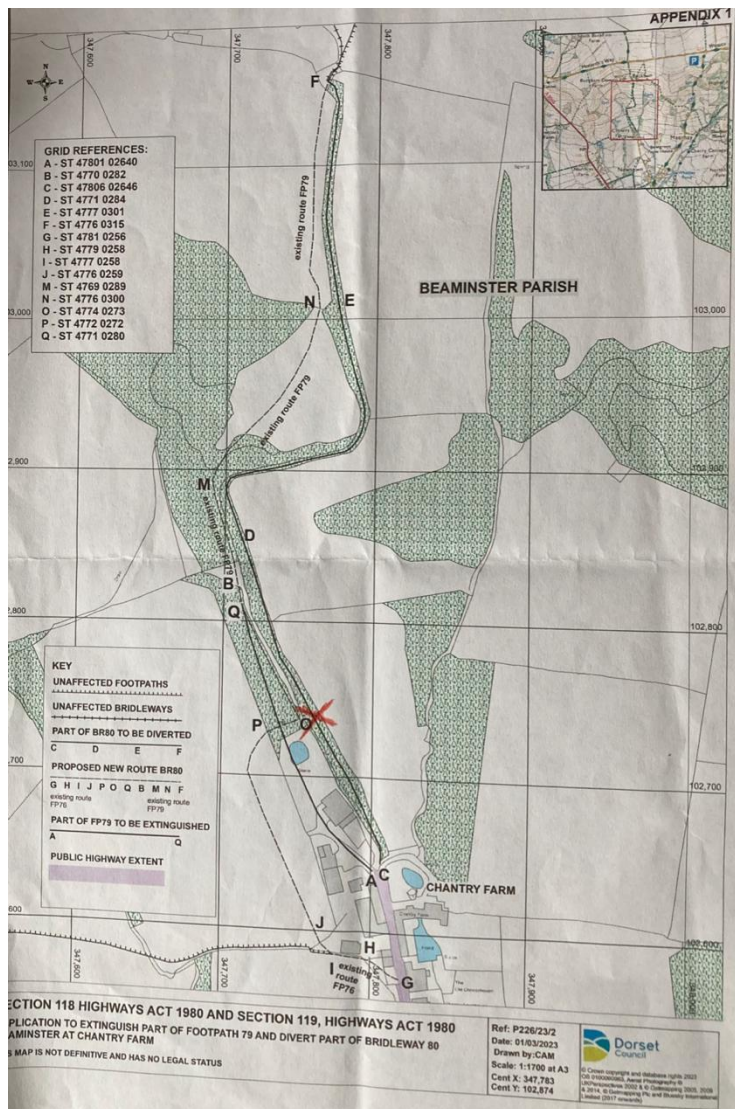


Document List

Document 5 - suggested entry point for public using the rehabilitated route X - F

Suggested route to avoid farmyard G-H-I-J-P-O-X



Document 6 - link to Strategic and Planning Committee 26th July

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=auuwXoaON4A>

Relevant Meeting starts at 2 minutes 54 seconds

Document 7 - Link to BBC Open Country - Hedgerow havens - BBC Sounds

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m002s3fy>

Document 8 - copy of 16th March 2023 submission to Carol McKay Dorset Council

Dorset Council document reference 11a in *Documents relating to these Orders* suggesting compromise solution which has not been considered by Dorset Council

To Carol McKay,

Senior Definitive Map Technical Officer

Diversion of Footpath 79

Thanks to Dorset Council and the landowner for considering a compromise solution where Footpath

79 remains within the woodland O - B after diverting around the landowners property G-H-I-J-P-O.

Footpath A-Q would then be Extinguished. I fully support this revision to the application.

Diverting Bridleway 80 and merging Footpath 79 and Bridleway 80

I cannot support this application. The route will become unsafe and unusable if it is used by horses /

bicyclists and walkers, as suggested in the application. As the ground can be muddy, horses /

bicycles will churn up the ground thus making the Footpath, unsafe and unusable especially between

points Q-B-M-N. I believe this is why the Bridleway and Footpath are separate and should remain so.

I would like to see some estimate of the amount of equestrian / bicycle (riders) traffic likely to use

this path. Is it the occasional recreational rider, a pony club holiday trek, an off road cycling group or

the local hunt?

I would like to see evidence to support the claim made in the Revised Proposals that Bridleway 80 cannot be rehabilitated and a cost analysis of the cost of the rehabilitation versus the cost of the Revised Proposals.

Blocking and lack of maintenance

Although I am sympathetic to the work needed to make the Bridleway safe and usable, I would have

thought it is the responsibility of Dorset Council and the landowner to maintain a Public Right of Way

in safe and usable condition. My questions and concerns about the blocking of B80 with vegetation

and barbed wire started over a year ago in January 2022, by email to Alastair Beaven in the

Definitive Map Team. He passed on my question to Russel Goff, Senior Ranger who has never responded. I have made a number of subsequent enquiries to which I have not received a response.

I attended a site meeting with Dorset Council and the Landowner, on 25th January 2023, where the

condition and status of B80 was part of the discussion. Dorset Council refused to discuss and now claim that this was not part of the subject for discussion. As B80 has remained blocked and not maintained and inquiries ignored, naturally it has deteriorated and is now in a condition where,

“officers consider it would become unsafe and unusable without extensive invasive works “.

I am concerned that it is possible to divert an historic route and Right of Way by lack of maintenance

and then ignoring public concern and observation, that the Right of Way has been blocked. This is a

dangerous precedent if Right of Ways are to be maintained.

Wildlife and ecology

I am also sympathetic to the wildlife and ecology of the “ Holloway “ but would point out that this is

an historic route, clearly marked on the 1843 Beaminster Tithe Map and the current Definitive Map.

Recent research indicates that regular use of Holloways, as routes, will keep them clear and allow them to establish their own eco-systems which may be beneficial to certain species of flora and fauna. Blocking them will create a different habitat. This is a complex subject and requires detailed

research before declaring that rehabilitating the Holloway “negatively impacts upon the wildlife along its length “. I would also point out that there is a similar “ natural “ habitat less than a hundred

yards to the west of B80 which is more likely to remain “ natural “ if walkers and riders use the
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historic route B80. The proposed route allowing riders through O-Q-B-M-N-F will also impact the environment.

Benefits to Beaminster public

The proximity and ease of access of B80 to Beaminster Town Centre and especially to Beaminster and Mountjoy Schools makes it an important local educational and recreational resource for the public. The other Holloway, I know of, in Beaminster at Coombe Down Hill can only be reached on foot by a rather perilous journey on the A3066 south of Beaminster.

Categorisation by Natural England

There is a current project financed by Natural England researching Holloways in West Dorset see <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-dorset-64322794>

One of the aims of the Natural England project is to look into the feasibility of giving Holloways a separate classification as a Right of Way distinct from Footpath or Bridleway, so their historical significance and ecology can be protected. If this proposal to divert B80 is supported, then B80, the

landowner and Dorset Council may become a case study in extinguishing a “ Holloway “ rather than

rehabilitation.

Possible solution

The best scenario is the rehabilitation of B80 so that this historic route and Public Right of Way is reopened for the public. This will keep P79 free of riders so that walkers can safely enjoy the route.

This also has the advantage of giving walkers the option of using B80 instead of having to walk through fields that may contain livestock. This is also advantageous for the landowners / farmer who

may not want walkers / riders in their fields that may also contain livestock.

A survey carried out to establish the frequency of use of the route for riders.

An ecological survey to establish the environmental impact of the proposed changes versus the rehabilitation of the existing route.

A cost analysis to estimate the relative costs of the proposed changes versus the cost of rehabilitation of the existing route

B80 could be rehabilitated so that is safe and usable for walkers but not for riders.

The southern section of B80 from point C-D which is the “ Holloway “ opened and the northern

section E-F and down to the bend of the Bridleway opened, as it is in safe and usable condition. The

section of the Holloway from next to point M to the bend between M and E is in the most unsafe and unusable condition. This could be bypassed on the existing Footpath 79 between M and the bend between M and E.

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In summary

- I support the diversion of F79 G-H-I-J-P-O-B and Extinguishment of F79 between A-Q
- Merging the Footpath and Bridleway will make the route unsafe and unusable for walkers due to horses / bicycles churning the muddy, narrow path. Data is needed to assess the likely usage. I cannot support this proposal to divert B80 C-D-E-F.
- The environmental impact of the proposal may be more significant than rehabilitating the

current Bridleway, at least to Footpath standard.

- Cost analysis is needed of the Revised Proposal v. Rehabilitation of Bridleway 80, at least to footpath standard.
- B80 is an historic Right of Way and “ Holloway “ of educational and recreational importance to Beaminster.
- Reopening Bridleway 80 would have the additional advantage for walkers and the landowner of the section north of point N,E, in that it would separate walkers from livestock which are often in the field
- It is a dangerous precedent that Dorset Council and the landowner have allowed a Right of Way to deteriorate, by blocking the path and ignoring public comments, so it requires extensive works to rehabilitate it.

In cases such as this, I think it is often prudent to seek guidance and offer this paragraph.

Quote from The Rights of Way Review Committee Practice Guidance Notes revised 2007 - Securing

agreement to public path orders:

“ Applicants for orders should bear in mind there must be good reason for wanting to make changes

to the existing network. Public rights of way and private ownership should not be interfered with lightly. The “ do nothing “ option should always be evaluated alongside any proposals for change. It

may prove to be the best option even though the existing situation may be inconvenient for the owner or inadequate for the user “

Please inform me if the case is brought before the Strategic and Technical Planning Committee.