

**Consultation:****Highways Act 1980 Proposed changes to public paths in the vicinity of Hill House, Shadforth****Upgrading of part of Shadforth Footpath 14 to bridleway and creation of a new footpath in Haswell Parish****Closure of part of Shadforth Bridleway 12 and Footpaths 13a and 13b and part of Footpath 14**

1. Thank you for notifying me of these proposed changes thereby giving me the opportunity to comment.
2. As a member and volunteer of the British Horse Society on the County Durham Committee (Assistant Access and Bridleways Officer for East Durham) I am commenting on behalf of myself and horse riders in the area.
3. I have similar comments to make to those I gave in my response to the original application, for these proposals, when it was submitted in 2014. Particularly again dismay at the reduction of off road riding by the proposed change to Bridleway 12. As I noted before, there are few off road routes in the area and this further decreases the network.
4. Since the original application changes have been made to the main traffic route into the farm and a new access road is now sited from the trunk road near Shadforth village. This route passes to the south of the farm units housing livestock and south of Bridleway 12. It therefore seems eminently sensible as an alternative to the proposed new route to move the bridleway from the current route alongside the farm onto this access road, for a short distance, which is only used for farm traffic. This would keep horses further away from livestock, reducing the risk of contamination, and would be a more accessible route as currently one cannot ride a horse along the bridleway as a caterpillar type truck is sited at the eastern end thereby preventing entry/egress. (One can get through on foot. The gate at this end of the route has been removed. Anyone riding the route at the moment would have to use the farm road.) As traffic movement of livestock is estimated to be only 5 times a year this does not seem excessive for entanglement with users. And would be far better for the short distance concerned, rather than using the Shadforth - Ludworth trunk road. My experience of traffic on this road is that it is quite fast and does not move over, or slow down, for other users, and as there is no footpath alongside the road it's rather problematic.
5. As an another alternative, as I noted in my previous response (in Jan. 2015) to the application, it does not appear too difficult to change the eastern end of footpath 13 to bridleway and the rest of this route seems perfectly acceptable for use to join up with the current footpath 14 (proposed for change to bridleway), again making a full off road route avoiding traffic and the farm.
6. Again, regarding the creation of a new footpath in Haswell parish from bridleway 12, it would be considerably advantageous if the proposed footpath could be considered for creation as a bridleway. As well as ensuring the safety of riders away from traffic (and the safety of other road users encountering horses, and cyclists) it would improve the network of routes in the area for a more 'joined-up' network. As well as being an objective of Durham County Council and County Rights of Way planning, it is also an important part of county planning for improved access generally to East Durham and objectives to meet improved visitor/tourist numbers to the county as part of Visit Durham and other initiatives to improve the local economy.

7. If there are only sheep (or no livestock at all), which is often the case, in the fields this route crosses, no additional fencing would be needed to make a bridleway route. i.e. a fenced corridor would not be needed. Even if cattle are to be grazed on these fields, I would suggest a fenced corridor would not be needed. (I often ride routes in Cumbria where cattle are in fields crossed by bridleways with no separation fencing. There are only the usual reminders to ensure gates are securely closed at the entry points to the fields.)

8. It would also be considerably advantageous to users if the route could be considered bridleway all the way to the end route across the fields emerging at The Bottoms at Haswell Plough (footpath 9). The exit onto the road at this point would be far preferable to the exit/entrance for bridleway 12 as it is now at the northern end, with fast moving traffic on B1283 (Sherburn Hill - Haswell Plough). This part of the road, at The Bottoms, is of a more open aspect, with good sighting in each direction, has a grass verge and also footpath/pavement alongside the road on the north perimeter. This is a far safer situation for users.

9. My previous comments concerning various footpaths in the area, and consideration for upgrade to bridleways (and possible past evidence of their existence) still stands as valid information for input to improving the network in the area.

I'd be grateful if the above points can be taken into consideration when determining any changes to be made.

Thank you

*Assistant Access And Bridleways Officer - East Durham*

9 February 2018

**From:** Haswell ParishCouncil  
**Sent:** 08 February 2018 20:22  
**To:** Audrey Christie  
**Subject:** Re: Proposed path changes Hill House Shadforth

Hi Audrey

I can now confirm we have no comments to offer.

Apologies for the delay in getting back to you initially.

Kind regards

Kay

Kay Tweddle, Clerk, The Haswells

**Subject:**

FW: Proposed path changes Hill House Shadforth

From: Robert Blackburn [mailto:

Sent: 29 January 2018 06:16

To: Public Rights of Way <pro@durham.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: Proposed path changes Hill House Shadforth

We Have no objections to the proposed changes.

Robert Blackburn

Ramblers

**From:** Shadforth Parish Council <shadforthpc@hotmail.co.uk>

**Sent:** 07 March 2018 20:01

**To:** Audrey Christie <audrey.christie@durham.gov.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Proposed bridleway changes Hill House Shadforth

Hi Audrey

One of my councillors has spoken with Mr Oliver on this matter. He explained the problem with extending the bridleway across his land and at our meeting last night members agreed to leave the proposals as you suggested. They have no objections.

Thank you for your time and waiting for us.

Julia Owston

Clerk to Shadforth Parish Council