



ALBAN WAY

GREENSPACE ACTION PLAN

2025 – 2030



OVERVIEW

Greenspace Action Plans

Greenspace Actions Plans (GAPs) are map-based management plans which specify activities that should take place on a site over a stated period of time; these activities will help to deliver the agreed aspirations which the site managers and stakeholders have identified for that site.

Public Engagement

Engagement with stakeholders is at the centre of effective management planning on any site. An initial engagement period was held for three weeks in November 2023 to establish core aims and objectives for the site; these are reflected in Section 3. A second stage of engagement completed in August 2025 enable stakeholders to comment on the proposed management actions for the site. An associated engagement response document has been published online as an appendix to the final plan to summarise comments received and any amendments made to the plan as a result.

Version Control

Version	Issue Date	Details	Author	Reviewed	Approved
v0		Draft GAP	AT		
v1		Final GAP	AG		

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1.0 SUMMARY

1.1 Site Summary

Site Name:	Alban Way
Site Address, from:	Cottonmill Lane St Albans AL1 2BQ
	to: Smallford Station Station Road Smallford AL4 0HF
Grid Reference:	Cottonmill Lane entrance: TL 514905 206138 Smallford Station entrance TL 519852 207219 Boundary with Welwyn Hatfield TL 520426 207434
Size:	St Albans City and District Council section: 3.5 miles (5.6km) Total Alban Way length: 6 miles (9.6km)
Owner:	St Albans City & District Council
Designations:	Local Wildlife Site Conservation Area Metropolitan Green Belt

1.2 Vision Statement

The Alban Way will continue to be a welcoming, functional and popular multi-use route, forming an attractive option for non-motorised travel between St Albans, Hatfield and destinations along and beyond the route. The heritage, biodiversity and recreational assets that are features along the route will be protected and enhanced at all available opportunities.

The vision will be achieved through the following aims:

- Provision of clear and welcoming access to the Alban Way and throughout the site
- Ensuring that visitors to the Alban Way feel safe and able to enjoy the site at all times
- Maintaining a uniform and appropriate standard of vegetation management along the entire route
- Ensuring ongoing costs are sustainable, and external funding for capital works is secured where required
- Biodiversity and heritage along the route will be protected and celebrated

- Communities along the Alban Way will be supported and encouraged to increase their interaction with the route
- Promotion and awareness raising will increase interest in the Alban Way and highlight its benefits as a green transport corridor

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Introduction

The Alban Way is a 6.5-mile multi-use route which follows the course of the former railway branch line which connected Hatfield and St Albans. Its tree-lined and surfaced path is popular for recreation and traffic-free travel throughout the year. The route also provides a continuous wildlife habitat corridor through a largely urbanised landscape, linking rural areas and urban greenspaces. Around 4.25 miles (7 km) of the Alban Way lies within St Albans District and is managed by SADC.



Wildlife habitat corridor

Opened in 1865, the line was used for freight and passenger services between St Albans and Hatfield, where it connected to the Great Northern Railway. The line was closed and dismantled in 1969 due to declining use, as improvements in other railway lines and the road network provided more favourable transport options. Despite its closure and removal of the track, many elements of the historic railway infrastructure have remained in place to this day, such as bridges, platforms and halts.

Closure of the railway and the subsequent end of regular maintenance allowed dense and tall vegetation to establish, resulting in dark and shaded conditions along the route. Improvements have been made through vegetation and woodland management undertaken in recent years, which have focused on creating areas for habitat regeneration, reducing tree risk, and opening up gaps in the canopy to increase light levels along the path.

The pathway is an important link in the local sustainable transport network and forms part of Route 61 of the Sustrans National Cycle Network. There are multiple access points along the route which connect with neighbouring residential and industrial areas as well as the Rights of Way network and other cycleways.

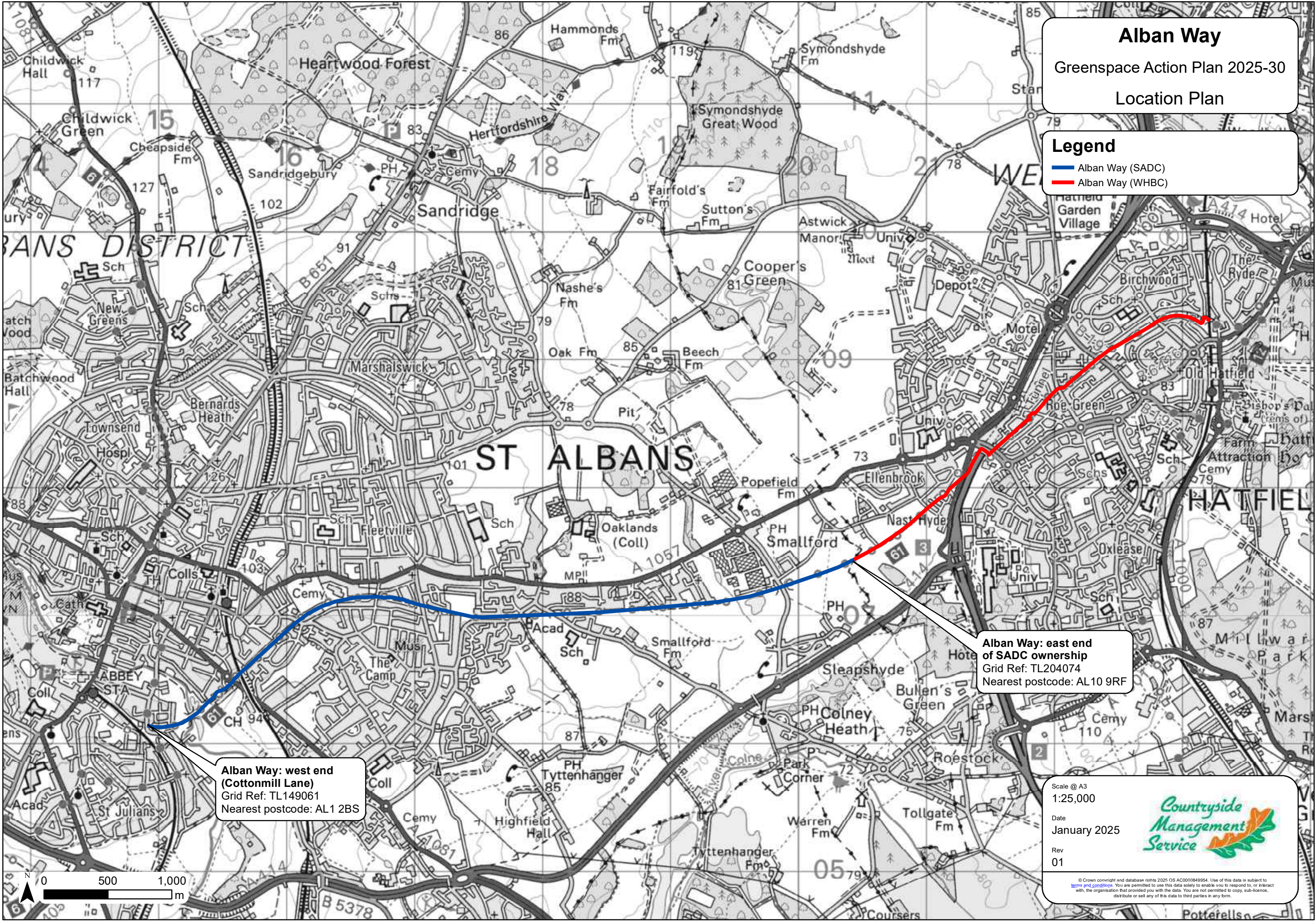
Alban Way

Greenspace Action Plan 2025-30

Location Plan

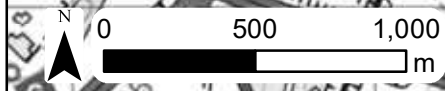
Legend

- Alban Way (SADC)
- Alban Way (WHBC)



Alban Way: west end
(Cottonmill Lane)
Grid Ref: TL149061
Nearest postcode: AL1 2BS

Alban Way: east end
of SADC ownership
Grid Ref: TL204074
Nearest postcode: AL10 9RF



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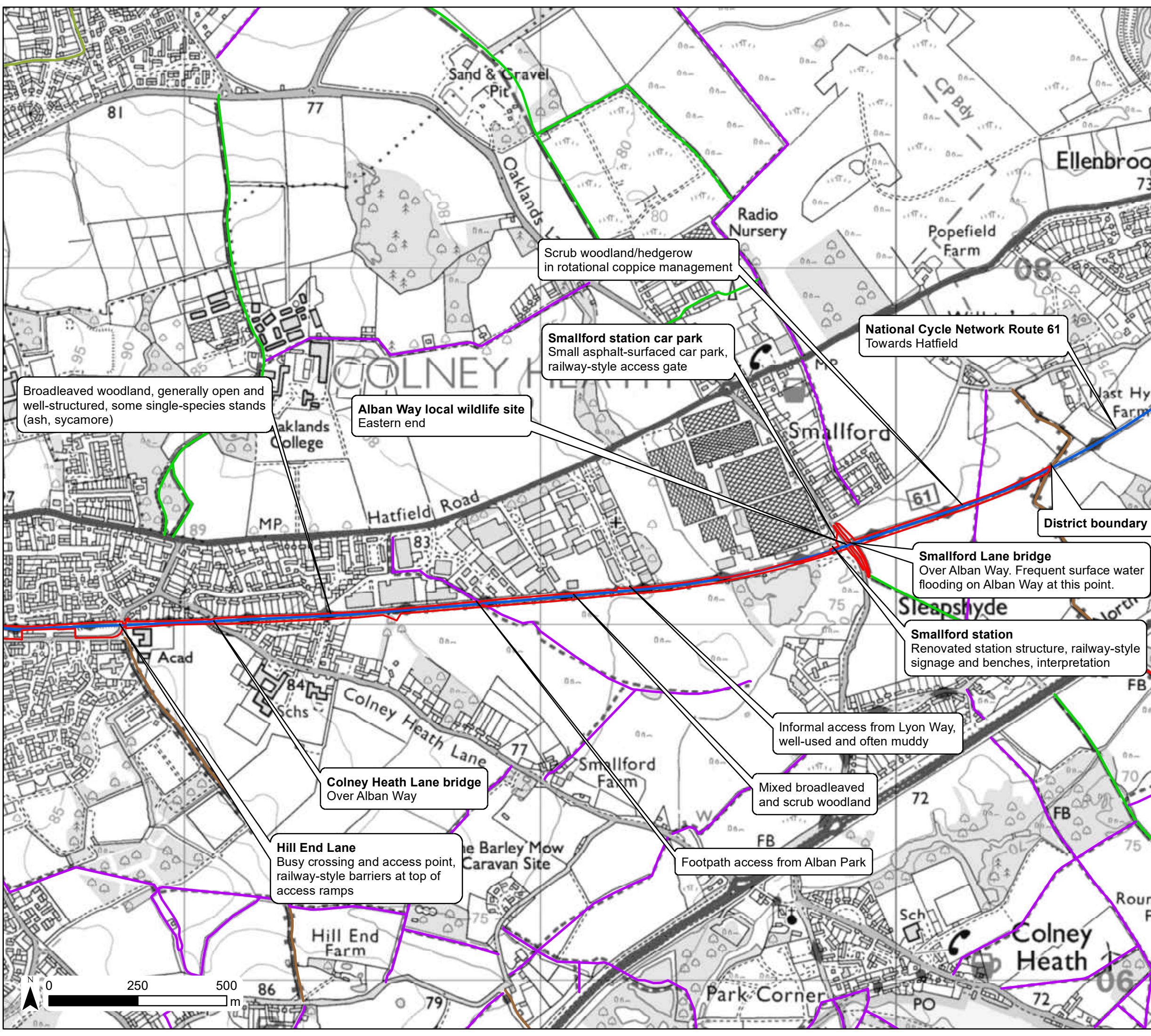
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Alban Way

Greenspace Action Plan 2025-30
 Site Description - Hill End Lane to District Boundary

Legend

- Alban Way Boundary
- National Cycle Network
- Byway Open to All Traffic
- Restricted Byway
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Unmetalled UCR



Broadleaved woodland, generally open and well-structured, some single-species stands (ash, sycamore)

Alban Way local wildlife site
Eastern end

Scrub woodland/hedgerow in rotational coppice management

Smallford station car park
Small asphalt-surfaced car park, railway-style access gate

National Cycle Network Route 61
Towards Hatfield

District boundary

Smallford Lane bridge
Over Alban Way. Frequent surface water flooding on Alban Way at this point.

Smallford station
Renovated station structure, railway-style signage and benches, interpretation

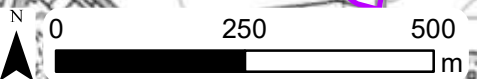
Informal access from Lyon Way, well-used and often muddy

Mixed broadleaved and scrub woodland

Footpath access from Alban Park

Colney Heath Lane bridge
Over Alban Way

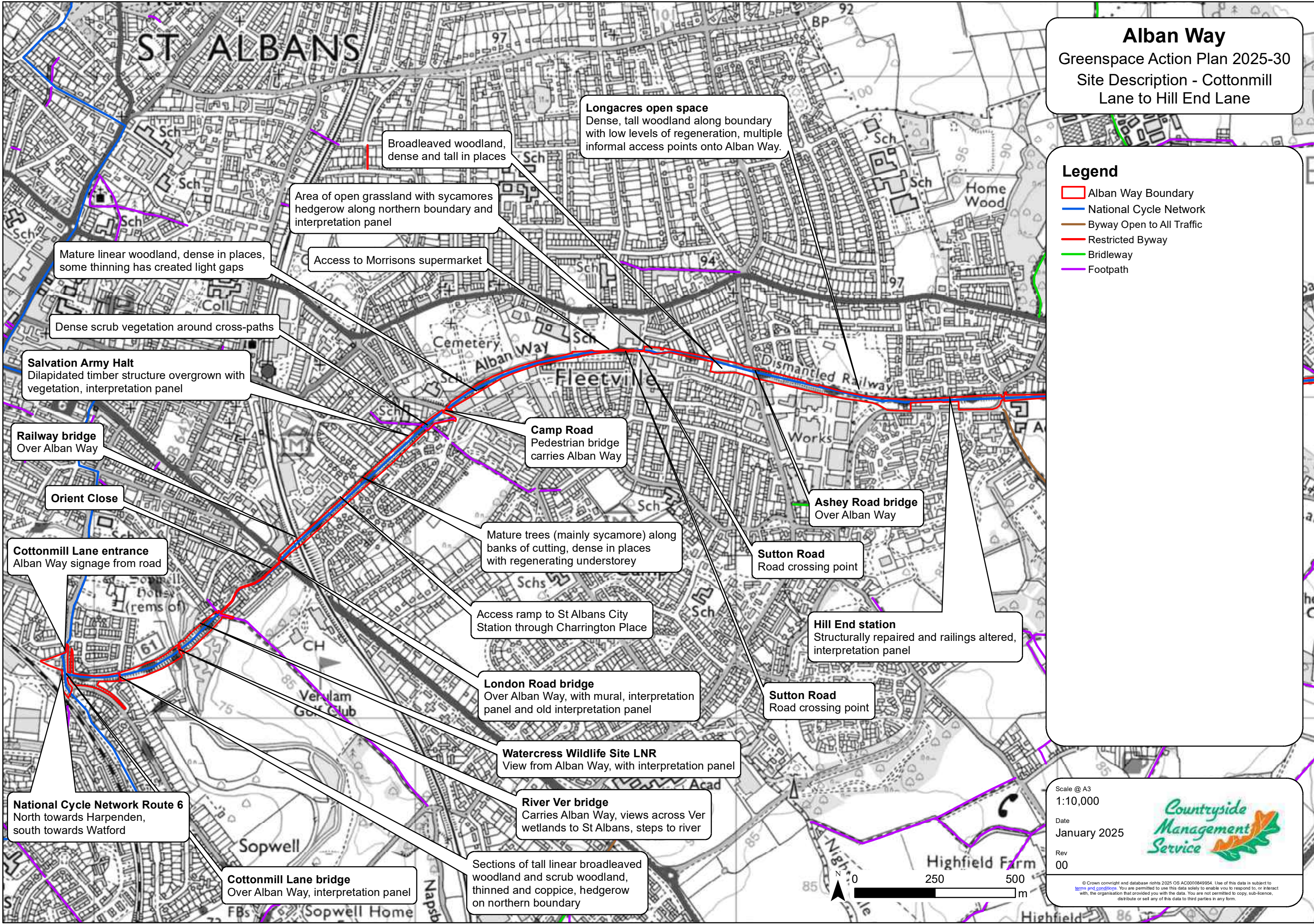
Hill End Lane
Busy crossing and access point, railway-style barriers at top of access ramps



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Alban Way
 Greenspace Action Plan 2025-30
 Site Description - Cottonmill Lane to Hill End Lane

- Legend**
- ▬ Alban Way Boundary
 - ▬ National Cycle Network
 - ▬ Byway Open to All Traffic
 - ▬ Restricted Byway
 - ▬ Bridleway
 - ▬ Footpath

Broadleaved woodland, dense and tall in places

Longacres open space
 Dense, tall woodland along boundary with low levels of regeneration, multiple informal access points onto Alban Way.

Area of open grassland with sycamores hedgerow along northern boundary and interpretation panel

Mature linear woodland, dense in places, some thinning has created light gaps

Access to Morrisons supermarket

Dense scrub vegetation around cross-paths

Salvation Army Halt
 Dilapidated timber structure overgrown with vegetation, interpretation panel

Railway bridge
 Over Alban Way

Camp Road
 Pedestrian bridge carries Alban Way

Orient Close

Ashey Road bridge
 Over Alban Way

Cottonmill Lane entrance
 Alban Way signage from road

Mature trees (mainly sycamore) along banks of cutting, dense in places with regenerating understorey

Sutton Road
 Road crossing point

Access ramp to St Albans City Station through Charrington Place

Hill End station
 Structurally repaired and railings altered, interpretation panel

London Road bridge
 Over Alban Way, with mural, interpretation panel and old interpretation panel

Sutton Road
 Road crossing point

Watercress Wildlife Site LNR
 View from Alban Way, with interpretation panel

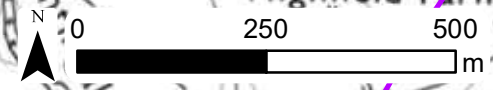
National Cycle Network Route 6
 North towards Harpenden, south towards Watford

River Ver bridge
 Carries Alban Way, views across Ver wetlands to St Albans, steps to river

Cottonmill Lane bridge
 Over Alban Way, interpretation panel

Sections of tall linear broadleaved woodland and scrub woodland, thinned and coppice, hedgerow on northern boundary

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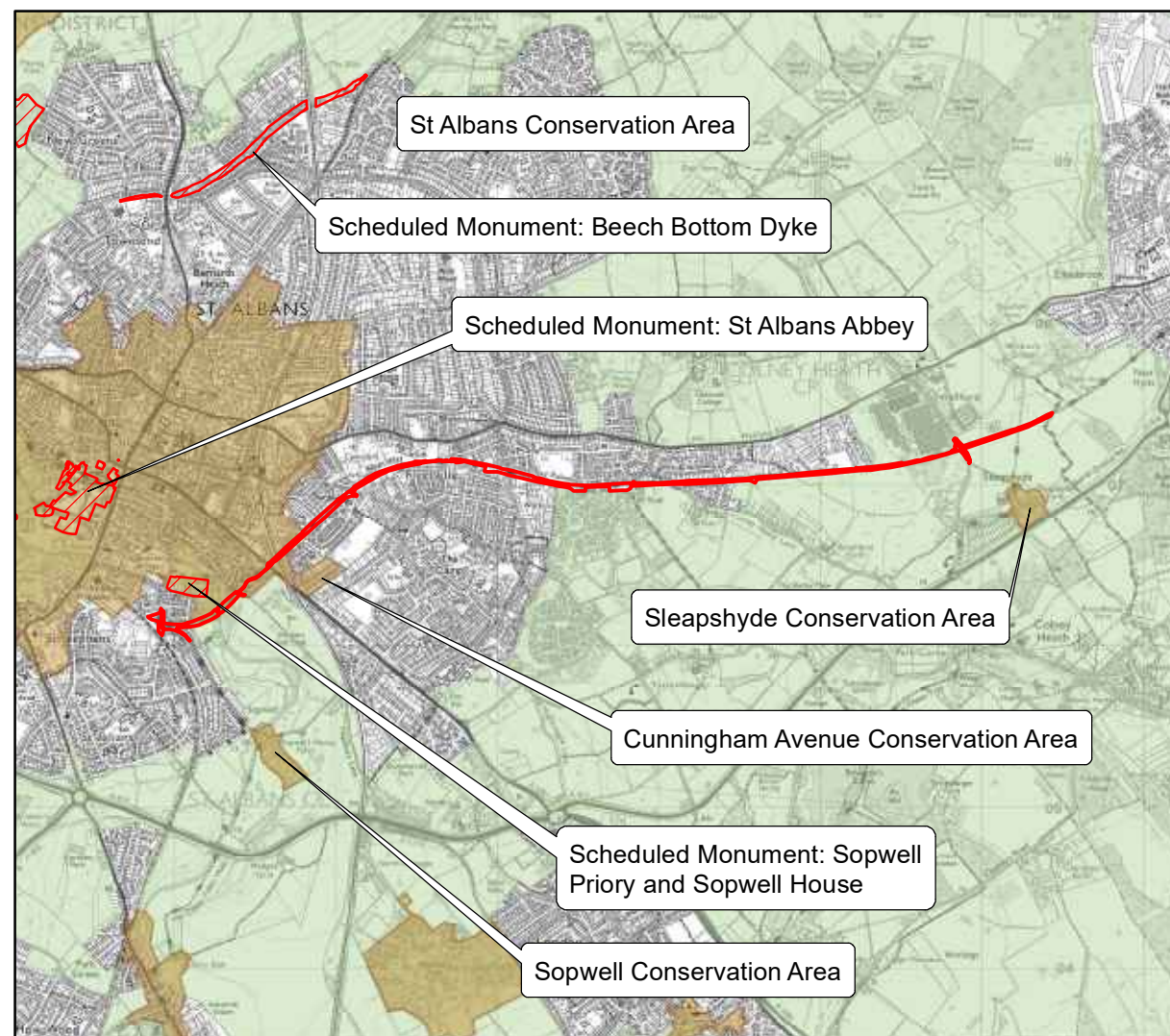
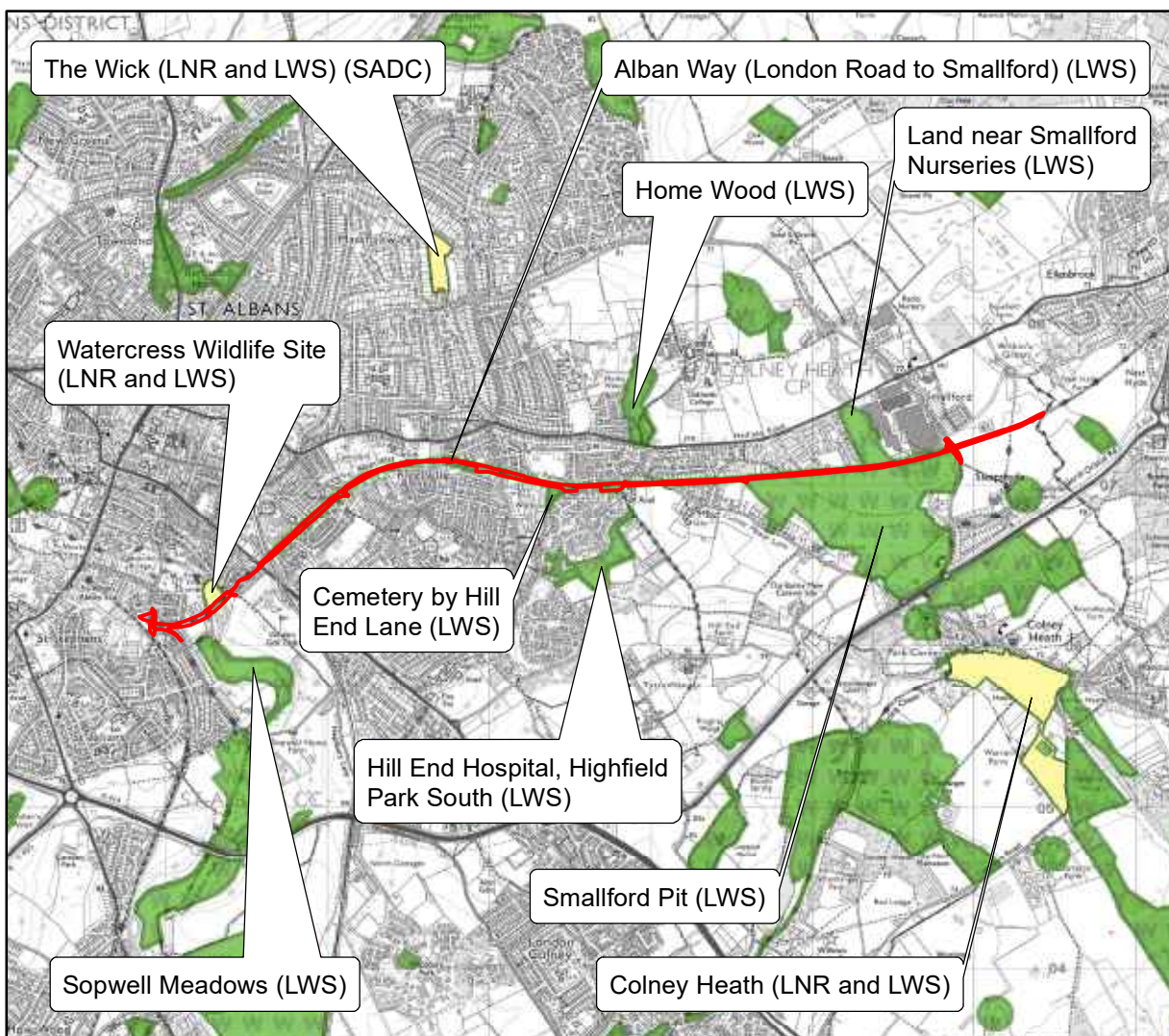
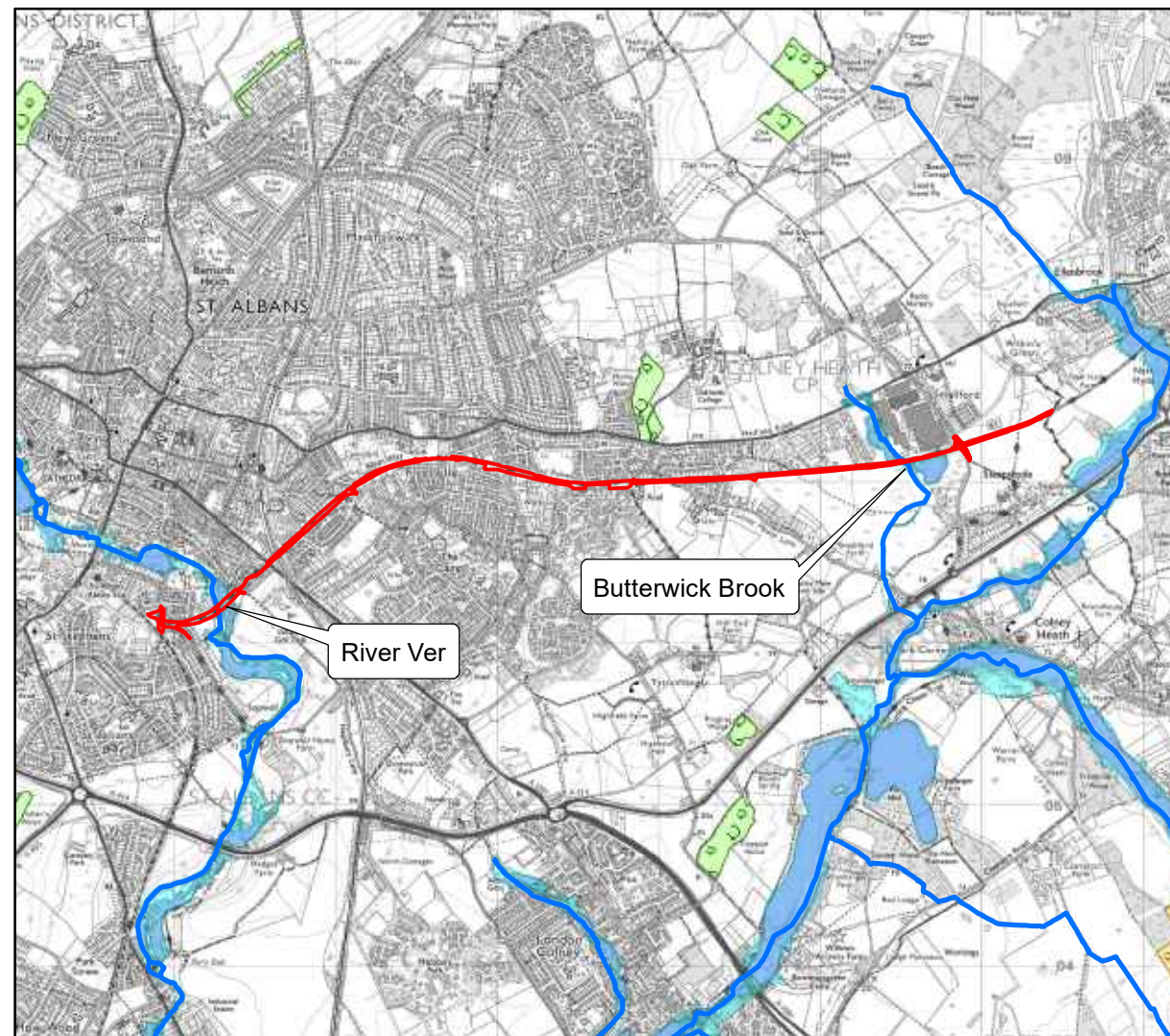
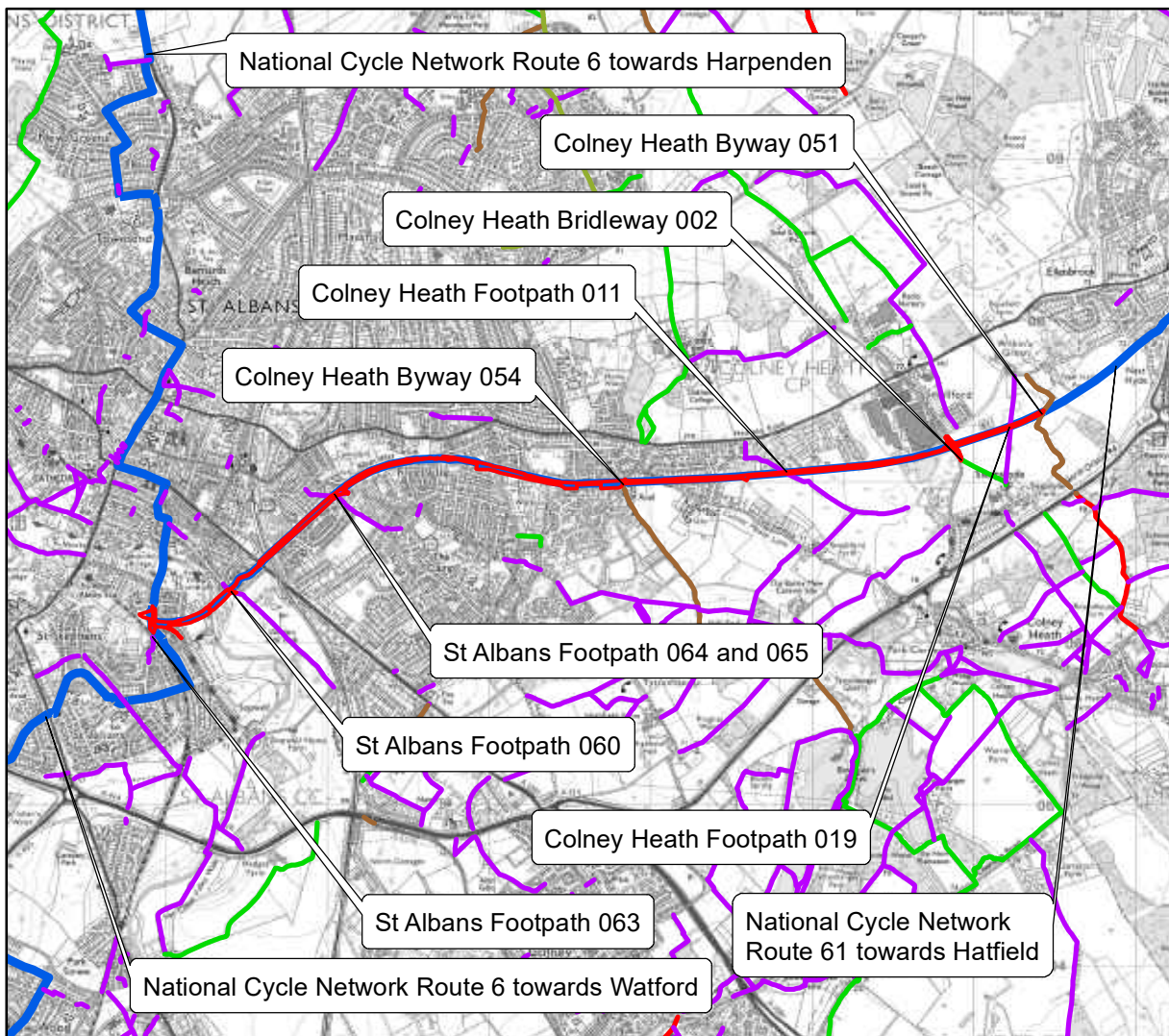
Alban Way

Greenspace Action Plan 2025-30

Constraints Plan

Legend

- Alban Way Boundary
- Byway Open to All Traffic
- Restricted Byway
- Bridleway
- Footpath
- Unmetalled UCR
- Sustrans National Route
- Main River
- Flood Zone 3
- Flood Zone 2
- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland (ASNW)
- Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS)
- Local Nature Reserve
- Local Wildlife Site
- Scheduled Monument
- Conservation Areas
- Green Belt



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2.2 Policy Context

2.2.1 Active travel

The Alban Way should be viewed not as an isolated route but as part of a developing and increasingly important network of strategic non-motorised public transport options.

Hertfordshire County Council's [Local Transport Plan 2018-31](#) (LTP4) places a high emphasis on active travel and is therefore strongly supportive of work to improve the Alban Way and access to it. One of its four guiding principles is **modal shift and encouraging active travel**: 'Achieving a modal shift in future years away from car use to more sustainable modes such as public transport, walking and cycling will greatly support delivery of the LTP objectives. The potential public health benefits of increased levels of active travel indicate this should be a high priority, and a key feature of the future transport system we are planning for.'

The new [Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan](#) (LCWIP) for St Albans was published in July 2023 and identifies necessary cycling and walking improvements at a local level. The Alban Way is recognised as a primary cycling route within the district and the plan includes recommendations for interventions to improve the route. The [Welwyn Hatfield LCWIP](#) agreed in March 2023 also highlights the section of the Alban Way within the borough as a primary cycling route.

2.2.2 Transport and health

Growth in active travel and recreation will increase levels of physical activity, with the potential to improve health, promote mental wellbeing, improve quality of life and help promote independence. The Hertfordshire County Council [Public Health Strategy 2022 – 2027](#) highlights the importance of healthy places, including the health benefits that can be obtained by walking and cycling more, on better designed, safer routes, and taking fewer car journeys.

2.2.3 Air quality and climate change

Emissions from transport are a major source of air pollution, and poor air quality is also a serious threat to health. In Hertfordshire, 514 deaths per year are thought to be attributable to fine particulate air pollution ([Public Health England, 2014](#)). Any modal shift from car to active travel will provide additional health and environmental benefits by reducing air pollution, and so increased use of the Alban Way offers potential to improve air quality in St Albans.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transport is also essential if local and national targets are to be met. Road use by each Hertfordshire resident produces 2.3 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year, 6% higher than the East of England average (National Statistics, 2017).

2.2.4 Development proposals

The Alban Way will be a critical piece of strategic green infrastructure for future developments in St Albans and Hatfield. The draft Local Plan for St Albans covering the period until 2041 includes residential sites at Smallford, between Hatfield Road and the Alban Way (436 units), Smallford Works off Smallford Lane south of the Alban Way (80 units), off London Road close to Orient Close (65 units) and between Boissy Close and the Alban Way (40 units with outline planning permission), as well as a new secondary school site on Hatfield Road.

2.3 Site Designations

The conservation designations which are within the Alban Way boundary have some constraining influence on how the site is managed. Details of the conservation designations are listed in the table below and annotated on the Constraints Plan.

Scale	Designation	Detail
County	Local Wildlife Site	68/044: Smallford Trail/Alban Way Part of the Alban Way from London Road to Station Road is designated as Local Wildlife Site. Further Wildlife Sites are adjacent or near to the route, as shown on the constraints map.
District	Conservation Area	Sadleir Road to Dellfields: St Albans Conservation Area This covers all aspects of the landscape, including trees. Therefore, if any tree works are to take place along the route, a request must be made to the planning authority.
National	Metropolitan Green Belt	Several sections of the Alban Way fall within the Metropolitan Green Belt, designated under PPG2 (Green Belts), which restricts the growth of development in strategic rural areas on the edge of conurbations.

2.4 Geology and Hydrology

The Alban Way is situated on a chalk bedrock throughout, with sand and gravel deposits around the river Ver and Butterwick Brook. Soils are primarily slightly acid, loamy and clayey, and freely draining or with slightly impeded drainage.

The Alban Way crosses two main rivers, the river Ver at Sopwell and Butterwick brook west of Smallford. There is no flood risk on the route associated with the Ver as it is on a high embankment at this point, but parts of the Alban Way are within Flood Zones 2 and 3 where it crosses the Butterwick Brook. Just east of here there

is also a risk of surface water flooding on the Alban Way under Station Road, where the Alban Way sits in a low point in the landscape and water frequently collects on the track.

2.5 Landscape Character

The Alban Way mainly follows the gentle contours of the local landscape, passing through urban areas of St Albans and Hatfield, and fragments of farmland in between these two conurbations. Cuttings and embankments are a dominant feature of the Alban Way, particularly further west along the route, offering both enclosed and elevated impressions of the local area.

The route-side habitat influences the atmosphere on the path. Vegetation is characterised by scrub and secondary woodland, and where the tree canopy has closed, dense shade is cast onto the path. At points along the line where trees have been removed through felling, open areas are present.

Land use adjacent to the Alban Way is varied, consisting of residential, industrial and green open space, with the Alban Way providing a consistent green corridor connecting these elements together.

The landscape around the boundary between St Albans and Hatfield is characterised by low hedges, scrub and standard trees amongst grazed and arable fields, providing a distinctively countryside feel. Grass verges are maintained on either side of the main path to provide a visually attractive and important wildlife habitat; in places, the verges contain neutral grassland plant species and tall herbs.

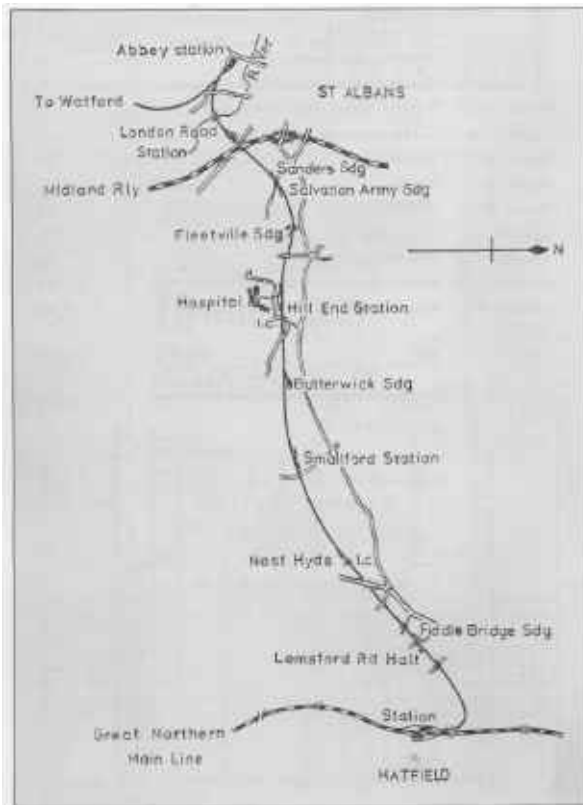
2.6 History and Archaeology

The Alban Way follows the route of the former Hatfield to St Albans branch line railway. Opened in 1865, the line connected the city of St Albans with the Great Northern Railway and to the wider national rail network. It was in use for passengers until 1951, and the final freight trains used the line in 1969, after which the track was dismantled. The increased use of the Midland Mainline for goods trains led to the route becoming largely redundant, and its closure followed years of financial loss.

The primary stations for the line were in St Albans and Hatfield. There were however several smaller halts along the route which served local communities and businesses. Within the St Albans section, small stations and halts were:

- Abbey station
- London Road station
- Sanders siding

- Salvation Army halt
- Fleetville siding
- Hill End station
- Butterwick siding
- Smallford station



Of these, the Salvation Army halt, Hill End station and Smallford station remain. Extensive historical information on the stations along the Alban Way can be found here: [Disused Stations \(disused-stations.org.uk\)](http://disused-stations.org.uk)

Smallford station is now in excellent condition following extensive restoration efforts. The old station building is present but outside the ownership of SADC, and the brick platform has railway-style benches, signage and posters. There is a car park behind the platform. Hill End station has a brick platform and railway-style platform signage, while Salvation Army halt has a deteriorating timber platform and the same platform signage.

2.7 Habitats and Wildlife

2.7.1 Grassland

Where open spaces have been maintained, such as verges and glades in the woodland, areas of neutral grassland exist with species including yarrow, field

scabious, black knapweed, ox-eye daisy and bird's-foot-trefoil. These small areas are highly valuable for invertebrates, and site management seeks to protect and extend these where possible. In more shaded areas, nettle, willowherb and cow parsley grow, which provide habitat niches for invertebrates.

2.7.2 Trees, woodland and scrub

Much of the route is lined with secondary broadleaved woodland, and cumulatively provides a substantial area of established woodland, particularly where it stretches up embankments and cuttings. Oak, ash, hawthorn, poplar, sycamore and cherry are the abundant species; trees are almost entirely self-set and distributed sporadically along the route depending on seed supply and germination.

The lack of management of the route-side woodland following rail closure allowed trees to become densely crowded, providing little room for growth and limiting light levels along the route. To address this, significant areas of tree thinning were undertaken between 2014 and 2019, removing poor quality trees to improve route usability and woodland structure. This has an added benefit of proactively removing trees which are likely to present future issues, rather than requiring expensive reactive management.



Example of pre- and post- woodland thinning works to increase light and views of bridge.

The understorey contains a shade tolerant shrub layer of holly and hazel, with hawthorn and elder in lighter areas. Small patches woodland ground flora exist which is largely dominated by ivy along with species including dog's mercury and bluebell.

Scrub is present along more open sections of the Alban Way, notably from Cottonmill Lane to Orient Close and at the eastern end of the SADC section of the route. Blackthorn and hawthorn are key species, with elder, hazel and dogwood occasional, and climbing bramble, honeysuckle and ivy. This provides a valuable habitat for wildlife.

Rhododendron and cherry laurel growth occurs around residential zones. These invasive non-native species are detrimental to the habitats on the Alban Way.

2.7.3 Hedgerows

Former hedgerows along the Alban Way, which would originally have been extensive, have largely grown into secondary woodland or been replaced by fencing. A short section which has been laid exists between Smallford station and the boundary with Welwyn Hatfield, and there is evidence of older hedges along Longacres and towards Cottonmill Lane.

Two short sections of species-rich hedgerow were planted between 2014 and 2019, and aimed to provide screening for adjacent properties and also wildlife benefits.

2.7.4 Rivers and watercourses

A major watercourse associated with the Alban Way is the river Ver, which the route passes over via a large bridge near to the western end of the route; this location presents an attractive view of the river and wetland environment from the Alban Way. A stepped access links the Alban Way to the River Ver Trail at this point.

2.7.5 Species

2.7.5.1 Birds

The Alban Way provides a woodland and scrub corridor which is used by a variety of common and widespread species which are typically associated with gardens and woodland. Flocks of tits and finches are regularly seen, together with thrush species, robin, dunnock, wren, and warblers such as blackcap and chiffchaff. Migrant species including whitethroat can be seen or heard during summer, as well as redwing and fieldfare during winter. The section of the route passing through farmland at the eastern end of the route provides opportunity to see and hear skylark and yellowhammer in summer.

2.7.5.2 Mammals

The linear woodland allows mammals to live along the Alban Way and use it as a transport route to move between other areas of habitat. Red fox, hedgehog, badger and mole have all been recorded, and wood mouse, brown rat and field vole are likely inhabitants.

The route provides a valuable resource for bats, as the primary east-west habitat corridor through the urbanised St Albans landscape. The majority of our native bat species are reliant on dark, tree-rich habitats for foraging, roosting and moving through the landscape. Areas of open ground and artificial light are often avoided. Pipistrelle, brown long-eared, Daubenton's, Natterer's and noctule bats have all been recorded on or adjacent to the Alban Way.

2.7.5.3 Amphibians

Sections of the route near watercourses, around Smallford pits and the River Ver, provide good habitat for amphibians, and records adjacent to the site include smooth

newt, common frog and toad, and great crested newt. Many amphibian species, particularly great crested newts, use woodland and hedgerows for moving between wetland sites and for over-wintering.

2.7.5.4 *Reptiles*

Slow worm and grass snake have been recorded adjacent to the site.

2.7.5.5 *Insects*

A range of butterfly and moth species are commonly found using the habitats of the Alban Way during spring and summer. Pollinating insects such as bees and hoverflies use the site for foraging and over-wintering, whilst damselflies and dragonflies are regularly sighted hawking along the route.

2.7.5.6 *Oak Processionary Moth*

The Alban Way sits within the Forestry Commission's Established Zone for oak processionary moth (OPM), making OPM control the responsibility of the landowner.

2.8 **Access, Facilities and Infrastructure**

The various destinations along the Alban Way and linked to it are marked on the map at the end of this section.

2.8.1 **Access and circulation**

The Alban Way is not a designated public right of way but has a permissive agreement in place from St Albans City and District Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, to allow access for walkers and cyclists, and horse-riders on sections of the route that are suitable for horses.

The route is an important link in the local sustainable transport network and forms part of Route 61 of the Sustrans National Cycle Network. There are multiple access points along the route which link into the public rights of way network and other cycleways. There are also direct links to the public transport network: a series of bus stops and routes are located near to the Alban Way, and three railway stations (St Albans Abbey, St Albans City and Hatfield) are only a short distance from the route.

2.8.1.1 *St Albans Green Ring*

[St Albans Green Ring](#) is a continuous walking and cycling route (approx. 9km/5 miles long) that encircles the city centre, linking local suburbs and surrounding parishes. At least thirteen green spaces are connected by the Green Ring along with schools, places of worship, heritage sites, retail centres, leisure facilities and both railway stations in the city.

The route aims to make cycling and walking a sensible first choice for journeys within the city where previously a car would have been used, to help reduce congestion

and air pollution, and provide an attractive and easy option for people to increase their activity levels. The Sutton Road to Cottonmill Lane section of Alban Way forms around ¼ of the length of the Green Ring.

2.8.1.2 Wider cycling routes

In addition to the Alban Way and Green Ring, there are several off-road cycle routes and traffic-free cycle paths across St Albans that link into the Alban Way and surrounding areas. The context of the Alban Way in the local and regional cycle network can be viewed on the [St Albans Cycle Route Map](#) and the Sustrans [National Cycle Network Map](#).

2.8.2 Site entrances

There are multiple access points along the Alban Way, including both formally adopted and managed entrances, and informal 'desire lines'. An objective of site management is to ensure that the formal access points are kept in good repair, and the ability to enter/exit the route at different points is promoted through relevant access maps and signage.

The main entrance points are summarised as follows:

- Cottonmill Lane Entrance (western limit/start of the Alban Way)
- Smallford Station Entrance
- Charrington Place (for St Albans City station)
- From all main roads which cross or are crossed by the Alban Way: London Road; Camp Road; Sutton Road; Ashley Road; Hill End Lane; Colney Heath Lane; Station Road
- Alban Way: Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council asset (eastern end of site)
- Rights of Way: Footpaths 011, 012, 019, 060, 062, 063, 064, 065; Bridleway 002; and Byways 026 and 054

Additional entrances are from local green spaces, schools, industrial and residential estates.

2.8.3 Car parks and vehicular access

Motor vehicles are not permitted access to the Alban Way apart from authorised contractors and site owners/managers. Lockable barriers were improved under the previous GAP to reduce likelihood of unauthorised access.

Authorised vehicles can access the Alban Way at the following points:

- Cottonmill Lane

- Orient Close
- London Road
- Morrisons supermarket car park (gated)
- Sutton Road
- Hill End Lane
- Station Road via Smallford Station Car Park

When accessing the site, contractors are advised to enter at the closest point and exit at the next point along, to avoid turning around on the narrow track.

A small car park for around ten cars was resurfaced and improved at Smallford Station, off Station Road, in 2015. All other parking for the route is on local roads or nearby car parks.

2.8.4 Path surface

The entire length of the Alban Way was resurfaced in 2013, providing a smooth tarmac running surface suitable for use in all weathers. The surface has lasted well to-date, requiring little upkeep and generally draining well. Minor imperfections are beginning to develop, mainly where tree roots are creating small mounds.

2.8.5 Park furniture

2.8.5.1 Benches

Benches are provided along the route and where present were renovated between 2014 and 2019.

2.8.5.2 Litter & dog waste bins

There are seven litter bins and five dog waste bins along the route, which are emptied as required by SADC grounds maintenance contractors, who are also required to remove litter and fly tipping from the Alban Way.

2.8.5.3 Entrance barrier chicanes

Where entrances are from the road network/car parks, barriers were replaced in 2015 with bespoke wooden gates in a railway style. These incorporate a heavy-duty security bollard, to prevent unauthorised vehicle access, with a staggered chicane which slows cycles on approach to the road network.

There are also metal chicane barriers at many of the entrance points to the Alban Way on footways and public rights of way.

Chicane barriers are not able to prevent motorcycles, as stopping these would also restrict horses, cycles, pushchairs and wheelchairs. Motorcycles are not currently considered a widespread problem on the Alban Way, and local Police Community Support Officers are consulted on this issue.

2.8.6 Signage, interpretation and leaflets

2.8.6.1 Signage

Signage is an important aspect of marketing the Alban Way, particularly where encouraging people to use the route for non-motorised transport. Signage along and connecting to the route was audited and updated between 2014 and 2019, including providing directions to/from local destinations (as described on 'Destinations Map'). Maintenance of signage in good condition is important to ensure that users can readily navigate to/from the site. Signage includes road names painted onto the surface of the route, intended to reduce clutter from signposts.

Bespoke code of conduct signage was designed and installed in 2017.

2.8.6.2 Interpretation

The provision of interpretation panels on site was vastly improved through S106 funding between 2014 and 2019, proving popular with site users and interest groups. Using an attractive bespoke design and historical content provided by Smallford Station and Alban Way Heritage Society, the panels provide information at the following locations/attractions:

- Cottonmill Lane
- River Ver and watercress beds
- London Road station
- Salvation Army halt
- Fleetville
- Hill End station
- Smallford station
- Butterwick

Further interpretation that exists includes:

- A historical interpretation panel on the Alban Way by London Road Bridge, which predates the interpretation described above.

- An interpretation panel on Longacres Open Space depicting the permissive path around Longacres open space.
- A mural depicting the history and modern life of the Alban Way painted by local people on the London Road Bridge, as part of a community day.

2.8.6.3 Leaflets

The [Alban Way leaflet](#) details the whole route, its history, what to see and do, and contact details for organisations involved with the route.

Other leaflets that use or run near to the Alban Way include:

- [Ver Valley Trail – Walk 6 The Two Cities Walk](#)
- [Abbey Flyer – The River Ver Walk](#)
- [Sopwell History Walks – Walks 1, 3, 4](#)
- [St Albans City & District Cycle Route Map](#)
- [The Abbey Way](#)

2.8.7 Structures

2.8.7.1 Bridges

There are eleven bridges on the St Albans section of the Alban Way. The five bridges that carry a public highway are in the ownership of Hertfordshire County Council. The four bridges that carry the Alban Way are in the ownership of SADC with safety inspections carried out by the respective owners every three years. The mainline railway line is owned by Network Rail.

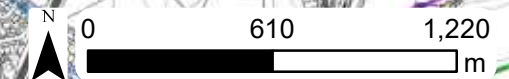
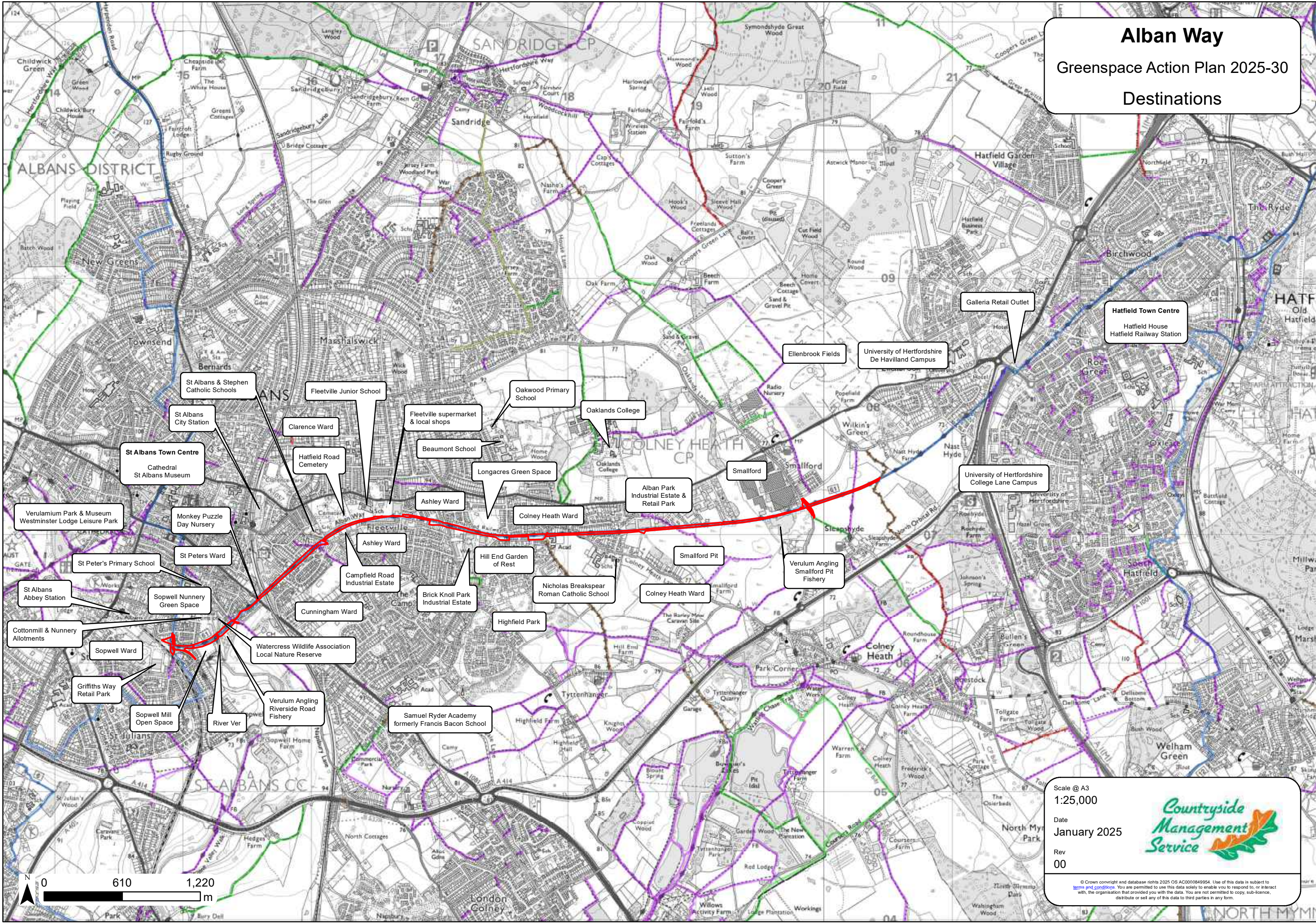
2.8.7.2 Blackberry Arch

A metal blackberry arch sculpture, created by local sculptor Diane Maclean, is located on the section of the route between Smallford Station and the St Albans/Welwyn Hatfield boundary.

2.8.8 Lighting

Street lighting is not currently provided on the Alban Way, apart from a 250m section where the route passes through a residential estate (Orient Close) and lighting from the adjacent streets at Camp Road and Hill End Crossing including a section by Coach Mews. Woodland management works have targeted the thinning of route-side vegetation to increase daytime light levels. Usage by cyclists after dark currently requires use of lights (a minimum legal requirement for cycling at night).

Alban Way Greenspace Action Plan 2025-30 Destinations



Scale @ A3
1:25,000

Date
January 2025

Rev
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2.9 Community and Events

The Alban Way is a popular route used by a variety of groups, for walking, running, cycling and horse-riding. It is part of a route used by Hertfordshire Health Walks.

The route has been used for various events, from guided walks by local history groups to community events such as mural painting, fun runs and Get Active days. The Smallford Station and Alban Way Heritage Society organise railway heritage events at Smallford station.

Site management is supported by the Countryside Management Service volunteer group and Smallford Station & Alban Way Heritage Society. There are also regular volunteer efforts from local community and cycling groups. Volunteer surveyors including a Community Horse Patrol and cycle cooperative regularly ride the Alban Way and report any issues to SADC and CMS.

2.10 Site Management

2.10.1 Management

Responsibility for management of the Alban Way sits with its owners, SADC, with day-to-day maintenance co-ordinated by the Parks & Green Spaces team at SADC. The regular maintenance works are currently carried out by SADC's grounds maintenance term contractor. External contractors are employed to carry out larger and more complex works including tree works and surfacing.

Greenspace Action Plans (GAPs) guide the management of the route and are produced by the Countryside Management Service on a five-year basis. The development process for GAPs incorporates engagement of relevant partners, stakeholders and the local community. Stakeholders were asked to comment on a Briefing Document relating to this GAP in November 2023, and there was a further opportunity to comment on this final version of the GAP in August 2024. All comments received are considered and fed into the final document.

2.10.2 Stakeholders

Stakeholders for the GAP include:

- Relevant St Albans City and District Councillors
- Relevant St Albans City and District Council officers
- Relevant Hertfordshire County Councillors
- Relevant Hertfordshire County Council officers
- Relevant Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council officers

- St Albans City Neighbourhood Committee
- Colney Heath Parish Council
- Hertfordshire Local Access Forum
- St Albans Access Forum
- British Horse Society
- CycleHerts
- Ramblers Association
- Open Spaces Society
- St Albans & District Footpath Society
- St Albans Cycle Campaign
- WelHat Cycling
- Sustrans
- Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust
- Smallford Station and Alban Way Heritage Society
- Smallford Residents' Association
- Sopwell Residents' Association
- Charrington Place Residents' Association
- St Albans Civic Society
- Hatfield Local History Society
- St Albans and Hertfordshire Architectural and Archaeological Society
- Ver Valley Society
- Highfield Park Trust
- Watercress Wildlife Association
- Local residents

3.0 ANALYSIS & EVALUATION

A series of improvements carried out between 2014 and 2019 enhanced the Alban Way for people, wildlife and its historic features. This included improving access to the route at entrance points, new branding and interpretation, updated site leaflet, updated directional signage, significant woodland and vegetation management works and restoration of heritage features.

Following 2019, with a good standard of infrastructure in place, management aims shifted to sustainable maintenance of the route, whilst incorporating further opportunities for local improvements where possible.

3.1 A safe, welcoming and accessible place

Many of the upgrades to the Alban Way were now made some time ago and not all of the route or its access points comply with the current [LTN 1/20 standard](#) for cycle infrastructure design, published in 2020. Where feasible and where possible within available budgets, the Alban Way should be upgraded to meet this standard. Core design principles within the new standard which should direct future management of the Alban Way include:

- Coherent: allowing people to reach their day to day destinations easily, including clear and comprehensive signage.
- Safe: cycle infrastructure should be both safe and perceived to be safe, so that more people feel able to cycle.
- Comfortable: a good quality, well-maintained, smooth surface with adequate width for the volume of users (at least 3m wherever possible) and minimal stopping and starting, avoiding the use of access control structures (which should ideally be bollards at a minimum of 1.5m spacing).
- Attractive: well-designed and finished in attractive materials, a place that people want to spend time using.

3.1.1 Access along the route

The railway-style white fencing and gates installed in 2015 around the Hill End Lane crossing are attractive and support railway branding but do not meet LTN 1/20 standards and make the Alban Way less comfortable and easy to use for cyclists at this point. They should be renovated and redesigned on both sides of the crossing, allowing a gap of 3m between the front gate and the back gate. The gates at Smallford station have been re-painted by Smallford Station & Alban Way Heritage Society.

The road crossing points at Hill End Lane and Sutton Road should be redesigned to improve the interaction between users of the Alban Way and the road network. This is outside the direct scope of this plan but Hertfordshire County Council Highways

should be approached to investigate improvements in these areas. This could include ensuring vehicles using the road network approach at safe speeds, ensuring sightlines are sufficient for vehicles and users of the Alban Way and ensuring crossings are well-signed and demarcated from the road network and the Alban Way, using on-road markings where necessary.

Surface water flooding on the Alban Way at Smallford station is a recurring issue and has a substantial impact on the accessibility of the route during wet periods. An investigation into the issue by Hertfordshire County Council's flood risk management team is underway and more information on proposed actions should be available by the summer. However the Alban Way occupies a low point in the landscape in this area, and combined with the local geology which results in poor drainage, it may be that the issue cannot be fully resolved.

Where the Alban Way runs alongside Orient Close it is marked as a segregated route between cyclists and pedestrians, despite there being insufficient space for this. It would be safer and more consistent with the rest of the route to remove these markings and treat this section as an unsegregated shared use route. A highways safety audit should be carried out on this area and the recommendations implemented.

3.1.2 Access to and from the route

There are two metal chicanes on the access ramp to Charrington Place, which is also the signed route to City Station. These are difficult and unsafe even for regular bicycles, and form an impassable barrier for disabled users and adapted cycles. They should be replaced with chicanes complying with LTN 1/20 standards. A section of this access route is owned and managed by the management company for Charrington Place.

Existing informal access points should be formalised where possible, including:

- The well-used existing informal entrance to the Alban Park industrial estate at Lyon Way, which should be surfaced to provide an even level to the Alban Way with dropped kerb provided at Lyon Way. This entrance is only partially in the ownership of the council and agreement with a private landowner would be requirement to complete this improvement in full.
- Creation of a formal access point to the Alban Way from the proposed development between Boissy Close and the Alban Way with outline planning permission. This is not included within the action plan below as it will be delivered as part of the development.

Any new access points should be signed appropriately.

3.1.3 Signage

On floor signage was painted on the surface of the Alban Way in 2017 and was a popular choice, making exit points clear without introducing unnecessary clutter in the form of physical signage. However, it has not weathered well and is now in need of replacement in most locations. Consideration should be given to design options which would make this signage more durable.

Otherwise, signage along the Alban Way route itself is generally good. However, signage to the Alban Way from the many destinations it serves does not reach the same standard. A full audit of signage considering carefully for accessibility to the Alban Way should be undertaken and signage should be installed where gaps are identified. All new signage related to the Alban Way should incorporate established Alban Way branding, including sections allowed by horse riders and the defibrillator's location website www.defibfinder.uk.

3.1.4 Maintenance of surfaces, structures and vegetation

The tarmac surface of the Alban Way should be maintained in good repair, including spot repairs, repairs to longer sections and removal of significant tree root damage where necessary. Tree root damage is now developing in a small number of locations along the route, for example west of Smallford station and around Morrisons supermarket. The surface on Camp Road bridge is also poor. To deliver these repairs, external funding will need to be sourced.

All recognised access points should also be inspected and maintained in good repair. Improvements currently required include fixing wooden planks on steps at the entrance from Ashley Road and repairing a broken section of tarmac in the ramp at Camp Road.

Track-side verges will be cut regularly from March to October to ensure the managed width and height of vegetation meets the standard set in the specification, and small gaps will be created in route-side vegetation on a rotational basis to provide adequate light levels. Drainage ditches, channels and culverts will be kept clear and functional. Autumn leaf fall should be cleared to prevent accumulation, which can be slippery.

Regular litter picking and bin emptying, as well as graffiti removal, for example under Smallford Lane bridge, will provide an attractive and well cared for appearance. Signage and interpretation should be inspected and cleaned annually and maintained in good condition.

3.1.5 Furniture

Additional benches will be installed to allow for more rest points. This will make the route more accessible for older people and those with disabilities. The placement of benches will aim to have no more than 500m between rest points and can be placed to correspond to viewpoints or locations of interest. The frequency of benches can

be increased in busier locations. To maintain a consistent appearance across the route the simple sleeper style bench should continue to be used.

There are no plans to introduce further bins and it remains the responsibility of users to take their litter home with them.

3.1.6 Safety

The Alban Way must provide a safe, high-quality route for all legitimate user groups. This is best achieved by maintaining its status as an unsegregated, shared use route. This is likely to encourage more considerate, less territorial behaviour by path users. No user group is given priority over another.

Code of conduct signage emphasising these values of shared use has previously been designed and installed, but the current design is too small and unclear to be effective. Shared use signage should be redesigned following the style used on the Cole Green Way and based on the established Alban Way brand. This approach would ideally be delivered in partnership with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council as owners of the eastern section of the Alban Way.



As well as the potential for conflict between legitimate users, there is also illegitimate vehicle use on the Alban Way, including various petrol-powered vehicles. It is very difficult to physically restrict these vehicles, which are no wider than those of legitimate users, particularly on a long route with so many potential access points.

SADC does not have sufficient resources to regularly patrol the route and relies on site users to report any kind of misuse, either to the council or to the police as

appropriate. Any form of illegitimate or illegal behaviour on the Alban Way should be reported to the police when observed, by calling 101 if a non-emergency situation. This helps the police build a log of incidents and respond appropriately. SADC should continue to work with the police and community groups to reduce antisocial and illegal behaviour on the Alban Way through the St Albans Community Safety Partnership.

Perception of safety for users is an important consideration and can be affected by factors such as light levels, signage and access points. Provision of artificial lighting on sections of the Alban Way was considered by the council in 2019/20 and is not supported.

The woodland and vegetation management described in section 3.2 below aims to allow more natural light into the path and to create a more welcoming environment. This is especially important in the cutting between London Road and Camp Road which is naturally darker. Vegetation management is also important to keep access points open to maximise visibility and make the route feel welcoming.

Ensuring signage is in place and provides clear information on exit points and distances should give users more confidence that they would be able to leave the route in an emergency. Formalising additional access points as discussed in 3.1.2 would also help by reducing the distance between access points.

Fleetville Junior School and St Alban and St Stephen Primary School have entrances directly onto the Alban Way, which are very busy at arrival and departure times. This creates additional risk from collision with other users of the Alban Way. On floor warning signage should be painted in these locations to help reduce this risk.

3.1.7 Impact of new developments

As noted in 2.2.4, several upcoming developments are likely to be immediately adjacent or close to the Alban Way. The council should ensure through the planning process that these developments are well-connected to the Alban Way, with good links and attractive access points provided where necessary. Funding should also be secured from new developments to ensure the Alban Way can meet the greater usage it will face.

3.2 Conservation and habitat management

3.2.1 Woodland and tree management

Individual tree risk assessments and management will continue to ensure any high risk trees are identified and quickly dealt with. Trees encroaching into the defined maintenance area (1m either side of the surfaced path and 4m upwards) will also be removed under the maintenance regime. Monitoring for tree diseases including ash dieback should take place through annual tree inspections.

Tree and woodland management works took place along much of the route between 2014 and 2019 and proved successful in opening up areas for light ingress, preventing potential tree risks developing, and creating variety in the habitat structure. This work paused between 2019 and 2024 due to lack of available funding, but should continue over the next five years if funding can be identified. Key areas where tree growth is dense and would benefit from targeted thinning, coppicing and/or pollarding are identified on the action plan maps and include the sections from Colney Heath Lane to Ashley Road, particularly alongside Longacres Open Space, and in the cutting between London Road and Camp Road.

Some trees could be removed such as the ones near the Railway bridge to allow view of the bridge and trees near the Alban Park industrial estate to allow undergrowth vegetation to grow and create an attractive green barrier.



Railway bridge



Alban Park industrial estate

3.2.2 Rotational scrub management

Rotational scrub management by volunteers should continue to the east of Smallford station where the Alban Way is more open and less wooded. Sections of over-mature scrub should be selected and coppiced to ground level to increase light levels and re-set the growth cycle of the scrub, providing scrub habitat of a variety of age classes.

3.2.3 Other habitat management

As part of the Smallford station project described in 3.3 below there are plans to enhance habitats on the embankment adjacent to Smallford station car park, including through planting shrubs. Old spiral guards on the hedge planting around the car park can now be removed.

A small section of hedgerow has been planted and fenced near Sadleir Road. The fence and old spiral guards can now be removed.

Where they occur, invasive non-native species (INNS) should be controlled. This primarily relates to rhododendron and cherry laurel, including where these species have previously been removed and are regrowing from stumps.

A mixed native hedgerow should be planted in the grass area by the fence by Coach Mews.

3.2.4 Biodiversity Net Gain

A formal habitat and condition assessment survey has not been undertaken as part of the development of this Greenspace Action Plan. Most of the actions set out in this plan are focused on maintaining the quality of existing habitats rather than changing habitat type or condition, and so it is not expected that any significant biodiversity net gain will be delivered through the plan.

3.3 Heritage and marketing

3.3.1 Smallford station

In 2023 a project led by the Smallford Station and Alban Way Heritage Society (SSAWHS), supported by SADC, has achieved major improvements to Smallford Station including resurfacing the platform, new platform benches and railway-style platform signage. Much of the work has been achieved with the support of students from Oaklands College.



A goods van body has been refurbished at Oaklands College and it is planned to site this in the car park at Smallford station alongside the platform, where it will hold an SSAWHS exhibition and be opened to the public on various occasions throughout the year. The structure to support and access the goods van has been recently completed. SSAWHS hold an annual open day at Smallford station which should be supported by SADC.

3.3.2 Salvation Army halt

The Salvation Army halt is a timber platform structure, which is in very poor condition and continuing to deteriorate. It should be restored through removal of vegetation and repairs to the structure and finishing features. Outline plans have already been developed, but funding is required to deliver this work.



Salvation Army halt

3.3.3 Leaflet and promotion

The existing leaflet for the Alban Way, which currently dates from 2015, should be updated and reprinted in coordination with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council, to offer a complete resource for site users. Once updated, the new version should be made available online and widely distributed in its physical form.

Promotion of the Alban Way will be aided by the proposed improvements to signage to the route from destinations around St Albans, including links to public transport.

3.4 Community involvement

Local communities and stakeholders are given an opportunity to engage in the management of the site through involvement in the management planning process, helping to identify issues and opportunities. Where possible, local volunteers are engaged in the delivery of actions identified in the plan.

The council should support heritage interest groups in communicating the history and local context of the branch line, through on-site interpretation and events. SSAWHS hold an annual Heritage Open Day, usually on the first or second Sunday in September. This should be promoted by SADC and CMS. There may also be occasions where it is beneficial for SADC or CMS to be directly involved in the event.

The council should continue to liaise with community protection officers to identify areas where public safety is compromised, responding proactively to misuse and anti-social behaviour on the route. Links with community groups, social workers and PCSOs should be maintained.

The London Road underpass on the Alban Way could be made more attractive by providing opportunities for local community groups or schools to produce relevant and appropriate art installations.

3.5 Sustainable operations

Availability of funding is a key challenge to enabling the delivery of the actions identified in this plan. It is essential that the costs of annual maintenance are sustainable and achievable within the resources available. External funding should be sought from grant bodies, developments through S106 agreements, and sustainable transport funds to deliver proposed actions beyond annual maintenance. The action plan below is therefore categorised according to whether actions can be achieved within existing revenue budgets or whether external funding is required for their delivery.

A bid to the National Lottery Heritage Fund encompassing all old railway lines in Hertfordshire is currently in development and if successful could support some of the actions proposed.

All management operations on the Alban Way should be carried out according to environmental best practice, including relating to herbicide use, plant biosecurity, use of natural materials and sustainable woodland management practices.

4.0 AIM & OBJECTIVES

The aim and objectives of the GAP are as follows:

Aim

To ensure the Alban Way maintains high standards of access, safety, user enjoyment and environmental quality, through upkeep of its surfaces, structures and features and adoption of sustainable long-term management.

Objectives

A. A safe, welcoming and accessible place

Maximise public safety, access opportunities and user experience

- A1 Maintain a high standard of access to, from and along the route, and identify opportunities for additional links with local destinations
- A2 Ensure all signage to, from and along route is appropriate and in good repair, and identify any further opportunities for signage
- A3 Achieve and maintain a clean and tidy route
- A4 Ensure surfaces, features and drainage are functional and in good repair
- A5 Respond proactively to misuse of the Alban Way and anti-social or illegal behaviour, including building links with community groups, social workers and PCSOs
- A6 Engage with relevant stakeholders and new developments adjacent or close to the route to ensure the Alban Way and connections to it are properly considered

B. Conservation and habitat management

Ensure habitats along the route are managed cost-effectively and following best practice and that biodiversity along the route is enhanced

- B1 Manage the route as a green corridor for wildlife and improve links with other wildlife sites along the route.
- B2 Continue with a proactive approach to woodland and tree management
- B3 Continue rotational scrub and grass verge management, identifying opportunities for further habitat creation
- B4 Identify and remove invasive non-native species (INNS) of plants where appropriate, and replace with native species
- B5 Implement monitoring of wildlife and tree diseases, e.g. ash dieback; apply appropriate best practice if required in consultation with external experts

C. Heritage and marketing

Continue to celebrate the route's heritage, and promote respectful and appropriate use

- C1 Ensure historic features are protected and in good repair

- C2 Ensure interpretation panels are maintained in good repair, and consider additional opportunities for information provision
- C3 Promote responsible and respectful use through a focused campaign to encourage respectful shared use
- C4 Update, reprint and distribute to local groups the Alban Way leaflet in conjunction with the Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council section
- C5 Use Alban Way branding to maintain a recognisable and consistent image for the route

D. Community involvement

Continue to develop and support an informed, involved and enthusiastic local community interest in the site

- D1 Encourage the local community to become involved in the management of the site through operating towards the GAP objectives
- D2 Develop opportunities for local community groups to produce relevant and appropriate art installations for the site
- D3 Work with and engage key stakeholders for the Alban Way

E. Sustainable operations

All management and activities will be environmentally and financially sustainable

- E1 Ensure costs of ongoing maintenance proposed in the GAP are sustainable and achievable with the financial resources available
- E2 Seek external funding from grant bodies and development funds to deliver proposed activities beyond annual maintenance
- E3 Ensure all management is carried out according to environmental best practice, including on herbicide use, plant biosecurity, and sustainable woodland management practices

5.0 ACTION PLANS AND MAPS

Items within the action plans are colour coded:

- **Ongoing management** – actions which can be funded through existing revenue budgets. Actions we expect to be delivered.
- **Opportunities** – actions which require capital expenditure and for which funding has not yet been confirmed. Actions we hope to be able to deliver, subject to funding.

5.1 ANNUAL AND REGULAR ACTIONS

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.1	Empty litter bins on a weekly basis	A3	Ongoing	SADC	GM	SADC GM budget	Contract rates		
0.2	Empty dog waste bins at least weekly or when required	A3	Ongoing	SADC	GM	SADC GM budget	Contract rates		
0.3	Remove fly tipping and litter pick	A3	Ongoing	SADC	GM	SADC GM budget	Contract rates		
0.4	Regular maintenance of route-side vegetation to 1m on either side of surfaced path and 4m height	A1	Apr-Oct	SADC	GM	SADC GM budget	Contract rates		
0.5	Annual vegetation management at access points	A1	Apr-Oct	SADC	GM	SADC GM budget	Contract rates		
0.6	Annual vegetation management adjacent to bridges	A1	Apr-Oct	SADC	GM	SADC GM budget	Contract rates		
0.7	Annual management of vegetation and weed growth on and around restored stations/halts	A1	Apr-Oct	SADC	GM	SADC GM budget	Contract rates		
0.8	Leaf and debris clearance (2 no. per year)	A1	Autumn/winter	SADC	GM	SADC GM budget	Contract rates		

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.9	Smallford station to district boundary: rotational scrub management (2x 25m sections, different to previous)	B3	Sep-Feb	CMS	Volunteers	SADC budget	Officer time		
0.10	Cottonmill Lane to Riverside Road: create small scallops in route side vegetation	B3	Sep-Feb	CMS	Volunteers	SADC budget	Officer time		
0.11	Inspect and maintain path surface	A4	Annual	SADC	GM	SADC GM budget	Contract rates		
0.12	Inspect and maintain site furniture (benches, bins, barriers, interpretation) including cleaning where required	A4	Annual	SADC	GM	SADC GM budget	Contract rates		
0.13	Inspect and maintain access points	A1	Annual	SADC	GM	SADC GM budget	Contract rates		
0.14	Remove all graffiti in accordance with SADC graffiti policy	A3	When required	SADC	GM	SADC GM budget	Contract rates		
0.15	Undertake tree safety survey and carry out works identified	B2	Every two years	SADC	Contractor	SADC tree budget	Contract rates		
0.16	Carry out reactive tree works	B2	When required	SADC	Contractor	SADC tree budget	Contract rates		
0.17	Seek funding to ensure viability of capital works	E2	Ongoing	SADC /CMS	SADC /CMS	SADC budget	Officer time		
0.18	Seek to ensure that new developments are well-connected to the Alban Way	A6	Ongoing	SADC	SADC	SADC budget	Officer time		
0.19	Seek to secure funding from new developments to support the maintenance and enhancement of the Alban Way	E2	Ongoing	SADC	SADC	SADC budget	Officer time		

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.20	Replace benches and bins when required, following consistent style	A4	When required	SADC	GM	SADC GM budget	Contract rates		
0.21	Support annual SSAWHS open day	D1	September	SADC /CMS	SADC /CMS	SADC budget	Officer time		
0.22	Work with the police and community groups to reduce antisocial and illegal behaviour on the Alban Way through the St Albans Community Safety Partnership	A5	Ongoing	SADC	SADC	SADC budget	Officer time		
0.23	Review and update annual action plans	E1	Mar	SADC/ CMS	SADC/ CMS	SADC budget	Officer time		
0.24	Work with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council to ensure consistent management and signage along the route	A6	Ongoing	CMS	CMS	SADC budget	Officer time		

Abbreviations: CMS – Countryside Management Service; GM – Grounds Maintenance; SADC – St Albans City and District Council; SSAWHS – Smallford Station and Alban Way Heritage Society; HCC – Hertfordshire County Council.

5.2 YEAR 1 2025-26

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
1.1	Re-paint surface-painted road names and Alban Way logos	A4	Apr-Oct	CMS	Contractor	External grant funding	£4000		
1.2	Design and install new shared use signage to replace existing Code of Conduct signage	A2	Apr-Oct	CMS	Contractor	External grant funding	£5000		
1.3	Revise chicane on Charrington Place access ramp (City Station exit), investigate adding bollards and reduce height of wall at base of ramp to improve sightlines	A6	Apr-Oct	CMS	Contractor	External	£5000		
1.4	Salvation Army halt restoration: clear vegetation and repair structure	A4	Sep-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External grant funding	£10000		
1.5	Smallford station: remove spiral guards from hedge planting	B2	Sep-Feb	SSAW HS	Volunteers	SADC budget	Officer time		
1.6	Smallford station: enhancement of habitats on embankment adjacent to car park	B2	Sep-Feb	SSAW HS	Volunteers	SADC budget	Officer time		
1.7	Develop and submit funding bid to National Lottery Heritage Fund	E2	Ongoing	CMS	CMS	SADC budget	Officer time		
1.8	Investigate flooding at Smallford station	A4	Sep-Feb	CMS/SADC	HCC Flood Risk	HCC Flood Risk	Officer time		

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
					Management budget	Management budget			
1.9	Carry out audit of signage to the Alban Way from destinations it serves	A2	Ongoing	CMS	CMS	SADC budget	Officer time		
1.10	Carry out targeted surface repairs	A4	Apr-Oct	CMS	Contractor	External	£10000		
1.11	Resurface Camp Road bridge	A4	Apr-Oct	CMS	Contractor	External	£5000		
1.12	Paint on-floor warning signage at school entrances to reduce risk of collisions	A2	Apr-Oct	CMS	Contractor	External	£300		
1.13	Update and reprint Alban Way leaflet	C4	Ongoing	CMS	Contractor	External grant funding	£4000		
1.14	Fix wooden planks on steps at the entrance from Ashley Road	A4	Apr-Oct	CMS	Contractor	External	TBC		
1.15	Repair a broken section of tarmac in the ramp at Camp Road.	A4	Apr-Oct	CMS	Contractor	External	TBC		

Task Responsibility

- District led } Officer/Contractor delivered
- CMS led } Volunteer delivered
- District led } Volunteer delivered
- SSAWHS led
- Private landowner led

**Alban Way
Greenspace Action Plan
Year 1 Action Plan Map**

- Annual Management**
- General maintenance**
- Empty litter bins on a weekly basis □
 - Empty dog waste bins at least weekly or when required □
 - Remove fly tipping and litter pick □
 - Leaf and debris clearance (2 no. per year) □
 - Inspect and maintain path surface, access points, site furniture (benches, bins, barriers, interpretation) including cleaning where required □
 - Remove all graffiti in accordance with SADC graffiti policy □
 - Replace benches and bins when required, following consistent style □
- Vegetation management**
- Regular management of route-side verges to 1m on either side of surfaced path and 4m height □
 - Annual vegetation management at access points □
 - Annual vegetation management adjacent to bridges □
 - Annual management of vegetation and weed growth on and around restored stations/halts □
 - Smallford station to district boundary: rotational scrub management (2x 25m sections, different to previous) □
 - Cottonmill Lane to Riverside Road: create small scallops in route side vegetation □
 - Undertake tree safety survey and carry out works identified □
 - Carry out reactive tree works □
- Other Management**
- Seek funding to ensure viability of capital works □
 - Seek to ensure that new developments are well-connected to the Alban Way □
 - Seek to secure funding from new developments to support the maintenance and enhancement of the Alban Way □
 - Support annual SSAWHS open day □
 - Work with the police and community groups to reduce antisocial and illegal behaviour on the Alban Way through the St Albans Community Safety Partnership □
 - Review and update annual action plans □
 - Work with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council to ensure consistent management and signage along the route □

- Site-wide Year 1 actions**
- Re-paint surface-painted road names and Alban Way logos □
 - Design and install new shared use signage to replace existing Code of Conduct signage □
 - Develop and submit funding bid to National Lottery Heritage Fund □
 - Carry out audit of signage to the Alban Way from destinations it serves □
 - Carry out targeted surface repairs □
 - Paint on-floor warning signage at school entrances to reduce risk of collisions □
 - Update and reprint Alban Way leaflet □

Smallford station
- Remove spiral guards from hedge planting
- Enhancement of habitats on embankment adjacent to car park

Camp Road bridge
- Resurface

Charrington Place
- Revise chicane barrier and reduce height of wall at base of ramp to improve sightlines

Camp Road ramp
- Repair a broken section of tarmac

Salvation Army halt
- Clear vegetation and repair structure

Ashley Road entrance
- Fix wooden planks on steps

Smallford station
- Investigate flooding

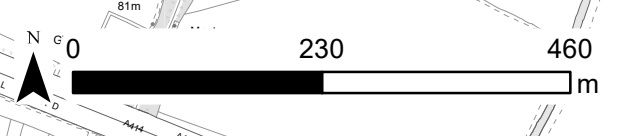
Legend

- Building
- Permeable path
- Railway
- Road
- Hard surfaced pa
- Woodland
- Tall herb
- Flail cut
- Amenity grass
- Car park

Scale @ A1
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Date
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5.3 YEAR 2 2026-27

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spe c. Ref.	Status
2.1	Lyon Way entrance: surface short path from informal access point to Alban Way	A4	Apr-Oct	CMS/private landowner	Contractor	External	£1000		
2.2	Hill End Lane crossing: renovate and redesign railway style gates	A4	Apr-Oct	CMS	Contractor	External grant funding	£3000		
2.3	Investigate potential to redesign road crossing at Hill End Lane	A1	Ongoing	CMS	HCC Highways	HCC Highways budget	Officer time		
2.4	Investigate potential to redesign road crossing at Sutton Road	A1	Ongoing	CMS	HCC Highways	HCC Highways budget	Officer time		

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
2.5	Orient Close: commission road safety audit to consider removal of segregation markings	A2	Ongoing	CMS	HCC Highways	External	£1000		
2.6	Install new signage to the Alban Way where a requirement is identified	A2	Apr-Oct	CMS	Contractor	External	TBC		
2.7	Increase provision of benches with the aim of one bench every 500m	A1	Ongoing	CMS	Contractor	External grant funding	TBC		
2.8	Add Sheffield stands near benches in places such as by the river Ver and other Green Spaces.	A1	Ongoing	CMS	Contractor	External grant funding	TBC		
2.9	Camp Road to London Road: light thinning (max 20%)	B2	Sep-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External	£5000		
2.10	Rhododendron/laurel – control sapling growth and treat stumps to prevent regrowth	B4	Sep-Feb	CMS	Volunteers /contractor	SADC budget	Officer time/ £500		
2.11	Distribute updated Alban Way leaflet as widely as possible	C4	Ongoing	CMS	CMS/SAD C	SADC budget	Officer time		

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
2.12	London Road underpass: work with local community groups to produce relevant art installation	D2	Ongoing	CMS	Volunteers	External grant funding	Officer time		
2.13	Remove trees and vegetation near Railway Bridge to allow view of the bridge	B2	Sep-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External	TBC		
2.14	Remove some trees near Alban Park to allow undergrowth vegetation to grow	B2	Sep-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External	TBC		
2.15	Wildflower meadow creation in grass area between Sutton Road and Coach Mews	B3	Sep-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External	TBC		
2.16	Scrub removal to improve wildlife linkages such as the Alban Way and Sopwell Mill green space	B3	Sep-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External	TBC		

Task Responsibility

- District led } Officer/Contractor delivered
- CMS led } Volunteer delivered
- CMS led } Volunteer delivered
- SSAWHS led
- Private landowner led

**Alban Way
Greenspace Action Plan
Year 2 Action Plan Map**

- Annual Management**
- General maintenance**
- Empty litter bins on a weekly basis □
 - Empty dog waste bins at least weekly or when required □
 - Remove fly tipping and litter pick □
 - Leaf and debris clearance (2 no. per year) □
 - Inspect and maintain path surface, access points, site furniture (benches, bins, barriers, interpretation) including cleaning where required □
 - Remove all graffiti in accordance with SADC graffiti policy □
 - Replace benches and bins when required, following consistent style □
- Vegetation management**
- Regular management of route-side verges to 1m on either side of surfaced path and 4m height □
 - Annual vegetation management at access points □
 - Annual vegetation management adjacent to bridges □
 - Annual management of vegetation and weed growth on and around restored stations/halts □
 - Smallford station to district boundary: rotational scrub management (2x 25m sections, different to previous) □
 - Cottonmill Lane to Riverside Road: create small scallops in route side vegetation □
 - Undertake tree safety survey and carry out works identified □
 - Carry out reactive tree works □
- Other Management**
- Seek funding to ensure viability of capital works □
 - Seek to ensure that new developments are well-connected to the Alban Way □
 - Seek to secure funding from new developments to support the maintenance and enhancement of the Alban Way □
 - Support annual SSAWHS open day □
 - Work with the police and community groups to reduce antisocial and illegal behaviour on the Alban Way through the St Albans Community Safety Partnership □
 - Review and update annual action plans □
 - Work with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council to ensure consistent management and signage along the route □

Site-wide Year 2 actions

- Install new signage to the Alban Way where a requirement is identified □
- Increase provision of benches with the aim of one bench every 500m □
- Distribute updated Alban Way leaflet as widely as possible □

Alban Park
- Remove some trees to allow undergrowth vegetation to grow □

Longacres open space
- Update signage □

Rhododendron/laurel control
- Control sapling growth and treat stumps to prevent regrowth □

Rhododendron/laurel control
- Control sapling growth and treat stumps to prevent regrowth □

Lyon Way entrance
- surface short path from informal access point to Alban Way □

Camp Road to London Road
- Light thinning (max 20%) □

Rhododendron/laurel control
- Control sapling growth and treat stumps to prevent regrowth □

Sutton Road
- Investigate potential to redesign road crossing □

Coach Mews
- Wildflower meadow creation □

Hill End Lane
- Investigate potential to redesign road crossing □

Hill End Lane crossing
- Renovate and redesign railway style gates □

Railway bridge
- Remove trees and vegetation to allow view of the bridge □

London Road underpass
- Work with local community groups to produce relevant art installation □

Orient Close
- Commission road safety audit to consider removal of segregation markings □

River Ver
- Add Sheffield stands near benches □

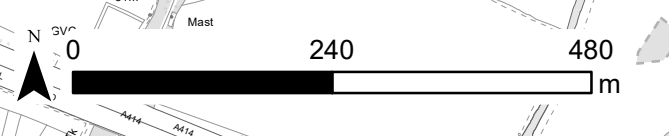
Sopwell Mill
- Scrub removal between Alban Way and Sopwell Mill □

Legend

- Building
- Permeable path
- Railway
- Road
- Hard surfaced pa
- Woodland
- Tall herb
- Flail cut
- Amenity grass
- Car park

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5.4 YEAR 3 to YEAR 5 2027-28

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
3.1	Orient Close: deliver recommendations of road safety audit	A2	Ongoing	CMS	Contractor	External	TBC		
3.2	Colney Heath Lane to Ashley Road: light thinning (max 20%)	B2	Sep-Feb	CMS	Contractor	External	£2000		
3.3	Rhododendron/laurel – control sapling growth and treat stumps to prevent regrowth	B4	Sep-Feb	CMS	Volunteers /contractor	SADC budget	Officer time/ £500		
3.4	Remove fence and old spiral guards by Sadlier Road	B2	Sep-Feb	CMS	Volunteers	SADC budget	Officer time		
3.5	Plant a hedgerow in the grass area by the fence by Coach Mews	B2	Sep-Feb	CMS	Volunteers	SADC budget	Officer time		

Alban Way Greenspace Action Plan Year 3 to Year 5 Action Plan Map

Task Responsibility

- District led) Officer/Contractor delivered
- CMS led)
- District led) Volunteer delivered
- CMS led)
- SSAWHS led
- Private landowner led

- Annual Management**
- General maintenance**
- Empty litter bins on a weekly basis □
 - Empty dog waste bins at least weekly or when required □
 - Remove fly tipping and litter pick □
 - Leaf and debris clearance (2 no. per year) □
 - Inspect and maintain path surface, access points, site furniture (benches, bins, barriers, interpretation) including cleaning where required □
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 - Smallford station to district boundary: rotational scrub management (2x 25m sections, different to previous) □
 - Cottonmill Lane to Riverside Road: create small scallops in route side vegetation □
 - Undertake tree safety survey and carry out works identified □
 - Carry out reactive tree works □
- Other Management**
- Seek funding to ensure viability of capital works □
 - Seek to ensure that new developments are well-connected to the Alban Way □
 - Seek to secure funding from new developments to support the maintenance and enhancement of the Alban Way □
 - Support annual SSAWHS open day □
 - Work with the police and community groups to reduce antisocial and illegal behaviour on the Alban Way through the St Albans Community Safety Partnership □
 - Review and update annual action plans □
 - Work with Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council to ensure consistent management and signage along the route □

Site-wide Year 3 to Year 5 actions
- Increase provision of benches with the aim of one bench every 500m

Colney Heath Lane to Ashley Road
- Light thinning (max 20%)

Rhododendron/laurel control
- Control sapling growth and treat stumps to prevent regrowth

Rhododendron/laurel control
- Control sapling growth and treat stumps to prevent regrowth

Coach Mews
- Plant a hedgerow in the grass area by the fence

Rhododendron/laurel control
- Control sapling growth and treat stumps to prevent regrowth

Sadlier Road
- Remove fence and old spiral guards

Orient Close
- Deliver recommendations of road safety audit

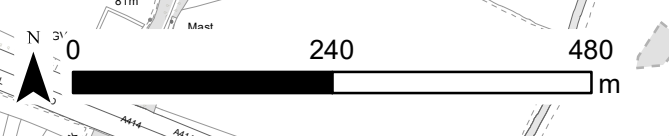
Legend

- Building
- Permeable path
- Railway
- Road
- Hard surfaced pa
- Woodland
- Tall herb
- Flail cut
- Amenity grass
- Car park

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6.0 SPECIFICATIONS

6.1 Vegetation & Woodland Management

6.1.1 Grassland

A universal, minimum standard of maintenance along the whole length of the Alban Way will be established. This will include creating a minimum 4m clearance (height) along the route, cutting 1m margins along each side of the path (to an overall width of 4m), keeping useable width of the path and entrance/egress points free from encroaching vegetation, and cutting around benches and signage.

The grassland area by Sutton Road is to be flail cut four times per year, three cuts between March and August and one in October/November.

Tall herb areas are to be cut once a year in February/March.

6.1.2 Woodland

Tree safety

The safety of users is of primary importance to SADC. Formal tree safety surveys are undertaken every three years; any works identified by the surveys will be addressed as a matter of urgency. The tree inspection captures locations of all trees, inspects their condition and provides professionally supported recommendations for required tree work. The recommendations relate only to risk and not to issues of nuisance or aesthetics. Each inspection will take into account the risk factors relating to condition and targets (proximity to public footpaths etc) and project the date for the next inspection accordingly. That way we are able to prioritise inspections to those trees which potentially present the highest risk.

Thinning

The woodlands require thinning to stop the trees from becoming tall and spindly as they compete for light and to protect the older trees from becoming over shaded, losing the diverse woodland canopy. Selectively thin - by up to 20% across the whole site - the less healthy or desirable tree species and remove to give the remaining trees more space to develop. This will also allow light to reach the woodland floor, encouraging ground flora and an understorey of small plants, shrubs and trees to thrive. Thinning will break up any uniformed pattern that may be emerging and will create a more diverse structure.

Coppicing

Coppicing is a traditional method of woodland management where understorey trees are cut low to the ground and allowed to re-grow in a multi-stemmed form. Periodic cutting boosts the trees growth and coppiced trees in their various stages of growth provide a great variety of habitats for animals, birds and butterflies. Hazel will be coppiced on a 7 year rotation by cutting stems above previous cuts (other species of tree are cut to the previous level of the stool without greatly increasing or decreasing the height) this promotes new vigorous growth and prolongs the trees life. Stems are cut using a sloping cut towards the outside of the stool – to shed rainwater. They are removed one at a time, working in a spiral fashion, from the outside in, towards the centre of the stool. Deer protection may be required to protect the regrowth from grazing in the form of temporary fencing or deer baskets made from the cut material.

Timings

Tree works to be undertaken between November and February to avoid bird nesting season, unless tree risk management inspections stipulate otherwise.

Non-native species

Selective removal of non-native species throughout the woodland areas. Invasive species including cherry laurel and rhododendron (plus any others that arise on site) will be targeted as an imperative. Further non-native species, such as sycamore and conifer trees, will be gradually selected for removal in favour of promoting native tree species growth.

Timber arisings

All cut logs and brash to be removed from site, unless there are any exceptionally large trees being removed due to health and safety reasons that could be turned into bench seats.

Disposal of rubbish

All non-organic material collected on site to be disposed of by Council contractor unless otherwise stated.

6.2 Signage

Any new site-based, Rights of Way and Sustrans signage will follow the established specification for these styles of sign. The Alban Way logo has been developed under the 2014-19 GAP and is integrated into all signage and information; this has helped to rejuvenate the route and created a recognisable brand. Any future signage, such as a renewed code of conduct, will apply this brand in a clear and concise design.

6.3 Interpretation

Interpretation boards developed during the 2014-19 GAP will be maintained in clean and good condition. Any additional interpretation will follow the same design and

standard of materials. The retained rail infrastructure – halts and platforms - will be maintained and/ or restored to provide visitors with greater visual experiences along the route.

6.4 Car Park

Improvements to Smallford Station car park's surface, drainage and the addition of extra parking bays have greatly improved its functionality and appeal. New post and rail fencing between the car park and platform is more in keeping with the old railway and provides a view of the platform from the car park.