

Nunthorpe Hall Farm - Proposals for a PRow.

On 7th July 2023, there was a site visit organised by Stewart Williams, attended by Cllr Mieka Smiles, Geoff Watkins from the Ramblers Association, and myself.

Planning permission has already been granted for housing redevelopment of a relatively small section of the land forming Nunthorpe Hall Farm. The whole site, including the housing, is a triangle extending from the Old Stokesley Road in Nunthorpe Village to two points on the A172 (the main road between Middlesbrough and Stokesley).

The triangle is currently bounded by two PRows.

The base of the triangle to the south is a wide hard-surfaced pathway (CD). It is not proposed that there will be any changes to CD, other than to remove the gate currently at the Nunthorpe Village starting point. There is a gate and a stile where the pathway meets the A172, and it is not planned to alter this restriction when the houses have been constructed.

The other PRow (AB) extends from a point close to the entrance to CD at Nunthorpe Village. It joins the A172 to the north of where pathway CD joins the A172.

Because the section of AB closest to Nunthorpe Village runs through the part of the site where housing will be constructed, it is proposed that PRow AB be deleted at this point, with walkers required to use PRow AD instead. The middle section of AB will also be deleted because the middle zone between the two PRows will be required by the developer for various purposes, including creation of a Suds pond in an area prone to flooding. The final section of PRow AB will be retained, accessible for over two thirds of the way via CD and then via a new route created by the developer to the north-east of the Suds. There is a stile and a gate where PRow AB joins the A172 now, and presumably this restriction will be retained after housing construction.

The loss of most of PRow AB might appear alarming, but the pathway is already overgrown to the point where it has been unofficially diverted at the Nunthorpe Village end, it is not easily identifiable or accessible throughout, and the small final section (which will be retained) is particularly challenging for those with limited mobility. Because it is close to the other wide and hard-surfaced pathway CD, in practice most walkers use CD instead.

Some issues were identified during the site visit.

1. The construction of the new PRow connecting PRow CD with the small remaining section of AB, to the north east of the Suds. Unless the new connecting pathway is constructed to an adequate standard, it is liable to be over-grown and possibly flooded, to the point where it could become as difficult to walk on as the current AB.
2. The proposal about AB has drawn attention to a related problem with access/exit to CD where it joins the A172. This junction currently poses a major challenge to those of limited mobility, because of the locked gate and the adjacent stile. (Diversion to the remaining part of AB via the new path alongside the Suds is likely to be even more

challenging.) As we were informed that the gate will remain open during the construction period, we wondered why it needs to be locked again when construction has finished.

There is inevitably some concern about the justification that most of an overgrown PRow might reasonably be removed because it has become relatively inaccessible due to lack of maintenance. On the other hand, there is a wide, firm, and well-acknowledged PRow quite near, and the commitment to create a new pathway north east of the Suds is some compensation.

Therefore it is proposed that the Parish Council does not object to the removal and part-diversion of PRow AB, subject to clarification about the standard of construction of the new link adjacent to the Suds, and to clarification about making CD accessible for all residents.