

## Diversity Impact Assessment

Name of policy, programme or project **Oxford (Whitehouse Lane) Footbridge**  
**Great Western Route Modernisation**

Name:

Your job title/position:

Department: **Infrastructure Projects**

Date: **May 2016**

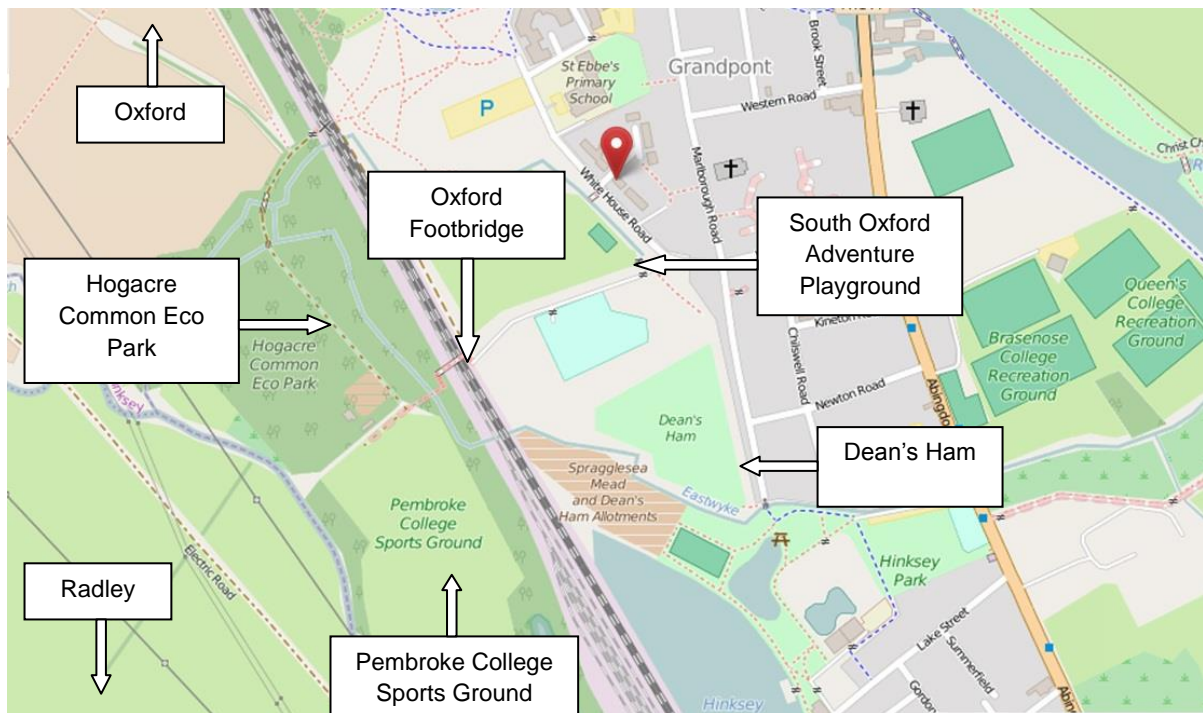
*Diversity Impact Assessments (DIA) are the method used by Network Rail to clearly demonstrate that we have paid due regard to our duties within the Equality Act 2010. The DIA is a tool that helps NR confirm that our policies and the way we design, build and operate will work for everyone.*

*Completed Diversity Impact assessments must be copied to the **Access and Inclusion Manager** [DiversityandInclusion@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:DiversityandInclusion@networkrail.co.uk)*

### Introduction

The Great Western Electrification Project is electrifying the Great Western route between Maidenhead, Reading, Bristol and South Wales. The route to Bristol, including Newbury and Oxford, is programmed for completion by 2016, with the route to Cardiff electrified by 2017. As a result, a number of existing structures such as bridges and tunnels need to be altered or replaced to provide sufficient clearance to accommodate the overhead electrification wires.

Oxford Footbridge is located 0.8 miles or 1,287 metres from Oxford Railway Station 4.1 miles or 6,598 metres from Radley Railway Station. The structure supports a footbridge providing access from Dean's Ham an area of open meadow land and South Oxford Adventure Playground on the East side and to Hogacre Common Eco Park and Pembroke College Sports Ground on the West side of the railway.



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### Structure Details

Oxford Footbridge is a three span footbridge carrying a pedestrian walkway over a five track railway (2 Main Lines, 2 Sidings and 1 Through Sidings track). The parapets are 1.42m in height from the bridge deck throughout, which is substandard and therefore needed to be raised to 1.8m for electrification of the railway. The footbridge was also in relatively poor condition.

Works were completed in March 2016.

### Step 1: Clarifying Aims

Q1. What are the aims of this project/piece of work?

The aim of this project was to raise the footbridge to provide sufficient clearance for the proposed electrification works. The original headroom clearance was 4511mm. The full deck reconstruction provided the required clearance of 5100mm.

Q2. Could this work impact on people? If yes, explain how.

The requirements for the clearance from the footbridge and electrification lines have resulted in an increase in height of the footbridge and increase in the number of steps on either side of the footbridge, which could have an impact on groups with a protected characteristic.

#### Access

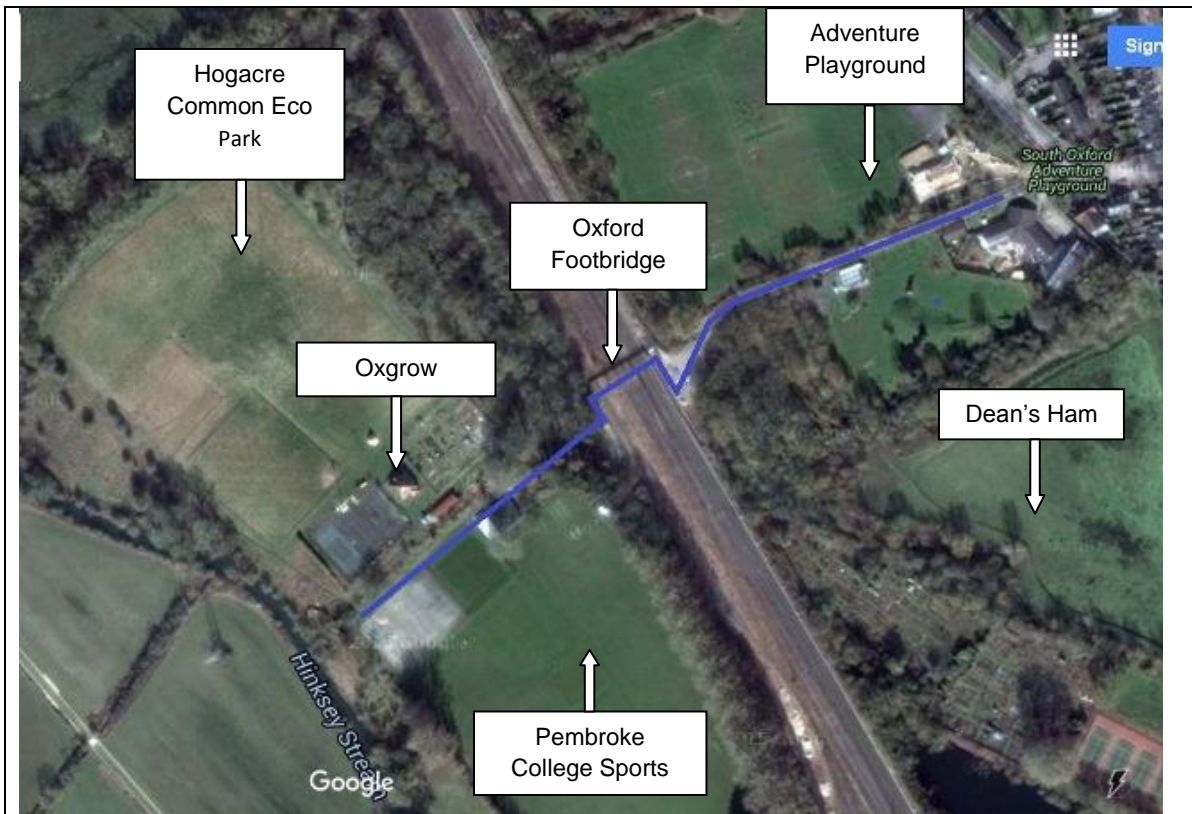
The bridge is located approximately 1 mile to the south of Oxford city centre. Access to the footbridge starting from Whitehouse Road on the east side of the railway is located between Dean's Ham (an area of open meadow land), South Oxford Adventure Playground to the north and allotments to the south. On the west side of the railway there are two open spaces, Hogacre Common Eco Park and Pembroke College Sports Ground.

The main route from the City Centre is via Abingdon Road (on the east side of the railway), which is the main road leading into and out of Oxford from the South. From Whitehouse Road, where there is an emergency access gate on the left, with a metaled fence lane sign-posted Hogacre Common Eco Park. 300 metres down this lane and over the railway footbridge is Hogacre Common Eco Park with Pembroke College Sports Ground on the left.

Hogacre Common is a fourteen acre site which has features of a field, woodland and aquatic habitats and hosts low carbon community activities and events. The land and projects are managed by Hogacre Common Eco Park Community Interest Company. The park is mainly accessible by foot or bike, and their website advises against travelling direct to the park by car; only limited parking is available on the east side of the railway on Whitehouse Road. Within the park, there are no made paths, and no seating facilities along the trails. There is a café on the site which is not open at all times, and no other public facilities such as toilets are available.

The Pembroke College Sports Ground which belongs to Pembroke College is used for football rugby and other sports activities only, and has no public facilities available.

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**Key:** Main Walking Route

The route from Whitehouse Road is separated by an emergency only access gate for vehicles which leads to the current footbridge (Figure 1). There is a path which appears wide enough for wheelchair and mobility scooter users to use beside the gate, but beyond that there are no pedestrian walkways (Figure 2). The road is tarmacked and as long as there are no vehicles on the road it is suitable for most people to use.



**Figure 1 - Whitehouse Road**



**Figure 2 - Emergency Access Gate**

The ground surface on the east side of the footbridge leading to the open spaces is narrower but also tarmacked with metal fencing which ends at the start of the open spaces (Figure 3).



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Figure 3 - Path leading to Hogacre Common Eco Park



Figure 4 - Hogacre Common Eco Park

There is a desire path (a path caused by human erosion) running through the Hogacre Common Eco Park (Figure 4). There are no surfaced or defined pathways through the park. This route is partly lit in places as it takes walkers through open grassland which at times can be very muddy as well as slippery after rainfall. The access/egress via this route appears to be unsuitable for some groups with a protected characteristic.

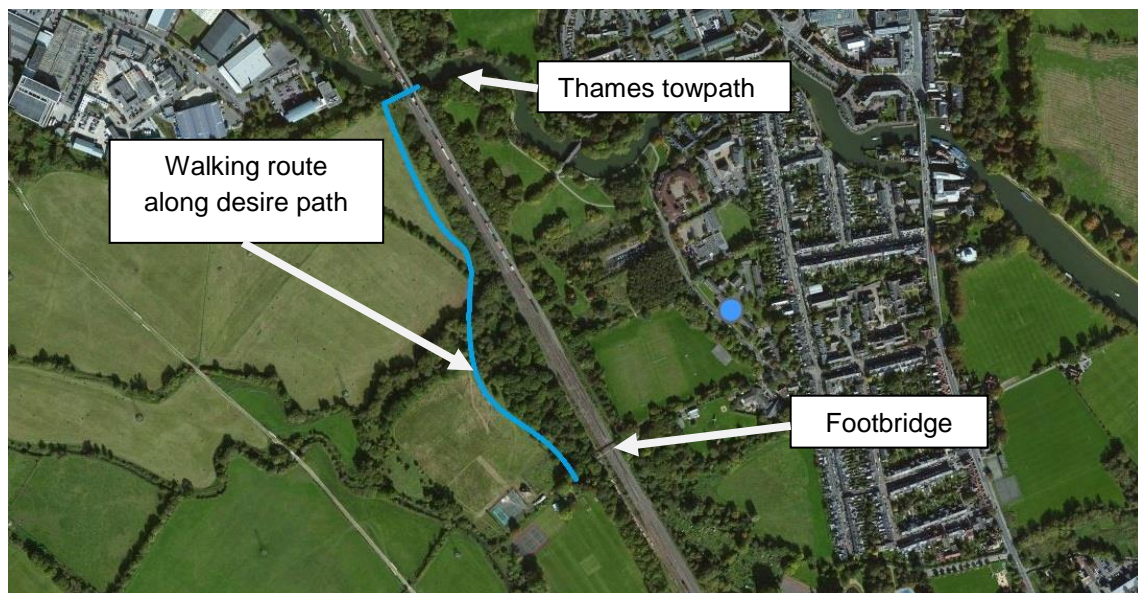


Figure 5 – unofficial alternative route via Thames Towpath

The websites for both Hogacre Common Eco Park and Pembroke College Sports Ground do not detail any other accessible routes other than the one described from Whitehouse Road.

### Details of Constraints

There were a number of constraints to consider in the reconstruction of the current footbridge:

- The footbridge is located between open fields on both sides of the railway
- There is limited parking on the east side of the footbridge
- There is no public vehicle access to the west side of the footbridge

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- Land on the west side of the footbridge is not owned by Network Rail.
- The area surrounding the footbridge has been identified by the Environment Agency as having a “significant” risk of flooding.
- There are residential properties 80m east of the footbridge.

### Design Options Considered

Options included a stepped and ramped footbridge, a footbridge with a lift option, and a stepped only footbridge.

- Ramps and steps

Due to the height of the proposed structure, the length and footprint of the ramps need for compliance was significant, and would have required the acquisition of land from third parties. Provision for adding ramps in the future has been incorporated into the replacement structure.

- Lifts

The option of adding lifts was also considered. The main issue noted was that the area is a flood risk zone; this can be mitigated through design but remains a maintenance and reliability concern. The land surrounding the footbridge is very open and isolated from other properties nearby, and would require remote monitoring.

- Stepped only footbridge

The stepped only footbridge could be constructed within the existing footbridge, and therefore did not require any land purchases. Retaining the same footprint also ensured no additional impact on flooding risk.

Given the nature and levels of usage of the bridge, and the lack of facilities for people with mobility issues or disabilities on the Sports Ground and the Eco Park, provision of a replacement with steps only, but incorporating the possibility of attaching ramps in the future, was deemed to be a reasonable solution.

### Alternatives to Footbridge

The only alternative public access to the sites is a walking only route on an unmade path from the Thames Towpath to the north (see Figure 5 above).

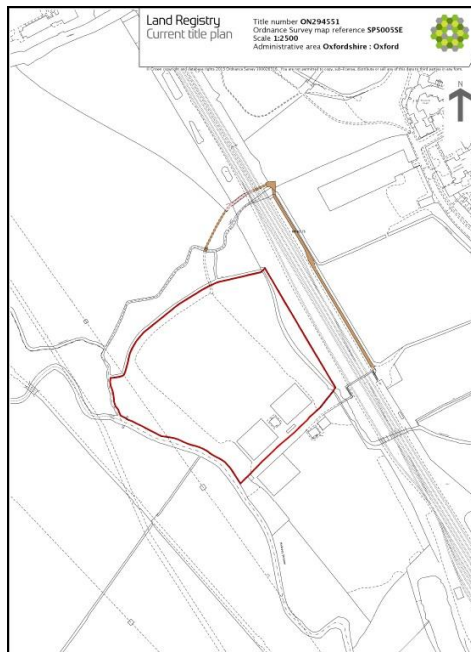
It is accessed from A420 Thames Street, joining the Towpath and crossing beneath the railway bridge over the River Thames. Upon leaving the Thames towpath there are only paths made by human erosion. There is a stile from the towpath leading towards Hogacre Common Eco Park. This route requires navigating through open fields and is prone to natural weather conditions. There are sections of the route where it is currently unlit.

The total distance from the starting point and Hogacre Common Eco Park is 1,287 metres.



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A vehicle access route exists on the east side of the railway, which is used only by authorised vehicles to gain access to the railway. This is shown on the land registry below.



### Bus Services

There are a number of bus services available to the population of New Hinksey that currently provide travel towards the footbridge to reach the open spaces on the east of the railway. However, all the routes advertised will only go as far as the starting point on Whitehouse Road access to the open spaces are via the footbridge.



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### Community Transport

Accessible transport is offered in a number of ways by Oxford City Council, including 'dial-a-ride' and wheel chair accessible taxis for eligible users without private transport. The 'dial-a-ride' service is offered to those with mobility difficulties, visual difficulties, severe learning difficulties and age-related frailty or any other significant difficulties in using conventional public transport.

The service is available Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm providing transport for a variety of reasons including days out. Users are required to register to become a member of the scheme. Membership fee is £5 annually with a flat journey fee:

Travel cost:

- Free with concessionary bus passes
- £2 single or £4 return for journeys within the same district
- Other journeys are £3 single, £6 return – including journey to Oxford city centre.

(Full details can be found: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/dial-ride-0>)

### Environment and Ecology

Oxford Footbridge is located in the vicinity of two conservation areas (as noted below); however the bridge itself is not located within either of these areas. It should be noted that the water courses adjacent to the bridge, local ground water table and associated ecology are likely to be linked to the nearby Hinksey Pools Conservation Area and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

#### Site Environment/Ecology

- 61m 1404yds to 62m 650yds – Hinksey Pools: Conservation Area – Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC) as per letter from Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust dated 11th August 2000
- 61m 1650yds to 62m 880yds – Hinksey Pools: Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Oxfordshire

The structure has established trees and vegetation adjacent to both approach paths, the outer faces of both stair units and along both cesses at track level that are likely to require reduction in size or clearance prior to reconstruction. The site walkover conducted on 2nd June 2011 during daylight hours only did not record any locations of badger sets or other intrusive biodiversity that could affect the proposed bridge reconstruction activities. The existing structure did not contain recesses suitable for bats and birds to roost; however the locations of heavy spalling may provide these locations in the future and should be investigated prior to commencement of works. It is recommended that a full ecological and environmental survey within 200m of the structure is undertaken in GRIP 4 / 5.

### Flood Risk

Oxford Footbridge is located in the vicinity of Hinksey Stream and is subject to a "significant" risk of flooding, as shown on the Environment Agency Flood Map in Figure 2.2.

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Figure 2.2 – Environment Agency Flood Risk Map

### Step 2: The Evidence Base

Q3. Summarise what data we have about the diversity of the people potentially impacted by this work and any research on the issues effecting their inclusion.

Research on the community demographics has been undertaken in order to gain a high level understanding of the area. Neighborhood Statistics records all the people who were usually resident in the area at the time of the 2011 Census. Statistics for people with a long term health problem or disability that had lasted, or was expected to last, at least 12 months and whose daily activities are limited a little or a lot were compared. General health, age structure as well as school children living within the area was compared.

Hinksey Park ward/electoral division in Oxford include the area where Oxford Footbridge is located.





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<b>People with Long-Term Health Problem or Disability, 2011</b>	<b>Hinksey Park</b>	<b>Oxford (Non-Metropolitan District)</b>	<b>South East</b>
Total number of All Usual Residents (Persons)	5,944	151,906	8,634,750
Total number of people whose day to day activities are limited a lot	322	8,139	593,643
Total number of people whose day to day activities are limited a little	431	10,712	762,561
Total number of people whose day to day activities are Not limited	5,190	133,055	7,278,546

The statistics show that overall there are a small percentage of people residing in the ward of Hinksey Park who have a long term health problem whose day to day activities are limited when compared to the total number who usually reside there.

<b>General Health, 2011</b>	<b>Hinksey Park</b>	<b>Oxford (Non-Metropolitan District)</b>	<b>South East</b>
Total number of All Usual Residents (Persons)	5,944	151,906	8,634,750
Total number of people who have <b>Very Good</b> health	3,310	83,904	4,232,707
Total number of people who have <b>Good</b> health	1,846	48,201	2,989,920
Total number of people who have <b>Fair</b> health	574	14,320	1,037,592
Total number of people who have <b>Bad</b> health	156	4,189	291,456
Total number of people who have <b>Very Bad</b> health	58	1,292	83,075

The General Health of the Hinksey Park ward is general good with only a small percentage being recorded as bad to very bad.

<b>Age structure of all Usual Residents (Persons)</b>	<b>Hinksey Park</b>	<b>Oxford (Non-Metropolitan District)</b>	<b>South East</b>
Total number of All Usual Residents (Persons)	5,944	151,906	8,634,750
Total number aged 0-4	364	9,251	534,235
Total number aged 65 and over	663	16,640	217,207

<b>Schoolchildren and Full-Time Students at their Non Term-Time</b>	<b>Hinksey Park</b>	<b>Oxford (Non-Metropolitan District)</b>	<b>South East</b>
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Address, 2011		District)	
All Schoolchildren and Full-Time Students Aged 4 and Over at their Non Term-Time Address (Persons)	86	2,393	130,976
All Schoolchildren and Full-Time Students Aged 4 and Over at their Non Term-Time Address; Males	40	1,220	67,154
All Schoolchildren and Full-Time Students Aged 4 and Over at their Non Term-Time Address; Females	46	1,173	63,822

### Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust

- In 2013-14 there were 8,257 births. This is a decrease of 4.4% when compared to the previous year where there were 8,640 births.

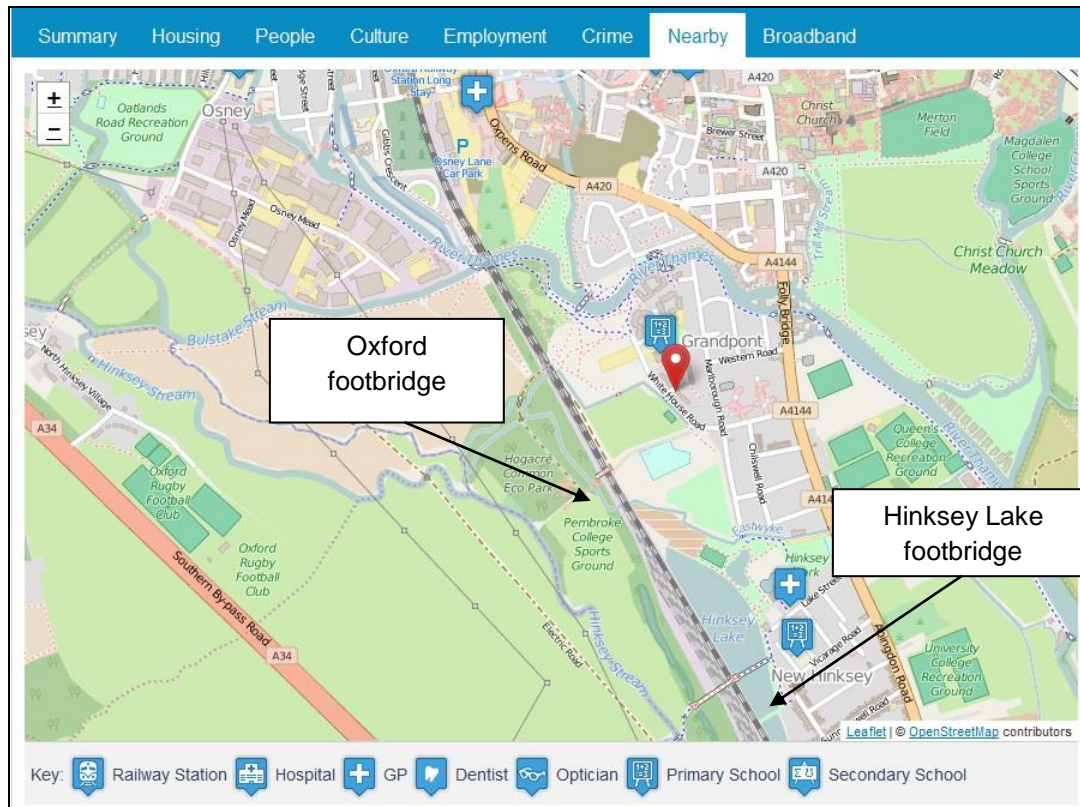
Area of usual residence	All conceptions 2013	All conceptions 2012	All conceptions 2011
Oxfordshire	9,357	9,508	9,789
South East	126,089		

### What's nearby?

The area surrounding Oxford Footbridge is mainly open spaces with residential properties to the east and the open fields of Hogacre Common Eco Park and Pembroke College Sports Ground to the west.

Hinksey Lake an area of natural beauty for picnics, play, sport and relaxation is located 996 metres south from the Oxford footbridge and a short walk or cycle ride from the centre of Oxford. The park is open all day every day with a footbridge connecting the paths on the east and west of Hinksey Stream and Lake. Part of the footbridge crosses the railway and will be raised to meet the OLE requirements. Designs are currently being revised to provide better access for people with mobility issues. During the reconstruction phases of the Oxford footbridge, Hinksey Lake footbridge will remain open.

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- **Nearest Railway Stations to White House Road, Oxford, OX1**
  - Oxford – 0.8 miles or 1,287 metres
  - Radley – 4.1 miles or 6,598 metres
- **Nearest Primary Schools to White House Road, Oxford, OX1**
  - St Ebbe's Church of England Aided Primary School – 110 yards
  - New Hinksey Church of England Primary School – 800 yards
  - West Oxford Community Primary School – 0.8 miles or 1,287 (not shown on map)
- **Nearest Secondary Schools to White House Road, Oxford, OX1**
  - St Gregory the Great Catholic School – 1.5 miles or 2,414 metres
- **Nearest Doctor's Surgeries/GP Practices to White House Road, Oxford, OX1**
  - Dr Wooding and Partners – 670 yards
  - Luther Street Medical Centre – 0.5 miles or 805 metres (not shown on map)
  - King Edward Street Medical Practice – 0.8 miles or 805 metres (not shown on map)
- **Nearest Dentists to White House Road, Oxford, OX1**
  - Luther Street Dental Clinic – 0.6 miles or 966 metres (not shown on map)
  - MISS L FABIAN & MR A K MURGAI – 0.8 miles or 1,287 (not shown on map)



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- **Nearest Hospitals to White House Road, Oxford, OX1**
  - Warneford Hospital – 1.9 miles or 3057 metres (not shown on map)
- **Nearest Opticians to White House Road, Oxford, OX1**
  - Vision Express – 0.7 miles or 1126 miles (not shown on map)
  - Specsavers - 0.7 miles or 1126 miles (not shown on map)
  - Eye Site - 0.7 miles or 1126 miles (not shown on map)

The area around the ward of Hinksey Park has shown a higher concentrated of student residents - 15% of the resident population. On average, around 9.2% of census respondents were students. Male residents were slightly less likely than women to be students. The figures for students include both working and full-time studying students.

Consider evidence in relation to;

- Disability (including evidence relating to access and inclusive design)
- Age
- Pregnancy/maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage/Civil Partnership
- Gender reassignment

### Step 3: Impact

Q4. Given the evidence listed at step 2, what potentially negative impact could this work have on people who share protected characteristics?

Protected Characteristic	Y/N	Explain the potential impact
Disability		<p>The impact to disabled people who use the stepped only footbridge as a route to the open spaces on the east side of the railway varies depending on the type of disability.</p> <p>Disabled people who in particular have difficulty in using stepped accesses will have to navigate additional steps and an overall increase in the vertical distance to be travelled with the current replacement proposal.</p> <p>Disabled people who are unable to climb steps would more than likely use an alternative route to reach the open spaces. Although the environment surrounding the footbridge to access/egress the footbridge does not appear to be suitable for some who share this protected characteristic.</p> <p>Disabled people who cannot currently use the bridge at all because of the stepped access will continue to be affected.</p>

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Age		<p>A person whose mobility is reduced because of their age and has difficulty in using stepped accesses will have to navigate additional steps and/or an overall increase in the vertical distance to be travelled with the current replacement proposal.</p> <p>People whose mobility is reduced because of their age who cannot currently use the bridge at all because of the stepped access will continue to be affected.</p> <p>This would include young children and children in pushchairs.</p>
Pregnancy /maternity		<p>A person whose mobility is reduced as a result of pregnancy, or those with young children in pushchairs / prams, and have difficulty in using stepped accesses will have to navigate additional steps and/or an overall increase in the vertical distance to be travelled with the current replacement proposal.</p>
Race		No differential impact on people with this protected characteristic
Religion or belief		No differential impact on people with this protected characteristic
Gender		No differential impact on people with this protected characteristic
Sexual orientation		No differential impact on people with this protected characteristic
Marriage/Civil Partnership		No differential impact on people with this protected characteristic
Gender reassignment		No differential impact on people with this protected characteristic
Q5.What extra will you do to have a positive impact on diversity and inclusion?		
<p>Currently the decision to include a ramp to the footbridge would rely on further cooperation and land being acquired on the east side of the railway.</p> <p>The evidence collected so far supports the decision to consider constructing a stepped only footbridge. Although the decision would still impact some people who are considered to be in the protected characteristics group, there are extenuating circumstances which could result in this being the chosen option.</p> <p>The location and the access/egress to the footbridge has an impact on people who have a protected characteristic. The footbridge does not connect to any amenities other than open recreational fields. Due to the area, the weather contributes to the changing environment which has an effect on the ground surfaces. NR would need to consult with local environment agencies to find better ways to drain away surface water which at present may impede mobility.</p> <p>Cooperation between the owners of the amenities on the east side of the railway would help towards developing the access/egress up to and from the footbridge. Improvements to the ground surfaces would better facilitate mobility for disabled people.</p> <p>General lighting in the area and on the footbridge will have an impact on visibility. As the footbridge is away from the main roads and general walkways, the area can appear dark and</p>		

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gloomy in the early morning and towards the latter parts of the day. Improvements to illuminating the access/egress along the route and on the actual footbridge would provide better visibility increasing safety and security for people who may feel vulnerable.

### Step 4: Consultation

Q6. How has consultation with those who share a protected characteristic informed your work?	
Who was consulted?	Changes made as a result of consultation
Oxford City Council	The City Council originally objected to the design on the basis of a stepped only structure. However, subsequent discussions regarding the reasonableness of alternatives in relation to the spaces being accessed and other priorities in the vicinity, no further representations have been received.
Landowners	<p>The land on the west is owned by Corpus Christi college used by Pembroke College and Oxford University Football Club, and includes a leasehold to the Eco Park. The Eco Park would like to see a ramped structure, but do not have public facilities on their site or pathways and seating suitable for visitors with mobility issues.</p> <p>Network Rail consulted with the Landlord (Corpus Christy College) regarding its proposed bridge works, and no objections were received.</p>

### Step 5: Informed Decision-Making

Q7. In light of the assessment above, what is your decision? Please tick and provide a rationale	
Continue the work	
Justify and continue the work	The works have been completed (March 2016) on the basis that given the constraints on the use of the land accessed via the



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	footbridge, provision of a ramped structure or lifts is not a reasonable adjustment at this time. The structure can be fitted with ramps in the future, should further funding and opportunity arise.
Change the work	
Stop the work	

### Step 6: Action Planning

Q8. What actions will be taken to address any potential negative impacts and deliver positive impacts?		
Action	By when	By who
DIA to be passed to the Route Asset Manager for structures, for future consideration.	June 2016	Project Manager / Sponsor

### Step 7: Sign off

Name	Position <sup>i</sup>	Signed	Date

**Step 8:** Add an action to your plan setting out how you will monitor this DIA

**Revision Date:**

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<sup>i</sup> A DIA should be signed by someone can approve policy, programme or budget changes when required.