

Review of the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan for North Yorkshire

“People, Paths and Places” 2007– 2011

Response of the North York Moors Local Access Forum to the Consultation Draft North Yorkshire ROWIP 2

1. Introduction

1.1 The review document: “Consultation Draft North Yorkshire ROWIP 2” was considered by the LAF at its meeting on 12 June 2012 when it was agreed that a LAF response would be agreed by exchange of e-mails.

1.2 During the meeting, members were pleased at the progress made on access improvements during the first ROWIP.

1.3 On the detailed content of the Objectives and Guiding Principles (Page 24) two changes were requested to strengthen the proposed actions:

- Usability P7(Pages 24 and 27):
“Consider the highest possible status when making changes to individual routes”
to be replaced with :
Aim for the highest possible status when making changes to individual routes.
- Economy P13 (pages 25 and 28):
“Consider wider promotional opportunities with relevant partners involved in tourism and business.”
to be replaced with :
Will undertake wider promotional opportunities with relevant partners involved in tourism and business.

1.4 ROWIP: NYCC have been through the ROWIP for effect on equality and then under the environment assessments have omitted equestrians

Page no 77 of LAF papers:

third box down - no mention of equestrians page 95 answer to question 2 only mentions walkers and cyclists. Many riders actually ride as part of their work, so ROWIP important for their work

2.0 Response to specific consultation questions (page 29 of the full LAF agenda)

2.1 Yes. The comprehensive background research and basis for the first Rights of Way Improvement Plan are still relevant.

2.2 Yes. We agree with the approach of identifying guiding principles in ROWIP 2 to inform the future management and maintenance of the rights of way network. (Pages 24 – 27 Draft ROWIP 2)

2.3 With the two exceptions referred to above, we agree with the principles identified by ROWIP 2. These are sufficient as to add any more would only serve to dilute the importance of those already identified.

- 2.4 Yes, we agree with the conclusions of the Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment. (Pages 62 – 69 of the full LAF agenda)
- 2.5 Yes, we can think of another way in which the management of rights of way may affect the environment, society or the economy. (Page 83 of the full LAF agenda). Construction impacts can actually be a very positive outcome for producing a sustainable surface that is more easily maintained for the future without any of the risks of soil compaction or run off etc; provide a safer surface and one which is more suitable for a wider range of users; and quite often they are needed in places where existing usage has produced a wide corridor of use with an increasing loss of habitat and therefore by constructing a better surface, significant areas can have the habitat restored and the overall aesthetic impact can be significantly improved. There is also the potential for economic benefits to be derived not just from additional, restored grazing and bird breeding habitat etc but also because it is more easily usable, it is more likely to be used and if this happens to be in a circuit that takes in a local refreshment facility etc it is more likely to encourage people to use that route and that facility.
- 2.6 Yes we agree with the methodology for undertaking the sustainability checklist assessment. (Pages 82 – 87 of the full LAF agenda)The method is fine for this purpose – better to spend the time on rights of way themselves.
- 2.7 Yes, The 15 sustainability questions (Page 88 of the full LAF agenda) are appropriate.
- 2.8 Yes, the sustainability assessment (Pages 90 & 91 of the full LAF agenda) is fine.

Regarding the recommendations contained in Appendix 2 (Pages 95 – 102 of the full LAF agenda):

- page 97 questions 10 & 11- only refer to FPs and walking and cycling
- page 98 question 12 - no riding
- page 99 question 2 (from previous page) - riders do NOT seek RoWs elsewhere as they don't have transport or the time to use it if they do have it, let alone the increased cost of using it.

No further recommendations to add.

3.0 **General conclusion on the LAF consultation:**

- 3.1 The layout of this report was confusing - having several appendices some numbered others not and the whole ROWIP 2 consultation as Appendix 1.
- 3.2 To facilitate a more meaningful discussion and encourage participation, the LAF should have just been provided with the draft ROWIP 2 document without:
- Equality Impact Assessment Template
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement
 - Creating A Sustainability Checklist for the Rights of Way Improvement Plan
 - Results of Sustainability Checklist for the Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan objectives
- 3.3 These 41 pages should just have been available on request for any specialists with a particular interest in these aspects.

Catriona Cook, Deputy Chair July 2012