

Subject RE: Potential footpath diversions, Longmoor near Ennerdale Bridge
From Nick Thorne <Nick.Thorne@lakedistrict.gov.uk>
To Nick Thorne <Nick.Thorne@lakedistrict.gov.uk>
Date 14/07/2026 12:21

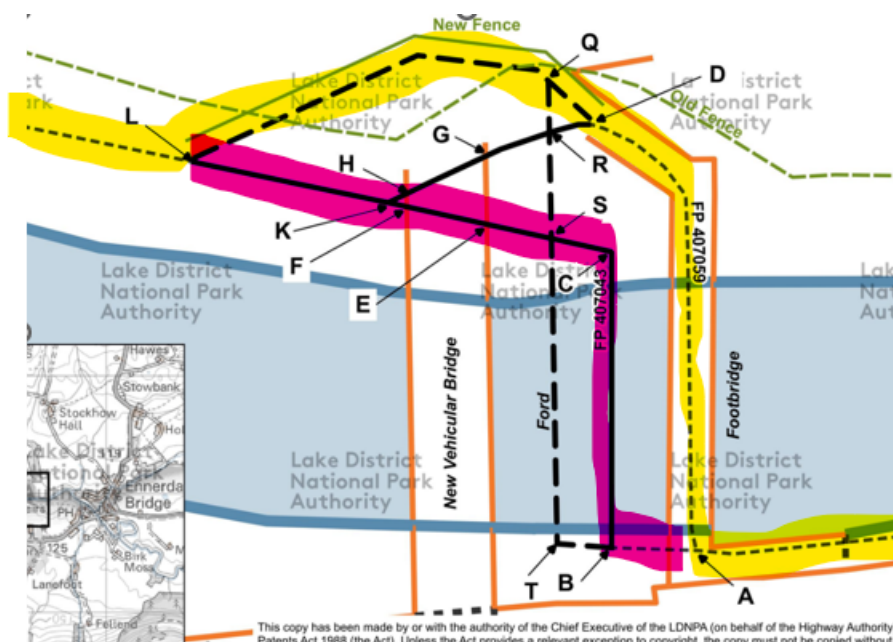
Dear consultee / interested party

Footpaths 407043 & 407059, northern end of Longmoor Bridges - Ennerdale & Kinniside Parishes

Following my consultation on this matter below, we received a number of responses.

Some of these responses queried whether or not the proposed diversion of footpath 407043 should go ahead – mainly on environmental grounds relating to the potential disturbance to the river bed and any potential impact on the pearl mussels for which the river is noted, but also whether there was actually any need for a path through the ford.

In effect, suggestions were that instead of diverting the footpath BCEFK to BTQ, we simply continue with the diversion of the through footpath (that is – replace DGHKL with DQL on the map below) and extinguish BCEFK altogether. This would result in the most simple future situation of one public footpath running from Ennerdale Bridge to Longmoor Bridge, then across the footbridge (AD) around the end of the vehicular bridge (DQL) and continuing along the northern bank of the river – as shown in yellow. The red line would be extinguished.



We have received a counter response to the effect that it is important to have the public highway shown through the ford as (along with other matters) it has been enjoyed for generations, has historical significance, and forms part of the cultural landscape and understanding of such.

Our Rights of Way Committee will be considering all the various options in due course. One of the main questions will be related to section 118 of the Highways Act 1980. This reads: *"Where it appears to a council as respects a footpath in their area that it is expedient that the path or way should be stopped up on the ground that it is not needed for public use..."* And one of the main things that is looked at is: *"The Secretary of State shall not confirm a public path extinguishment order, and a council shall not confirm such an order as an unopposed order, unless he or, as the case may be, they are satisfied that it is expedient so to do having regard to the extent (if any) to which it appears to him or, as the case may be, them that the path or way would, apart from the order, be likely to be used by the public"*

This is basically saying: What is the likelihood of the path through the ford being used by the public in the future?

Our Rights of Way Committee Members will be interested to hear from all of our consultees as to their views on this matter – to help them make the most appropriate decision. So, in essence, this consultation is to ask you the following please, bearing in mind the existence of the footbridge and any historical issues:

- Have you, or your members, used this ford on foot to cross the river since the footbridge was installed in around 1990 (other than during the period when the footbridge was closed / being replaced)?
- Are you, or your members, likely to use a public highway on foot through this ford in the future?
- What do you, or your organisation, consider to be the likelihood of the wider public using a public highway on foot through this ford in the future?

Many thanks, and I look forward to hearing from you in the next few weeks if possible.

Nick Thorne

Senior Rights of Way Officer
Lake District National Park Authority
01539 792621

lakedistrict.gov.uk | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

My normal working week is Monday to Thursday

From: Nick Thorne

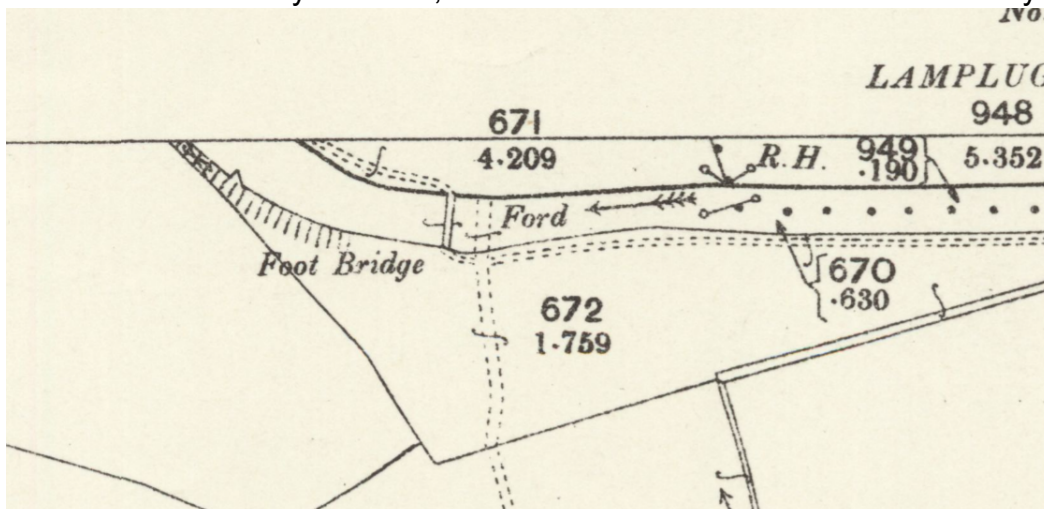
Sent: 13 April 2026 14:29

Subject: Potential footpath diversions, Longmoor near Ennerdale Bridge

Dear consultee / interested party

Potential diversions of footpaths 407043 & 407059, northern end of Longmoor Bridges - Ennerdale & Kinniside Parishes

The public footpaths that cross the River Ehen north of Longmoor Head Farm have an interesting history. Initially there was one footpath (FP 407043) which went across a bridge just downstream from the ford used by the farm, as shown on the 1890s Ordnance Survey Map.



This bridge was washed away, seemingly in the 1930s or 1940s. In 1953 during the definitive map process the parish council claimed the public right of way, and showed it as going across the

footbridge. However, as the bridge was no longer there, the path eventually ended up being shown and described by the county councils as going through the ford.

In the late 1980s / early 1990s we worked with the local community to build a new bridge to serve the footpath – this time just upstream from the ford.

This bridge was replaced after damage in c2010 – and the landowner dedicated a new public footpath across the bridge (FP 407059). Just prior to that, FP 407043 was also diverted to run more along the southern riverbank on its approach from Ennerdale Bridge to the bridge/ford site.

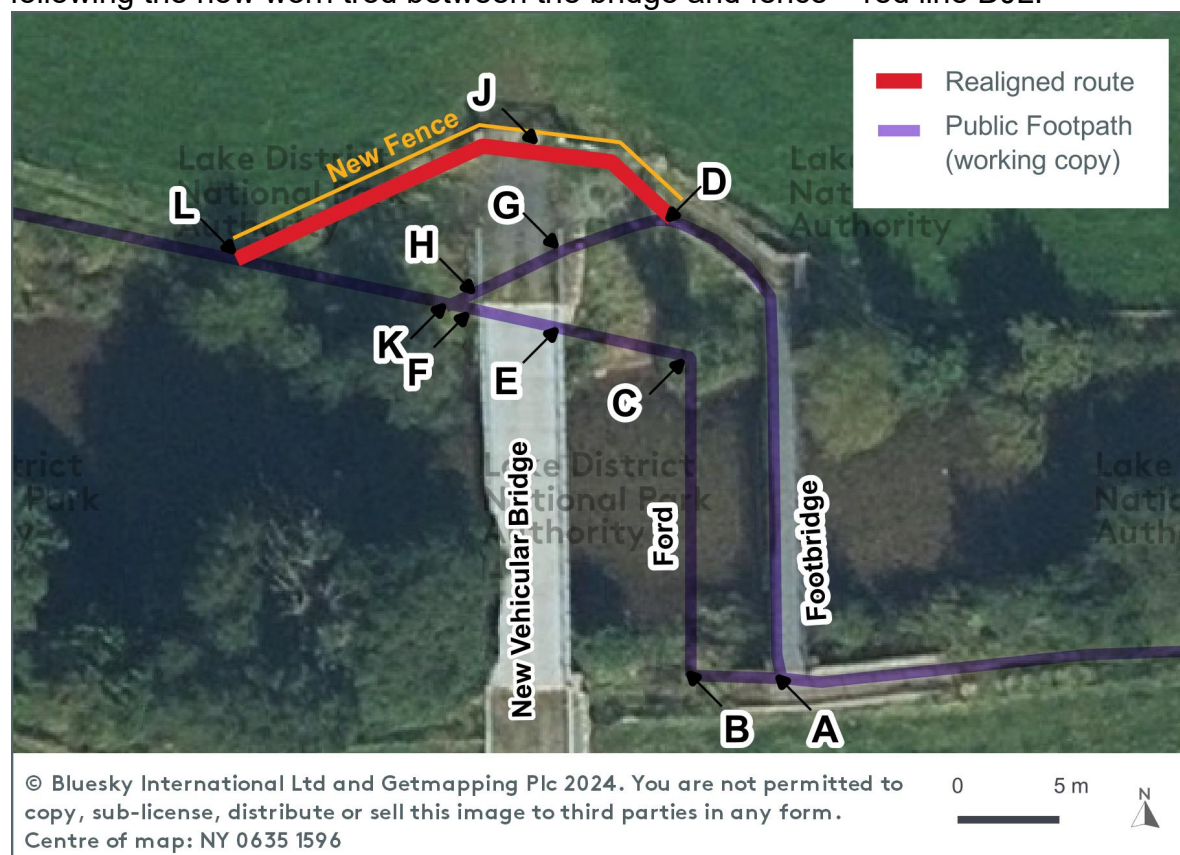
Since then a few things have happened.

- It seems that the base mapping of the ford appears to have become a bit more accurate over the last century – and where the ford is now shown on the Ordnance Survey base maps, and where it exists physically is something like five metres to the west (downstream) of where the definitive line has been mapped.
- A vehicular bridge has relatively recently been built just downstream of the ford to provide vehicular and cattle access to help protect the pearl mussels in the River Ehen from disturbance of the gravel beds in the ford. Unfortunately during the notification of intention planning process the impact on the two public footpaths was not identified by the planner. As a result, the legal definitive line of both paths are now obstructed by the northern end of the new vehicular bridge, but the ability for walkers to use the path as a whole has not been impacted – as a clear way round the end of the bridge has been provided/maintained.

To resolve these issues, we are suggesting retaining and diverting both paths slightly so that they:

- a. Go around the northern end of the new vehicular bridge;
- b. Show FP 407043 as going through the ford, rather than just alongside it.

Footpath 407059 was created over the 2012 footbridge, then from the base of the ramp coming off the footbridge Point D to Point K. The railing and ramp of the new vehicular bridge mean that this route cannot be used, and the proposal is to curve round the end of the bridge railings/ramp following the now worn trod between the bridge and fence – red line DJL.



Footpath 407043 will go down the steps of the footbridge (as it already does), then instead of going through the river between the footbridge and the ford, it will go through the ford itself. It will then exit on the north side on the sloping ramped exit, join FP 407059 and curve left round the far end of the new vehicular footbridge.



This is shown on the attached map as "Footpath 407059 to be diverted from DRGHK to DQ, Footpath 407043 to be diverted from BCS to BTS and from SEFKL to SRQL".

We would very much appreciate your views on this proposal, and would recommend that you visit the site to see the situation on the ground for yourself. If you wish to comment, please do so before the end of May 2026.

Thank you for your time, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Nick Thorne
Senior Rights of Way Officer
Lake District National Park Authority
01539 792621

lakedistrict.gov.uk | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#)

My normal working week is Monday to Thursday

This email contains information intended for the addressee only. It may be confidential and may be the subject of legal and/or professional privilege.. Any dissemination, distribution, copyright or use of this communication without prior permission of the addressee is strictly prohibited. Any views or opinions presented are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Lake District National Park Authority. Although this email and any attachments are believed to be free of any virus or other defects which might affect any computer or IT system into which they are received, no responsibility is accepted by the Lake District National Park Authority for any loss or damage arising in any way from the receipt or use

thereof. Computer systems of this Authority may be monitored and communications carried out on them recorded, to secure the effective operation of the system and for other lawful purposes.