

North Yorkshire County Council
North Yorkshire Local Access Forum

17 January 2018

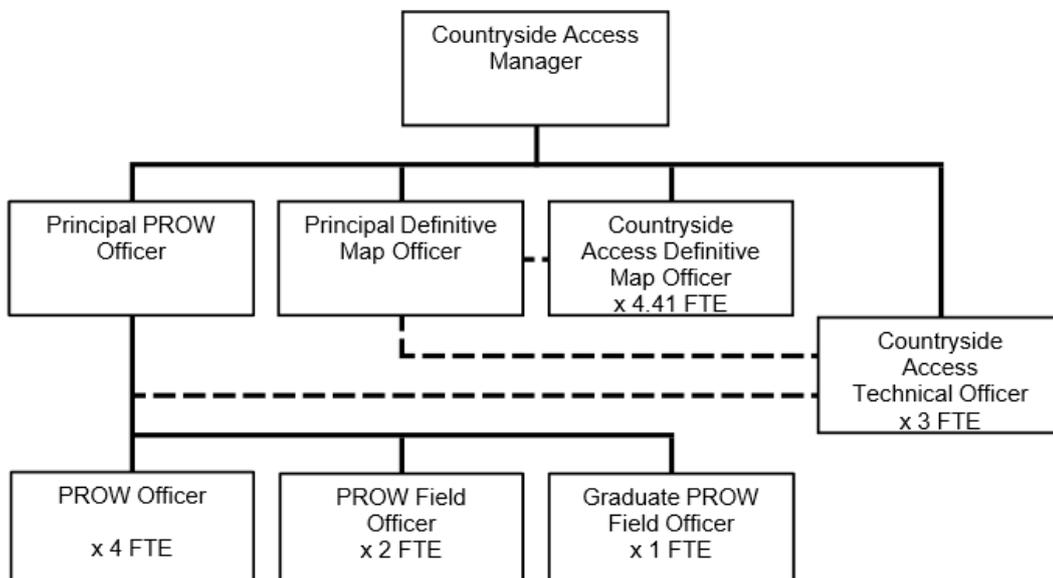
Definitive Map Team Update

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide NYLAF with an update on the progress the Definitive Map Team are making towards their main function of keeping the Definitive Map and Statement up to date.

2.0 Staffing

- 2.1 The Countryside Access Service is comprised of two teams – The Access Maintenance Team lead by the Principal PROW Officer and the Definitive Map Team lead by the Principal Definitive Map Officer. See structure chart below (--- denotes technical and operational supervision).



- 2.2 The structure of the Definitive Map team has been reviewed and Diversion Officer, Definitive Map Officer and Diversions & Definitive Map Officer posts have been amalgamated into a new post - Countryside Access Definitive Map Officer and the FTE has increased by 0.8 FTE on a permanent basis. This builds capacity and improves resilience across the team.
- 2.3 Further to this, capacity at technical officer level has been increased by 2 FTE. A total of 3 no. Countryside Access Technical Officers offer support to both the Definitive Map and Access Maintenance Teams.

3.0 Update on work undertaken by the Definitive Map Team

- 3.1 In reviewing the work of the Team 2 years ago it was decided that it had now become essential to spend time bringing the digital mapping of the PRow network up to date, checking every digitised route against the most up to date OS base mapping. This work was deemed necessary in order to have mapping which is reliable for day to day reference for PRow purposes; for PRow Officers to rely upon in undertaking works on the ground or pursuing enforcement issues, and for reference for answering the various types of searches that are submitted daily, and ultimately to allow the issue of a new Definitive Map and Statement for the whole county. Checking the digitised mapping has entailed the individual close examination of in excess of 17,000 paths, making reference to associated documents where necessary, and in some cases involving site visits by PRow officers.
- 3.2 Closely linked to the re-digitisation project, the Team has also been working on completing the necessary Omnibus Modification Orders which have been outstanding for many years. Omnibus Orders are the legal process to amend the Definitive Map and Statement following Public Path Orders (Diversions, Creations etc), they are also time consuming, needing much attention to detail. The Team has now completed Omnibus Orders for each of the Districts, bringing the basis for North Yorkshire's proposed new Definitive Map up-to-date in relation to past 'legal events' for the first time since its original production.
- 3.3 Historic and current path orders are also being mapped which will help Countryside Access staff based away from County Hall to identify where paths have been, or are proposed to be diverted etc. The declaration of any proposed changes to the network is now a requirement of the Land Charge Searches process. Information relating to these Orders is also being made available to the public on the county council's website.
- 3.4 Since July 2016, all Land Charge Searches (where, for example, people are purchasing property) have a mandatory question about whether there is a PRow affecting the property. The number of Searches submitted has therefore increased hugely.
- 3.5 The approximate numbers of searches of different types being answered per year are:

Land Charge Searches	10,140
Planning Application consultations	1500
Utility company and other searches	900

The majority of these searches are now answered by the Technical Officers from the electronic mapping. Due to the input of the Technical Officers the Countryside Access Service has managed to catch up with the number of

planning applications consultations being processed by the District Councils, and all applications are now being responded to. This is the first time this has ever been possible, and will help to prevent the inadvertent obstruction of PProWs by development.

- 3.6 The inevitable consequences of the Team undertaking all of this necessary re-digitisation and Omnibus Order work has of course meant that few DMMOs have been resolved over the last 2 years, but it is anticipated that some work will recommence on DMMOs after April when the re-digitisation will be largely complete. As the officers involved with PPOs have not been so involved with the re-digitisation those Orders have continued to be progressed. The table below outlines the DMMO and PPO cases undertaken over the last 2 years.

	DMMOs						PPOs							
	Applications submitted	DMMOs made	DMMOs confirmed	DMMOs NOT confirmed or rejected	Resolved by PI / PINS?		Unresolved @ Jan 2018	Applications submitted	PPOs made	PPOs confirmed	PPOs NOT confirmed or abandoned	Resolved by PI / PINS?		Unresolved @ Jan 2018
					Yes	No						Yes	No	
2015	5	2	8	2	4 C 3 N/C 1	6 C 5 R 1		14	38	25	17	0	42	
2016	5	1	1	3	2 C 1 N/C 1	2 R 2		12	1	17	26	0	43	
2017	20	0	2	3	3 C 1 N/C 2	2 C 1 R 1		22	22	15	6	0	21	
2018							133							106

C = Confirmed N/C =Not Confirmed R =Rejected

Of the 133 unresolved DMMOs - 26 are 'In progress' (23 requiring referral to SoS.), and 107 are awaiting investigation.

- 3.7 Section 31 submissions (now also known as Highways Statements and Declarations) and renewals of such submissions is another area of work now largely handled by the Technical Officers. It is a statutory function for the team to receive, check, record and hold in a public Register of all submissions made under Section 31 of the Highways Act. At the moment we receive approximately 13 submissions per year.

4.0 Future work programme

4.1 It is anticipated that the majority of the re-digitisation checks will be completed by April and that the initial focus for the Definitive Map Team will become the progression of those cases awaiting determination by the SoS. Approximately 50% of DMMO applications/Orders are opposed and will need referral to the SoS for resolution.

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications as this is an advisory report only.

6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications as this is an advisory report only.

7.0 Equalities Implications

7.1 There are no equality implications as this is an advisory report only.

4.0 Recommendation(s)

4.1 It is recommended that North Yorkshire Local Access Forum members take note of the content of the report.

Ian Fielding

Assistant Director – Transport, Waste and Countryside Services.

Author of Report: Penny Noake, Principal Definitive Map Officer.

Background Documents:

None