

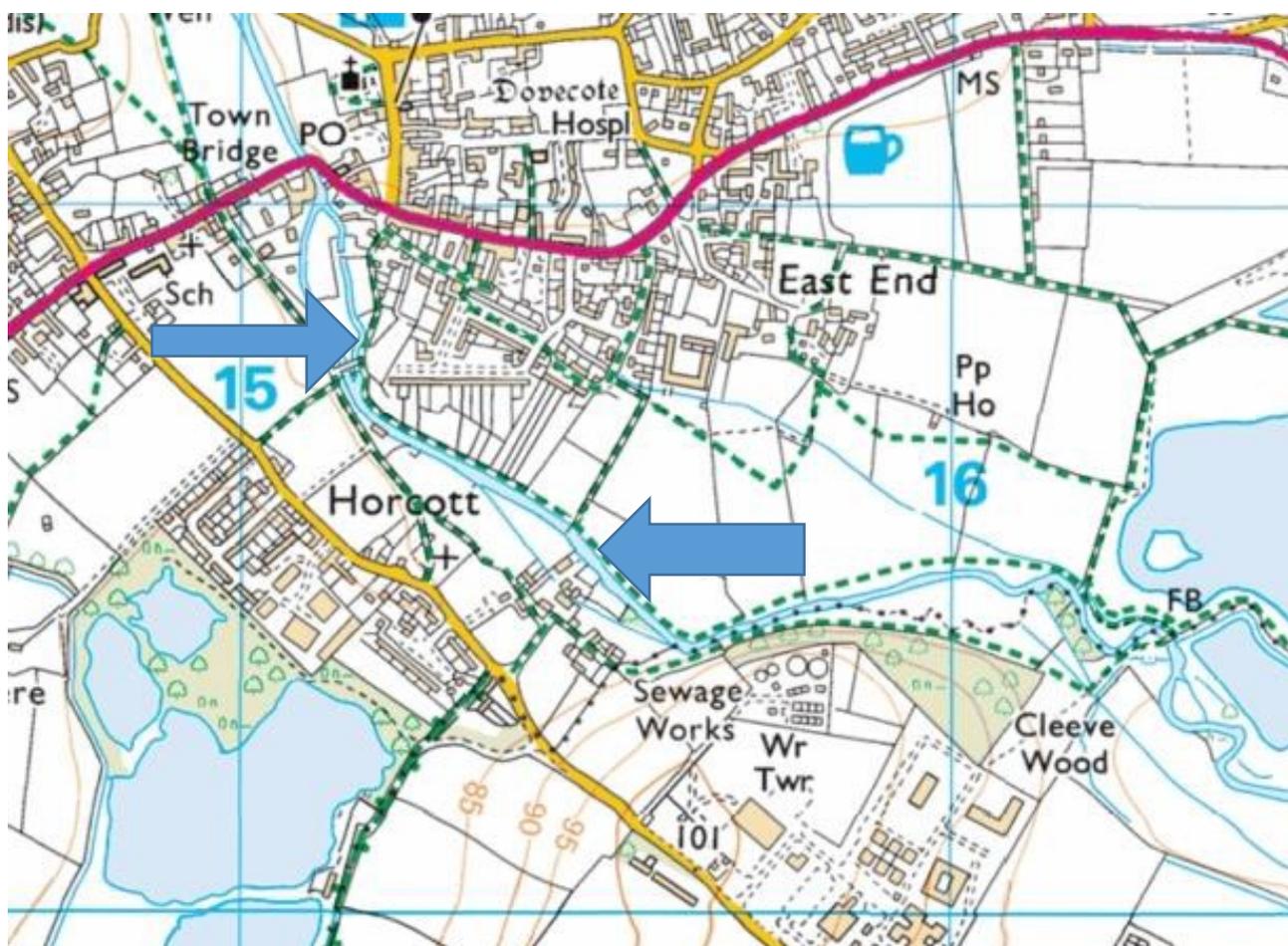
# Specification for Path along the River Coln, Fairford December 2018 V5

## 1. Background

Fairford Town Council would like to upgrade the existing footpath running to the north of the River Coln to a standard suitable for disability access.

## 2. Site Summary

The existing path starts to the north at OS Grid Ref 152009 to 154005, the new path will be located on top of the existing path and then also an additional section slightly further along the river bank which extends the path to OS Grid Ref 155005, this extends the path along the existing right of way to a seating area overlooking the river. Path to be developed is approximately located between the two blue arrows.



There is currently a muddy footpath in some places with timber edging running along the river bank, with the latter section being grass field, a formal footpath is required to be built along the entire length that meets accessibility standards and is constructed taking into account the needs of the local water vole population.

### 3. General Path Specification

The finished path is approx. 430m long but this will need to be verified by the contractor on site.

The path must be built using a no dig construction method, using a geotextile membrane to limit ground compaction, with a pressure treated larch timber edge (min 10 year guarantee) both sides and a compacted 100mm Type 1 stone base (DOT) with a self-binding topping finished depth of 50 - 75mm using a compactible gravel such as that from Ducklington Quarry. Soil edge to run alongside the raised timber edge to create a verge for wheels. Soil source to be approved. Also see drawing Construction Notes for River Coln Path Fairford.

The target width for the path is 1200mm, it is recognised that due to existing features this may not be possible along the entire length, at no point must the path width be reduced to a width less than 815mm with the maximum length for this width being 300mm, a width of a 1000mm is allowable with path lengths of no more than 1600mm at this width.

6 passing places are required where the overall path width becomes 2000mm and each passing place should be 2000mm in length. Proposed locations as per survey. Also see attached drawing Construction Notes for River Coln Path Fairford.

Where there is an option the path must be built as far away in distance from the river bank as is practical. The Site survey sheets show the location of the existing path marked in a black dashed line, the proposed site for the new path construction assumes the river side edge of the path remains in the current location (marked as a black dash) and the new path be constructed to the width of 1.2m with the new non river side edge marked as a solid red line in red.

There should be no steps, stiles, hedges or walls, and at no point should the gradient of the path exceed 1:12.

In all places vegetation overhanging the path should be cut back to a minimum 1200mm wide and 2100mm high, ideally cut back from the path to allow for growing space, where possible 500mm from path edge. This should be carried out in a manner that ensures minimal impact on the immediately adjacent vegetation and should be agreed on site with the Ecologist.

Timescales;

Last week Feb – Cut back woody vegetation along path (avoiding bird nesting season)

First week March – Strim the bank side for water vole habitat degradation.

Second week March – Start path construction work and complete as one job

July – Bank repair / Coir Roll installation

Repair work to the bank is required to establish a fringe of emergent vegetation along the river bank. There are three locations where Coir Rolls are required to restore the bank, these are along the line of the existing faggots/ wooden posts on sheet 4, a length on sheet 6 (adjacent to river cross section 7) and at a location close to the existing benches on sheet 9.

Additionally any areas of vegetation damaged during construction work and areas damaged during the habitat degradation required to displace the water voles will need to be reinstated by plug planting and reseeded.

Species to use include a multilayered mix of tall grasses and herbs such as meadowsweet and willowherb and nettle and a grassland wildflower and grass mix such as EM5 Meadow Mix for Loamy Soils from Emorsgate.

New signs are required at either end of the path requesting dogs to be kept under control and cyclists to dismount. Exact wording TBC.

The working area must be minimised to avoid excavation and compaction of the area between the bank and the track.

Site materials must be stored away from the river bank.

All site debris must be removed from the site.

Refueling of machinery must be carried out away from the river bank and plant nappies should be used.

#### **4. Path Specification by Section**

**Please refer to the site survey sheets for this section**

##### **4.1 Length covered by Sheet 1**



The path starts at the Fairford town end of Dilys Bridge. Cross sections of the river marked as Section 1 and 2 are available at this point. This section of path should follow the existing path alignment and width already bordered by timber edge. Obstructing post as per photo below to be removed.



#### **4.2 Sheet 2 and Sheet 3**

Cross section of the river marked as Section 3 at this point is available. Passing places to be located as marked.

#### **4.3 Sheet 4**

There is a likelihood of damaging burrows, therefore to displace the voles for the working period vegetation here needs to be trimmed in advance of path work. This will be approximately 50m in length as directed by the licensed ecologist.

Repair work to the bank approx. 9m in length is required using a combination of plug planting which should comprise emergent vegetation typical of the existing vegetation such as reed sweet grass and yellow flag and Coir Fibre roll. Use Coir roll pre-planted with Water Vole habitat plants such as that supplied by Salix, fixed according to the manufacturer's instructions in a double height row. This needs to be protected from trampling and also grazing by wild fowl.

The repair work must be securely fastened to the bank at both ends to prevent erosion behind the works. To create good water vole habitat the Coir rolls need to be staked along the line of the existing faggots and back filled behind to create a bank face with a steep profile ideally 1:1 and then this should be levelled off at bank height. When finished the height of the bank repaired shall not exceed the height of the bank on either side of the works.



New passing place to be located as marked.

#### **4.4 Sheet 5**

Cross sections of the river marked as Section 5 and Section 6 at this point are available.

New passing place to be located as marked.

#### **4.5 Sheet 6**

There is a likelihood of damaging burrows, to displace voles vegetation here needs to be trimmed in advance of path work. A section of bank less than 50m in length will require vegetation trimming, the exact location and length to be determined by the on-site Ecologist. Coir roll bank repair required of length 5m location at section 7 as below photo.



#### **4.6 Sheet 7**

No further detail

#### **4.7 Sheet 8**

No further detail

Passing place required as marked on site survey.

#### **4.8 Sheet 9**

Path to be extended from the end of the existing path to the benches located by the river bank, surfaced area of compactible gravel to be constructed as per the path to be laid extending 1.5m in front of the benches and 1m to the sides and rear of the benches.

Passing place required as marked on site survey.

Bank stabilization work required using Coir rolls immediately up stream of the benches, approx. length of repair 5m.



#### **4.9 Details relating to water voles**

The works will be covered by a Natural England licence in relation to water voles. The Licensed Ecologist will need to visit the site regularly to ensure compliance, and to oversee works in specific areas.

The contractor will need to undertake strimming of bankside vegetation, where required to displace water voles (c. 50m length on sheets 3/4, and a shorter length on sheets 5/6 – the precise locations will be agreed on site with the Licensed Ecologist). The strimming will need to extend back up to 2m from the top of the bank. The specification for this element of the works is as follows:

- 1) The affected lengths of the watercourse will be re-surveyed by the Licenced Ecologist in early-March and any burrows present marked with a bamboo cane positioned in front of the burrow.
- 2) Immediately following the survey referred to above, bankside vegetation will need to be strimmed within the affected lengths to bare earth and the arisings raked off and removed from site (Licensed Ecologist will need to be present during this operation, so it will need to be programmed to suit his availability); any in-channel vegetation within 5m of the bank edge will also need to be cut (or dug out with a spade where necessary).
- 3) After 5-10 days, where burrows cannot be retained, they will be excavated using hand tools by the Licensed Ecologist, digging back as far as possible or until the end of the burrow is located.
- 4) In some locations, the bank face will need to be scraped using an excavator with a toothed bucket to destroy any burrows present and then smoothed with a ditching bucket, to reduce the likelihood that water voles return during the works (Licensed Ecologist will need to be present during this operation, so it will need to be programmed to suit his availability).

Works in the specific locations covered by these works will be constrained until the operation referred to above has been completed. Dependent on the level of construction activity taking place prior to completion of the displacement operation, the contractor may need to install appropriate temporary signage / barrier fencing to prevent accidental damage to water vole burrows before completion of the water vole displacement operation.