A Nidderdale Greenway:

Extending the Harrogate and Ripley path to Pateley Bridge and Wath

Greenways & Cycleroutes Limited

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This report sets out the preliminary details of the proposed route. This will be based upon extending the successful greenway from Harrogate to Ripley and will follow a mixture of old railway formations, riverside paths and new links to make a continuous, mostly traffic free route along Nidderdale.

Wath and Pateley Bridge route	2.5 kms
Pateley Bridge and Glasshouses	1.7 kms
Glasshouses and Dacre Banks	4.46 kms
Dacre Banks and Darley	2.6 kms
Darley and Birstwith	4.9 kms
Birstwith and Hampsthwaite	1.9 kms
Hampsthwaite and Ripley	2.9 kms
Total length of Greenway from Wath to Ripley	20.92 kms

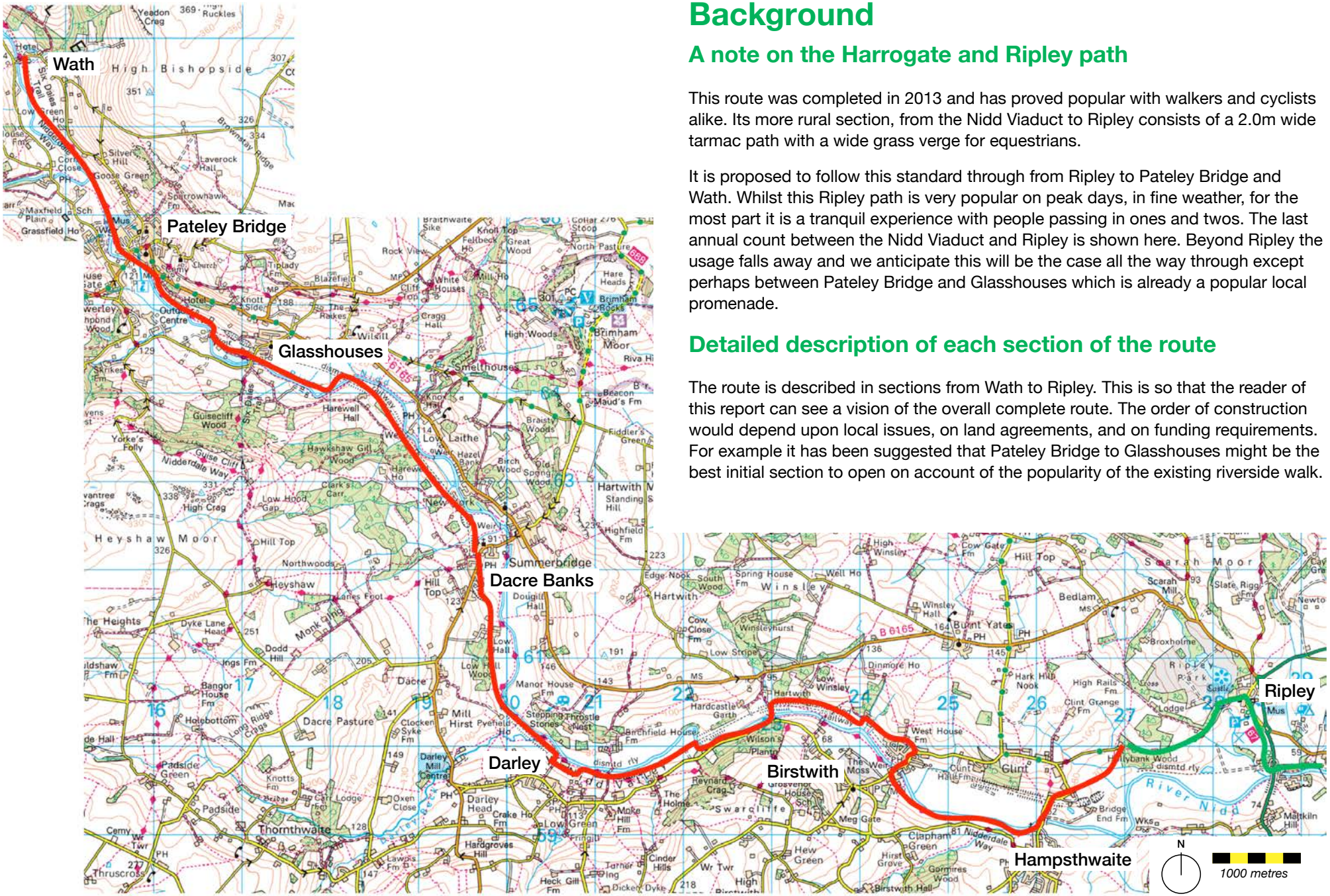
During the course of the preparation of this report the project team has met as many of the landowners along the route as possible. There has been widespread support for the route in general but no agreements on the details shown here have been reached. However the project team has endeavoured to reflect many of the points of view expressed and to select the most satisfactory option where possible.

Hollybank Lane on the way to Ripley

Ripley towards the Nidd Viaduct

Riverside section east of the Rippon Road

Approaching the Nidd Viaduct



Plan of proposed route

Background

A note on the Harrogate and Ripley path

This route was completed in 2013 and has proved popular with walkers and cyclists alike. Its more rural section, from the Nidd Viaduct to Ripley consists of a 2.0m wide tarmac path with a wide grass verge for equestrians.

It is proposed to follow this standard through from Ripley to Pateley Bridge and Wath. Whilst this Ripley path is very popular on peak days, in fine weather, for the most part it is a tranquil experience with people passing in ones and twos. The last annual count between the Nidd Viaduct and Ripley is shown here. Beyond Ripley the usage falls away and we anticipate this will be the case all the way through except perhaps between Pateley Bridge and Glasshouses which is already a popular local promenade.

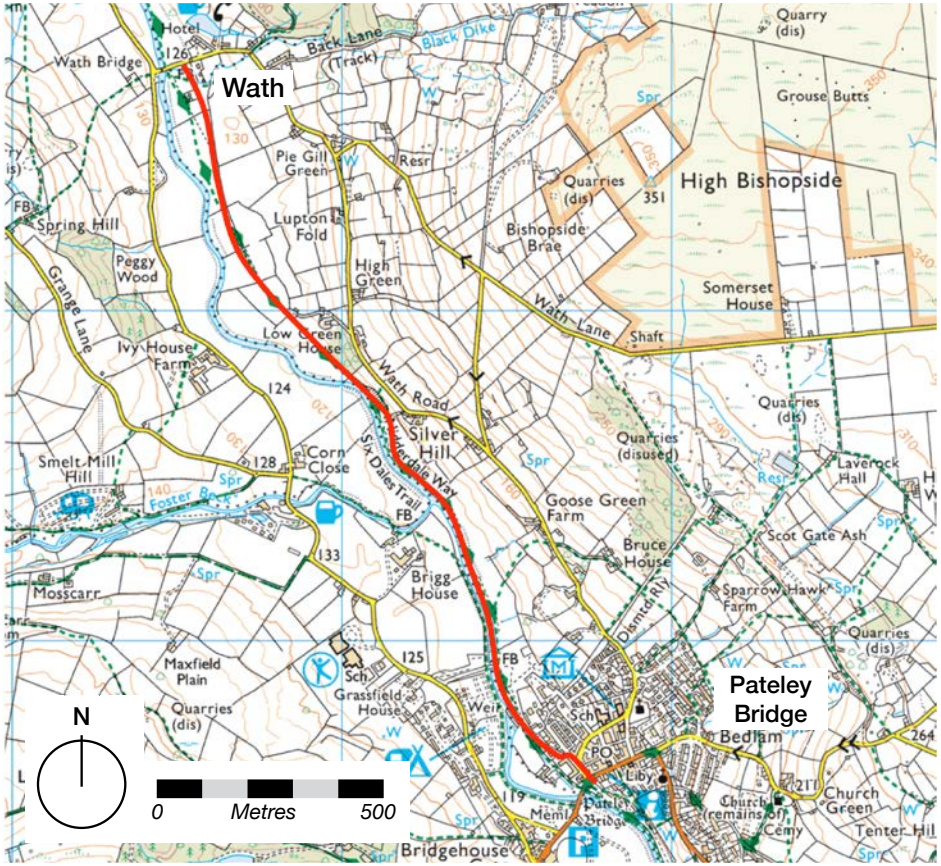
Detailed description of each section of the route

The route is described in sections from Wath to Ripley. This is so that the reader of this report can see a vision of the overall complete route. The order of construction would depend upon local issues, on land agreements, and on funding requirements. For example it has been suggested that Pateley Bridge to Glasshouses might be the best initial section to open on account of the popularity of the existing riverside walk.

Wath to Pateley Bridge – 2.5kms

This section largely follows the existing Nidderdale Way which runs on the formation of the original reservoir railway for much of its distance. It is worth noting that the whole of the old railway route down to Ripley is reserved for transport use in the local plans. We have followed this route where it is the best option but there are sections down the valley where riverside paths, for example, provide a more attractive route.

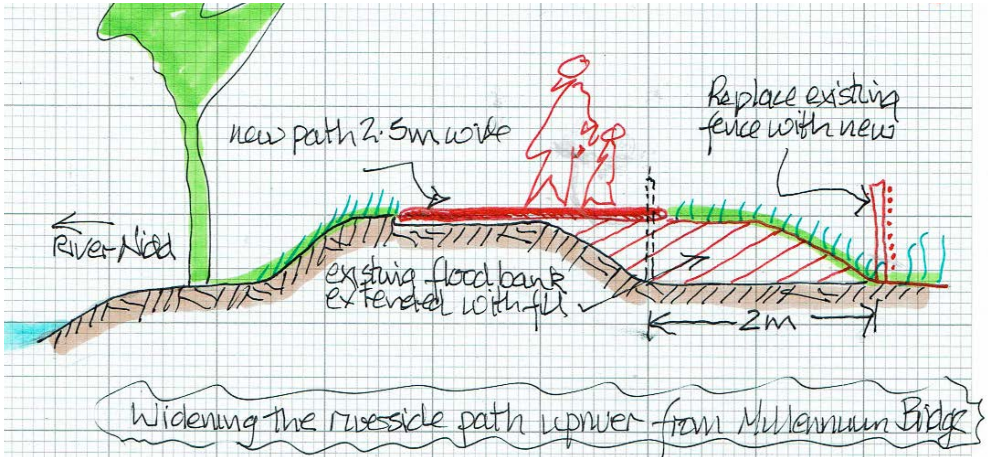
Starting from the Sportsman's Arms in Wath, the railway route is occupied by the old station house, so we need to make a new link to the railway a little closer to the river. A long length of the Nidderdale Way then follows the low causeway of the railway route. This is a most attractive section. Approaching Pateley Bridge the public path leaves the old railway in the nearby field and runs along the riverside and then as a narrow flood bank. This could be widened or the greenway path could be built just inside the bank. Finally the path passes the Millennium Bridge and joins the car park access road to reach Pateley Bridge via The Sidings.



Wath and Ripley Greenway Project	20.6 kms
Along the old railway	6.9 kms
Riverside route on existing paths	4.6 kms
Completed route to Ripley – Hollybank Wood	1.6 kms
New alignments including riverside field edges	1.8 kms
Bridleways and other tracks	3.1 kms
Public roads	2.8 kms

View of riverside path

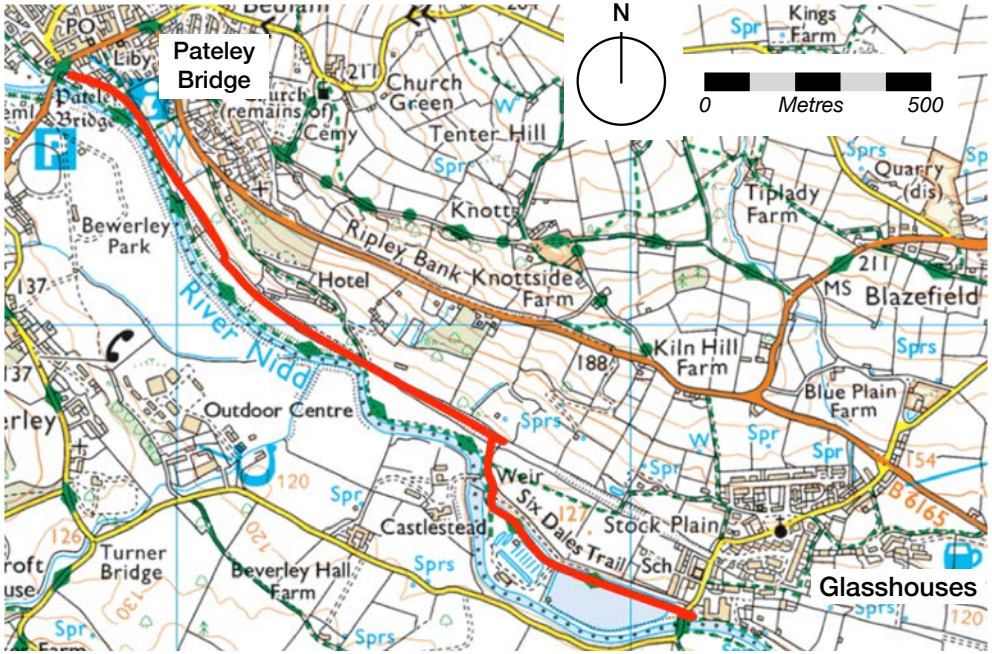
Views of existing narrow floodbank and fence



Sketch section through widened flood bank, with options of building the Greenway behind the bank

Pateley Bridge to Glasshouses – 2kms

Whilst most of this section of route is clearly defined first along the line of the old railway and then along the very fine walled lane along the side of Glasshouses Dam, (this includes the ornamental drive below Castlestead), we have had to consider a number of options past the Railway Cottages.



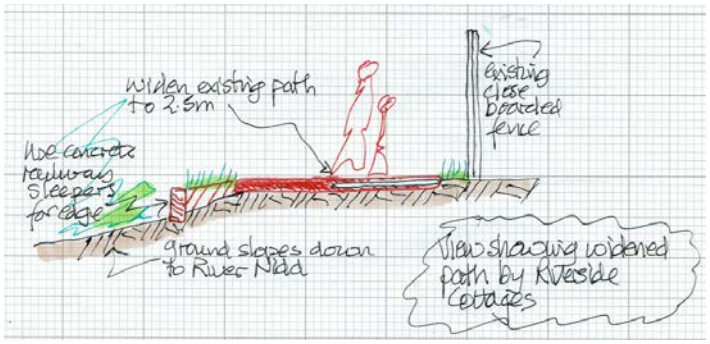
The first part of the old railway now carries Nidd Walk, and the road to the public car park on the station site.

The railway formation then becomes the private access road to the Railway Cottages for a distance of about 100m.

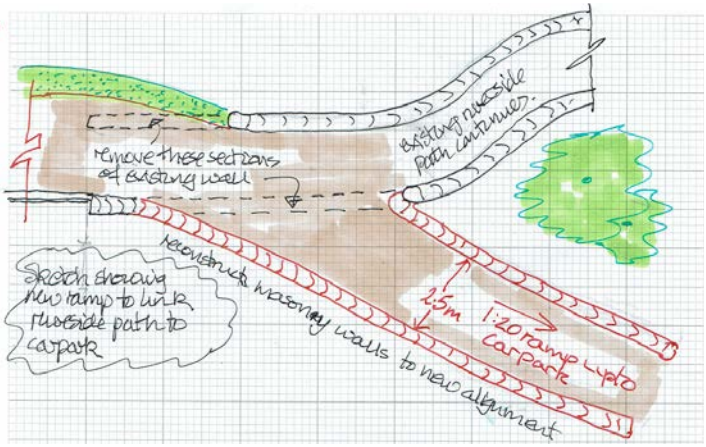
One option would be to divert the greenway onto the existing riverside path running in front of Riverside Cottages. This is already well screened from the houses by the existing fencing.

This option would require the creation of a new ramp from the car park, as shown in the sketch, as the long length of walled path constructed at the time of the railway is too narrow for shared use.

Views behind Cottages looking down the line of the path (above right)



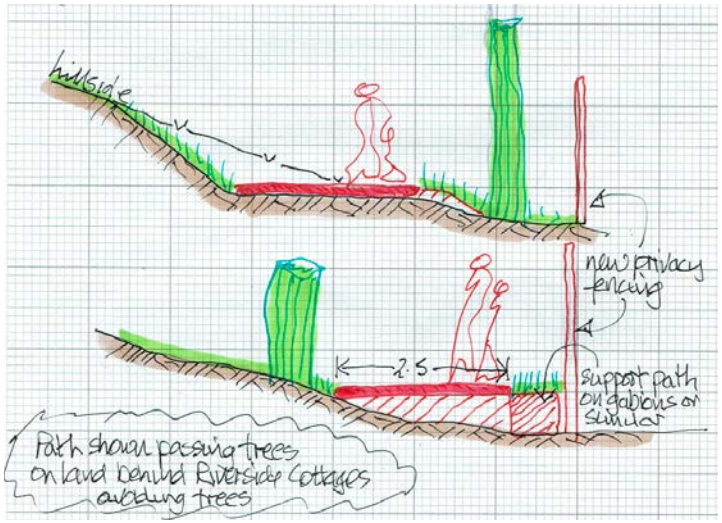
Sketch section



Sketch plan of ramp

A second option would be to construct a bypass on the hillside behind the cottages. Here the path would need to be carefully screened by timber fencing and/or planting to minimise loss of privacy.

View behind Cottages looking down the line of the path



Sketch cross section showing path and screening to railway cottages

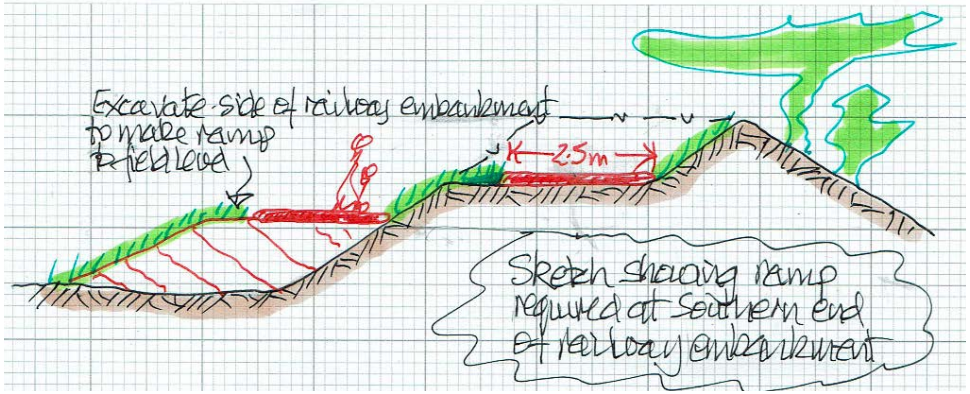
A third option would be to bridge over the river just downstream of the cottages and run a path along the edge of the showground area. This would have the advantage of linking the showground and its various activities, including the Bewerley Park Outdoor Centre, to the planned Greenway, but the added need for road safety measures at the main road and into the town centre.

View of existing Millennium Bridge which could be replicated for the showground link

Which of these alternatives was adopted would depend upon local interests and the availability of funding as the bridge to the showground would be the most costly. For the time being we recommend the bypass to the hillside behind the Railway Cottages.

The Greenway can now re-join the old railway as it runs through the grounds of the Harefield Hall Hotel. It would be best to keep the Greenway separate from the riverside for this section as it is a popular promenade with the public. At the far end of the railway section a new link is required to meet up with the Reservoir Lane, and this could be arranged as shown in the sketch.

Old railway through Hotel grounds



Sketch of ramp from railway and link to Reservoir Lane

The Reservoir Lane is a particularly memorable highlight of the whole route. Descriptive panels to explain the history and the workings of the watercourse in this area would be interesting.

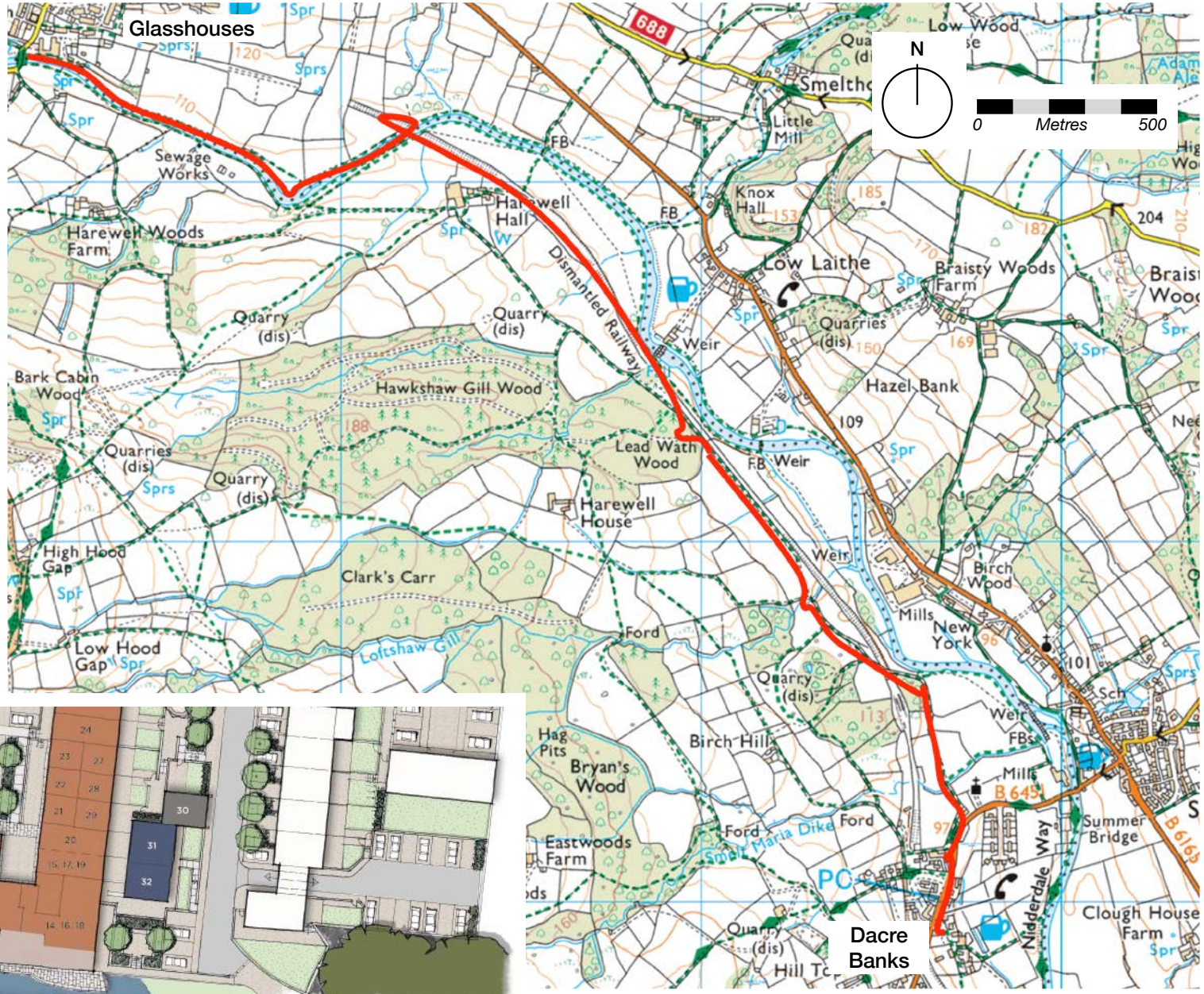
View of the Reservoir

Glasshouses to Dacre Banks – 4.06 kms

This magnificent section of the Greenway falls into 3 sections. It begins by following the riverside, then moves onto the old railway via a new bridge span and then runs along the existing access road from Lead Wath Forestry to the B6451 road at Dacre Banks.

To start with, cyclists may have to walk along the path past the redevelopment of the Glasshouses Mill. This work is still under development and it may be possible for a shared use route to be provided.

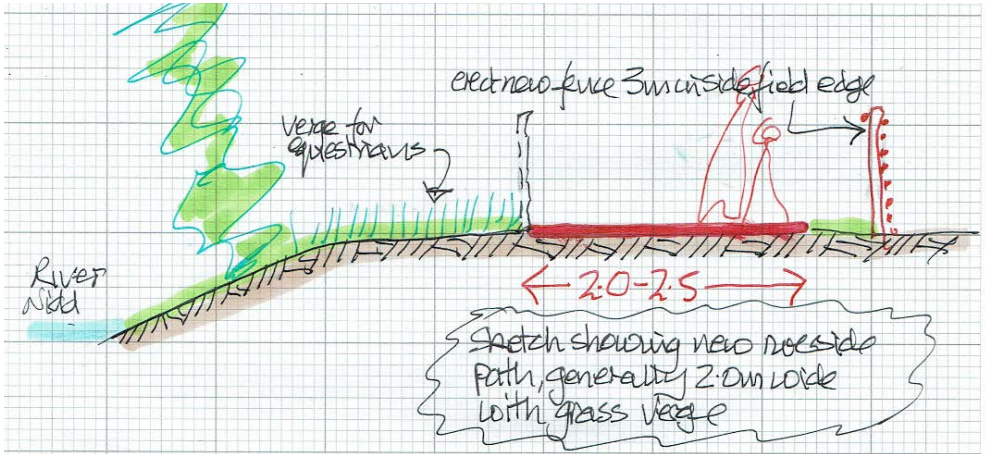
Glasshouses Mill, view at January 2020



Glasshouses Mill redevelopment: plan view adjacent to River Nidd

The next riverside section is particularly attractive. An additional 3m strip of the field edge is required to make the Greenway route as suggested in the sketch. There is a never ending stream of pleasure in walking and cycling along this river with a rich variety of views and the sound of the water never far away. From the perspective of the farmers too this may well be a much more attractive route for the public, on the boundary of their fields, rather than following the line of the old railway.

View of riverside path



Sketch through typical riverside path section

At one point the riverside path climbs steeply and here a ramp needs to be cut across the side of the bank in order to secure the 1:20 gradient the Greenway needs to provide for wheelchair users.

View of bank with overlay showing arrangement of ramp

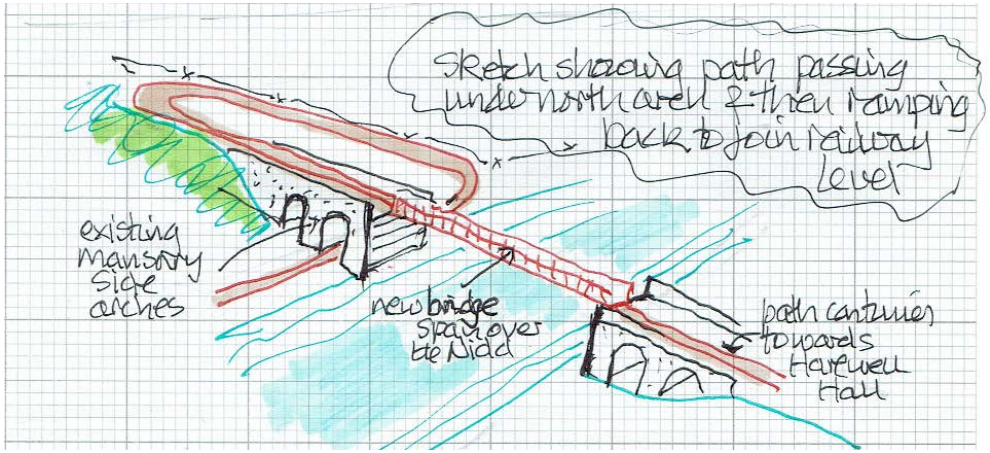
After one more section of riverside field edge, the next detail is the link up to the old railway approach arches where a new bridge span is required to replace the missing river span.

The Greenway should pass through the side arch so that one can appreciate the fabulous detailing of this slew arch and then ramp up alongside the old railway boundary at 1:20 to reach the railway levels.

A new steel span approximately 25m long is required. This should be 2.5m wide. The steel beams would be seated on simple concrete slabs cast against the existing massive masonry abutments.

Views of masonry bridge (right)

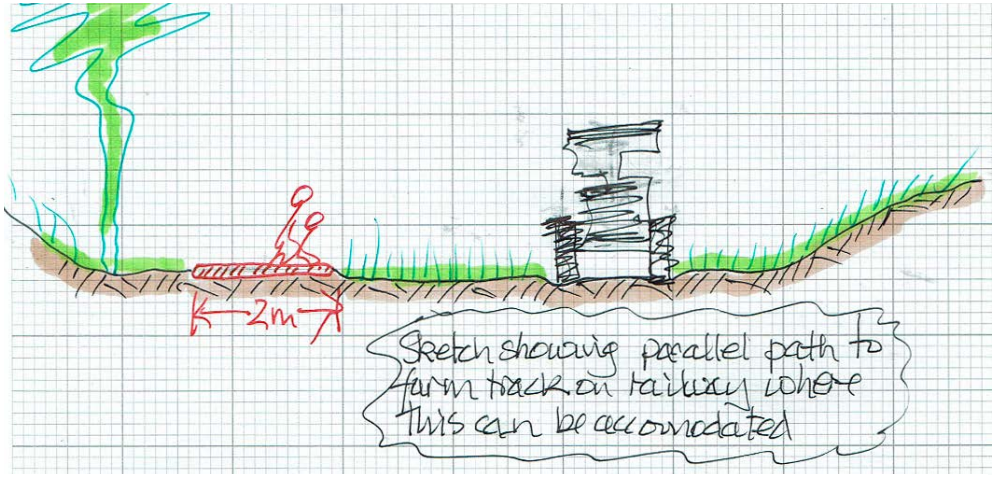
Sketch of link and proposed bridge (below)



Glasshouses to Dacre Banks – 4.06 kms - continued

Past Harewell Hall the railway is used by farm traffic and it would probably be best to construct the Greenway as a parallel path to the agricultural track.

View through the Harewell Cutting

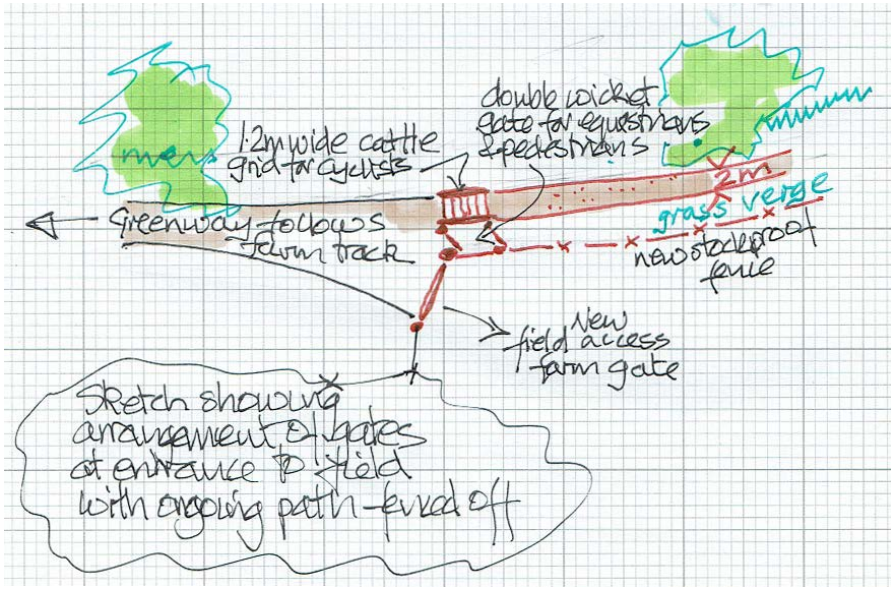


Sketch of parallel path

Across the last Harewell field the railway is lost and the Greenway could move to the nearby field edge to minimise disturbance to livestock. This section could be fenced off if this is required. The sketch shows a gating and sheep grid arrangement to prevent livestock straying onto the path.

View along field edge

View along field edge



Sketch plan of gate arrangement

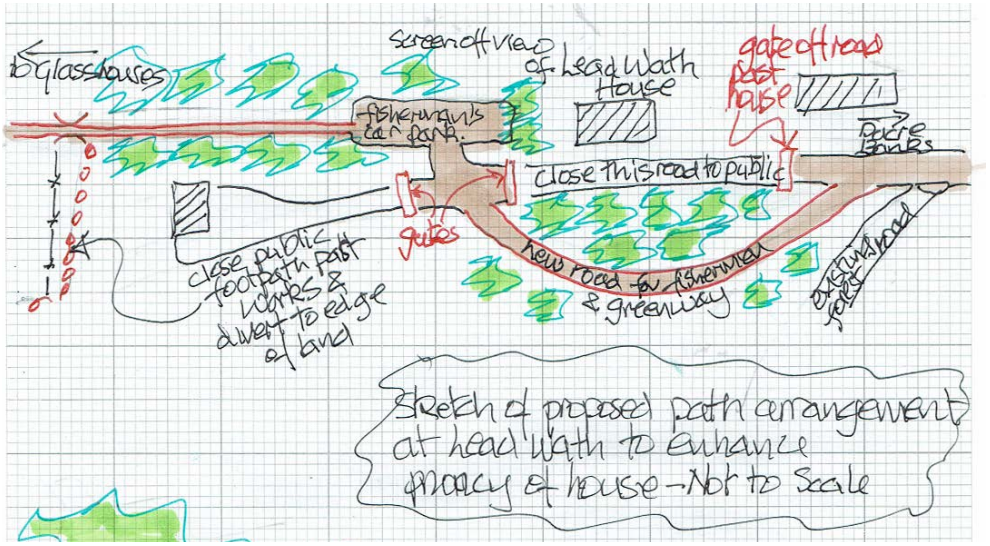
The railway now crosses a masonry arch which will require new balustrades and the path continues along the former sidings.

The section at Lead Wath needs to be carefully detailed in order to minimise annoyance and inconvenience to the resident and works. We suggest that the existing public footpaths are diverted as shown in the sketch plan. The existing track to the timber works would then no longer be a public right of way and could be gated off if this was required.

View of arched bridge

From Lead Wath to Dacre Banks one can conveniently follow the existing public footpath which follows the existing attractive access road. The Greenway project could tarmac this to minimise future maintenance. Alternatively the Greenway could follow the course of the parallel railway which runs on a low embankment here.

Views of Lead Wath road



Sketch of diversion of public paths onto the proposed Greenway route

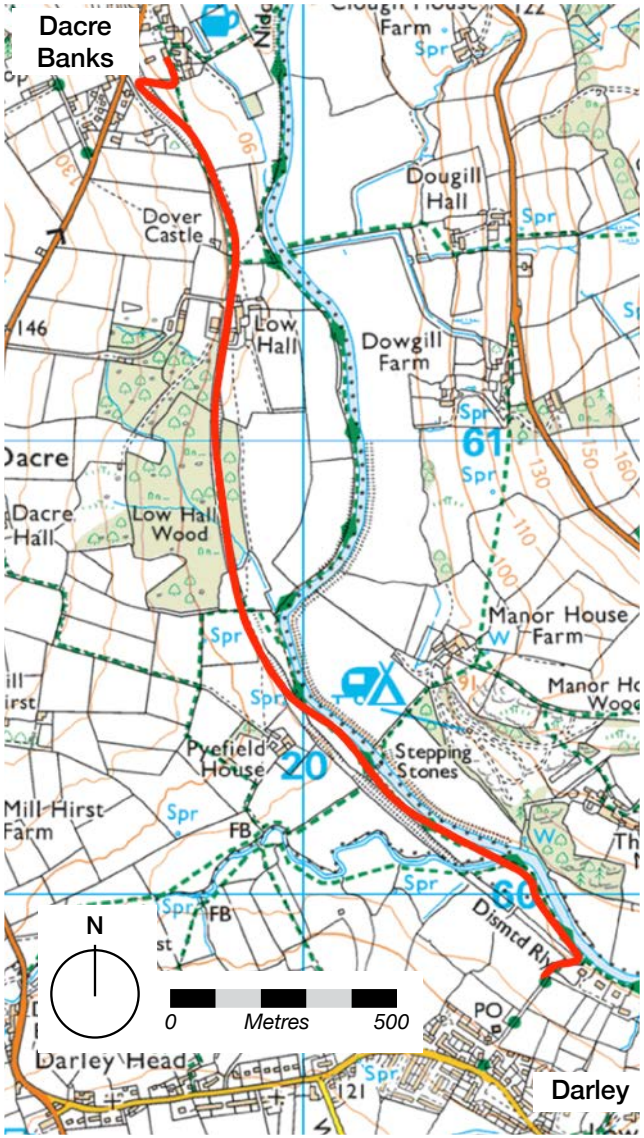
In Dacre Banks we recommend further traffic calming to reduce traffic speeds for the 200m of main road through to the Royal Oak Inn.

This could be designed to encourage the easy flow of cyclists.

View of existing traffic calming on road

Dacre Banks to Darley – 2.56 kms

This section runs along the old railway past Low Hall and then through the wood of the same name. It then comes out onto open grassland with one of the most memorable vistas of the whole route. Approaching the Pyefield House area, the Greenway moves to the riverbank so as to minimise the interference with the farm.

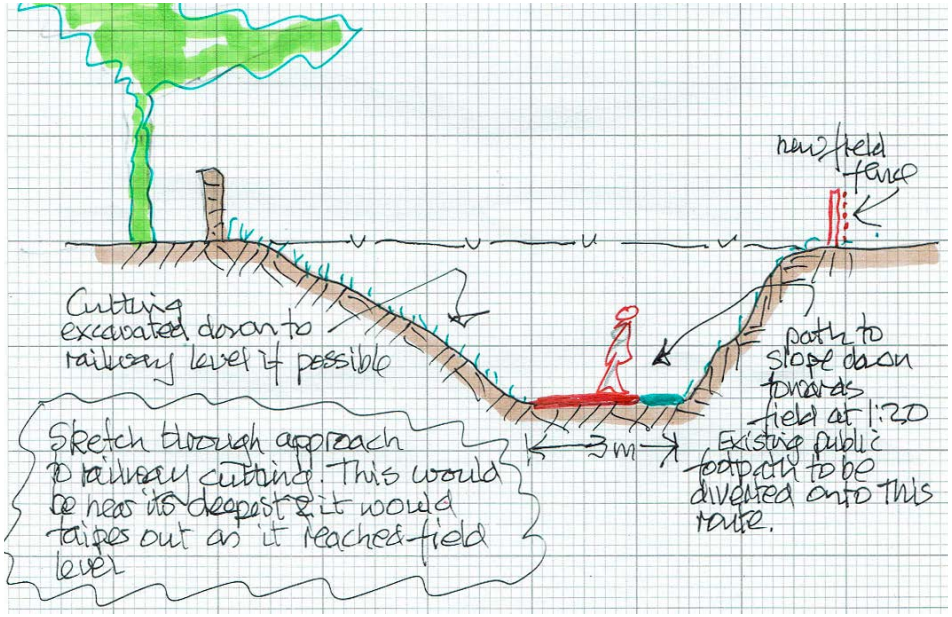


The link from the Royal Oak Inn to reach the railway is an interesting challenge, as the public footpath climbs a bit right across the centre of an open field. We suggest following the public footpath route as far as the field, but then diverting the public footpath (which cuts diagonally across the open field) to run in a defile along the field edge. Ideally this would be excavated deep enough to link conveniently to the floor of the railway cutting, and would ensure privacy to the the adjacent private garden.

View of field edge

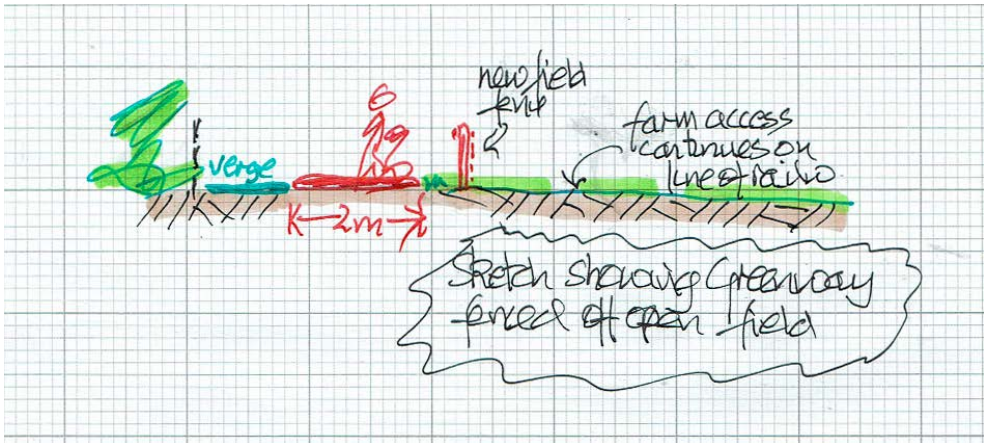
View of railway cutting

Sketch of path in defile along field edge



The railway cutting makes for an attractive detail along this route. At its southern end one could fence off the edge of the field to keep the public separate from livestock.

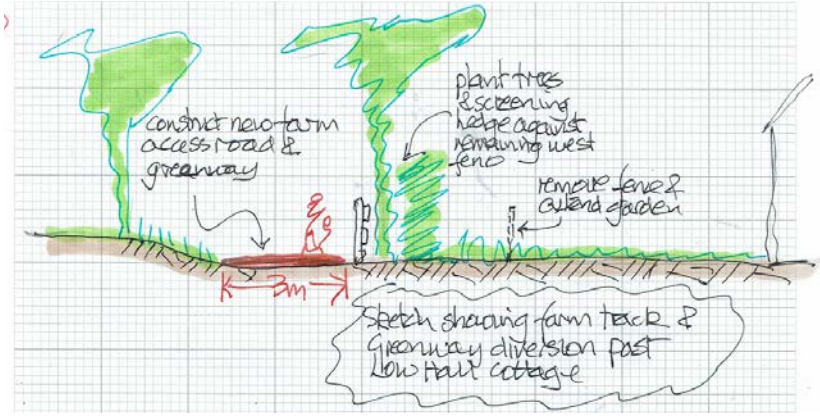
View of field



Suggested field edge path

The next section runs on the railway track as far as historic Low Hall. Here it has been suggested that the farm track is slightly moved away from the cottage so as to extend its garden and planting screen.

View of cottage



Sketch showing a possible arrangement so as to enhance the privacy of the existing cottage

This whole section is a public footpath which runs past the farmyard to reach a most attractive section of route through woodland.

This section is one of those where the track surface is almost good enough for Greenway use without further works.

View past the farmyard

View on woodland section

Dacre Banks to Darley – 2.56 kms - continued

Pyefield House is very close to the railway and public use of the old railway track would be intrusive. Fortunately, the riverside path offers a most attractive alternative.

View of railway

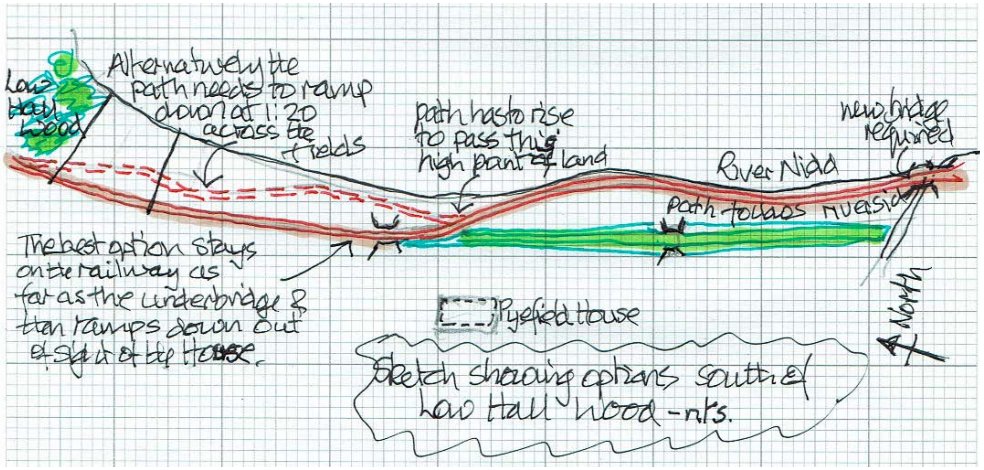
View of riverside path

The most satisfactory arrangement would be to stay on the railway to near the high point of the existing riverside path. The existing arched bridge under the railway would allow farm access to the riverside fields and the existing public path could be moved onto the railway path to keep people well clear of the farming operation. Once past the arch the path could ramp down on the side of the embankment away from the house until it reached the natural high point of the land from where it could slip down to the riverside.

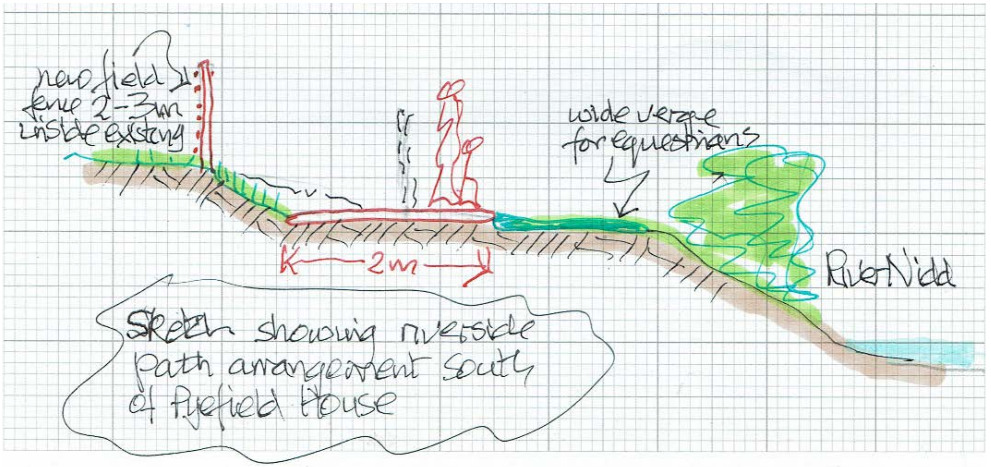
The alternative riverside route would involve more extensive earthworks so as to maintain nothing steeper than 1:20 gradient suitable for wheelchairs.

The final section beside the river would require an additional 3m wide strip along the field edge to provide for the Greenway route.

View of riverside



Sketch plan of options between railway level and riverside



Sketch of proposed path

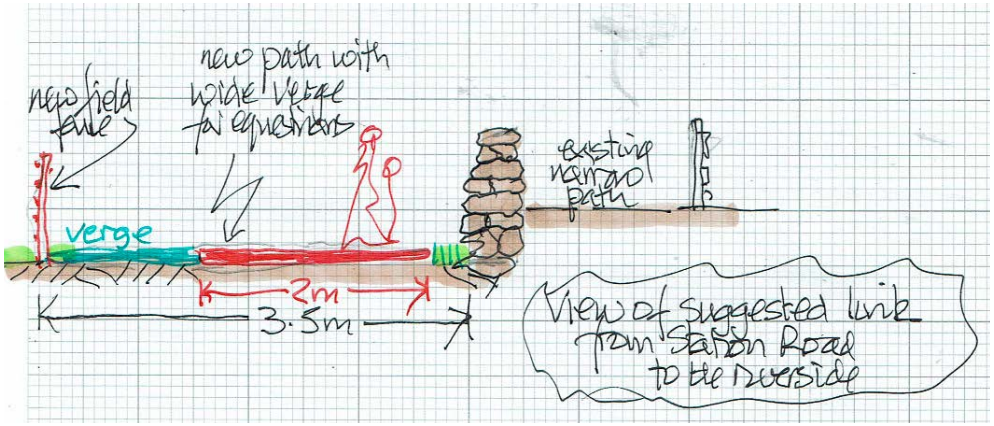
Part way along, the side stream is crossed by a narrow footbridge. This would need to be replaced by a new bridge at the higher field edge level. Note that there would have been no advantage staying on the railway route because it has lost its bridge.

View of existing foot bridge

View of similar bridge at Fleet Marston

Finally, to reach Station Road a new path would be needed along the field edge so as to widen the existing narrow path.

View to existing path to Station House



Sketch of link path

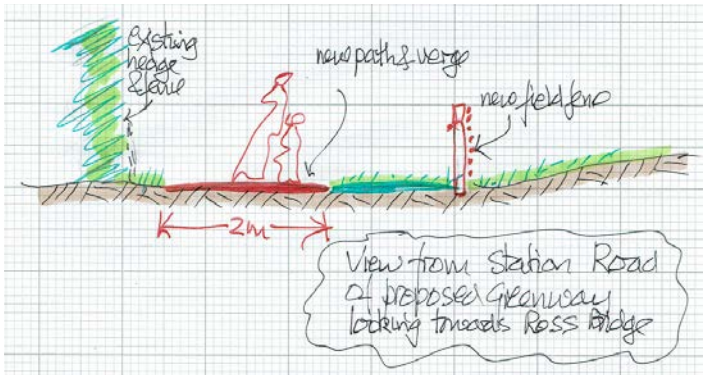
Darley to Birstwith – 4.9 kms

This is a particularly fascinating section which makes use of an original road alignment through the riverside edge of Wilsons Plantation as well a significant section of the old railway. It also includes the Ross Toll Bridge and passes close to the historic 'New' Bridge.

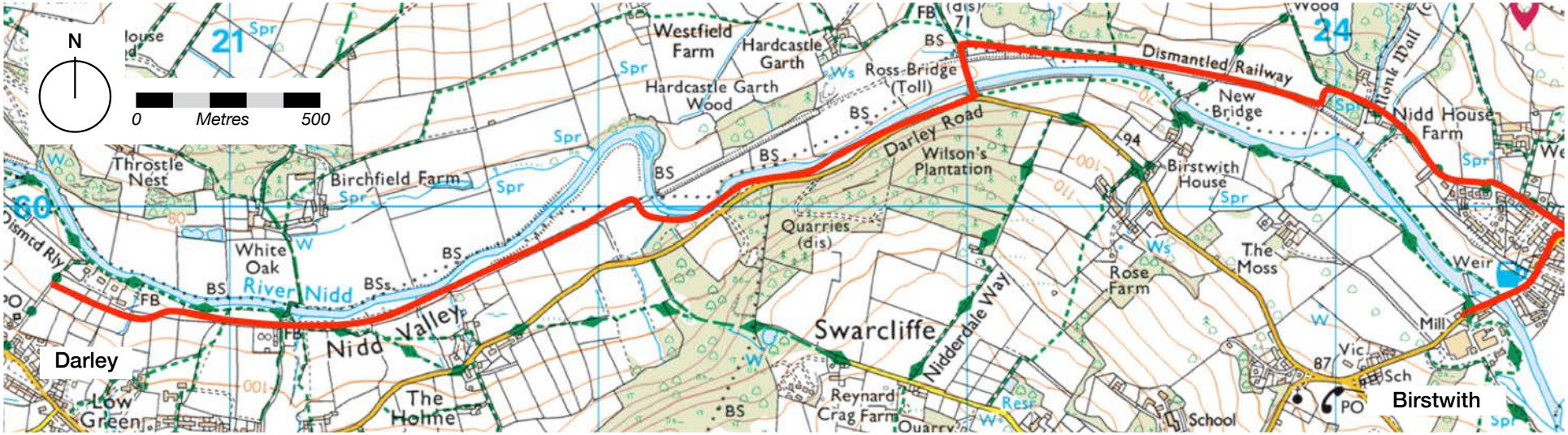
To start with the path needs to pass to the south of the railway properties. Although this means going uphill a little it is no hardship because this takes you closer to the Darley Post Office, general store and café, which is an important village resource and needs to be well supported.

Ross Toll Bridge

New Bridge



View of field edge with montage of suggested path



From here join the railway route for the next 1.5kms. Care is needed in the detailing to ensure that this section provides complete farm access to fields either side and fencing should be provided as required.

At the river crossing, where the bridge span is missing, run along the field edge and riverside to reach the woodland boundary.

By following the next woodland section one can avoid the need for a new river bridge. For most of the way the line of an old road is a well-defined level between the Darley Road and the River Nidd. At one point the line of the old road is marked by a line of ancient beech trees as the road climbed to avoid the steep bank eroded by the river.

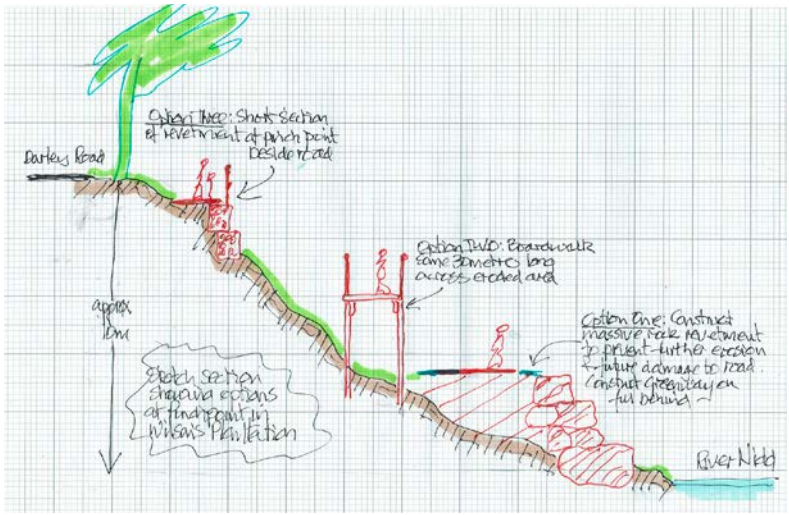
View of the railway

View of field edge

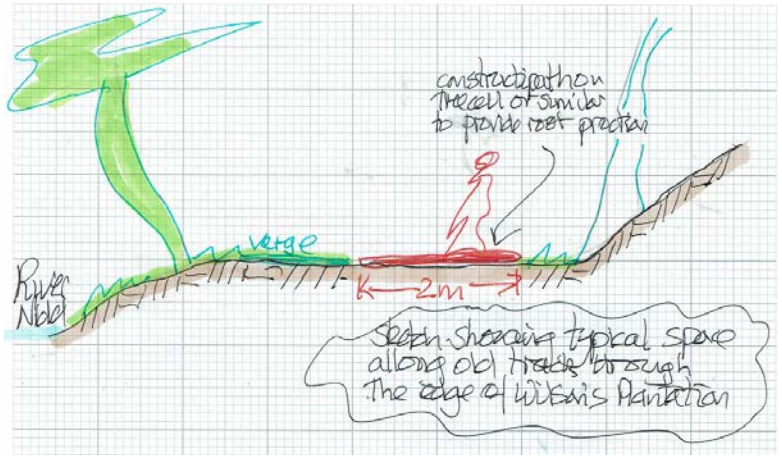
View of typical section

View of diversion at river bend

There are probably three general solutions to this pinch point. The Council might want to construct a rough retaining wall of massive rock to prevent further erosion and the eventual loss of the road, or we could construct 30 metres or so of board walk, or we could follow the probable line of the road up the slope and bypass the road on a short section of retained path. These are illustrated in the section below. Clearly to follow over the top of the rock revetment would be the best arrangement if this was possible.



Sketch through option at pinch point



Sketch through typical section of riverside path

Darley to Birstwith – 4.9 kms - continued

Ramp up to the Ross Toll Bridge and make a link on the edge of the field past the Toll House to reach the railway formation.

Now follow a lovely section of railway route which is well used by the public, follow by another private section, this last would need to be fenced off from the adjacent field.

At the end link along the field edge to the existing green lane and bridleway. Care is needed to ensure the whole field is carefully fenced against livestock, and that there are appropriate gates.

View of railway section with well used path

View of railway towards Nidd House Farm

View of Green Lane

Cyclists can join the road from Nidd House Farm, whilst walkers can follow the existing riverside footpath through to the Birstwith Bridge.

View of path from bridge

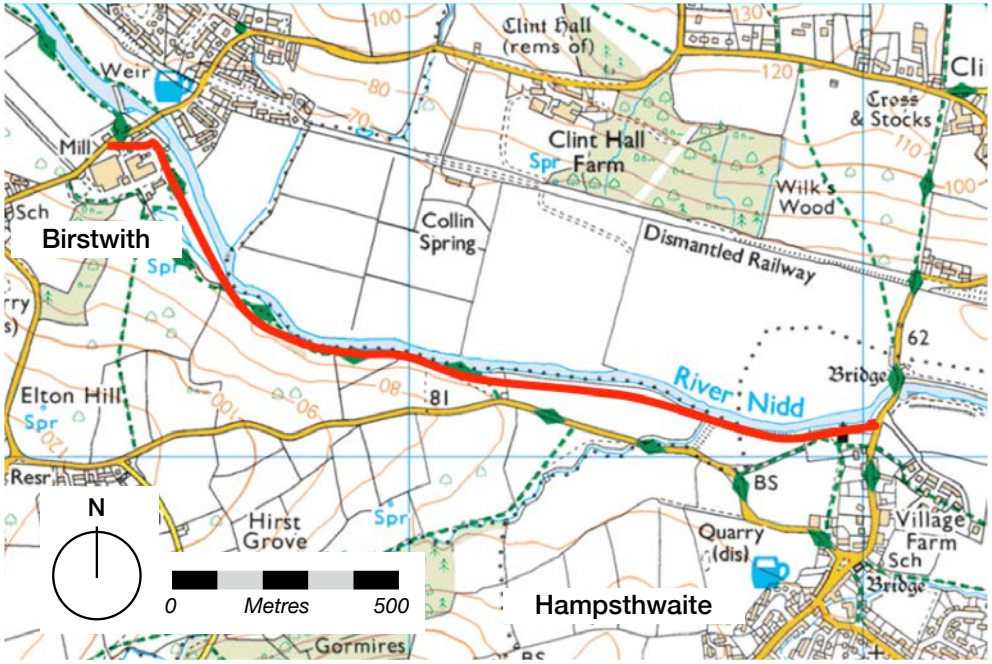
View of road south of river bridge

Birstwith to Hampsthwaite – 1.9 kms

Although the proposed riverside route appears to be a small detour, it does take you to Hampsthwaite with its renowned café, and follows for the most part an existing PROW whilst avoiding a section of the old railway.

Past the Kerry's factory we need a new bridge over the millstream and a series of careful detailing to gain sufficient space for a path outside the factory boundary.

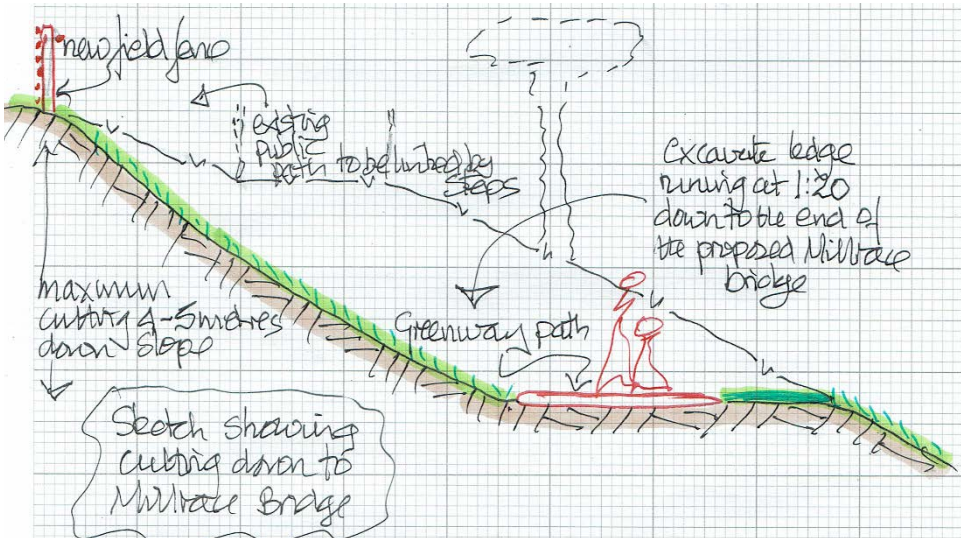
View of boundary



Map of section with views of riverside path

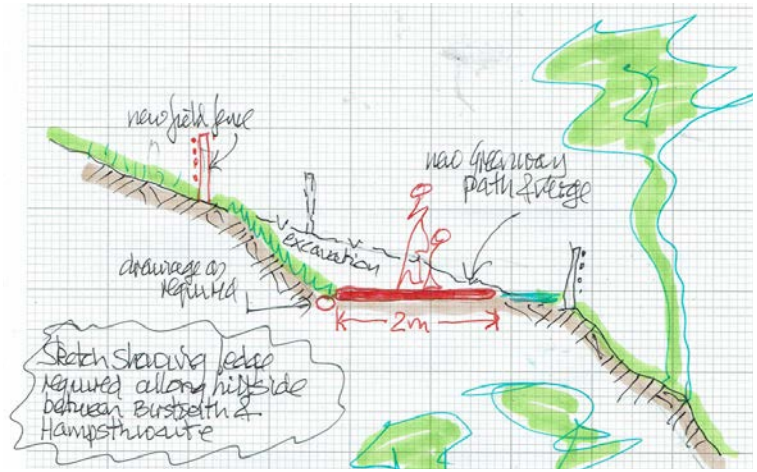
At the end of the fencing continue to the end of the spit of land, ramp up and bridge the outfall of the millrace to quite a high level on the hillside beyond.

View of Millrace near the planned bridge site



The next 500 metres of riverside path are most attractive but will require careful construction to get a good path through.

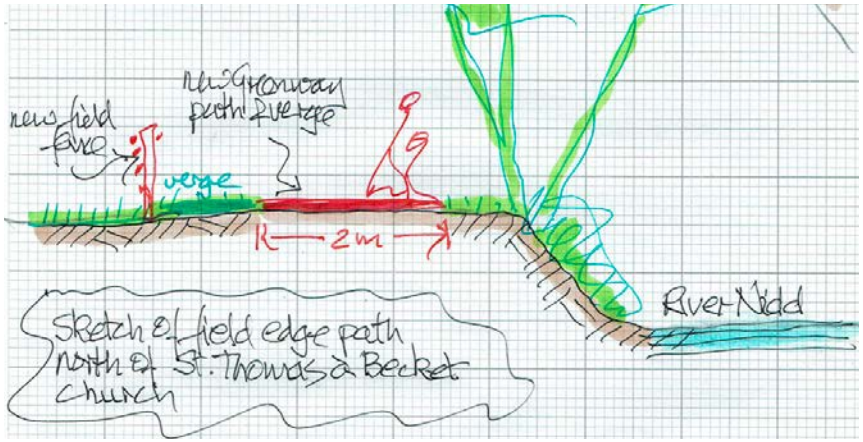
Views of woodland section



Sketch of section of hillside approaching bridge on the downstream side

The last section of riverside path into Hampsthwaite is much needed because currently the Nidderdale Way is routed along the road, which is neither pleasant nor safe.

View of field edge



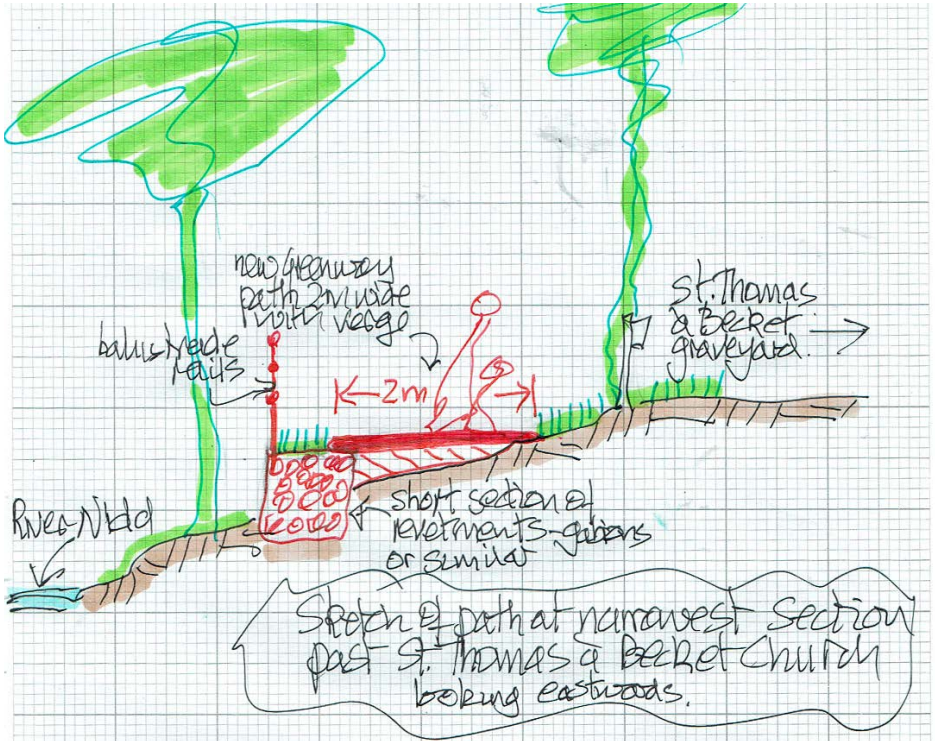
Sketch of typical path excavated into hillside

A new bridge will be required over the Bracken Brook.

Visitors will almost certainly want to walk through the churchyard of St. Thomas à Becket church to see the splendid marble sculpted monument to Amy Woodeford-Finden, as well as the much rebuilt church originally conceived as a penance by the brother in law of one of the three knights who murdered the Archbishop at Canterbury Cathedral.

The through route can pass between the churchyard and the riverside where about 10 metres of new construction will need to be supported on gabions or other revetment.

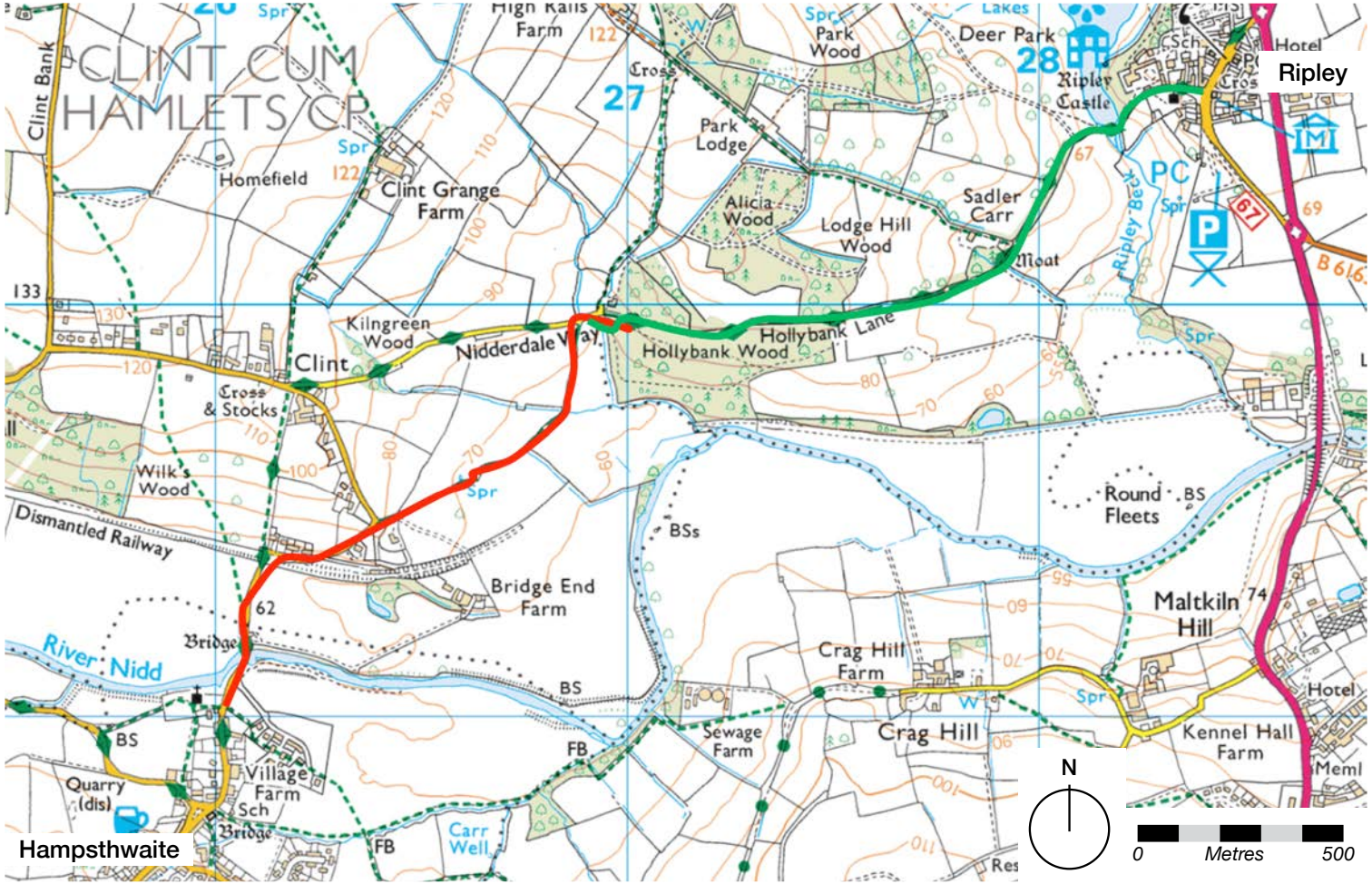
View between church and riverside



Hampsthwaite to Ripley – 3 kms

Most of this route is already in place. One could follow the road up to Clint (walkers to use the footpath) or much better follow the bridle path from the corner of Clint Bank Lane. This lovely route will need some work to improve drainage so as to provide a good all-year path for users.

View of existing bridleway



Below: four views of the existing Ripley Castle Path showing 2.0 metre wide sealed surface with adjacent verge

Hollybank Lane on the way to Ripley

Riverside section east of the Rippon Road

Ripley towards the Nidd Viaduct

Approaching the Nidd Viaduct

Summaries of route sections

Wath and Pateley Bridge route	2.5 kms
Pateley Bridge and Glasshouses	1.7 kms
Glasshouses and Dacre Banks	4.46 kms
Dacre Banks and Darley	2.6 kms
Darley and Birstwith	4.9 kms
Birstwith and Hampsthwaite	1.9 kms
Hampsthwaite and Ripley	2.9 kms
Total length of Greenway from Wath to Ripley	20.92 kms

Route Delivery

This report sets out the optimum route for extending the Harrogate and Ripley path as a greenway all the way through to Pateley Bridge and Wath. The next phase of the project requires the completion of working agreements with landowners all along the route, successful planning applications probably best done section by section, and the securing of funds to allow the route to be built either all at once, or section by section.

Estimates of cost section by section

These following estimates are based on aiming to construct a path to a similar standard as that existing between the Nidd Viaduct and Ripley and on through towards Clint. This 2.0m wide path with a metre wide soft verge seems to be suitable for informal use as a path for all. As far as possible gradients will be kept to 1:20 so that those in wheelchairs can readily use the route.

No real estimate is included for tree planting, soft measures, landscape sculpture, seats or even additional links to the route. The estimates here are for creation of the core route all through.

Kms	Disused railway	Railway used as farm access	Riverside path	Existing track	Public road	New alignment	Development site	Existing route	Total
Wath to Pateley Bridge		1.13	0.91		0.45				2.49
Pateley Bridge to Glasshouses	0.54			0.62	0.40	0.16			1.72
Glasshouses to Dacre Banks	0.40	1.00	1.16	1.50	0.20	0.10	0.10		4.46
Dacre Banks to Darley	0.50	1.00	0.86		0.10	0.10			2.56
Darley to Birsthwaite	1.44	0.92	0.97	0.20	1.02	0.35			4.90
Birsthwaite to Hampsthwaite			0.70	0.10		1.10			1.90
Hampsthwaite to Ripley				0.64	0.64			1.61	2.89
Total	2.88	4.05	4.6	3.06	2.81	1.81	0.1	1.61	**20.92**

Table of Distances and types of routes

Preliminary estimates of cost of construction from Wath to Ripley

Sum for earthworks	£50,000
Length of new construction including fencing 13.34kms @£160,000/km	£2,200,000
Cost of new bridges	£300,000
Cost of ancillary-seats, gates etc	£100,000
Sum for highway works	£200,000
Engineering and management	£150,000
Planning, ecology, EA licences	£20,000
Preliminary estimate for constructing whole route excluding land assembly costs	£3,000,000

Estimates from Pateley Bridge to Darley

New path	5.82kms @ £160000/km	£930,000
Upgrade Lead Wath and Mill pond track	2.12kms @£80/km	£170,000
Bridges	2	£15,000
Earthworks		£30,000
Sections on highway		£80,000
Engineering and management		80,000
Ancillary-seats, gates etc		£60,000
Total estimate		**£1,500,000**
Allow sum for planning, EA licence, ecology etc		£25,000
Allow sum for completion of land and legal		?