Dursley Rugby Club News March 23

Proposed Footpath Diversion

1. Background

In 2019/2020 Dursley Rugby Club purchased approximately 6.25 acres of land to the rear of the Village Hall from Gloucestershire County Council.

As part of that purchase, the Club also applied for Planning Permission for Change of Use from agricultural to sporting use. This permission was granted on 6th November 2020.

Since that time, the club has undertaken various works linked to the conditions and requirements of that change, including removal of some hedgerows, and replacement planting around the perimeter of the land, and undergrounding of the power line.

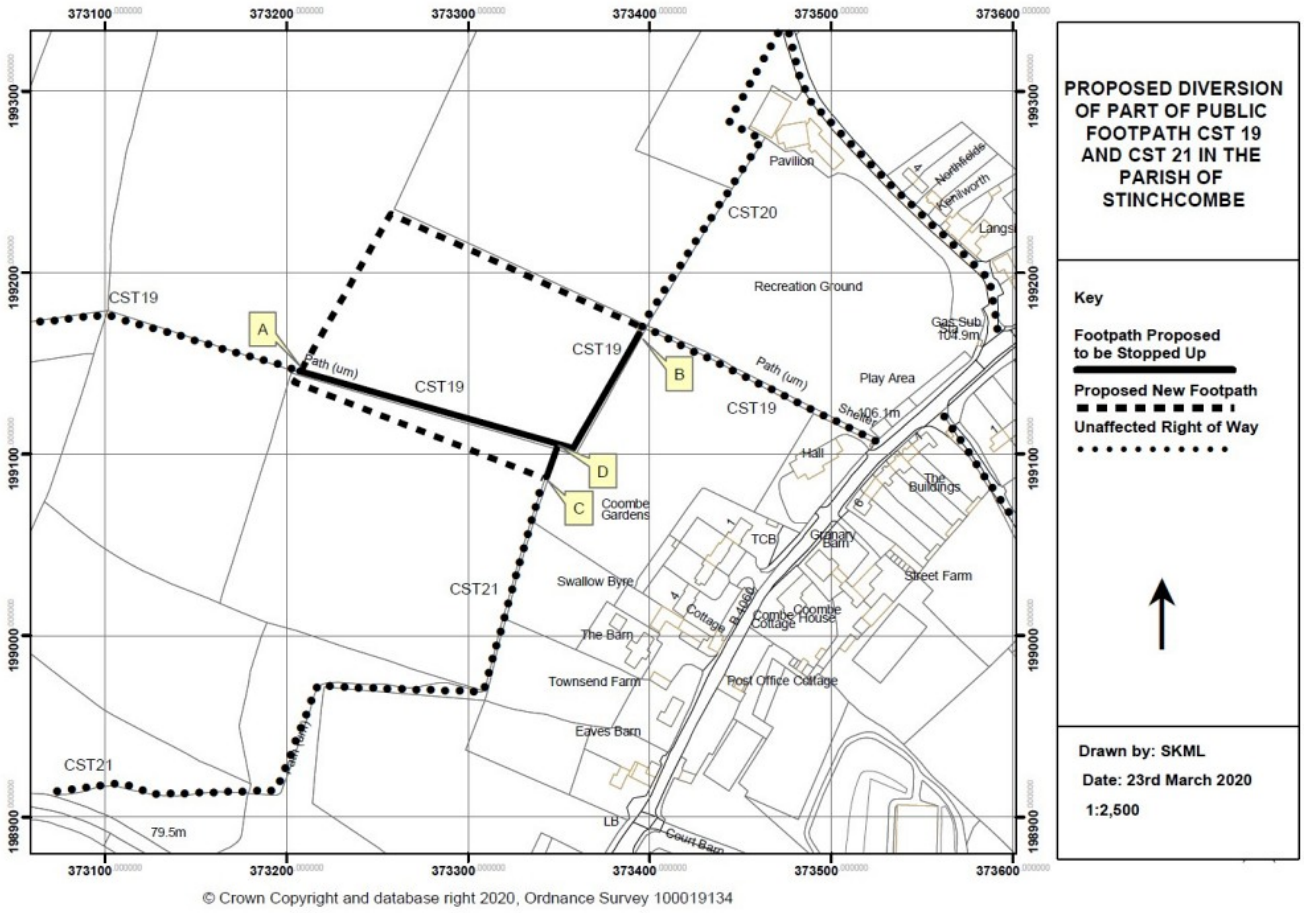
Work has been slower than originally hoped due to the uncertainty created by the pandemic, but we are now able to proceed with preparing the land more fully for actual sporting use. As per the change of use, this will include use by the Dursley Running Club for a running course around the field (precise route and design to be confirmed), and training areas for mini rugby groups.

To achieve this we now need to apply to divert the footpaths on the land, and we are keen for local residents to understand the reasons for this, and to answer any questions prompted by this application.

2. Which footpaths are we talking about?

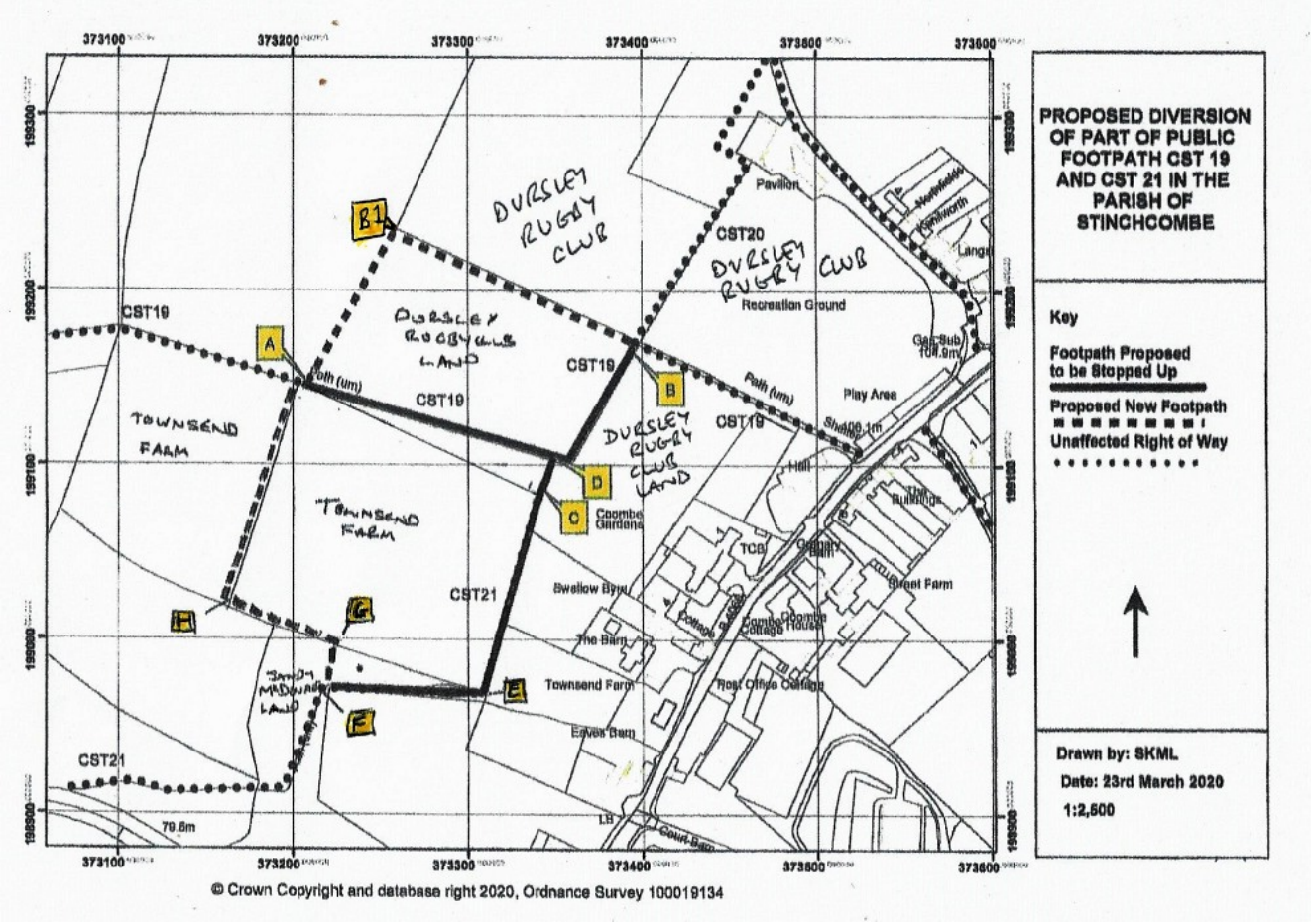
The footpaths in question are CST19 and CST21.

2.1 Original proposal – Please see Map 1 below:



The original proposal (dating back to 2019/2020) was only to divert CST 19, on a route to the northwest and around the perimeter of our new land to re-join CST21 at the stile which then leads into the field owned by James Luck.

2.2 Revised proposal – Please see Map 2 below:



However, having liaised with James Luck and Sandy McDonald, we now propose a different diversion which we believe will be better for footpath users by removing the need to return to CST21 down one side of our land, by following a route across James Luck's land and rejoining CST21 in the field owned by Sandy McDonald.

This is rather complicated to describe in text but hopefully is easy to see in the attached maps!

3. Why do we need to divert footpaths?

3.1 CST19

The diversion of footpath CST 19 is necessary as it crosses the rugby club land in a way which will make it incompatible for safe use by sporting users and footpath users at the same time. It will also restrict our ability to prepare and maintain the land.

3.2 CST21

The additional diversion of CST21 we believe is advantageous in several ways:

- It reduces the extent of the actual length of the diverted route on CST19 in order to get back onto CST21 making it better for footpath users
- It reduces the footpath presence on the rugby club land which is advantageous to the Club
- The diversion at point A to H takes walkers over the site of the Roman Villa
- It is advantageous or of neutral impact for James Luck, Sandy McDonald and the owners of Townsend Barn
- The Millennium Oak is still visible from the path near point F

4. Stiles & gates

The Rugby Club and James Luck will undertake to install gates (either kissing or hunter's) at the junction points (see Points A & H on Map 2) in place of stiles (there is no stile at Point B).

The junction between fields at Point G will need to be stock proof, so may remain as a stile.

The existing stiles at Points C & E on Map 2 will be removed or stopped up.

5. Next steps

We have presented this proposed diversion to the Parish Council, and now with local residents via the Stinchcombe e-News via this article.

The local Ramblers Association have indicated that they see no objection to the proposed diversion.

The next step will be to make a formal application to the

Stroud District Council for the diversion in the very near future.

If anyone would like to seek clarification on anything to do with the proposed diversion please email Simon Bilous at simonbilous@gmail.com .

Simon Bilous
Project Manager
Dursley Rugby Club