

Suggested Unaccompanied Inspection Route (on foot) for Planning Inspectorate Examining Body

SAILOR'S PATH (Hazlewood car park to Aldeburgh)

The road from the Sailor's Path car park to the Aldeburgh Roundabout forms part of the primary main road into Aldeburgh and there is concern that this road would be used by commercial vehicles and workers to reach NGET's development site from the Friday Street junction on the A12. Indeed the concern is that this road may also be used by Scottish Power too for access to their site along Leiston road.

DISTANCE - 2 km

TIME - ¾ hour

BACKGROUND

- The historic *Sailor's Path* is a significant and well-used footpath linking Aldeburgh and Snape. From the car park to Aldeburgh, it runs adjacent to the A1094.
- This footpath is used by locals, tourists and visitors to the *Hazelwood Marsh* Nature Reserve. The car park access is also a driveway entrance to 5 private houses.
- The section of footpath from the car park to the Golf Club is narrow and runs alongside the A1094 for a considerable distance. There is no formal footpath. A 40mph speed limit applies alongside the path.
- The Golf Club hosts National and International matches bringing significant economic benefit to the town. Part of the golf course is designated maritime heathland – and it won the Environmental Golf Club of the Year award in 2019.
- The A1094 is the main access road into Aldeburgh from the A12 and is one of only two primary access routes into the town. It runs through rural countryside until reaching the 30mph zone in Aldeburgh, the start of a residential area. It is heavily used throughout the year but particularly during the summer months when visitor numbers significantly increase the town's population. It is used by residents, visitors, commercial vehicles, emergency vehicles and caravans driving to the Church Farm Holiday Park.
- Walking east from the car park, an additional 7 private houses have driveways entering this stretch of road before the start of the 30mph limit area.
- The 40mph speed, along with the absence of double white lines to prevent overtaking – despite dangerous hidden dips - make this route an accident black spot. There have been several near fatal accidents over the past 4 years, causing the road to be closed for many hours, affecting the entire town. Accidents involving deer have also occurred.
- When there is excessive rainfall, the road floods in the dips making it even more treacherous. Farmland abuts either side of the road, with farm vehicles and tractors entering and exiting the road at various points.
- A survey on the A1094 carried out in September 2024 recorded 5,951 cars per day entering/exiting Aldeburgh. September is, of course, outside of the high tourist season and these numbers would clearly be vastly increased during busy months.
- **The key point** is that the A1094 is a busy rural road which also passes through a residential area. There is significant pedestrian flow along the route and crossing the road. Any increase in HGV, commercial and general vehicle movements would significantly increase the danger of using the Sailor's path and dramatically raise pollution levels. A speed monitor has been installed within the 30mph residential section to try and reduce traffic speeds.
- A material increase in commercial and general traffic from Friday Street to Aldeburgh on route to NGET's development site would deter visitors due to the congestion it might cause and hence have a potential adverse impact on the local tourist based economy.

Route Map



THE WALK

- From the Suffolk Wildlife Trust's Sailor's Path car park (photo 1), the walk heads east towards Aldeburgh. Vehicular exit from the car park is difficult in view of blind crests and the fact that traffic travels fast along this road (photos 2 /3/4).

Photo 1 Sailor's Path carpark



Photo 2 - exit from carpark west view

Blind crest



Photo 3 - exit from carpark east view

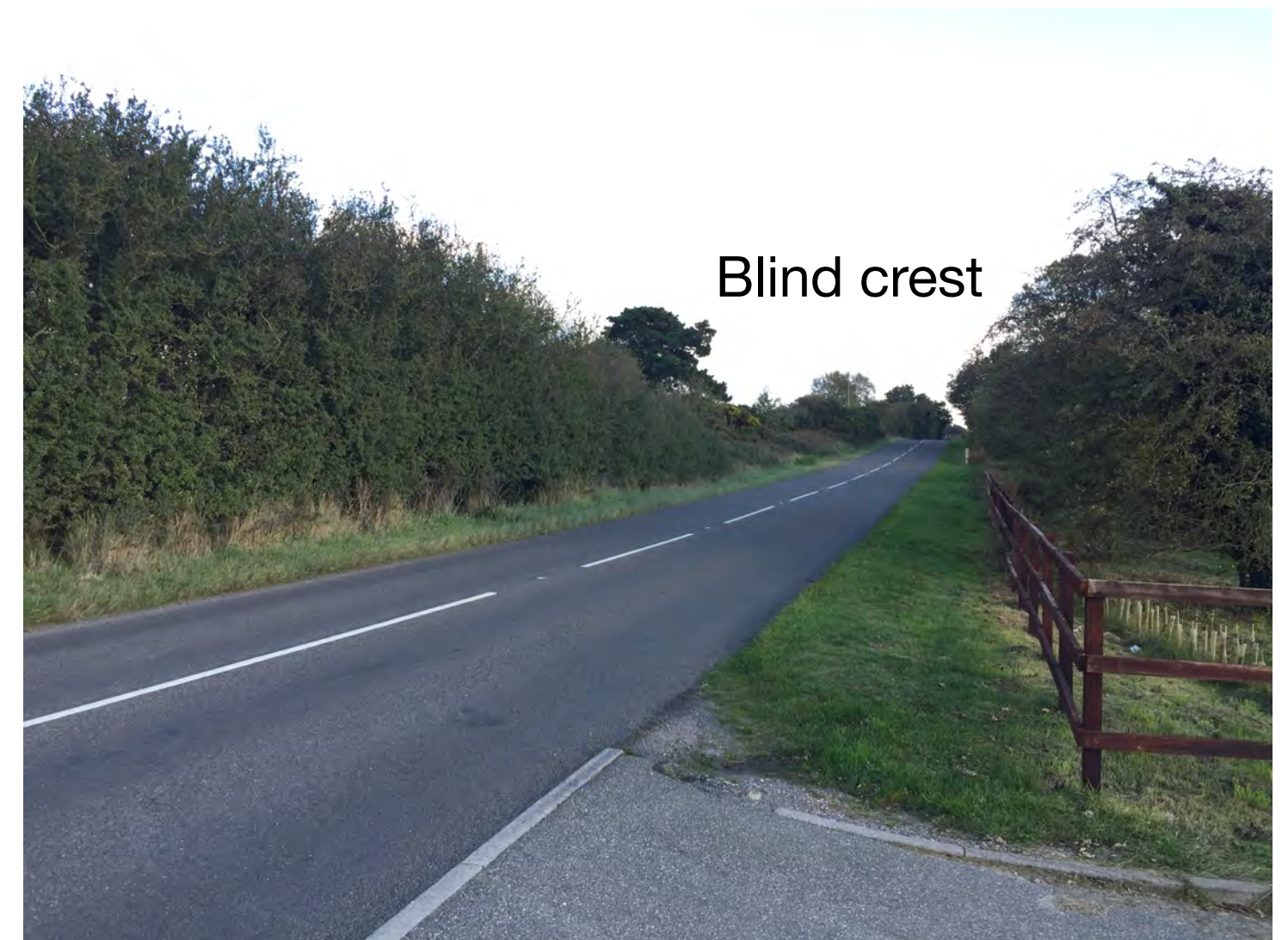


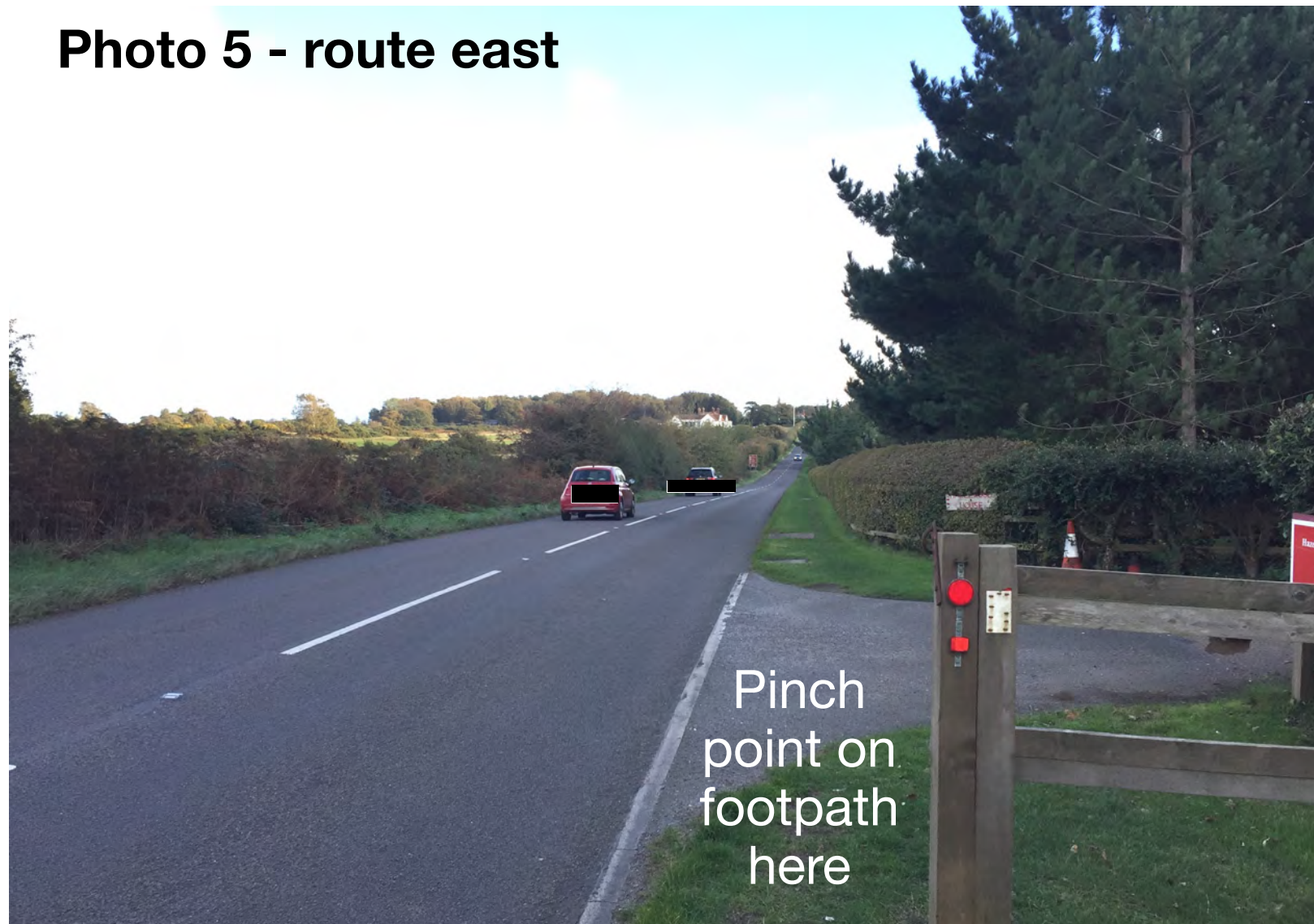
Photo 4 - route east

Blind crest



- Heading east the path immediately from the car park is narrow and is a very dangerous part of the walk with cars passing at very close proximity at 40 mph (photos 4 to 7).

Photo 5 - route east



**Photo 6 -
Warning notice
west**



Photo 7 - traffic travelling west



- Shortly after the path enters the 30mph limit, there is a crossing point by users of the golf course accessing the practice ground and river course (photo 8). After this point the residential area begins and the footpath route is on tarmac pavement. As this is a residential area, cars and commercial vehicles are often parked on the road restricting traffic flow to one way passing only.

**Photo 8 - Golf course users
crossing point just after 30mph**



- Moving east into Aldeburgh's residential area, it should be noted that there are a number of junctions on the left, allowing access into the residential areas to the north. These link to the Leiston Road, which leads to NGET's works site. There is a risk that these roads become rat-runs for any traffic if access to Leiston Road via the roundabout becomes slow or blocked.
- As the roundabout is approached, before reaching the entrance to the Co-op and Tesco's car parks, there is an entrance to a garden centre and other commercial properties on the right opposite Fairfield Road in addition to the entrances to the supermarkets which are also on the right. There is room for one-way traffic only as the road narrows at this point (photo 9).
- Please note the proximity of the residential properties to the road. Any increase in traffic volumes and in particular of commercial vehicles will cause considerable noise and pollution to these residents along with the other residents of Saxmundham Road. The risk to pedestrians will also be increased.



- The roadway into the roundabout is a 'busy' area for vehicles and pedestrians, requiring extreme caution. There is a dangerous right turn into the Tesco's car park and the zebra crossing is the only means of safe access across the road for families living in one of the key residential areas of Aldeburgh (photo 10).

Photo 10 - Zebra crossing opposite Tesco



- The roundabout is busy throughout the day and has five exits including access to the Fire Station (photos 11/12). Traffic trying to reach NGET's works site would take a left turn at the roundabout and proceed down Leiston Road.
- Immediately on entering Leiston road (photo 13) traffic has to negotiate one way passing only leading to a potential build up of traffic into the roundabout. This is a bus route (photo 14) and Fire engines from the Fire Station exits onto the roundabout (photo 15). Any delay to the emergency services due to an increase in the volume of traffic on route to NGET's site could be disastrous.

Photo 11 - Roundabout entrance from west showing five exits



**Photo 12
Roundabout
entrance from
Victoria Road**



**Photo 13
Roundabout exit
to Leiston Road
(one-way traffic
pinch point)**



Photo 14



Photo 15

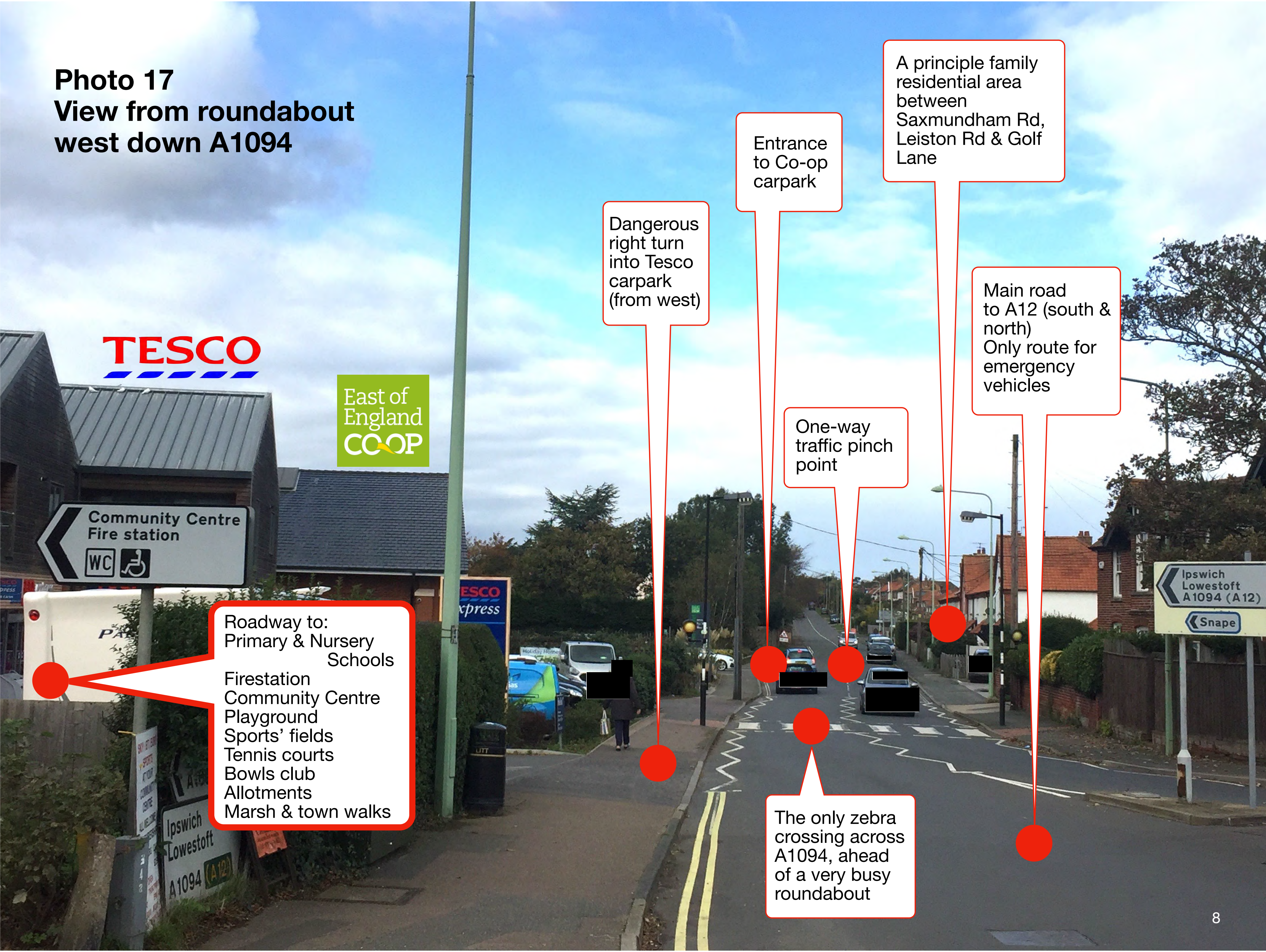
- Photo 16 highlights the use of the zebra crossing by children, often unaccompanied by an adult.

Photo 16



- The roundabout exit into Victoria Road, which is the main route into the Town Centre, is also the access route to the Churches, the Library and (via Park Rd) to the School, the Community Hospital and a care home.
- **Photo 17 (next page) highlights the key risks and movements at the roundabout. This is a complex junction and the zebra crossing forms the main access route from the residential area to most parts of the town. In particular it should be noted that, on a daily basis, it is heavily used by children and families to reach the town centre and all its public facilities, the primary school, the nursery school, the children's playground, the sports fields and the town's only two main supermarkets.**
- **It is recommend that inspections take place at times when traffic and school children flow are at their peak as well as at other times of the day.**

Photo 17
View from roundabout
west down A1094



TESCO

East of
England
COOP

Community Centre
Fire station
WC

Roadway to:
Primary & Nursery
Schools
Firestation
Community Centre
Playground
Sports' fields
Tennis courts
Bowls club
Allotments
Marsh & town walks

Dangerous
right turn
into Tesco
carpark
(from west)

Entrance
to Co-op
carpark

A principle family
residential area
between
Saxmundham Rd,
Leiston Rd & Golf
Lane

Main road
to A12 (south &
north)
Only route for
emergency
vehicles

One-way
traffic pinch
point

The only zebra
crossing across
A1094, ahead
of a very busy
roundabout

Ipswich
Lowestoft
A1094 (A12)
Snape