

Definitive Map Modification Order Prioritisation

The Definitive Map Team will use the criteria below as a guide to inform the order in which Definitive Map Modification Order applications will be considered. It provides an objective rationale that will assist them in prioritising and explaining why one case is being considered ahead of another. All DMMO submissions will be set against these criteria and their score used to rank them. Those scoring most highly will be addressed before other lower scoring schemes.

There will also be times when DMMOs will be dealt with out of sequence because of its high profile nature or because of other circumstances that would make it a higher priority. These will be considered on a case by case basis.

Below is a more detailed set of notes giving the rationale behind each of the criteria used in the prioritisation system.

Strength of Evidence

This category assesses the chances of the application being successful. Under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 there are only two forms of evidence that can be considered when attempting to add a route to the Definitive Map and Statement; namely historic and use. It is the strength of this evidence that is being assessed by this section.

Whilst there is no minimum number of evidence of use forms (Form WCA D) that are required, more relevant evidence of use forms will only improve the chances of an application being successful. Similarly a small amount of historic evidence does not mean that no Right of Way existed, but supporting an application with good, relevant historical evidence will only improve its chance of being successful.

Challenge to Public Use

The most important role that the Public Rights of Way section has is to protect the ability of members of the Public to use Public Rights of Way. Whilst this responsibility extends mainly to protecting those rights that are recorded on the Definitive Map we also have a duty to try and protect unrecorded rights as far as possible. This is the reason that a higher score is given to those routes that have recently been obstructed to such an extent that they are no longer useable.

Routes that are sometimes obstructed or have been obstructed for many years require some recognition but are not considered to be of quite such a high priority.

Wider Community Benefits and Support

While our statutory duty is to investigate applications to add route to the Definitive Map based solely on the evidence on the evidence criteria noted above, the County Council recognise that all matters relating to Public Rights of Way are hugely important to the residents of North Yorkshire. This section is an attempt to identify those routes that have particular local significance or would give the benefits that Public Rights of Way bring to as large a group as possible.

However it must be noted at the beginning that any application that does not have the required statutory evidence will be unsuccessful regardless of its score in this section.

Promoted By Parish Council or other Local Community Group

The Parish or Town Council is the most fundamental component of our democracy and through it local residents are represented. Therefore any application from them is seen as representing the

wishes of a good proportion of the local community. Similarly, local community groups that apply are seen as representing the wishes of most people in the area they represent.

Type of Route

Of the over 10,000km of Public Rights of Way in North Yorkshire approximately 7,000 km are footpath. This means that cyclists and equestrians are excluded from around 70% of the Rights of Way network. In addition, the need to provide higher status routes was recognised in the Rights of Way Improvement Plan. As a result higher status routes are given a slightly higher weighting than footpaths.

Avoid Roads and Road Crossings

If by recognising a Right of Way a busy road or road crossing can be avoided then this will improve the safety of the community that use this route. This would be especially useful if the proposed route were providing a link to a school.

Connects People with Local Services

Any proposed Right of Way that gives local residents more convenient access to local services will be of great benefit to the local community and the services.

Promotes Local Tourism or the Local Economy

Any proposed Right of Way that gives better access to local tourist attractions will draw more visitors to that attraction and this will help safeguard local employment opportunities. This is also true of any proposed Right of Way that promotes local business.

Public Transport

Whilst much of the Rights of Way network is used mainly for leisure pursuits, proposed routes that link into the Public Transport network should be encouraged as part of the overall strategy of increasing the use of Public Transport to reduce the harmful effects of traffic congestion.

Close to a Population Centre

Any proposed new Right of Way that is close to a population centre is likely to be well used and therefore bring benefits to a larger number of people.

Contributes to Circular or Promotable Route

Any proposed route that falls into this category will mean that a new circular route becomes available. Circular routes can be promoted both locally and more widely bring both health and economic benefits to the locality

County Council Service Centres

These are areas where the County Council focuses service delivery and are usually larger population centres. This means that any new routes in these areas are likely to be well used.

Connects a Defined Long Distance Route to Local Communities

This kind of proposed route can bring economic benefits to the areas surrounding these long distance routes.

	Overall Score	
Prioritisation Scoring Sheet	File Ref No.	
Strength of Statutory Evidence		
Evidence of use		
1 to 5 Evidence of use forms showing 20 years use overall	3	
6 to 10 Evidence of use forms showing 20 years use overall	3	
11 to 15 Evidence of use forms showing 20 years use overall	3	
16 to 20 Evidence of use forms showing 20 years use overall	3	
21+ Evidence of use forms showing 20 years use overall	3	
Evidence of use total		
Historical Evidence		
Relevant Inclosure Award	4	
Relevant Tithe Award	3	
Finance Act 1910	3	
Old maps (1 point each to a maximum of 2)	2 max	
Other relevant historical documents (1 point each to a maximum of 3)	3 max	
Historical evidence total		
Total Strength of Statutory Evidence		

Challenge to Public Use (score 1 category only)		
Recent permanent obstruction (e.g. fence erected across the route)	10	
Intermittent or historic obstruction (e.g. verbal challenges or long blocked route)	5	
No obstruction/Not Known	0	

Total Challenge to Public Use	
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Wider Community Benefits and Support		
Promoted by Parish Council or local community group	5	
Type of route to be added to the network - Adds a footpath to the network (score 1) - Adds a bridleway to the network (score 2) - Adds a restricted byway or a byway open to all traffic (score 3)	3 max	
Avoids a road or road crossing (including safer routes to school) - Contributes to community safety	3	
Connects people with local services - Provides clear pedestrian or cycle access to shops, schools, doctors or other public service	3	
Promotes local tourism or the local economy - Enhances access to local tourist attractions or local businesses	3	
Public transport - Integrates with or gives clear access to public transport	3	
Close to a population centre - Likely to be used by a larger number of people	3	
Contributes to a circular or promotable route - Encourages local walking, cycling or horse riding by giving easy to use routes	2	
In a County Council service centre	1	
Connects a defined long distance route to local amenities - Likely to bring economic benefits to the area	4	
Total for Wider Community Benefits and Support		

Strength of Statutory Evidence	
Challenge to the Public Use	
Wider Community Benefits and Support	
Prioritisation Score	