

The proposed Downham to Chatburn concessionary Bridleway is planned to be approximately 1km in length crossing a road and fields and through field boundaries. Included within the area are both standard mature trees and areas of younger copse. In addition there are a number of archaeological features which will also need to be taken in to consideration when planning the work.

The route has been broken down into four sections each with its own issues that need to be considered before construction can be planned. The preferred contractor would be able to show consideration and ability to work within the guidelines set by the archaeological report and tree report prepared in support of the planning application. They would also be expected to allow contingency for adaption of work dependant on what may be revealed during construction and through advice provided from the subsequent watching brief of the archaeologist and tree surgeon who will be involved during the construction phase.

The favoured approach will be a 'minimum dig' method, preferring to lay membrane and top dress with aggregate. This technique requires materials to be imported to site to construct the path, and an excavator to remove the top layer of turf from the line of the bridleway. This material will be used to build a hedge bank next to the route, or stored temporarily to be re-laid at a later date. Geotextile membrane should then be rolled out in front of the excavator and aggregate tipped on to the line of the track until a suitable surface is formed.

In other areas it may be appropriate to fill depressions in the ground rather than reprofiling to avoid damage to archaeological features. Because of the complicated nature of the features along the route, the contractor will be expected to attend a preliminary site visit to establish the line of the route and the specific options and requirements to avoid any unforeseen damage. This will also include working with specialist advisors who may ask for a technique to change during construction.

The landowner will provide specialist staff to remove and relocate some of the stone wall and gate posts as they have the specialist knowledge of those particular materials and the preferred contractor will communicate through the client to ensure the smooth running of this cross working.

Stone deliveries and machinery storage should all be carried out to minimise impact on any features along the route and it is expected that these be managed according to CDM compliance. The impact of stone deliveries along the highway has been discussed with LCC highways, however the contractor is expected to take advice on the impact of these deliveries to ensure there is no traffic disruption during construction.

Following the professional tree report, the preferred contractor will be expected to follow the recognised standard for protecting the Root Protection Area of trees where the route of the bridleway will impact on the RPA (BS 5837:2005). This advises the use of geocells (cellweb or Terram Geocell) to protect the roots of the trees identified in the report. Construction should also be designed to minimise soil compaction and therefore contractors are encouraged to minimise movement of machinery.

Contractors will be invited to produce their own method statement as part of their tender to take these concepts into account.