Letcombe Regis/West Challow BOAT, Oxfordshire

Date of survey	8 June 2026
Surveyor's name	Matt Judson
Surveyor's position	GLASS Representative for Oxfordshire

Surveyed issues				
Item	**Description**	**Severity**	**Location**	**length**
1	Vegetation encroachment	Severe	Points 4-10 (see map below)	0.5km

Assessed Byway distress in accordance with DEFRA National Guidelines				
Overview	**Byway circumstances**	**Information sheet number**	**Distress type**	**Applicable**
Distress associated only with types of byway construction	Byways with surfacing or structural layers	1	Structural layer rutting	-
		2	Subgrade bearing failure	-
		3	Inadequate compaction	-
		4	Potholes	-
		5	Corrugation	-

	Byways with subgrade surface	6	Bearing failure of subgrade surface	-
Distress associated with particular byway features	Raised carriageway	7	Edge loss	-
	Gradients and adjacent to water courses	8	Surface erosion	-
	Areas associated with flowing water	9	Scour	-
	Local low lying areas	10	Ponding	-
General types of distress	Concentrations of animal traffic	11	Poaching	-
	Vegetation growth	12	Encroaching vegetation	**Yes (1)**

Note: DEFRA does not provide guidance for surveyed issue 3. This is an enforcement issue.

Causes and solutions of highway stress (in accordance with National Guidelines)	
Distress Information Sheet number	12
Type of distress:	Encroaching vegetation
Listed primary cause	Natural growth and failure to cut-back the vegetation result in overhanging and encroaching vegetation. (The vegetation may be desirable for conservation purposes or to ensure the health of a protected tree
Maintenance and repair solutions:	Cut back vegetation to allow air and light to reach the byway surface.
Restrictions options:	None applicable.

Green Lane Association

Assessment by the Green Lane Association	
Survey item number	2
Distress type	12: Encroaching vegetation
Severity	Severe
Assessment	The vegetation growth is dense. Maintenance of the highway appears to have been abandoned long ago. Restoration of good maintenance is sufficient to address the issue.
Recommended action	Cut back vegetation to allow air and light to reach the highway surface

Consideration of traffic regulation

Factors in favour of traffic regulation

- A prohibition of traffic would alleviate the Council from the burden of repair and maintenance of the highway, either in total or in part.

Factors against traffic regulation

- The highway authority has a statutory duty to maintain the highway to a standard that permits convenient use by all those entitled to use it, and at all times of the year. Avoiding this duty leaves the Council venerable to challenge.
- Exemptions apply for access for agricultural machinery. Consequently, the Council will be expected to maintain the route to a standard suitable for large machinery. This includes both the maintained width and providing a suitable surface for the expected weight of the farm machinery - tractors, trailers, etc.
- A TRO that excludes the public while allowing access for large agricultural machinery undermines its own rationale.
- Traffic helps suppress vegetation, reducing the Highway Authority's maintenance burden. Restricting them increases overgrowth density and cost.
- A TRO would increase the Authority's obligations, as it would remove the natural "self-clearing" effect of legitimate users and require more frequent cutting.
- Equality and policy concerns arise if lawful users are excluded without evidence of necessity or proportionality.

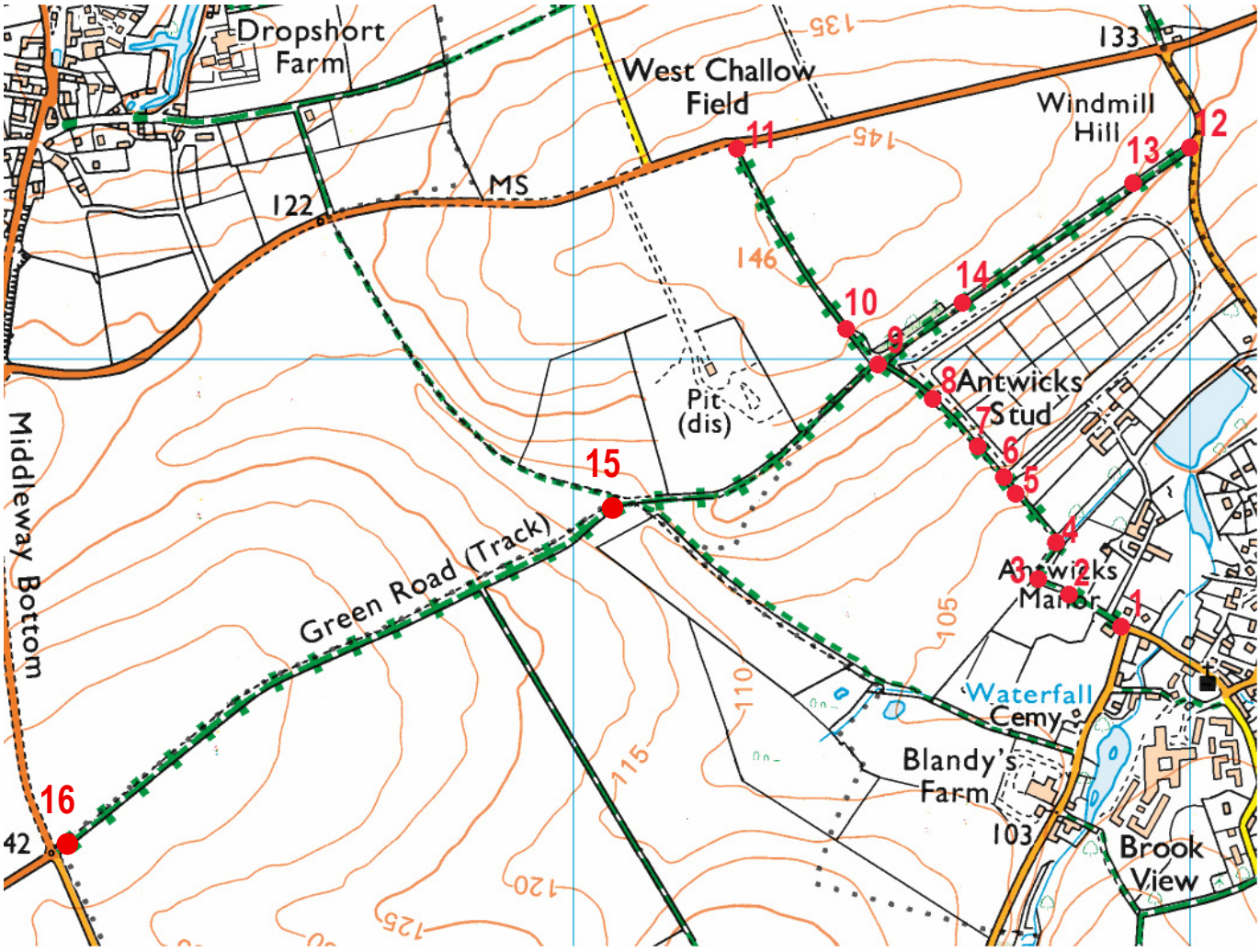
Recommended action

- The Highway Authority has a statutory duty to maintain the full width of the highway and to ensure it remains commodious for all lawful users. The identified issues - severe vegetation encroachment - have established maintenance solutions, none of which involve restricting traffic. Access for agricultural machinery must be retained without limitation, and the route must therefore be maintained to a standard suitable for such vehicles. As the required maintenance is the same whether public motor vehicles are present or not, excluding the public would be disproportionate and irrational.

- The appropriate course is maintenance: improve drainage, add stone where necessary and cut back vegetation.

- Adding drainage and stone to the route would provide a more sustainable and long-term solution and does not need to be costly, particularly when done in collaboration with user groups such as Green Lane Association.

Surveyor's notes:



Additional observations	
Width measurements showing the narrowest points	Point 5: 7m Point 7: 6m (made up of 2m road & 6m path) Point 8: 10m Point 10: 7.5m

Description	The survey was carried from the south, starting at Letcombe Regis Village Hall. **Overview:** It should be noted that this byway has been the subject of a Temporary TRO since late 2019 and as such much of the narrowing of the byway by vegetation is due to the lack of use. Clearance work would make this byway accessible to carriages and motor vehicles while still allowing access for pedestrians along the paths that have become established during the near seven years of TTRO. **In detail:** The beginning of the byway (1) is tarmacked and leads to a residential property, Antwicks Manor and on to Antwicks Stud which the byway runs alongside for much of its length. At the field boundary at point 3, a field gate has been installed effectively blocking the byway to all traffic. There is evidence that walkers and horse riders have past the gate post on the right (heading north). While it would be possible to get a carriage or motor vehicle past there is a drop into a ditch on the right-hand side. After this gate, the route has become established along the field edge with the route of the byway having disappeared under vegetation. At point 4, a corner post from an older fence is still visible in the nettles. At this point the byway turns in a north eastern direction. The byway is banked up, with the fields of Antwicks Stud in excess of a metre below the surface of the byway. At point 5, the byway measures 7m between the fence on the right side and the field edge on the left, not narrow. At point 6, concrete blocks have been placed to block the byway to enforce the TTRO. At this point there is a clear distinction between the pedestrian path that has been well used and a more obvious carriage/motor vehicle route. At point 7, there is a very clear distinction between the carriage/motor vehicle route and the pedestrian one. The full width of the highway here is 6m, made up of a 4m walkway on the left-hand edge and a 2m vehicle route to the right to the fence. At point 8, the byway measures 10m from the fence running alongside Antwicks Stud to the field side of hedging. Again, two clear routes allowing for separation of different user groups.

	At the junction with Green Road (9), the byway is very open, however overgrowth of trees is stopping sunlight getting to the surface and drying it out. At the time of the survey, the surface was dry and able to take all types of traffic. Going northeast from the crossroads (9-11), the byway becomes very enclosed by vegetation but is in excess of 10m wide between boundaries. To the right of the byway is being used as a 'play' area with evidence of shelters having been constructed in the past. The byway narrows between vegetation to its narrowest at point 10. At this point there is a visible 2m width between bushes that have established in the surface of the byway however between boundary fences, the the route measures 7.5m. The byway then opens out with no evidence of hedging to either side towards the B4507. Although the byway has become narrow due to lack of use, partly as a result of the extended TTRO, some minimal trimming that Green Lane Association members could do, and movement of the obstruction of the field gate, would still allow this Byway to be usable by all potential users.

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1 - OS Grid reference SU 3789 8656	
	

2 - OS Grid reference SU 3779	
	

3 - OS Grid reference SU 3775 8664	
	

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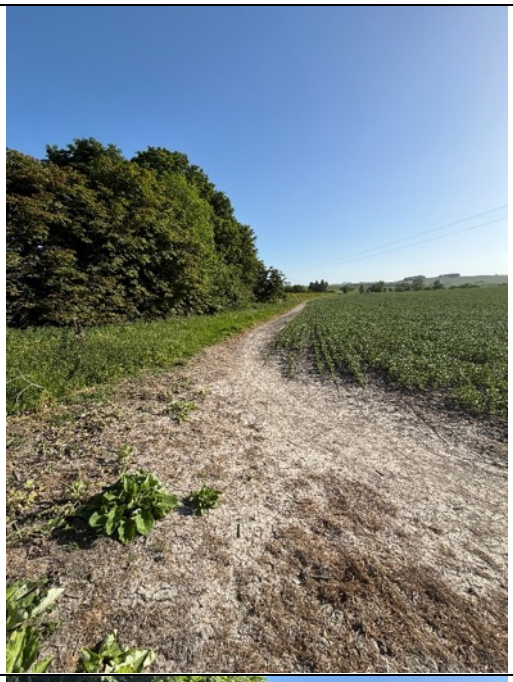
4 - OS Grid reference SU 3778 8671	
	
	

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5 - OS Grid reference SU 3771 8679	
	
	

6 - OS Grid reference SU 3770 8681	
	
	

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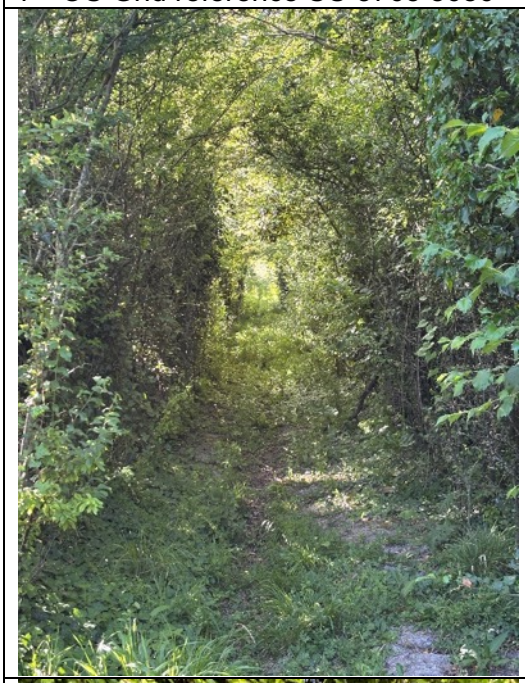
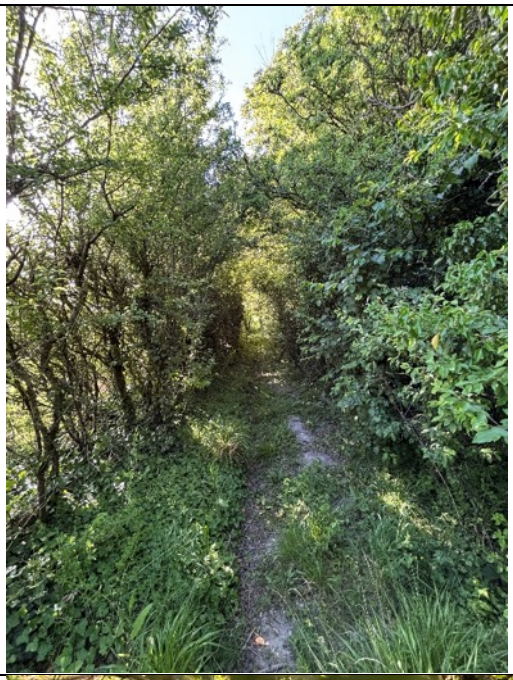
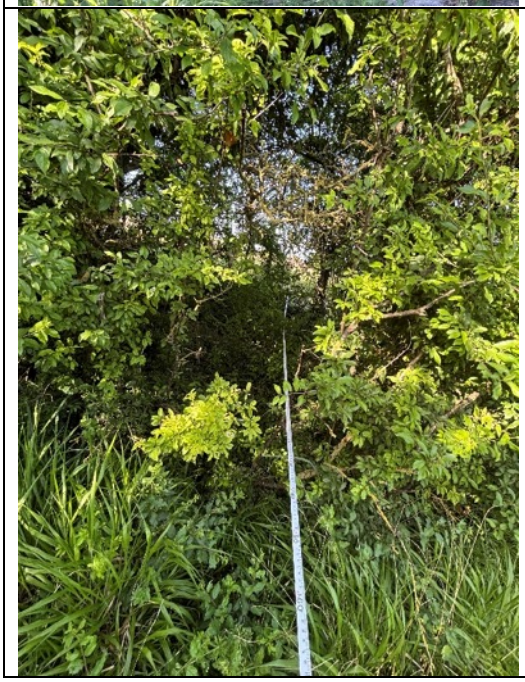
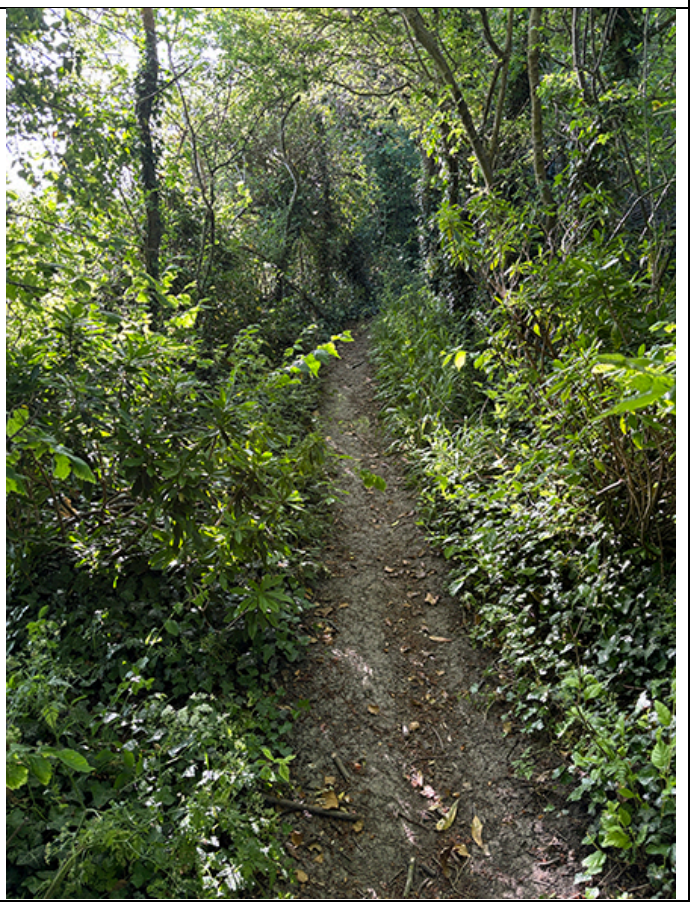
	
	

8 - OS Grid reference SU 3758 8694



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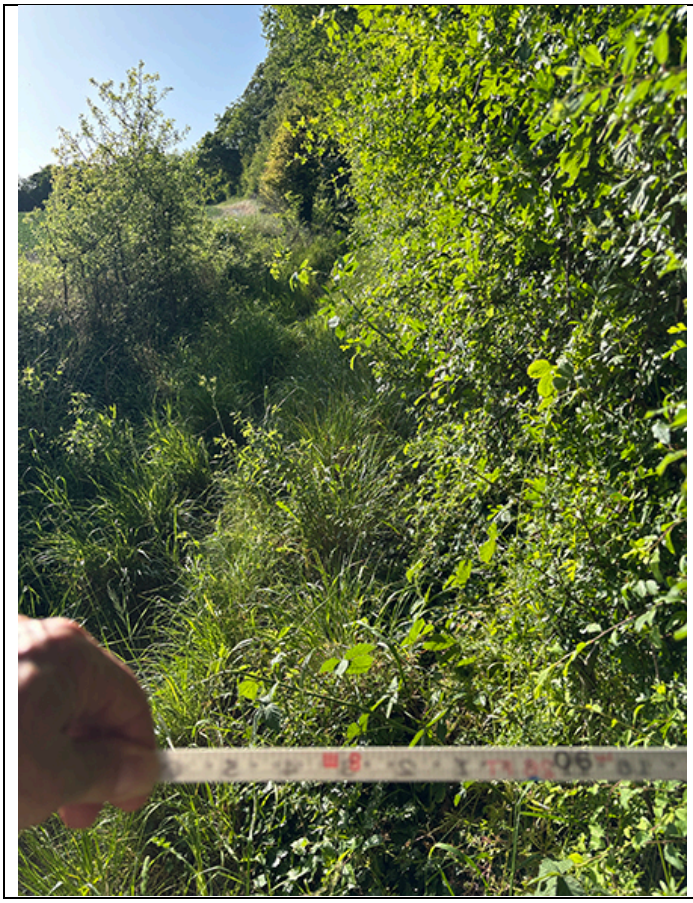	

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9 - OS Grid reference SU 3750 8700	
	
	

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10 - OS Grid reference SU 3745 8705	
	
	

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11 - OS Grid reference SU 3726 8735