

North Yorkshire County Council

Business and Environmental Services

Executive Members

25 August 2017

Proposed Dedication of a Cycletrack at Green Hammerton, Harrogate

Report of the Assistant Director - Transport, Waste and Countryside Services

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To advise the Corporate Director of Business and Environmental Services of a proposal to establish a cycletrack between Green Hammerton and Thorpe Underwood. A location plan is attached to this report as **Plan 1**. The whole route is shown as A – B – C – D – E – F – G – H on **Plan 2**.
- 1.2 To request the Corporate Director and Executive Members to note and support the proposed dedication of a cycletrack crossing that part of the land in NYCC's ownership.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Green Hammerton Parish Council decided to find a solution to their situation of being surrounded by busy main roads (A59 York to Junction 41 on A1(M), and the B6265 to Boroughbridge) which have cut the village off from access to the network of relatively quiet country roads into the Vale of York. The Parish Council determined to bring forward a new Greenway Link from the village to Thorpe Underwood, which will provide this missing connection, and in 2015 the Parish Council commissioned a feasibility report for the creation of a cycletrack. The feasibility report document is attached as Appendix 1. A group known as the Green Hammerton Recreational Charity (GHRC) was founded, and the charity has been liaising with landowners to achieve a suitable route and has been pursuing funding opportunities.
- 2.2 The most suitable route identified following the feasibility report for the cycletrack lies near to, and partly coincident with, an existing public footpath. GHRC approached NYCC seeking funding and advice, initially on converting the existing public footpath into a cycletrack. In addition, as NYCC is currently the owner of the majority of the agricultural land crossed by the identified route, GHRC approached NYCC as a landowner, hoping to secure permission to develop and construct a cycletrack across the land. Subsequently a route adjacent to the existing footpath but still lying on land owned by NYCC was chosen as the most appropriate route, as shown on Plan 2.
- 2.3 GHRC was informed that there was no possibility of actual funds being made available to them by NYCC but that assistance would be given to help with the legal and technical issues relating to the creation and/or the upgrading and/or conversion of the existing public right of way to achieve a cycletrack.
- 2.4 The land in NYCC's ownership, over which most of the route lies, is proposed to be sold, however, Corporate Property Management, who are responsible for the NYCC estate asset are agreeable to a cycletrack being established across NYCC's land in advance of the proposed disposal.

2.5 Following advice provided by the NYCC's Countryside Access Service and Legal Services, Green Hammerton Parish Council have arranged a formal Creation Agreement under Section 30 of the Highways Act 1980, between Little Ouseburn, Kirby Hall and Thorpe Underwood Parish Council and Foxlow Ltd (the owners of the land crossed by the route between Points G - H) creating a cycletrack. Therefore the section of the overall route between Points G - H is now already legally a cycletrack, albeit that it is not yet constructed or being promoted as such.

3.0 The Current Position

3.1 GHRC are now keen for the status of the section of the route within NYCC's ownership to be established as cycletrack to enable them to continue to secure the various funding streams available to them for physical works to be undertaken along the route.

3.2 NYCC has undertaken to dedicate a cycletrack across the land within its ownership between Points A – B – C and between D – E – F – G. The proposed Dedication document will record the respective responsibilities for maintenance, and other works. An initial draft of the Dedication has been prepared but will need input from Corporate Property Management and Legal Services. There is no requirement for any public consultation in the preparation of a Dedication, although the District Council would be notified.

3.3 The short section between Points C – D is in private ownership and a separate Creation Agreement between the landowner and the Parish Council will need to be finalised by GHRC.

3.4 Corporate Property Management has delayed the sale of the land until this matter is resolved; the completion of the Dedication will allow Corporate Property Management to dispose of all of the land as intended, acknowledging the existence of the cycletrack. Although initially it was considered that NYCC could retain the thin strip of land over which the cycletrack would lie, Corporate Property Management's preference is to sell all of the land but with the proviso that there is an existing cycletrack crossing the property.

4.0 Construction and future maintenance of the cycletrack

4.1 GHRC are confident that they will be able to raise the funds to construct the route as described within the feasibility study. Estimates of the costs of the works to create the cycletrack amounted to approximately £57,300. GHRC are securing funding from the Thorpe Underwood Estate, Harrogate Borough Council's Amenity Greenspace Fund and commuted sums payable by Linden Homes and Loxley Homes, totalling approximately £45,000 to date.

4.2 Once the route has been formally dedicated and then constructed, responsibility for the future maintenance of the route will lie with GHRC for the sections C – D and G – H, and will lie with NYCC for the sections A – B – C and D – E - F – G in accordance with the separate sections of the Highways Act under which the route would come into effect. Green Hammerton Parish Council has agreed to contribute to GHRC's costs for maintenance. If the initial surface construction works are undertaken to a good standard and no unforeseen damage occurs eg due to flooding, the route should only require minimal maintenance.

- 4.3 There is a relatively substantial footbridge crossing Score Ray Beck at Point G on Plan 2, (see Photo 1). The feasibility report identified that this bridge should ideally be replaced at an estimated cost of £4,000; costs which would need to be met by GHRC, but a suggestion was also made that perhaps it could be strengthened and improved in the short term at a cost of approximately £700, to take safe usage by cyclists. It is unclear who is currently responsible for this bridge although it seems likely that it is NYCC, but the responsibility only extends to the maintenance of a pedestrian bridge. Any works to the bridge would have to be done with the permission of NYCC. If the bridge were to be replaced to a standard approved by NYCC for use by cyclists, it is probable that NYCC would take future responsibility for it.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Concerns have been raised that if NYCC were to enter into a binding unconditional dedication agreement prior to the completion of the physical construction of the route, and in the unlikely event that GHRC were to become unable to contract those works or to meet the costs of those works, that NYCC would be put to a considerable financial outlay to construct a route to the status it had previously dedicated. Advice was sought from Legal Services who have suggested that a conditional agreement can be prepared within which NYCC will give a formal undertaking that it will dedicate the route as a cycletrack on land within its ownership, only on completion of works (to a previously agreed standard).
- 5.2 The cost to the Council for processing a Dedication will be minimal, however, as mentioned above there is likely to be some future maintenance costs on the route.

6.0 Legal Implications

- 6.1 Once the route has been formalised as a public highway of cycletrack status, future maintenance responsibility would legally fall to NYCC on those sections currently in its ownership, but any financial input from the community group would be welcomed.
- 6.2 Following completion of the works and of the Dedication, the relevant sections of the route subject of the Dedication should be added to the County Council's records of highways maintainable at the public expense.

7.0 Equalities Implications

- 7.1 The proposed route is part of a greater network intended to encourage people to take the opportunity of enjoying the countryside, and making journeys avoiding use of main roads. The proposed route would link 2 communities, providing a safe route for cyclists.
- 7.2 The route can be used freely by all legitimate users. Gates may be required on land ownership boundaries, but will be of a design that are easy to use.
- 7.3 The proposal is not considered to have any detrimental equality implications. A record has been made that an Equality Impact Assessment is not required.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 The proposal is essentially a community led project to create a cycletrack, in part by upgrading sections of an existing footpath, providing a safe route for pedestrians but more particularly for cyclists, with wider links via quieter roads from the villages in the area potentially to Boroughbridge and York.

- 8.2 The proposal would go some way towards some of the aspirations of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan eg, taking the opportunity to improve routes and make them available to a greater number of users, taking the opportunity to provide links between communities and encouraging the public to take exercise in a safe and pleasant environment.
- 8.3 The proposal has been led by a local community group who have put in an enormous effort to arrange funds and to undertake the scoping of the project in a professional manner. The County Council encourages and applauds such efforts by local communities.

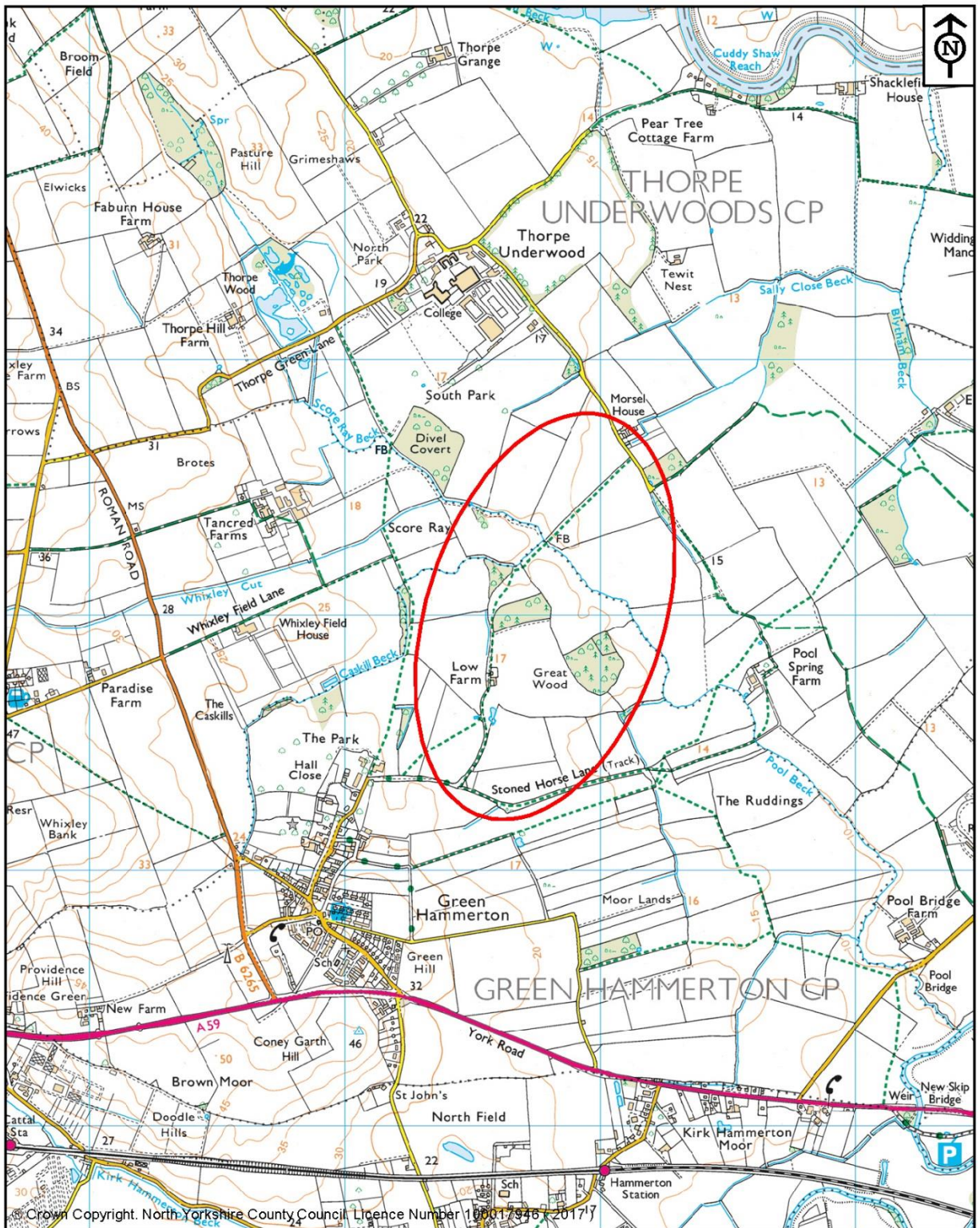
9.0 Recommendation


- 9.1 It is recommended that: The Corporate Director, Business and Environmental Services in consultation with Executive Members approves the proposed dedication of a cycletrack along the sections of the route between Points A – B – C and between D – E – F – G across land in NYCC's ownership, under a 'conditional' dedication.

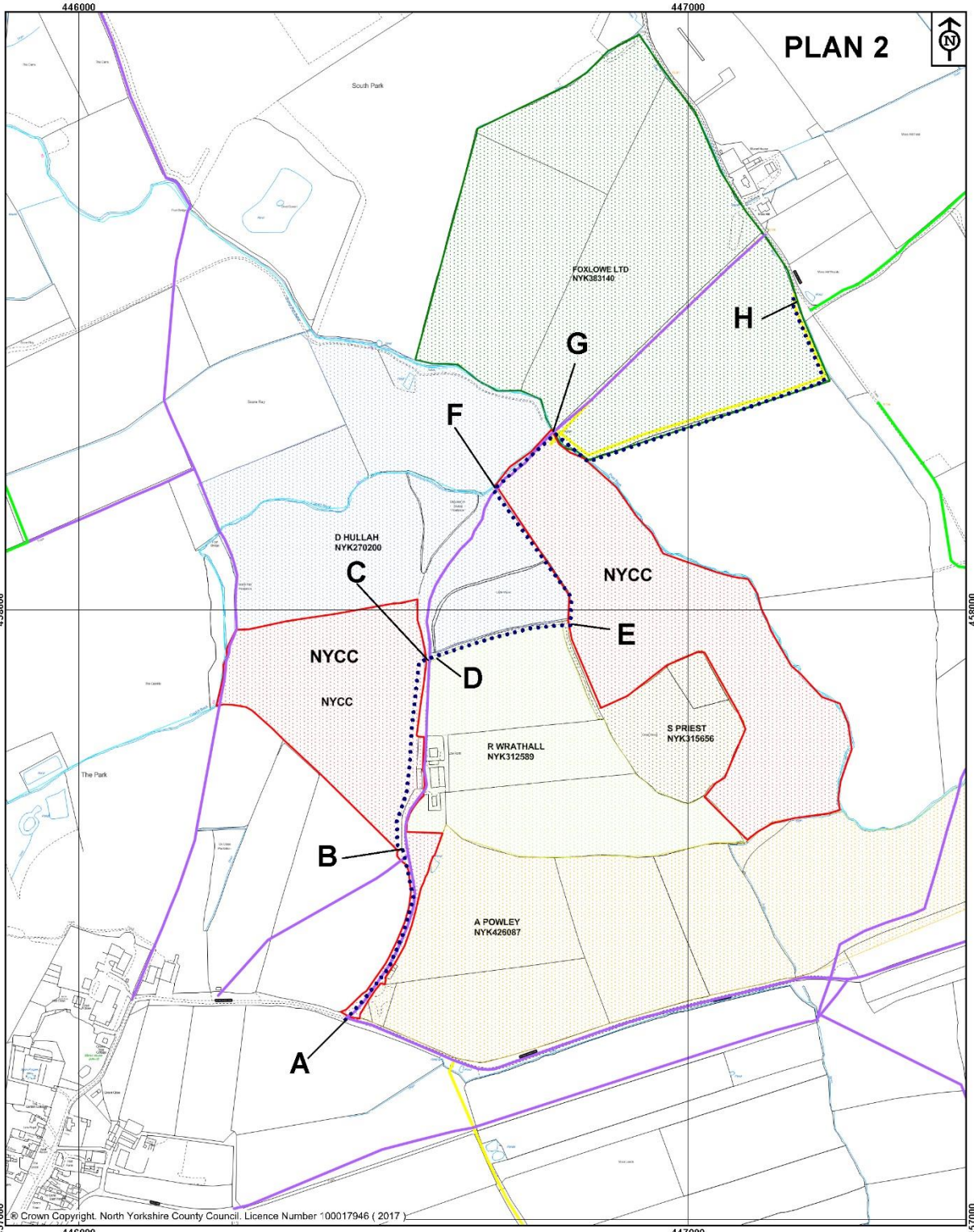
IAN FIELDING
Assistant Director, Transport, Waset & Countryside Services

Author of report: Penny Noake

Background papers: File Ref HAR/2017/11



 <p>North Yorkshire County Council</p> <p>Public Rights of Way Waste and Countryside Services County Hall Northallerton DL7 8AH</p>	<p>PLAN 1</p> <p>LOCATION PLAN</p>		<p>North Yorkshire County Council</p> <p>REPORT TO THE DIRECTOR-BES 15 AUGUST 2017</p> <p>PROPOSED CYCLE TRACK AT GREEN HAMMERTON TO THORPE UNDERWOODS</p>
	Map drawn on 9 January 2017	Drawn by pjn	Scale 1:20000




 <p>North Yorkshire County Council Public Rights of Way Waste and Countryside Services County Hall Northallerton DL7 8AH</p>	<p>Key:</p> <p>Public Footpath —</p> <p>Public Bridleway —</p>	<p>Plan prepared for the report to the Corporate Director-BES and Executive Members</p> <p>Proposed Dedication of a Cycletrack at Green Hammerton</p>
	<p>Approx route of proposed cycleway</p>	
	<p>Map drawn on 9 January 2017 Drawn by pjn Scale 1:5688.5</p>	



Photo 1: Existing footbridge crossing Score Ray Beck

North Yorkshire County Council

Report of the Assistant Director - Transport, Waste and Countryside Services

25 August 2017

Proposed Dedication of a Cycletrack at Green Hammerton, Harrogate

AUTHORISATION

I approve / do not approve the recommendation set out above

.....

ANY ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATION or COMMENT:

.....

.....

David Bowe
Corporate Director-BES

Signed: Date:

The Hammerton Greenway: Linking Green Hammerton and Thorpe Underwood



Report prepared for Green Hammerton Parish Council by Chain Events - September 2015



Harrogate Wheel Easy and Harrogate Cycle Action welcomes the development of a new traffic free route that will provide a safe link for cyclists including our members when cycling in the Green Hammerton area. The proximity of this route to the growing cycle network in this area is very exciting. The success of the Nidderdale Greenway and the Spofforth to Wetherby and Thorp Arch Cycleway are major contributors to encouraging more people to cycle.

Children and adults who have the opportunity to cycle along traffic free routes gain confidence and skills that cannot be done on our busy roads.

Gia Margolis Chair, Harrogate Wheel Easy

www.wheel-easy.org.uk



Proposals for the Hammerton Greenway, a safe cycle route from Green Hammerton to Thorpe Underwood

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"The Hammerton Greenway will help people with mobility issues to enjoy the countryside and improve the quality of their lives without having to overcome the obstacles usually suffered by users of wheelchairs and mobility scooters. It's a marvellous initiative."

Trevor Philips, Chairman, Shopmobility York



This document has been prepared for Green Hammerton Parish Council by David Gray and John Grimshaw - Sept 2015

Design: J Debney

- Binding Margin -



Angie: 'As Hunter and my other grandchildren get more confident on their bikes, it will be good to allow them more independent cycling in safety.'



Sam (4), Georgie (8) and Eliza (8): 'We really want to go on a longer bike ride, and it would be great to go for a ride with no cars.'



Hattie (10) and Jessica (10): Hattie said: 'I could get all the way back to Whixley through Thorpe Underwood if there was a bike path. I'm not allowed on the main road.' Jessica said: 'Our summer holidays would be such fun if we had a bike path.'



Rosie on her horse Beau: 'The Greenway will let me meet my friends and ride in safety. At the moment we can't ride out of the village - there are no bridleways and local roads are full of speeding traffic. It will also open up new longer rides to us to improve our riding skills and confidence.'



Matt: 'It would be great to be able to get onto the national cycle route and into York without having to deal with the main roads. The speed of the traffic on the main roads around the villages makes it more intimidating than when I've cycled in London.'



Jon: 'I've been living - and cycling - in Europe for the past seven years, and coming back to the UK I was shocked at how dangerous life is for cyclists here in comparison. We've got a fantastic cycle network just a few miles away, and the Hammerton Greenway will give everyone safe access to it.'



Robbie: 'I'm really excited about the Greenway. For years I've cycled down the Green and had nowhere else to go when it ends. I'd like to be able to cycle from my house in Green Hammerton without having to deal with the very busy road to York and the road to Boroughbridge which is extremely dangerous.'



Chris: 'My wife and I have just taken over the village shop and Post Office and I'm full of ideas about how to develop it for our community. The Hammerton Greenway fits in well with our plans. It will also enable people to come into Hammerton Station and link into the national cycle network, and that's going to be a real benefit for small businesses like me and others in the locality.'

Proposals for the Hammerton Greenway, a safe cycle route from Green Hammerton to Thorpe Underwood

1 Introduction

The Green Hammerton Parish Council (GHPC) wish to find a solution to their situation of being surrounded by busy main roads (A59 York to Junction 41 on A1(M), and the B6265 to Boroughbridge) which have cut the village off from access to the network of relatively quiet country roads into the Vale of York. The Parish Council has determined to bring forward a new Greenway Link from the village to Thorpe Underwood which will provide this missing connection.

In May 2015 the GHPC asked David Gray and John Grimshaw to review the opportunities and to prepare a report detailing how best to deliver this project. Both David and John have been involved in path construction for many years, including the York to Riccall path which was the first project undertaken by Sustrans and which eventually led to the creation of the National Cycle Network.

About the consultants

John Grimshaw CBE is a highly experienced civil engineer, founder of Sustrans and the architect of the National Cycle Network. Educated in Cambridge, John has had a long and distinguished career creating walking and cycling routes across the country. His current work includes advising on HS2 and as transport adviser to the Mayor of Bristol. His experience of the construction of urban greenways and the sympathetic use of former rail corridors means that he is able to offer a valuable insight into how the long awaited Chisholm Trail project could come to fruition.

David Gray joined the team in 1985 to construct the Derby and Swarkestone route including dealing with all the landowners. He built the Consett and Sunderland line which went through difficult areas requiring considerable diplomatic skills, before going on to conceive of, promote and develop the popular C2C route from Whitehaven to Sunderland.

Since also leaving Sustrans David has set up his own company called Chain Events running cycling tours and challenges on the very routes he helped build and beyond. His views on the local economic benefits of cycle tourism are widely sought following the outstanding global success of the C2C route. For the last thirty years he has also been a livestock farmer, forester and horse-livery yard owner, so understands the perceived conflicts over public access in rural areas.

are widely sought following the outstanding global success of the C2C route. For the last thirty years he has also been a livestock farmer, forester and horse-livery yard owner, so understands the perceived conflicts over public access in rural areas.

<http://johngrimshawassociates.co.uk>

<http://www.chain-events.co.uk>



John Grimshaw (left) and David Gray (centre)

2 An overall description of the proposal

The map shows the context of the Greenway Link. The village lies to the northeast of the junction of the York and Boroughbridge roads, neither of which are remotely suitable for novice or family cycling.

Four miles away, at Great Ouseburn the very popular "Way of the Roses" cycle route runs from Morecambe in the west to Bridlington in the east. More locally it provides a carefully detailed and signed route to Ripon and to York. At Aldwark Bridge it links to National Cycle Route 65 to the North York Moors.

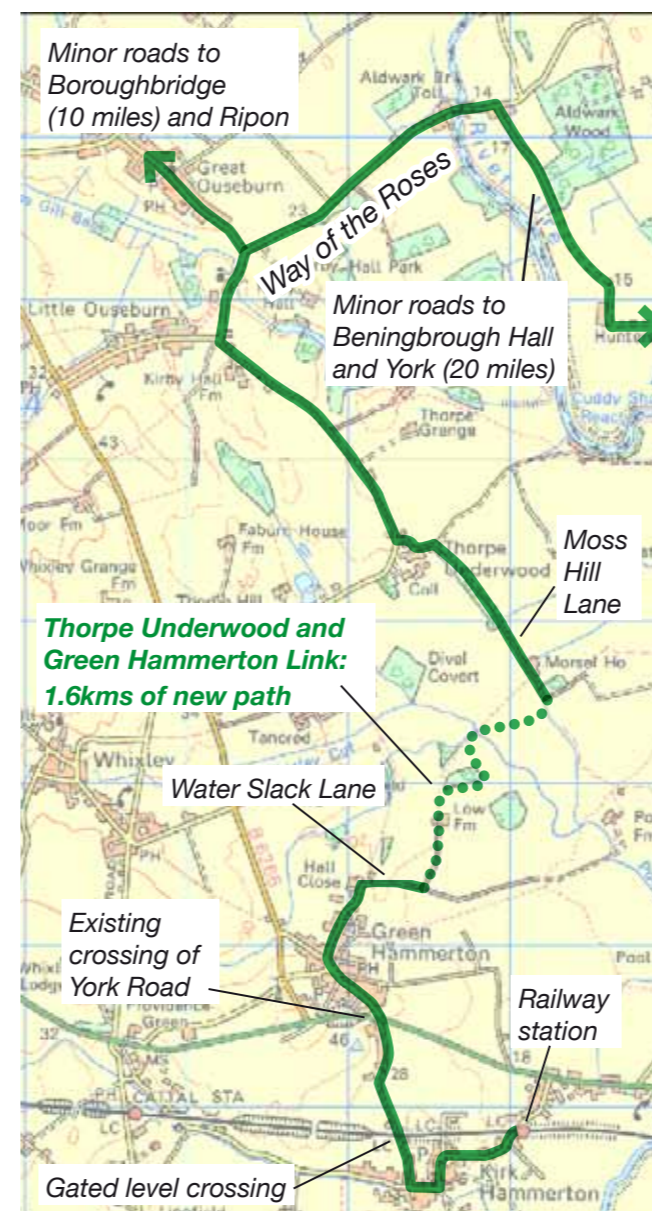
To the south there is a reasonable crossing of the A59 in the form of a central island which allows cyclists to cross one lane of traffic at a time. This leads to Kirk Hammerton Lane to a manned level crossing for Hammerton Station which provides regular train services to Harrogate and York. This link into the rail network gives the route strategic value, and enables users from beyond the local community to benefit from it.

The proposed route links two cul-de-sac lanes (Water Slack Lane to Moss Hill Lane) with a new traffic-free path, some 1.8kms long. This will be a Greenway for all users and will be designed to give a smooth dry surface for year round use on foot, by cycle, and with children's buggies or by those in wheelchairs. It will also be able to accommodate a low level of equestrian use.

The proposals are arranged so as to minimise any conflict or interference with local farming activity, and the Greenway is envisaged as a real resource for the Parish in its own right as well as the vital link providing a family cycling route to places such as Boroughbridge and Beningbrough Hall.

For various reasons explained in this report the alignment chosen is slightly different to that of the existing footpath and the North Yorkshire County Council may consider it desirable to divert the footpath to the Greenway alignment.

The report discusses the route in some detail, and provides estimates of cost and other matters to enable the work to proceed as soon as funds are assembled.



Location map showing key section of new path to link together minor roads



Picture of traffic on the York Road and the existing crossing to Kirk Hammerton

The Hammerton Greenway, linking Thorpe Underwood and Green Hammerton

Detailed map showing key sections of proposed route

3 The Hammerton Greenway

The route is described running from north to south in these notes by way of convention, although the project is clearly an initiative of the Green Hammerton Parish Council at the southern end!

We have divided the route into a number of sections as follows.

- 1 Moss Hill Lane. This is a public road along which no work is required. It is very lightly trafficked and is suitable for walking as well as cycling.
- 2 The Walled Field (580m). Here Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate are planning the construction of a 2m high brick wall the whole length of the planned path. It will be most important to liaise closely with the College to arrange that the details of their wall are such that this section of the Greenway is a pleasure to use.
- 3 The Little Wood section (640m) provides for open views over the Vale of York against the attractive backdrop of the wood.
- 4 The Low Farm Bypass (350m) runs down the field edge to the east of the farm so as to avoid any possible conflict with, or inconvenience for, the farming activities.
- 5 The Low Farm Lane (200m) picks up the southern part of the access road to the farm.
- 6 Water Slack Lane is another very quiet cul-de-sac leading to the village centre. The details of these sections are described in the following map pages.



Moss Hill Lane



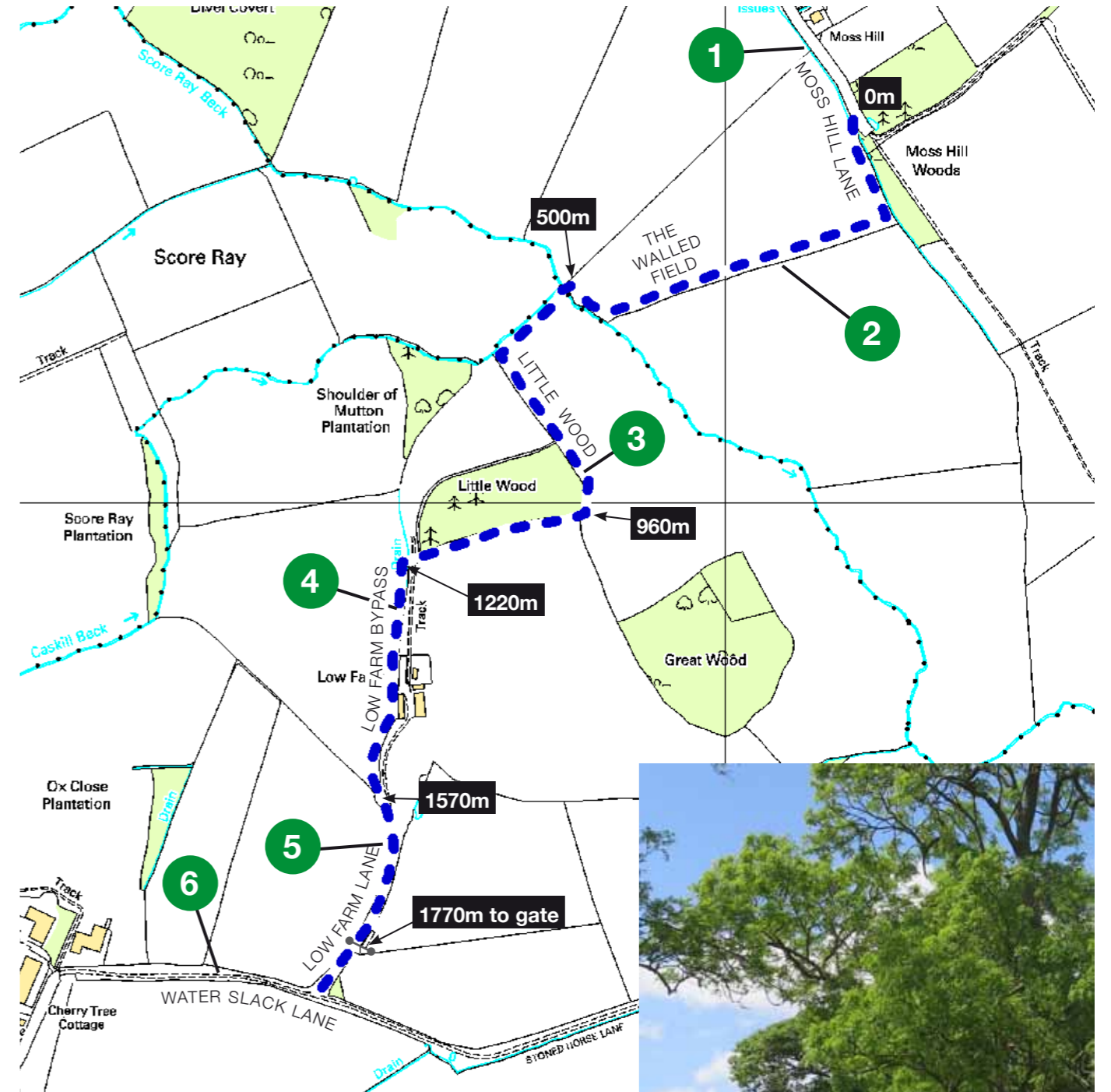
The Walled Field



Little Wood



Low Farm Bypass



Low Farm Lane



Water Slack Lane

Plan 1: The Walled Field - Moss Hill Lane to Score Ray Beck

Over this section the landowner has already set out the foundations for a planned brick wall running around the whole boundary of the field, but leaving a strip, never less than 5m wide, for the path and public use. There is no doubt that the wall will completely change the atmosphere of this section of the route which is currently an open field, and care will be needed to reduce its overall impact especially along the 400m straight boundary.

We understand that the landowner intends to plant a hedge of trees on the inside of the wall and these should be of varied indigenous species so as to provide a natural canopy projecting over the wall and softening its urban nature. In addition we suggest planting ivies and other climbers along the walls, and possibly a number of trees on the path side of the wall, maybe at about 50m intervals to further break up this stretch.

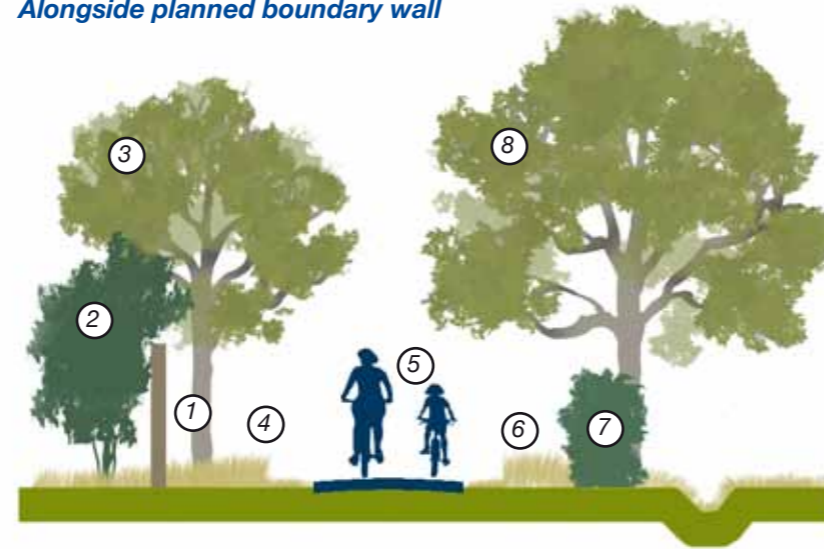
As the wall faces south it will be a good suntrap and a number of seats could be placed against the wall to take advantage of this if the landowner would consider this.

The existing boundary hedge provides a natural feel to the outside of the “public” strip and this should be maintained. At intervals advantage could be taken of existing mature trees to open up a gap in the hedge to create views looking out over the fields beyond.

This section ends at the existing bridge over Score Ray Beck. If funds allow this should be replaced with something a little wider and arranged on a skew to line up better with the line of the path and its level, but otherwise the existing bridge with smoothed ramped approaches would be satisfactory for the moment.

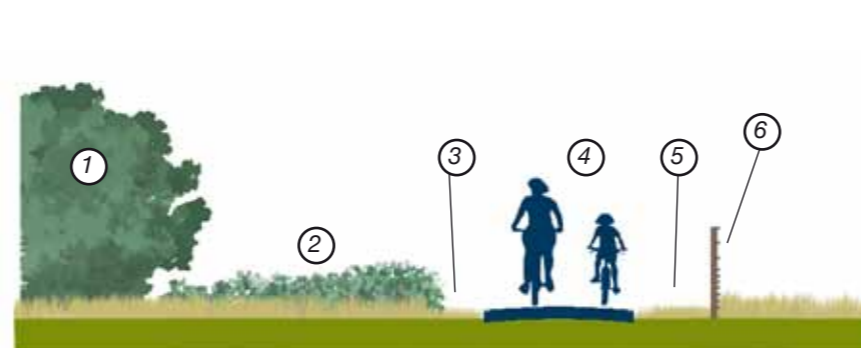
The Beck is managed by the Internal Drainage Board and they will be kept informed of any work in its vicinity.

Alongside planned boundary wall



- 1 Planned boundary wall, 2.0m high in brick, similar to that existing elsewhere on the Estate
- 2 Evergreen screening in some native species (e.g. holly) appropriate for the locality
- 3 The occasional woodland tree planted on the path side of the wall to break up its length – especially important for walkers who will take a while to walk its 700m
- 4 Wide grass verge sown with wildflower mix. Mow the 0.5m nearest to the path
- 5 2.0m wide path finished in compacted stone
- 6 Wild grass verge
- 7 Boundary hedge
- 8 Where there are mature trees cut a viewing “gap” in the hedge either side, and place an occasional seat at this location.

South of Beck



- 1 Boundary hedge
- 2 Blackthorn suckers create an interesting wildlife habitat
- 3 Mow 0.5m wide grass verge
- 4 2.0 wide path from compacted stone
- 5 1.0m wide grass verge to fence
- 6 Field fence, (7 strand sheep netting, 2 lines barbed wire and one line smooth wire on inside face) should this be required.



East of the planned wall



Existing Estate wall



Approaching the Beck

Plan 1: The Walled Field - Moss Hill Lane to Score Ray Beck

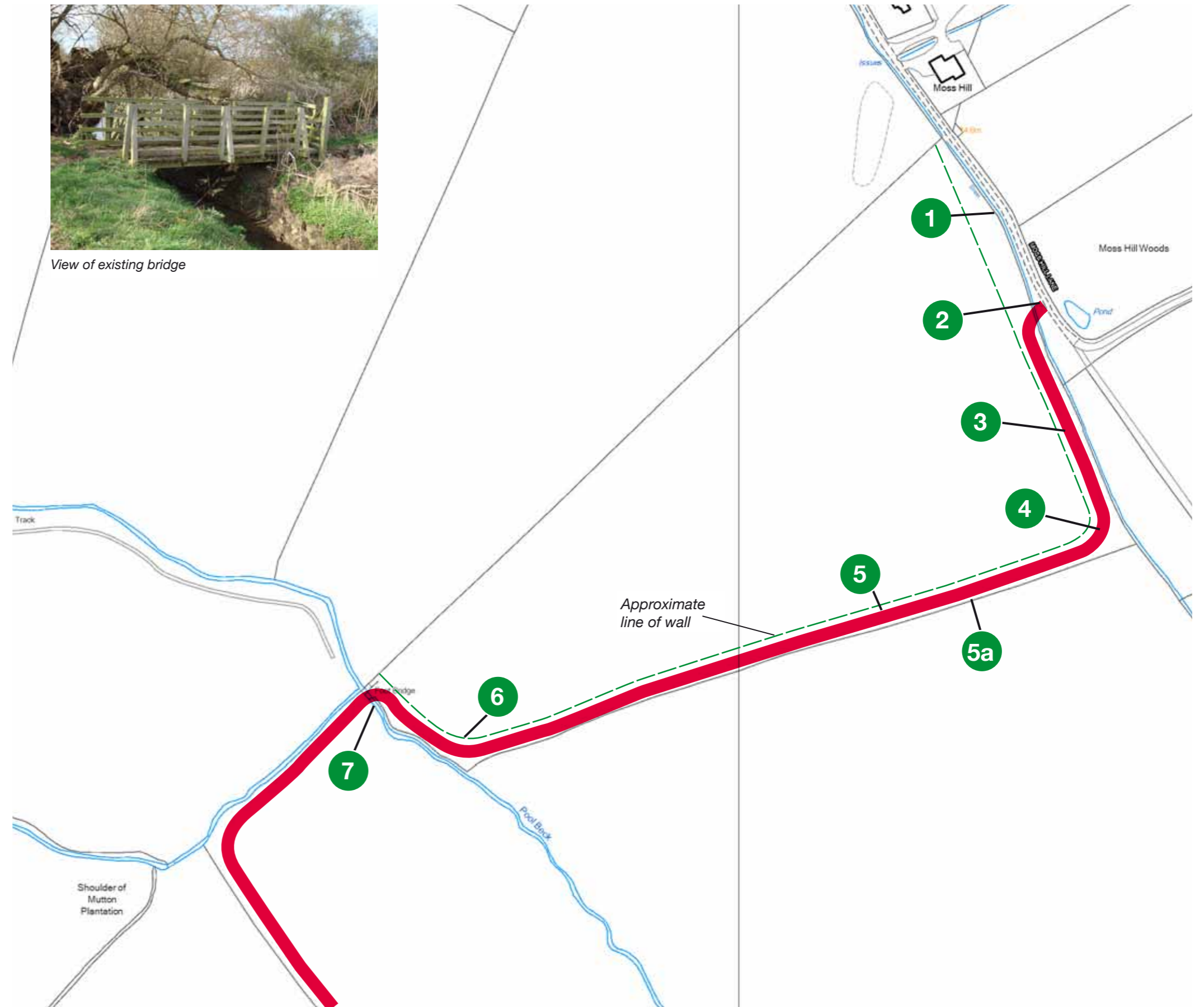
Essential details from walk-through 7th June 2015

The purpose of this proposed link is to enable the residents of Kirk Hammerton and Green Hammerton to cycle away on minor roads to the open countryside to Ripon and to York, without the current necessity of using main roads (A59 and B6265).

- 1 Moss Hill Lane leads through to Thorpe Underwood.
- 2 Leave the road just before the end of the hedge and cross the ditch with a 450mm dia culvert.
- 3 Run centrally down the space north of the planned 2m high boundary wall.
- 4 Wall to be curved with 10m radius so as to enhance security and look more attractive.
- 5 Continue in open space. Consider planting large trees at 40m centres to soften the view down the wall.
- 5a Consider cutting 3 or 4 gaps in hedge, adjacent to mature trees, to provide extensive views.
- 6 Round off this corner as 4 above.
- 7 Construct new 10m long, 1.2m wide bridge on slightly skew alignment and to raised levels. Initially the existing bridge may be kept and used, in which case the path surface needs to be levelled up to the bridge deck.



View of existing bridge



Plan 2: Little Wood - Score Ray Beck to Low Farm Track

This section takes the route away from the direct footpath route in order to avoid poor ground conditions and conflict with farm access vehicles. By keeping to the boundaries of Little Wood it also gains a more attractive setting with the leaves of wood to the one side and wide views across the Vale of York towards Beningbrough Hall three miles away on the far banks of the River Ouse. This will be the place for a seat a mile out from Green Hammerton and a good target for a daily walk.

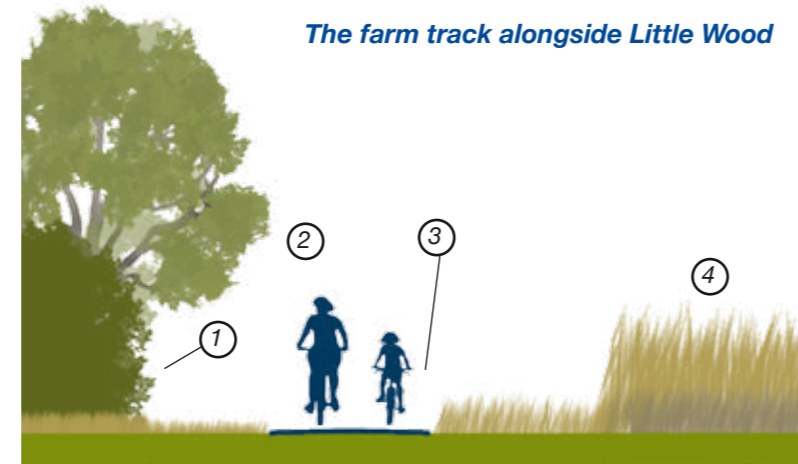
One of the benefits of the Hammerton Greenway will be that it will provide a dry path throughout the year which can be used by everyone especially in the winter when the existing field paths are impassable to the less active, and to those with children's buggies or wheelchairs.

The last leg of this section runs along an existing farm track on the south side of Little Wood. There is always a problem of maintaining a good path for all users and coping with the weight of large agricultural machinery. In this case the track is well built and relatively little used and we think that a stone dressing down each of the "tramlines" will work well. But it should be noted that at least one of these must be 1m wide in order to allow easy access for people with wheelchairs.

Little Wood is privately owned, and if the landowner was prepared to support an informal path through the wood it would be a most positive addition to the Greenway.



- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Existing woodland boundary | 6 Mown grass verge |
| 2 Overhanging trees make for a fine boundary | 7 Fence to field. This will be set approximately 8m from the woodland and field boundary. |
| 3 Lower level scrub and long grasses | |
| 4 Grass verge: keep the first 0.5m mown | |
| 5 2.0m wide stone path laid to finish a little higher than the adjacent ground in order that the path is dry in all weather conditions | |



- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 The boundary of the track is well defined by the trimmed edge of the wood | 3 Scrape off the grass, even out the stone and finish off with thin layer of fine-grained grit such as whindust or similar |
| 2 The existing farm track is almost suitable for cycling without further work, but its surface is a little irregular | 4 Existing rank of bird cover plantings makes an effective boundary. |



View along east side of Little Wood



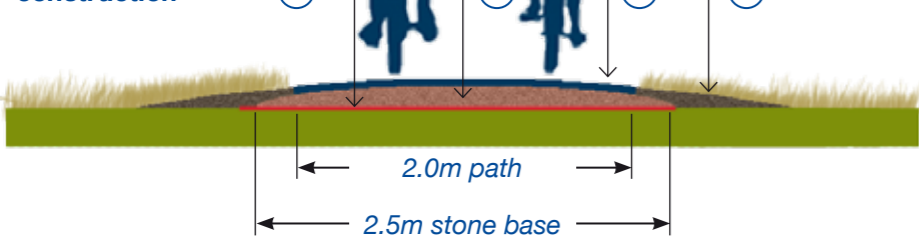
View along south side of Little Wood

Plan 2: Little Wood - Score Ray Beck to Low Farm Track

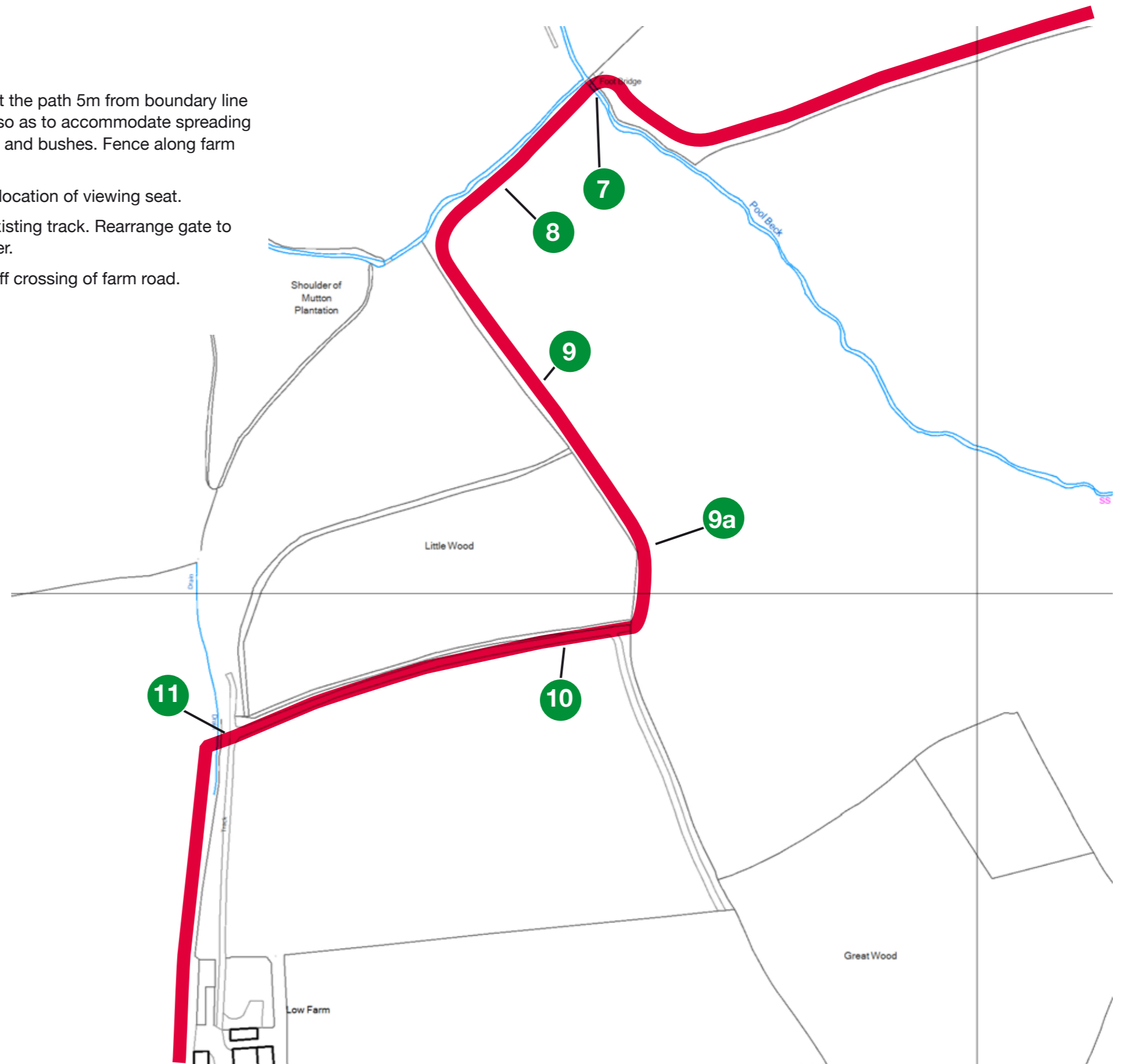
Essential details from walk-through 7th June 2015

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>7 Construct new 10m long, 1.2m wide bridge on slightly skew alignment and to raised levels. Initially the existing bridge may be kept and used, in which case the path surface needs to be levelled up to the bridge deck.</p> <p>8 Build path outside the spread of blackthorn suckers.</p> | <p>9 Construct the path 5m from boundary line of wood so as to accommodate spreading branches and bushes. Fence along farm field.</p> <p>9a Possible location of viewing seat.</p> <p>10 Follow existing track. Rearrange gate to suit farmer.</p> <p>11 Harden off crossing of farm road.</p> |
|---|--|

Detail of path construction



- a The ground to be levelled and the grass mown but not necessarily excavated.
A single layer of polypropylene filter fabric to be laid over the ground to reinforce the base of the path.
- b Lay a layer of carefully compacted stone, 100-150mm thick depending upon the softness of the ground and the state of the ground at the time of construction. If this is "Toptrek" graded material this should be machine laid. This layer must be laid with a smooth and even profile along the length of the path with a central 25m camber for drainage. At all times the finished path level must be 100mm or so above general ground level so as to ensure a dry path surface.
- c The finished surface is to be 3mm down to frost-resistant whindust or similar 10mm thick or if the base layer was "Toptrek" then no finishing layer is required.
- d Make up shoulders in local soil to cover the wider base stone layer, and create a smooth transition back to field level.

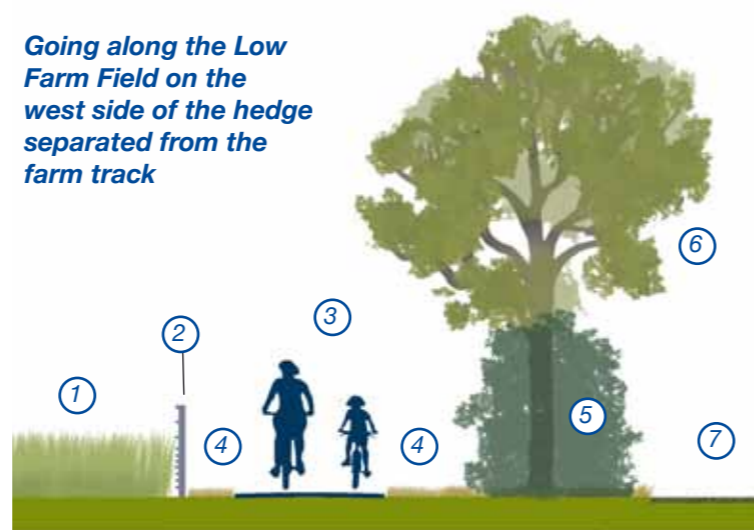


Plan 3: The Low Farm Bypass

This plan shows the crucial section of new path along the western boundary of the Low Farm Yard and farm tracks. Whilst the public footpath currently runs through the Yard this cannot be the best location for a popular route as inevitably there may be times when the area is busy with farm activity such that the public would be a nuisance or at risk. So this plan shows how the Greenway would be best placed along the edge of the field. This should continue as far south as possible before joining the lane because then the privacy of Low Farm House will be maintained.

If the County Council were to agree then we would suggest that the whole length of the current public footpath is rerouted onto this Greenway alignment. Ideally this would be done as a single Order including the planned diversion past Little Wood.

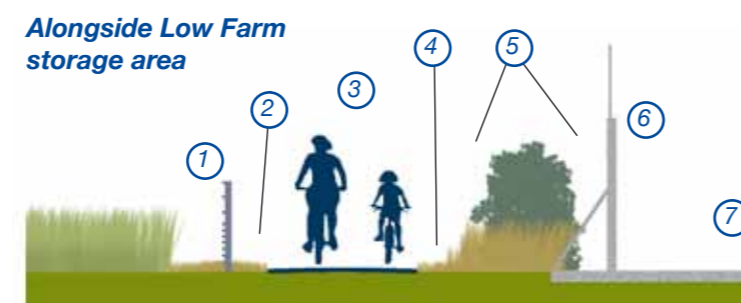
With regards to fencing, it would be better if these paths were unfenced in that the farms are currently arable with no livestock. But any agreement with the landowner, North Yorkshire County Council, should make provision for fencing. Ideally the path would have a wide verge of wild grasses and flowers separating the path from the crops, and this would be mown once the seeds have set each year - see page 16, Maintenance Matters.



- 1 Crops
- 2 Field fence if required, but preferably a 2-3m wide verge with wild grasses
- 3 2.0m stone path set a little above ground level for drainage
- 4 Mown grass verges either side
- 5 Maintain existing hedge
- 6 Further isolating woodland trees
- 7 Parallel farm track to be widened.



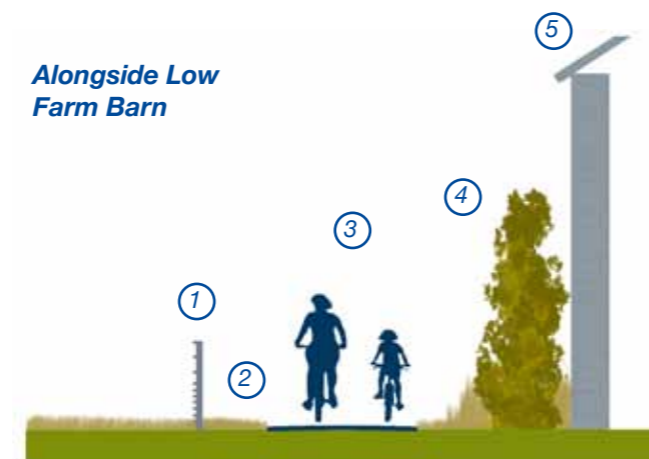
Looking north along the field edge with the farm track to the right of the photograph



- 1 Field fence – 7 strand sheep netting and 2 lines barbed if required. Otherwise allow 1.5m width to ploughed field. Provide field gate as required
- 2 0.5m wide mown verge
- 3 2.0m wide stone path
- 4 0.5m wide mown verge
- 5 Leave this area long grass and bushes to shield against wall of former silage clamp
- 6 Concrete walls
- 7 Storage area for farm equipment.



Looking north beside the silage clamp



- 1 Field fence if required. If not, then margin between path and cultivated field should be 1.5m
- 2 Mown verges
- 3 2.0m wide stone path
- 4 Allow vegetation to grow up to mask barn
- 5 Low Farm barn.

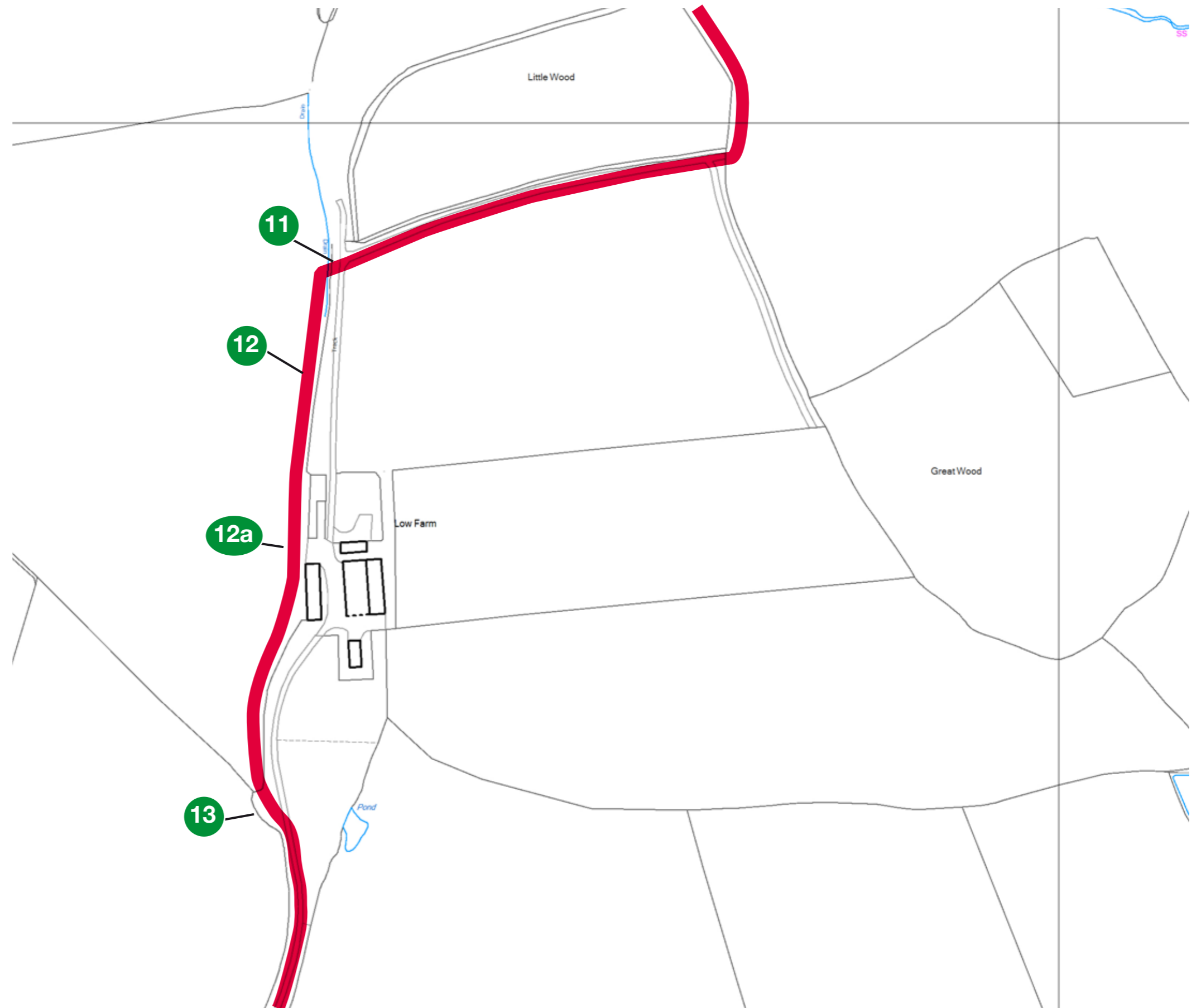


Looking north beside the Low Farm barn

Plan 3: Low Farm Lane to Water Slack Lane

Essential details from walk-through 7th June 2015

- 11 Harden off crossing of farm road.
- 12 Run in 5m wide strip to west of hedge and farm yard to avoid conflict there with moving machinery. Harden off crossing if required.
- 12a Provide farm gate if required and harden off crossing.
- 13 Re-join farm road at corner of field (existing gate) where the public will be out of sight from the farm house.



Plan 4: Low Farm Lane to Water Slack Lane

Essential details from walk-through 7th June 2015

- 13 Re-join farm road at corner of field (existing gate) where the public will be out of sight from the farm house.
- 14 Repair and asphalt farm road as far as northern edge of wood.
- 15 Join Water Slack Lane for the village.

The Greenway can join the lane via an existing gate and the small triangular copse alongside the lane. At this point the public will be out of sight of the Low Farm House. The lane carries regular traffic to the farm and is potholed as is inevitable with an unsealed surface. We recommend that the public road is extended to this point and that the lane is finished with a standard tarmac surface.

From here the public can continue on Water Slack Lane to reach the centre of the village.

Low Farm Lane to Water Slack Lane

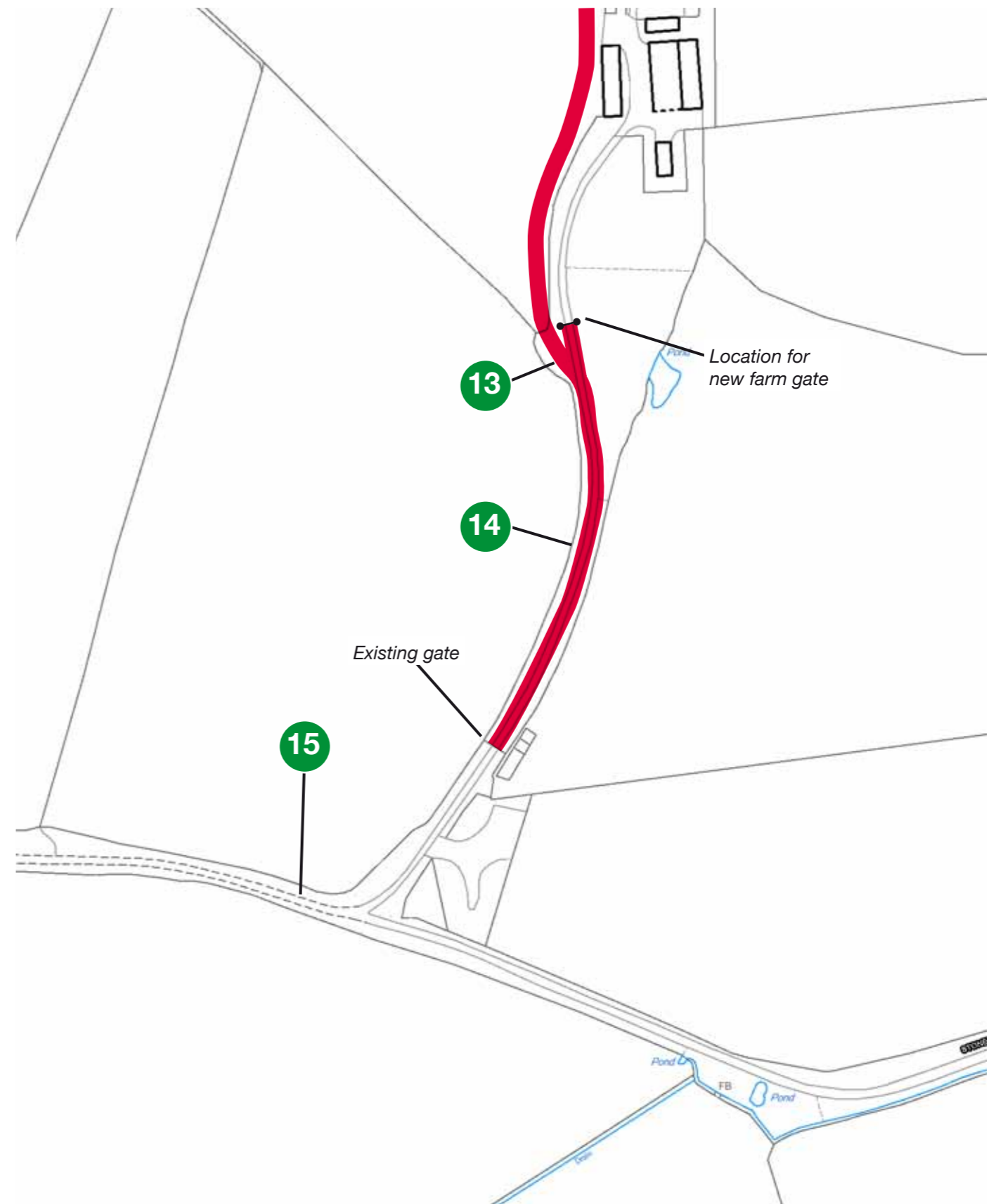


- 1 Bushes, hedge and trees on each side
- 2 Allow grass verges as at present
- 3 Fill potholes and level road surface. Compact and shape with central camber
- 4 Machine lay bitmac 60mm thick, 3m wide, with central camber of 40mm

Note This sealed surface to extend from the north corner of the triangular wood to the junction with the existing tarmac, or Water Slack Lane, whichever is the most appropriate.



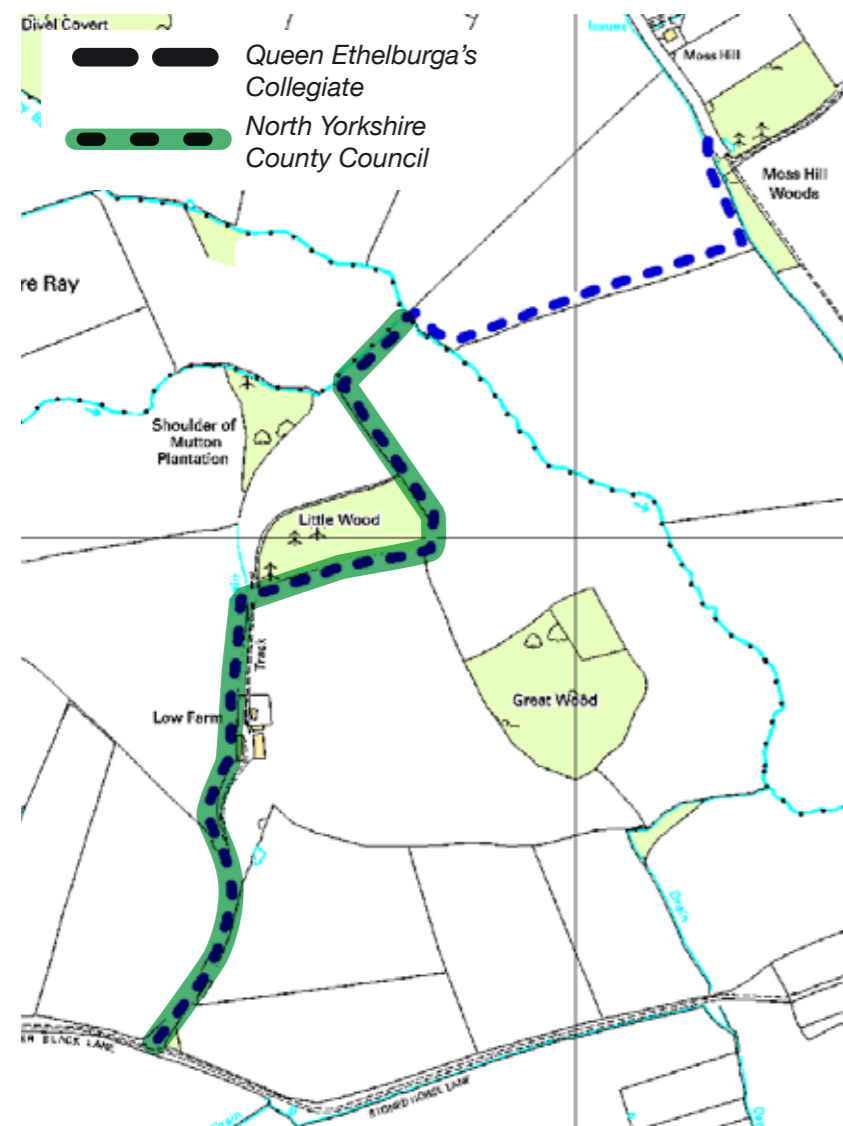
Emerging from the triangular copse onto Low Farm Lane



4 Land ownership and Agreements

The Greenway Link runs across two ownerships – that of Queen Ethelburga’s Collegiate as far as the Beck, and the remainder on North Yorkshire County Council lands and tracks. The Greenway runs alongside land and crosses track owned by Low Farm but at this stage is not anticipated to run on Low Farm land. In each case an Agreement is required to give confidence and permanence to the proposed route. At this stage it is possible that the nearby public footpath right of way (ROW) will be diverted to the line of the Greenway but that it will be a permissive path for cyclists and equestrians.

It may be that the existing ROW remains and a Creation Order for a new bridleway is taken forward for part of the route. The Wayleave Agreement, or Lease Agreement, which would be between the landowners and the Parish Council would set out the basis upon which these permissive rights were allowed thereby leaving some control with the landowners. The Agreement would for example include provisions and responsibilities for maintaining the Greenway route and its verges, as well as dealing with nuisances such as dogs worrying livestock, or from prohibited access by motorists for example.



Map showing ownership

5 Equestrians

At present the Score Ray Beck Bridge is not suitable for horse riders as it is too narrow. If funds permit the bridge could be replaced but we suggest that its width should be maintained at no more than 1.5m in order to preclude use by motor vehicles, and that it should be designed to pedestrians’ standards in order not to be too obtrusive in its countryside setting. If necessary mounting blocks could be provided at either end should this be required by riders.

Assuming the Greenway is permissive riders should be required that their horses only walk on the route, and where we can gain the width for a wide grass verge, to then follow this rather than cause too much damage to the sealed path surface.



View of equestrians adjacent to the York and Selby Path

6 Schedule of lengths and estimates of cost

The cost of this Greenway will very much depend upon the availability of local contractors and materials, the state of the ground when the work is done, the possible use of volunteers to construct the works, and the standards of construction.

For example for many years Sustrans used to construct paths with an annual summer work camp and the completion of lengths similar to the Hammerton Greenway were regularly achieved in a three week period

Whatever the method chosen, a local contractor to supply plant, and materials will be essential, and provided the works can be flexible in their timing then a good price can be achieved. It is essential to avoid construction in poor conditions when the ground is soft as this always adds to the cost.

Photographs showing the sequence of work constructing the 1.8km long Chedzoy to Bawdrip Path (Somerset) by a 2 week summer camp



Schedule of distances and works

KEY	Costings for basic path	Costings for optional extras	Costings for basic path + optional extras
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1	Walled Field Section: 580m	
	Construct path 2m wide @£ 30/m	£ 17,400
	Install 450mm dia culvert 6m long across ditch by Moss Hill Lane	£ 600
	Provide 2 entrance bollards, set 1.5m apart and install 3 or 4 large rocks in verge of Lane to ensure that cars do not park across entrance	£ 400
	Jack up existing Beck Bridge onto new bearings and create even path approach	£ 700
	Subtotal for basic path	£ 19,100
	<i>Harrowing and sowing grass verges</i>	£ 1,000
	<i>Provisional sum for replacement bridge over Beck</i>	£ 4,000
	Subtotal for optional extras	£ 5,000
	Subtotal for this section: basic path + optional extras	£ 24,100

2	Little Wood Section: 640m	
	Construct path on thicker base to allow for wetter ground, 380m @£ 30/m	£ 11,400
	Install new gate arrangement with self-closing wicket gate, 1.2m wide adjacent to new farm gate	£ 1,500
	Repair existing farm track 260m	£ 2,000
	Subtotal for basic path	£ 14,900
	<i>Sum for preparing verges</i>	£ 1,000
	Subtotal for optional extras	£ 1,000
	Subtotal for this section: basic path + optional extras	£ 15,900

3	Low Farm Bypass: 350m	
	Allow sum for hardening up crossing of farm track and cutting through hedgerow	£ 1,000
	Construct 2m wide path as per detailed section @£ 30/m	£ 10,500
	Provide gate across farm entrance	£ 500
	Install 450mm dia culvert, 6m long across ditch	£ 600
	Provide 2 bollards at start of path off Low Farm Lane	£ 400
	Subtotal for basic path	£ 13,000
	<i>Allow sum for planting and verges past the farm</i>	£ 2,000
	<i>Provide self-closing wicket gate at triangular copse</i>	£ 800
	Subtotal for optional extras	£ 2,800
	Subtotal for this section: basic path + optional extras	£ 15,800

4	Low Farm Lane: 200m	
	Install new farm gate 4.5m wide across lane north of triangular wood	£ 800
	Patch potholes, smooth off track and roll	£ 2,000
	Subtotal for basic path	£ 2,800
	<i>Repair potholes and provide bitmac surface through to start of existing tarmac @ £ 70/m</i>	£ 14,000
	Subtotal for optional extras	£ 14,000
	Subtotal for this section: basic path + optional extras	£ 16,800

5	Preliminaries and general matters	
	Ecological and historical survey reports for backing up the planning application	£ n/a
	Preparing planning application and submitting to Council	£ 1,500
	Costs of completing legal Agreements	£ 3,000
	Preliminary engineering liaison and discussion	£ 1,000
	Management and supervision of construction works on the basis of a single summer season	£ 2,000
	Subtotal for basic path	£ 7,500
	<i>Purchase of maintenance equipment required by Parish Council</i>	£ 2,000
	<i>Provision of signage from Hammerton Station to Thorpe Green Lane</i>	£ 1,500
	<i>Publicity and legalities</i>	£ 1,000
	Subtotal for optional extras	£ 4,500
	Subtotal for this section: basic path + optional extras	£ 12,000

	Total for basic path works	£ 57,300
	Total for optional extras	£ 27,300
	Total for all the proposed works: basic path + optional extras	£ 84,600

These estimates are prepared on the basis that the Parish Council wish to see the Greenway constructed as a single project by the most economical way possible. It may be that as funds come in the work is constructed in stages, or that the Parish wish to hand the whole work to a contractor in which case the estimates might be higher.

Phasing: the arrangement proposed gives little opportunity for phasing the route such that one part can be used in conjunction with temporary ways on existing tracks. If any decision along these lines had to be made then the section from Little Wood to Moss Hill Lane should be constructed first as this would at least give a through route, albeit one through Low Farm Yard.

7 Maintenance Matters

The enjoyment and usage of any path depends upon it being well conceived to meet a need and to provide a welcomed resource, on it being well constructed to give a smooth dry surface free from obstacles, and it being well maintained.

Maintenance is often seen as a considerable burden but this need not be the case provided the path has been soundly built and that it is maintained a little and often.

The main agents for causing damage to the path surface are water, frost, farm and maintenance vehicles, horses and overgrown verges. The first can be largely dealt with by laying the path with a good camber and an even longitudinal profile so that rain water runs off smoothly and does not puddle. This is helped by ensuring that the finished path levels are a little above the general ground level, and that the grass verges either side do not build up to channel water along the length of the path. Maintenance is best done by regular walks along the path, especially in the rain, and by digging there and then small channels to take away any standing water.



Example of path with the immediate verges mown on a regular basis - Ashton to Pill beside the River Avon

Frost, or rather the thawing after a frost can be a problem if the path is saturated and poorly compacted. The best defence is to ensure a frost resistant finish such as carboniferous limestone. On no account use magnesium limestone even though this is a prevalent local material.

It should be noted that any fine stone dust surface will gradually wear away from wind and water, and to ensure a good smooth cycle ride in years to come, it is important to ensure that the sub-base of crushed concrete is itself laid to a good even profile.

Farm and maintenance vehicles can cause damage by their weight, but even more so by the “suction” from their wide tyres which leads to potholing. Once started potholes get progressively worse as water hangs around in the hollows and weaken the base. This problem can be minimised by limiting the number of vehicles on the path – ideally none – and if they have to use it, to travel slowly. Where farm vehicles have to cross the cycle path it must be reinforced.

Lastly, horses can do a great deal of damage to an unsealed surface, especially in the wet. It is usual practice to ensure that horses only **walk** on these shared use paths or preferably use an adjacent grass verge.

Maintenance of verges is the next routine matter. There is a tendency to hold back on cutting verges until grass and wildflower seeds have set. This is a mistake. If one waits until the summer before the first cut, the sides of the path will grow in, weeds will propagate in the stone surfacing where it is shaded by overgrowing vegetation, the path width is progressively reduced and in some areas the path becomes so overgrown that you are brushing the grasses on each side, getting wet after rain and stung if there are nettles.

The verge should be divided into two zones. The first, nearest the path, should be mown regularly over a width of about half a metre. If the grass is kept to say 50mm height then it is an easy matter to walk end to end of the path mowing the grass along the way with a small flail mower. Flail mowers, preferably with powered drive wheels, can cut not only rough grass but undergrowth up to small saplings, dependent on the machine type. The resulting cuttings are mulched into small pieces and spread across the mown area. The outer zone should be managed for wild grasses and flowers. This area may only require one cut a year.

If there is equestrian usage then one of the verges may need to be mown wider.

Litter

The public should be encouraged to take any litter home with them. (Similarly dog mess should be bagged and taken away by the dog owners). It is inevitable that some litter will be left and this should be collected by voluntary rangers.

Maintenance in general comprises a number of small but regular items. These are ideally

suitable to be done by local volunteers from amongst regular path users.

Then it is very worthwhile to have an annual clean up and repair party day – commonly around Easter – when the whole community is encouraged to turn up for the afternoon to look after their path and to have a bit of a party.

Hedges

Hedges need trimming and again it is best if this is done by a local person cutting away blackberry strands and small branches as they become a problem. Depending on the species and the purpose of the hedging it will need flailing back every few years. This is best done by agreement with local farmers. Fallen branches should mostly be dealt with by a handsaw.

Fences and gates

If any damage is observed in these items endeavour to fix the problem as soon as possible before it grows worse.

Signage

It is important to make sure any signage is maintained. To this end it is often useful to have repetitive signage printed on self-adhesive vinyl sheets as these can easily be kept ready to replace signs which go missing.

Seats and sculpture

Seats can be sponsored by local people. These need to be looked after and repaired as necessary. It should be noted that anything in timber will gradually deteriorate and rot away and will have to be replaced after 10-20 years.

The Hammerton Greenway

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Summary Statement

This preliminary ecological statement is concerned with that part of the route between national grid references SE 471585 to SE 464573 and comprises a desk study and walkover survey and Phase 1 habitat survey. Those sections of the proposed route which do not follow existing made up tracks follow field margins and run adjacent to hedged field boundaries.

Ecological Evaluation

No rare or protected species or habitats were encountered along the route during the walkover survey and subsequent Phase 1 Survey.

The vegetation of the marginal strips is variable but largely made up of common grasses and forbs with some tall ruderal vegetation. The boundaries are of variable width; between 5 and 20+ metres and until recently have been in arable cultivation but have been 'set aside' for between 2 and 10 years. They are of relatively low ecological value but do accommodate significant populations of Meadow Brown and Ringlet butterflies.

The most valuable habitats noted were the native species-rich hedgerows with occasional mature trees and a diversity of hedge architecture. These provide a good food source and nesting sites for some of the priority farmland bird species (e.g. Corn Bunting, Yellowhammer), as well as favourable food sources and microclimate for a variety of insects. Some sections are of sufficient age and diversity to qualify as 'important' under the hedgerow regulations.



Local species (left to right): Corn bunting (*Emberiza calandra*); Ringlet butterfly (*Aphantopus hyperantus*); Meadow brown butterfly (*Maniola jurtina*); Yellowhammer (*Emberiza citrinella*). Images: Wikimedia Commons

Impact of cycle route

Construction of the route along the farm tracks will have negligible ecological impact on the tracks themselves and where the route lies over existing field margin vegetation the proportion of such vegetation lost will be relatively small and thus have low ecological impact.

The only trees likely to be lost are to the construction are a small number of young plantation trees and semi-natural regeneration where the path will leave the existing lane to enter the field 50m south of Low Farm. This will be of negligible ecological impact.

- A maximum of three lengths of hedgerow, each not much more than the width of the cycle path, will be lost but these will amount to a very small proportion of the hedgerows beside which the route is established.
- Some cutting back of hedgerows is likely to be necessary but, provided this takes place outside the main bird breeding season, will have low ecological impact.
- Some sections of the path may need to be drained and this is likely to affect the component species of the plant community but this will be low impact.
- No ecological impacts to Score Ray Beck are anticipated.

Conclusion

Details of the Ecological Appraisal will be set out in the full report and Phase 1 Survey but the construction of the Cycle Path will not impact on protected or otherwise important species, habitats or designated sites and only have a small to negligible impact on the immediate habitats through which it is routed.

Sites and history accessible from the Hammerton Greenway

The Hammerton Greenway can be reached from Hammerton Station, served by regular trains from York, Knaresborough, Harrogate and Leeds. The route turns into the village of Kirk Hammerton, with its Anglo-Saxon church dating from around 950 AD, built using massive stones from the ancient Roman bridge over the River Nidd. The decisive Civil War battle of Marston Moor (1644) was fought just across the river, and in 1926 many skeletons contemporary with the battle were unearthed in the churchyard.



St John the Baptist, Kirk Hammerton

From Kirk Hammerton the route crosses the railway line and the A59 into Green Hammerton, where it passes St Thomas's Church, completed in 1876 to a design by Sir George Gilbert Scott, architect of the Albert Memorial and St Pancras station.



St Thomas's Church, Green Hammerton

The route continues down the historic village green onto the Hammerton Greenway across the fields to Thorpe Underwood.

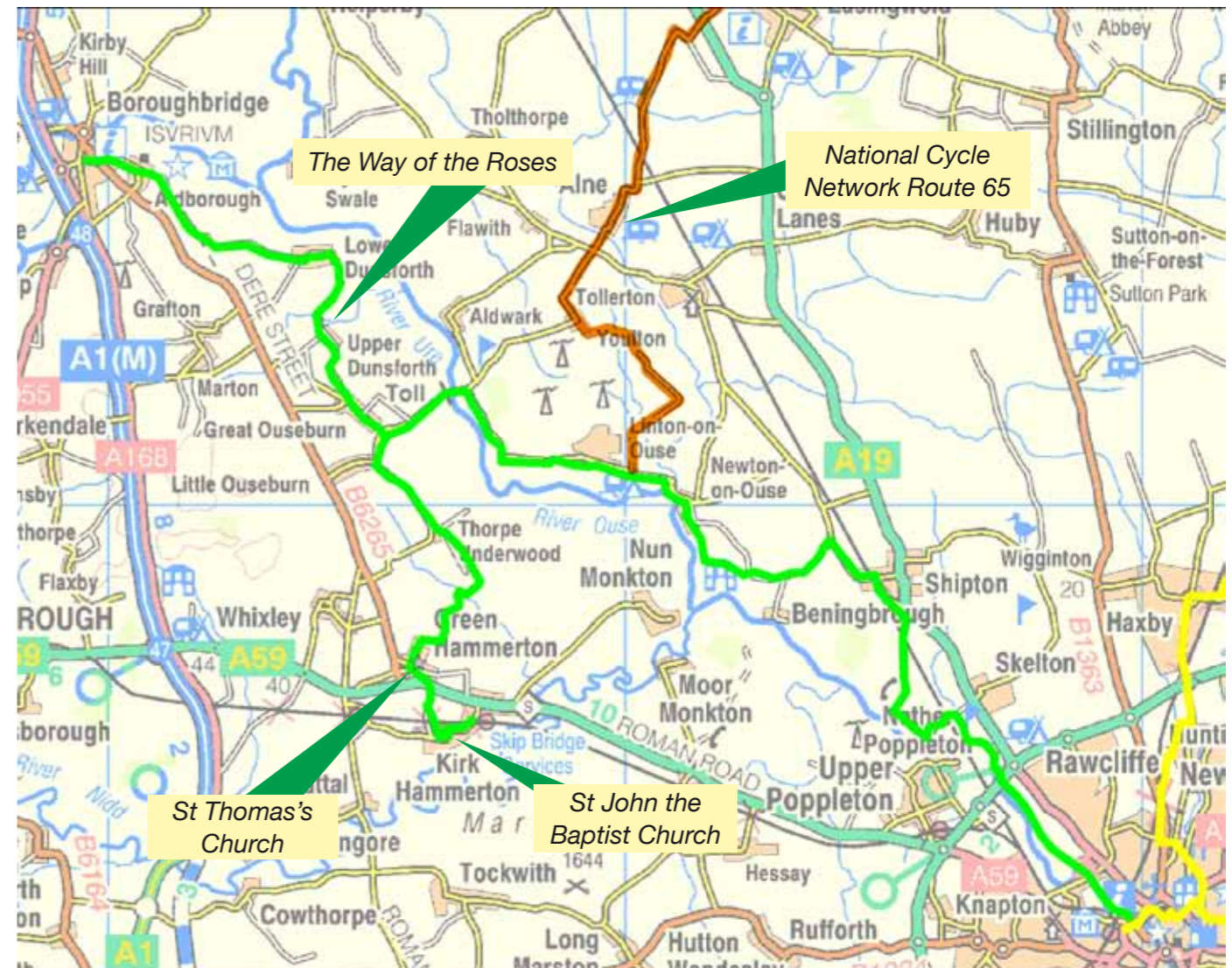


A cyclist on the Green 100 years ago

Here it follows in the footsteps of Anne and Branwell Bronte, who walked these lanes when they were governess and tutor to the Robinson children of Thorp Green Hall in the 1840s. The 26-year old Branwell was dismissed in 1845 when his illicit relationship with the lady of the house, Mrs Robinson, was discovered. Medicating his disappointment with opiates, Branwell's life went rapidly downhill, and he died just three years later. Anne, who resigned a month after Branwell's dismissal, touches on her experiences at Thorp Green in her novels Agnes Grey and The Tenant of Wildfell Hall. She outlived Branwell by barely eight months, dying of tuberculosis in May 1849.



Branwell Bronte's self-portrait, 1840



Sites and history accessible from the Hammerton Greenway



Portrait of Anne Bronte by her sister Charlotte, c. 1834

The cycleway passes the site of Thorp Green Hall, which is now Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate, a thriving campus attracting over a thousand students from around the world.



Thorpe Underwood Hall, rebuilt in 1912 on the site of Thorp Green Hall, and now the centre of Queen Ethelburga's Collegiate

Continuing along quiet back roads past Little Ouseburn and the celebrated Thompson Mausoleum, the route joins the Way of the Roses, the national cycle route linking the coasts of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

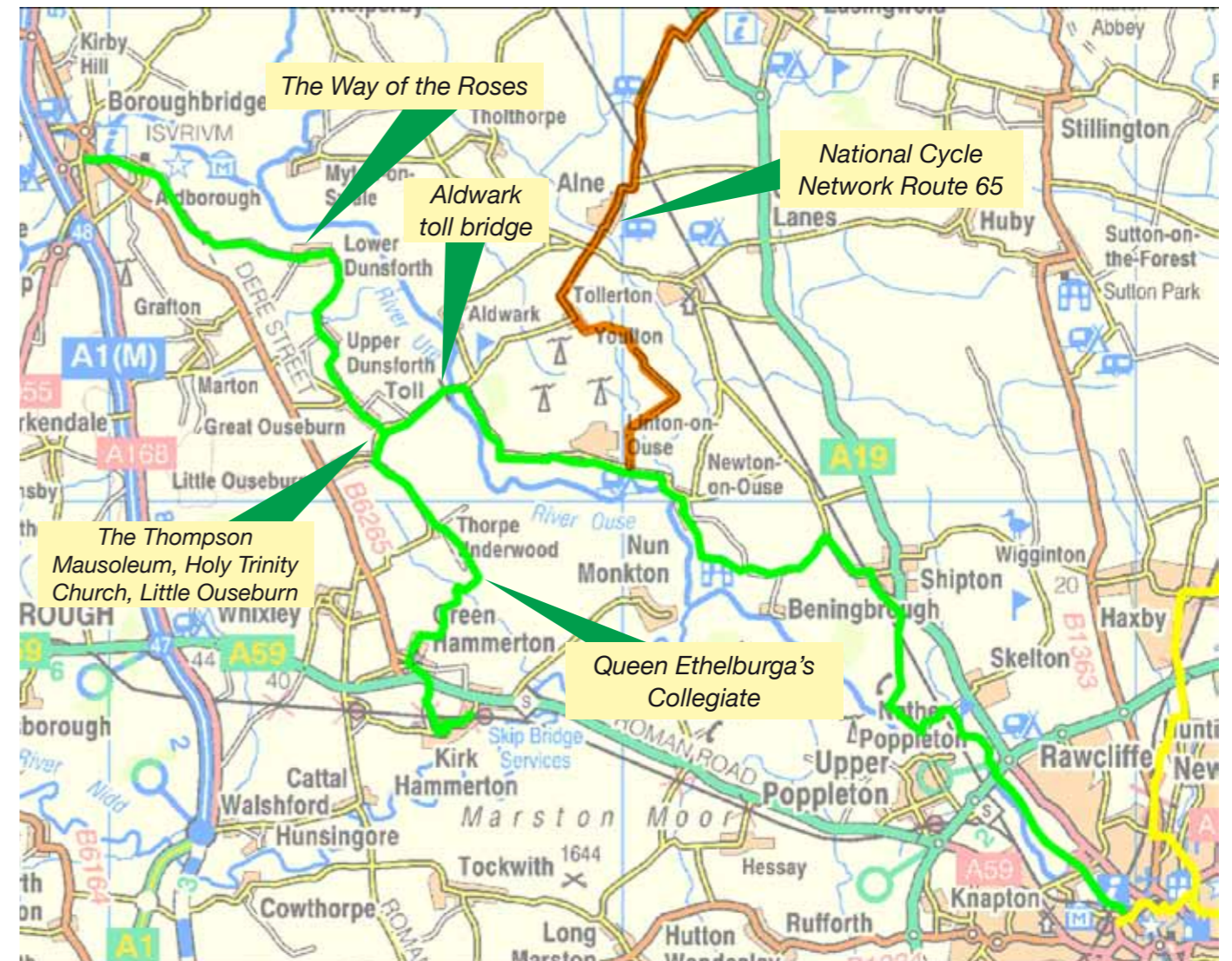


An architectural jewel - the Thompson Mausoleum, built in 1742

The Way of the Roses crosses the historic Aldwark toll bridge and joins national cycle route 65, which goes up into the North York Moors and south into the city of York.



Aldwark toll bridge - the centuries-old crossing is free to bicycles



Sites and history accessible from the Hammerton Greenway

Alongside the river, below Aldwark Bridge, the cycle route passes through the glorious landscaped estate of Beningbrough Hall, a handsome eighteenth-century National Trust property. Right on the route are a cafe and delicatessen, and there's an admission charge to visit the delightful gardens and the Hall, which has a permanent exhibition of notables from the Georgian era on loan from the National Portrait Gallery.



National Cycle Route 65 runs through the parkland of Beningbrough Hall

The alternative, instead of crossing Aldwark Bridge, is to continue north along the 'Way of the Roses' through the riverside villages to Aldborough, site of one of Rome's most northerly administrative centres, Isurium Brigantum. The small museum shows how the village streets still follow the layout of the Roman town, and copies of two remarkable floor mosaics can still be seen where they were found.



Detail from the Romulus and Remus mosaic. The original is now in Leeds City Museum

Aldborough is next to Boroughbridge, which still boasts handsome coaching inns from its heyday as the halfway point between London and Edinburgh on the Great North Road. The A1(M) still runs past the town, just a hundred metres from the three Devil's Arrows, standing stones from the Neolithic period, some 4,000 years ago.



One of the Devil's Arrows, which at 22.5 feet is taller than any of the Stonehenge megaliths

