

**DEFINITIVE MAP REVIEW: REVISED STATEMENT OF PRIORITIES  
January 2006**

*This statement of priorities for Definitive Map investigations and applications made under schedule 14 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 was considered and approved by the Rights of Way Committee on 23 January 2006 and minuted:*

**Background**

The County Council, as Surveying Authority for the Definitive Map and Statement, has a duty to keep it under continuous review and make modifications as required. The Secretary of State recommended that Surveying Authorities should periodically publish a statement of priorities for dealing with Definitive Map Modification Orders. The demands on the Definitive Map team were anticipated to increase due to national initiatives such as the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP), the Discovering Lost Ways Project and the consolidation of the Definitive Map. This had been recognised in the provision of an additional two officers, who took up post in May / June 2005. A revised Statement of Priorities was proposed to permit a systematic yet flexible approach to dealing with a potentially large volume of applications and matters requiring detailed investigations.

Previously, all applications for amendment of the Definitive Map were dealt with in strictly chronological order. It was now proposed that a combined system be employed comprising parallel lists, each star rated with provision for star rating certain criteria, namely:

- (a) a master list ("List A") of Schedule 14 claims from individuals / organisations listed chronologically in order of receipt / registration;
- (b) "List B" – internal priorities and investigations;
- (c) ROWIP priorities (items from the work programme or other identified improvements, e.g. safe routes to schools / strategic links / improvements to safety etc);
- (d) Discovering Lost Ways applications.

Star rating would also be attributed to the following criteria:-

- Date of receipt / length of time on the register (e.g., one star each year or six month period following registration; this being dependent on the scale of any backlog);
- impending development threatening the claimed route.

The report had been presented to the Cheshire and Warrington Local Access Forum for discussion at its meeting on 16 December 2005. The Forum endorsed the report and commented that there were big cost implications in terms of researching claims, which had to be borne by the Authority as it was incumbent on it to investigate all evidence.

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