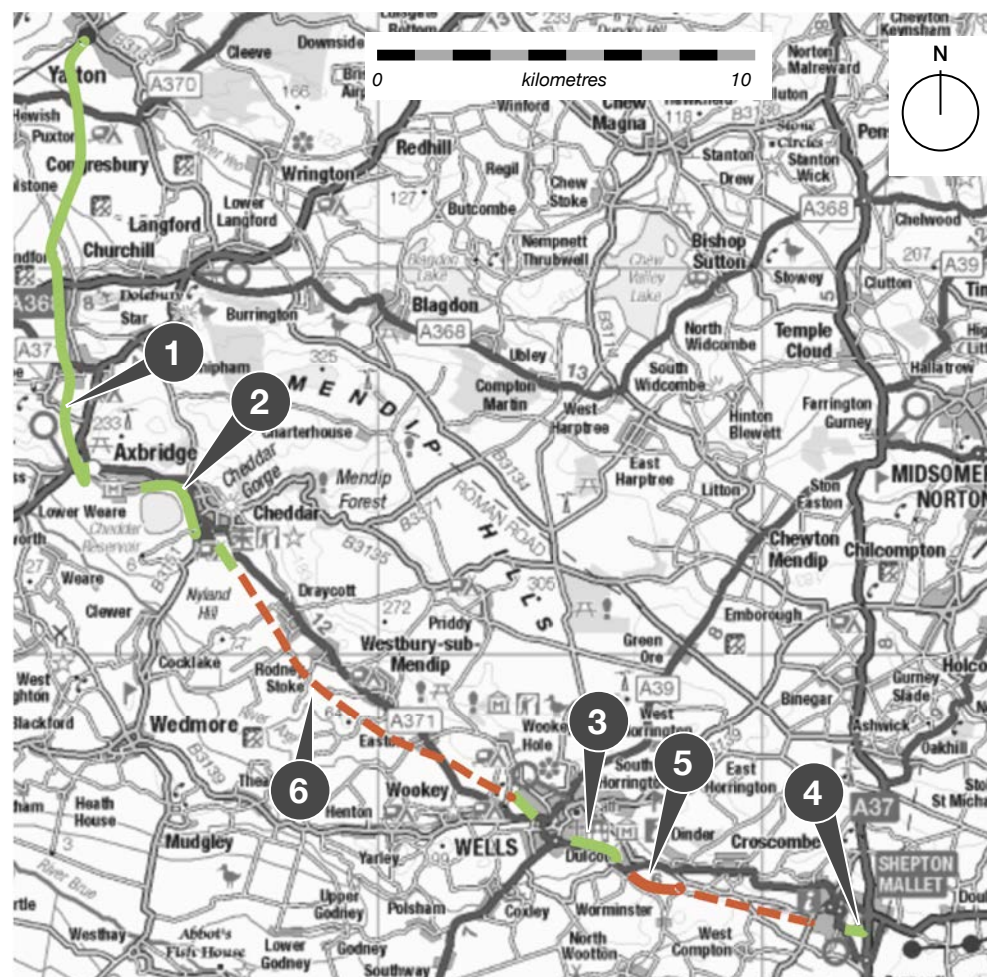
### Description of the proposal

The existing path from Wells drops down to join Durston Road, here a traffic free bridleway, and then passes under the main road via the Dulcote Underpass. The signposted National Cycle Route 3 then picks up minor roads to Queen's Sedge Moor and Glastonbury.

The proposed new path leaves the bridleway immediately after the A371 underpass and ramps up the side of that road to reach the remaining line of the railway which leads up to the Quarry entrance.

The railway route can be traced through, around the front of the quarry workings as far as the recycling plant. This blocks the way of the old railway and a diversion is required to make progress further.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 Existing path from Yatton Station to Axbridge | 5 Proposed Quarry Link  |
| 2 Continuation to Cheddar                       | 6 A good route along the general course of the Strawberry Line would be an invaluable resource to enable walkers and cyclists to bypass the busy main road. |
| 3 Existing section of railway path to Dulcote   |   |
| 4 Section of railway path in Shepton Mallet     |   |



- Open section of Strawberry Line
- Proposed Quarry Link
- Sections of disused railway with no route

### Map 3: Map showing proposed Quarry Link

- 1 Existing path from Wells joins the old Dulcote/Coxley Road below the remaining railway bridge.
- 2 Pass through the underpass and start the new path immediately beyond. Cut through existing fence and insert steel bollards with 1.2 metres clear.
- 3 Culvert existing roadside ditch for distance of 110m and construct new path over it as shown in the cross section.
- 4 Once past the highway boundary fence start to ramp up at 1:20 to climb back to the level of the old railway. This lower section to be constructed on fill won from an excavated section further up the slope.
- 5 Make linking steps, culvert ditch, and cut through hedge for footpath link to Wellesley Farm.
- 6 Now that the planned path is well away from the main road, we can excavate the side slope to make the upper sections of the ramp and to win materials to build the lower section.
- 7 Continue rising along more open ground. This section may need fencing if the Council wants to allow grazing in the area.
- 8 Run along the general alignment as far as possible so as to climb at an easy gradient before joining the line of the old road.
- 9 Ramp up to level of road and cut through hedge.
- 10 Follow the old road from Dulcote to Worminster. This section is almost level. Clear off the soil and detritus and construct new sandstone base for final path surface.
- 11 Join the Quarry entrance road.
- 12 A further phase could continue along the old railway. When this happens paint a "zebra" type crossing at the Quarry Road.





## Map 3: Detailed cross sections

### A: Near Dulcote Road

- 1 Present road to North Wooton
- 2 Verge of varying width
- 3 Timber fence to remain
- 4 Culvert existing ditch with 300 diameter pipe
- 5 Backfill and compact
- 6 New path, machine laid tarmac, 60mm thick and 2.5m wide.



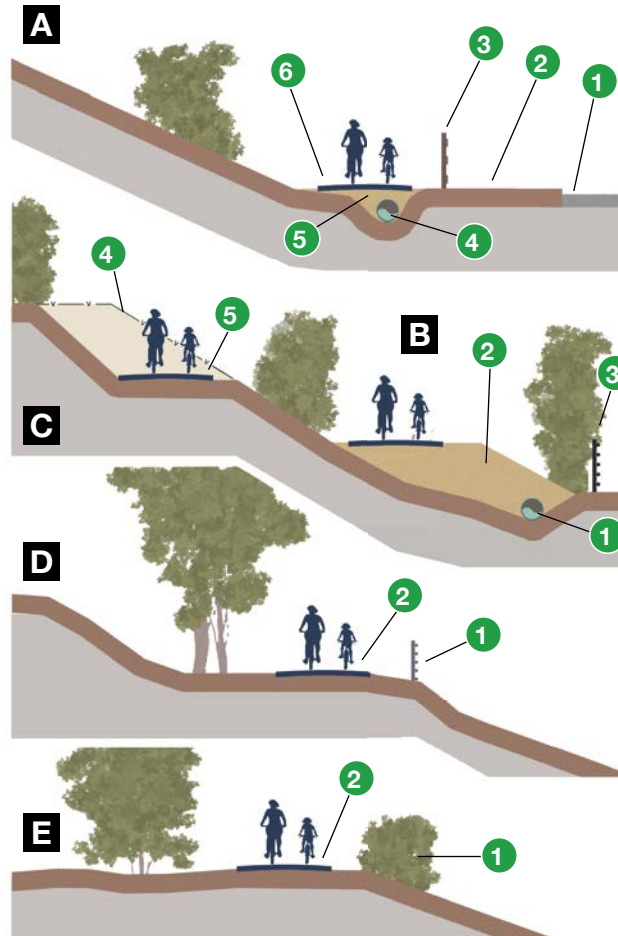
A Cleared way through at the foot of the main road embankment

### B: Start of 1:20 ramp up the side slope to join railway level

- 1 Culvert ditch with 300 diameter pipe
- 2 Construct path on fill
- 3 Existing boundary fence.

### C: Higher part of ramp cut out of hillside

- 4 This material excavated and used to make ramp at lower level
- 5 Path 2.5m wide and finished with flush grass verges either side.



B&C View across side slope reverse direction

### D: Along the railway formation

- 1 Remains of existing railway fencing
- 2 Construct new path on railway alignment. Scraping away the topsoil should reveal a sandstone base.



D Along the line of the former railway across the hillside

### E: The final section along the existing Green Lane

- 1 Breach through existing boundary hedge
- 2 Clean of all mud down to stone surface and finish with tarmac 2.5m wide.

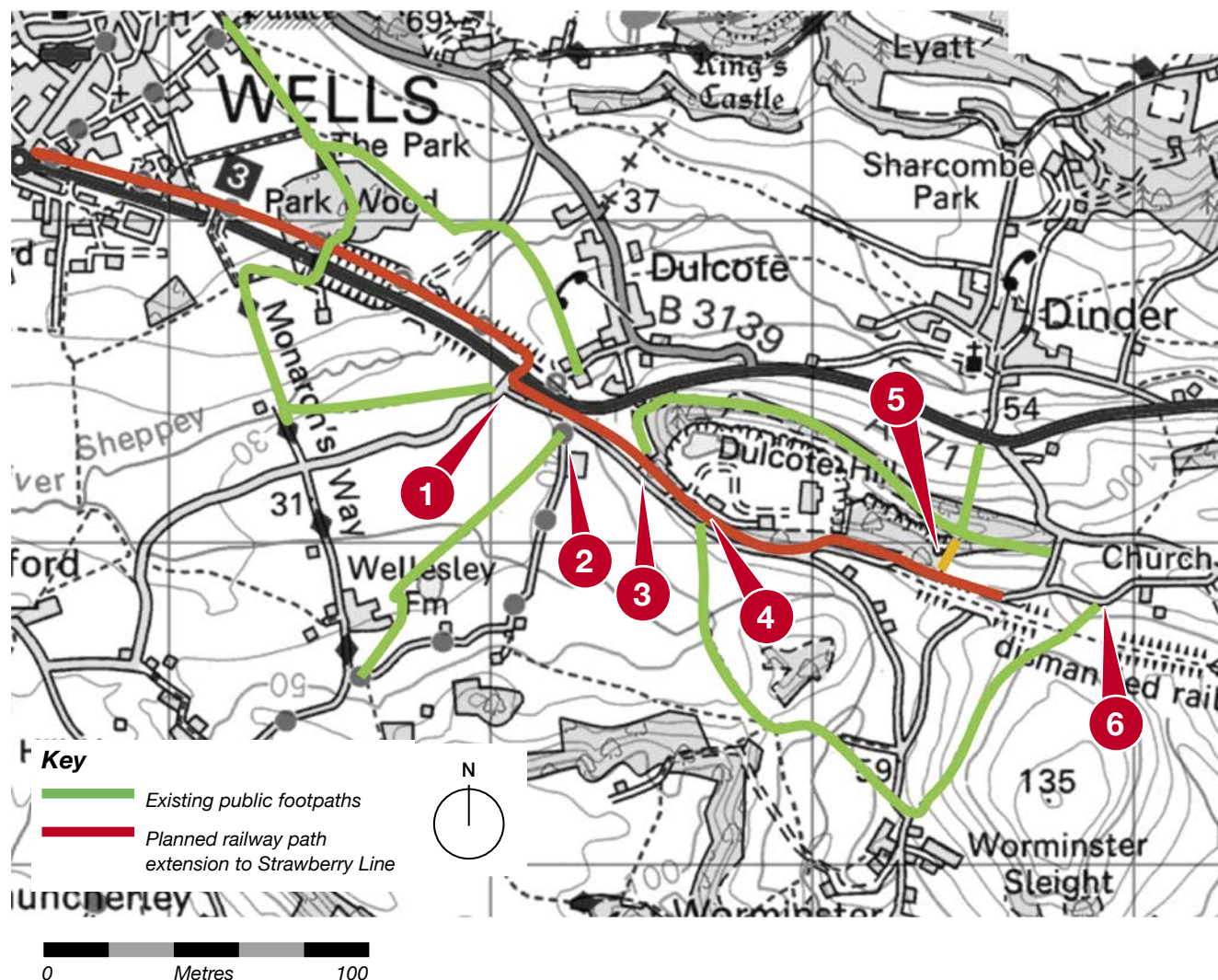


E Along existing green lane approaching quarry entrance

## Map 4: Future footpath links and extensions

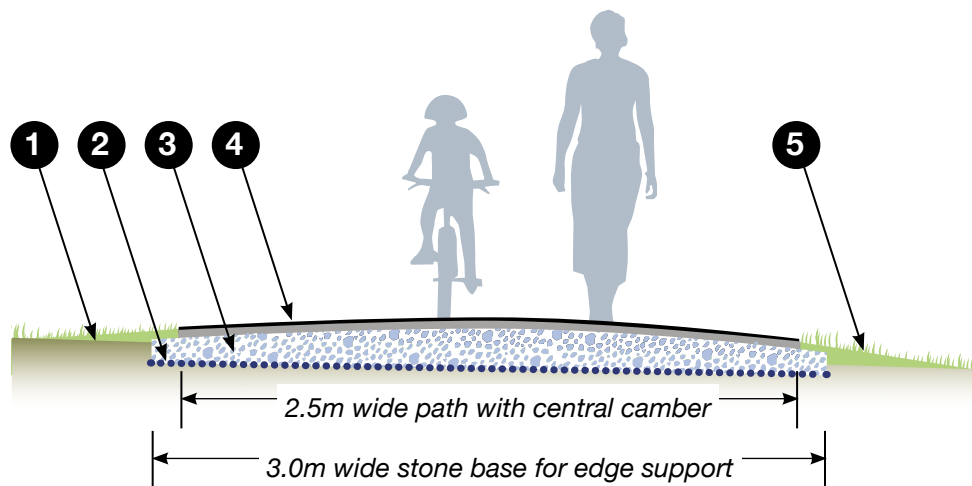
This map shows some of the footpaths in the vicinity of the planned Strawberry Line extension and the links and connections proposed to enhance walking routes and circuits.

- 1 Start of Strawberry Line extension to Dulcote Quarry
- 2 Provide a link from the Strawberry Line to emerge opposite the Launcherley Road to make a direct connection to the Wellesley Farm footpath.
- 3 Join into and follow a short section of the old Worminster Road
- 4 The railway continues past the quarry: make a link from any path to give a direct crossing of the road to access the path to Worminster.
- 5 A new link path at the eastern end of the former tip area would make a useful connection to Dinder and complete a circuit around Dulcote Hill.
- 6 After a short section on this very lightly trafficked road, one could join the footpath to Worminster for an attractive circuit in this area.





## Detail of proposed Dulcote path



- 1 Excavate a thin layer of soil, or down to the rocky base, and set this to one side to be used to build up the shoulders at the end of the work.
- 2 Lay a layer of polypropylene filter fabric to secure the base.
- 3 Construct a sound stone base 150mm thick and 3.0 metres wide. This extra width is needed to secure the sides of the finished path instead of using kerbs.
- 4 Lay the finished surface layer 2.5 metres wide. This typically will be a machine laid tarmac surface 60mm thick arranged with a central camber. This can then be finished with limestone dust brushed in to give the most natural look possible.

- 5 Build up soil verges either side to reach the edge of the tarmac. These should slope away from the path at 1:5 so as to allow for easy mowing. At the end of all this work the path will run on a slight 'causeway' some 150mm above the general ground level.

*The path will be open to pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders.*

*The Strawberry Line between Dulcote and Wells is already open to horses, and the proposed Dulcote Quarry Link starts and ends on an existing bridleway (the underpass and the old Dulcote-Worminster road respectively).*

## Design

The new path will be set out as shown in the cross-section detail.

The finished surface will be dense bitmac machine laid 2.5m wide with a central camber. A sealed surface is required over this section of the Strawberry Line to handle run off from rainfall over the long-graded slope.

The verges will be seeded with wild grass and wildflower mix which will take advantage of the clearance away of scrub and opening up the corridor to light.

Access details at each end will comprise steel bollards set with clear opening of 1.2m so as to provide a clear passage for wheelchairs.

## Access

The Dulcote Quarry extension will connect directly with the existing Strawberry Line path at the one end and with the entrance road to the Quarry at the other. There will be no link with a trafficked public road. The proposed link provides a new route for pedestrians and links with existing public footpath.

## Ecology

Appendix One sets out a brief report on the ecology of the corridor. The clearance away of scrub, largely rank hawthorn, will allow space for some interesting ground species to prosper. There are no anticipated effects on endangered species.

## Flooding

This link does not cross any natural watercourses or affect the drainage patterns in the area. Existing roadside ditches, which are largely dry, will be culverted. The project poses no flooding problems of any kind.

## Extension and continuations

Phase One of this link allows pedestrians and cyclists to bypass the traffic to the Quarry development.

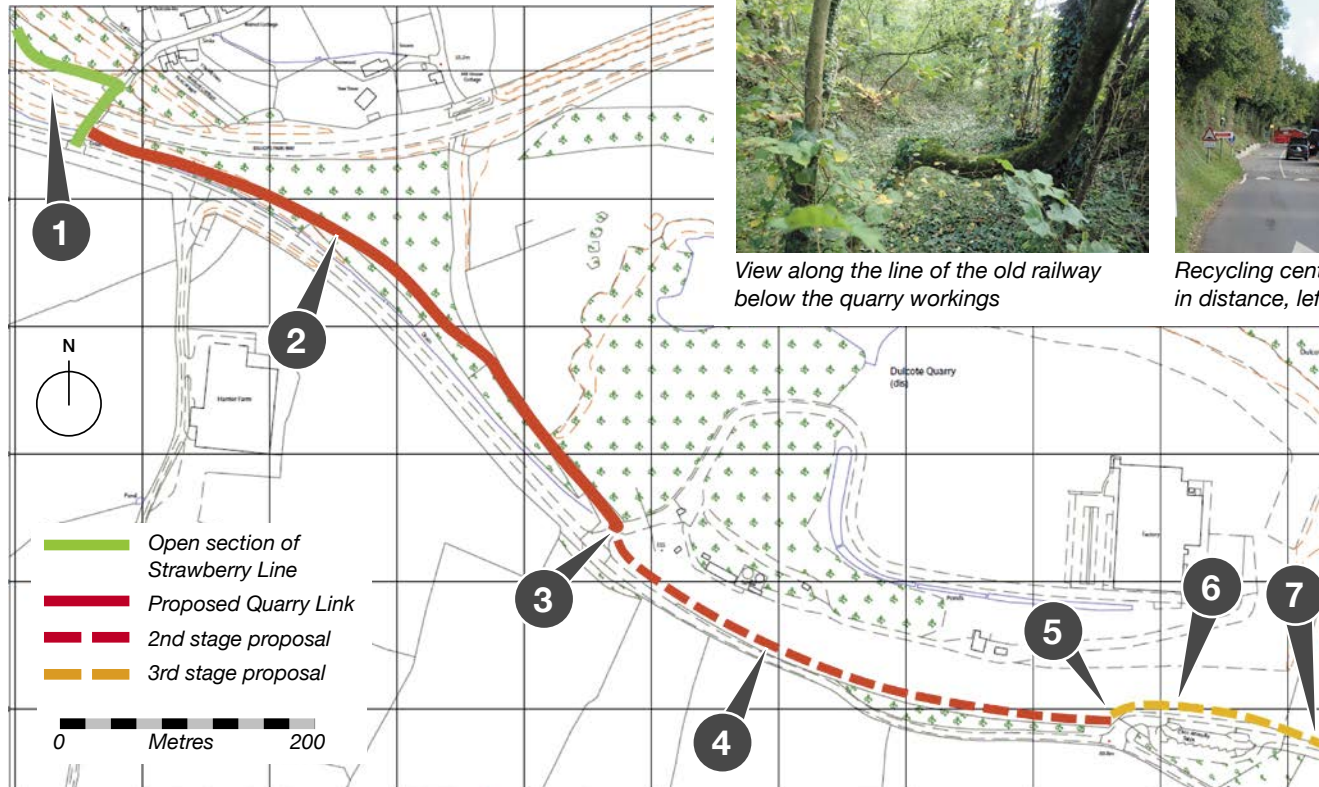
A second phase would further bypass the traffic to the Recycling Centre.

## Programme

The construction could commence in September, once bird nesting season is over and the scrub and woodlands cleared. The construction programme will be 3 months.



## Map 5: Detailed plan showing the 2nd and 3rd stages of a railway path past Dulcote Quarry



View along the line of the old railway below the quarry workings



Recycling centre: location of Section F in distance, left of road



View of road along line of railway running to old landfill site

### Section F: past Recycling Centre

- 1 Access road through Recycling Centre runs along the line of the old railway.
- 2 Existing boundary and security fence.
- 3 Reinforce existing hedge and trees to screen recycling from path.
- 4 Excavate path along line of slope. This bank is made up of the waste material from the quarry and will be variable in nature. Depending upon what is found some limited revetment may be needed.
- 5 Provide good surfaced path 2.5m wide.
- 6 Erect new security fence for the Quarry development at the top of the bank.

This section is able to follow the line of the disused railway as a largely level route so can be constructed with a stone dust finish.

