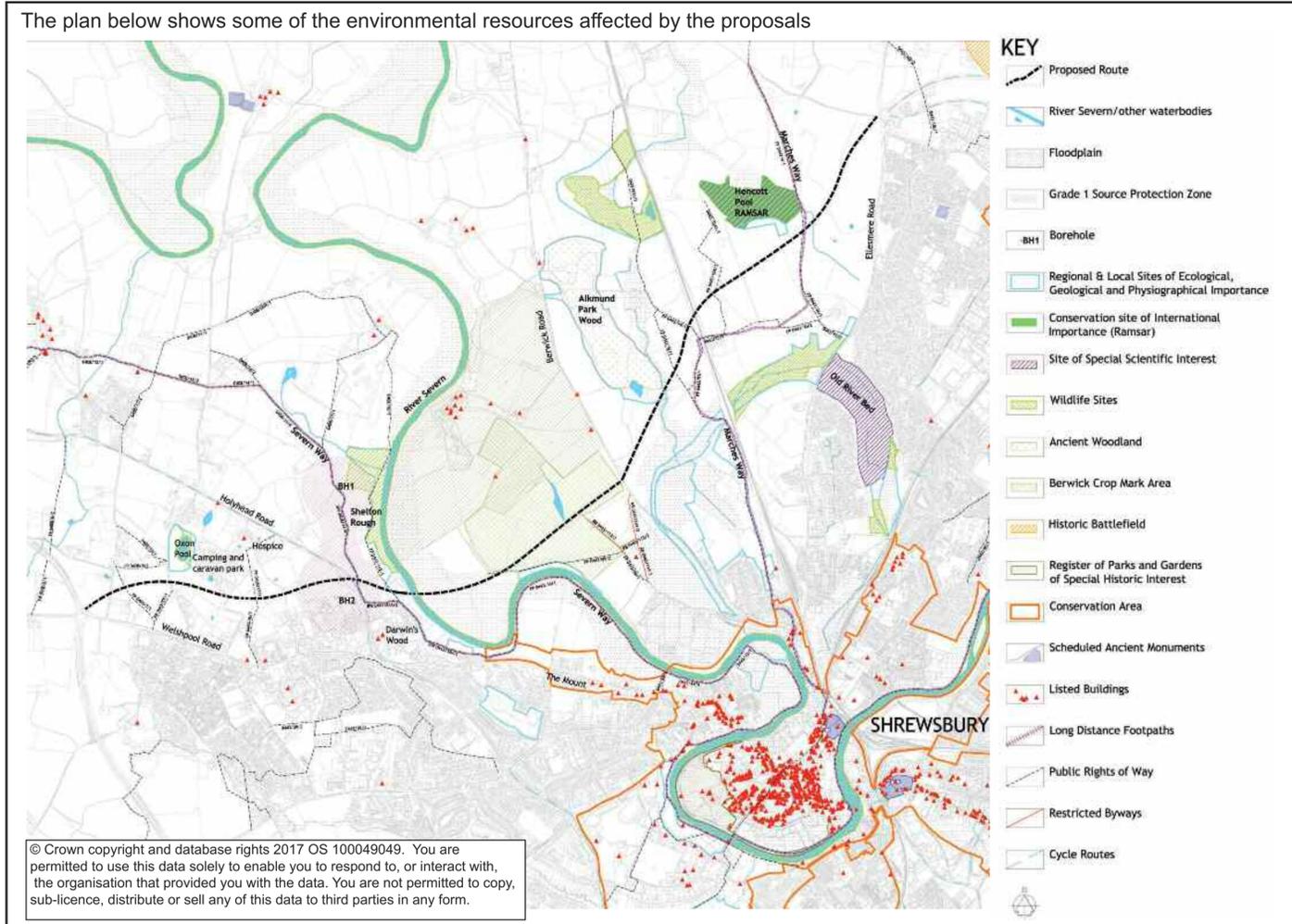


Environmental resources

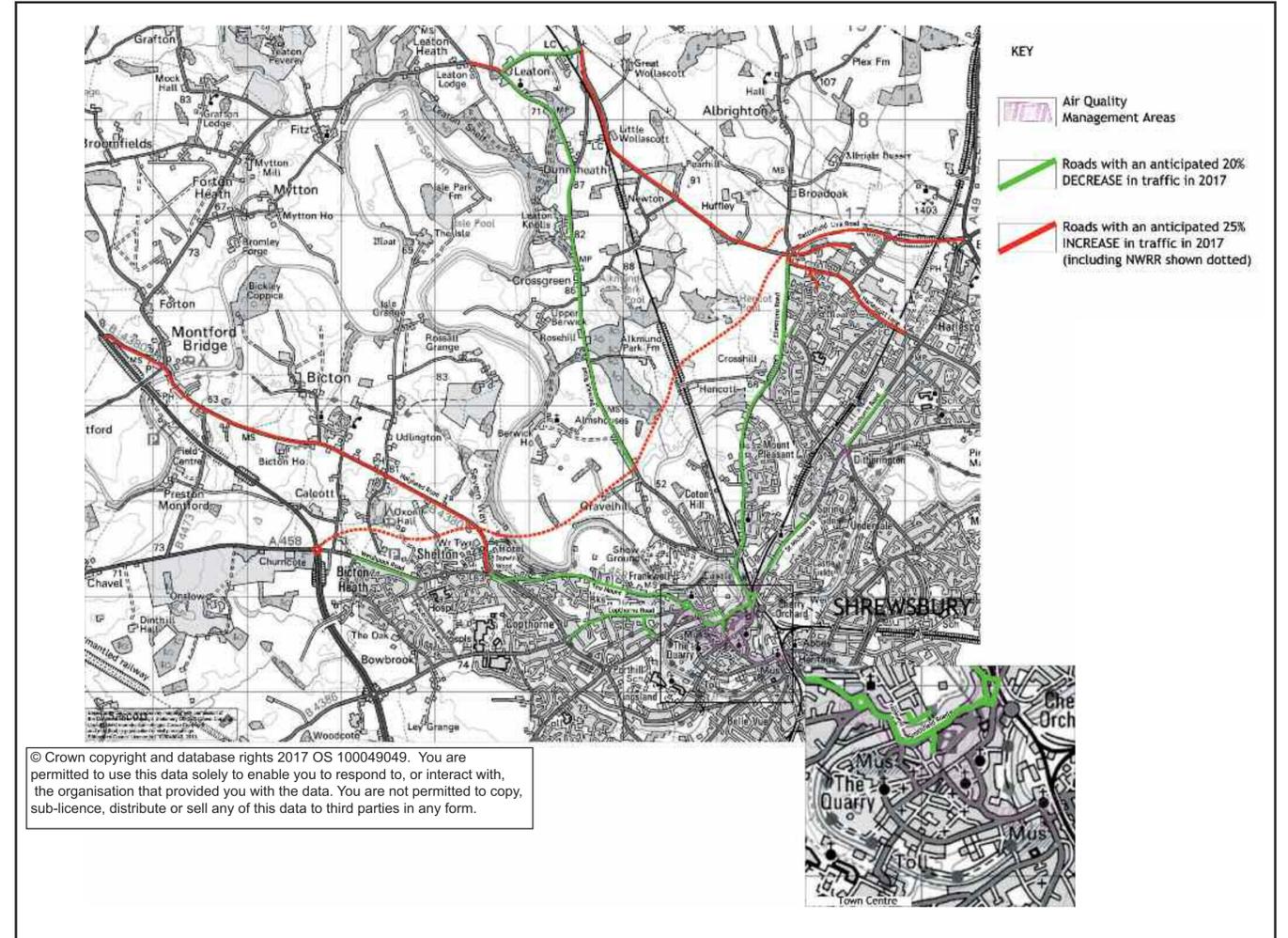


The route across the open landscape would result in some adverse effects for the environment. For example it would:

- Be visible from some of the housing on the edge of the town and the Registered Park and Garden at Berwick
- Cross the River Severn on a viaduct and pass close to the old river bed
- Affect an area of archaeological importance
- Result in the loss of some trees, hedgerows and agricultural land
- Disturb some wildlife habitats

The route also crosses quite close to Hencott Pool, which is part of a wildlife site of international importance. However, as the council propose to acquire the area as part of the road project, there are opportunities to enhance the site and safeguard its future with a long term management plan, resulting in a net environmental benefit. Environmental issues have played an important part in the selection of the preferred route. The proposals provide the best opportunities for benefits resulting from reduced traffic at the same time as keeping the potential for adverse effects to a minimum. A detailed environmental impact assessment will be carried out and the results published in an Environmental Statement to accompany the planning application.

Environmental effects



By reducing traffic flows and congestion in several parts of the town, the relief road would have environmental benefits. Work undertaken in 2010, which is currently being updated, indicated that:

- for local air quality there would be both improvements and deterioration for people, depending on traffic changes; however, on balance there would be an overall improvement in local air quality
- if opened today (2017) traffic noise would be reduced at 1417 houses, compared with increases at 351
- there would be an enhanced setting for the town's heritage features, including scheduled monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas
- there would be better access for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport, given less conflict with traffic, as well as improved safety

Also in 2010, carbon emissions from traffic were predicted to increase by a similar amount with or without a relief road in place (approximately 10% over a 60 year period). The plan above illustrates (2010 predictions) where traffic decreases would result in environmental benefits and where traffic increases would result in adverse effects. The percentages used to identify traffic changes are equivalent to a one decibel change in noise, the difference which could be perceived by people. They also provide an indication of other potential effects on amenity, including air quality, access for pedestrians and cyclists, and the setting of heritage features.