SATIN Case Study

Battleby House to Redgorton Active Travel Path

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Background

'**Battleby to Redgorton Active Travel Path'** is a 509m long, shared-use path providing a much needed off-road route between the Perthshire village of Redgorton and Battleby House Conference Centre.

Prior to these works being completed, the only way to gain non-motorised access to Battleby House from the nearest village was along a busy, narrow and fast rural road; heavily used by agricultural and haulage vehicles including large forestry transporters. A narrow grass verge did allow some pedestrians to step off the road however it is elevated above the road surface, uneven, irregularly maintained (limited grass cutting) and unsuited to use as a walking, cycling or horse riding surface.

A new path was required which took users off-road and along a safe, gradient friendly route; encouraging people who would have previously avoided travelling by non-motorised means to consider a more active travel option. In addition, it would allow users to gain safe access to the wider path networks within the area.

Location Plan
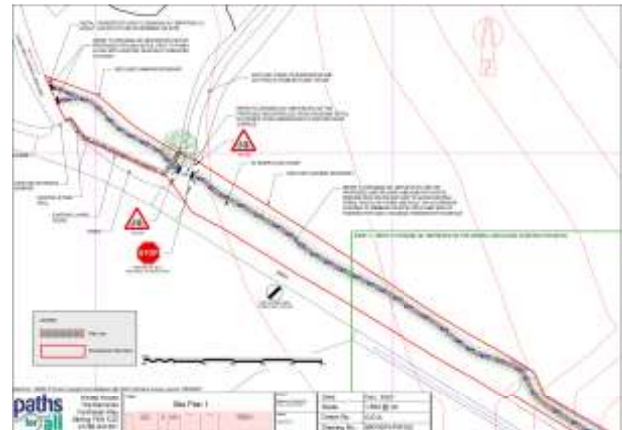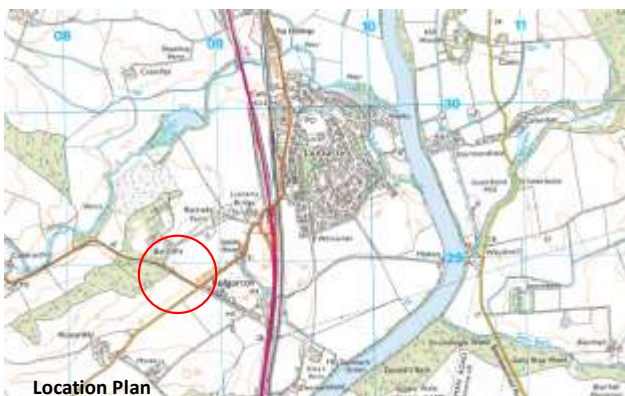
Technical Detail

A feasibility study was undertaken by Paths for All, on behalf of NatureScot, and followed by the production of technical design drawings and a tree survey (identifying trees to be felled to facilitate works) to allow planning approval to be obtained.

The upper part of the route passed through an area of mixed woodland with the lower section following an existing agricultural field edge.

Construction of the route required landowner consent and a legal agreement to be drawn up which determined the extent of the works, the width of ground being used to construct the full path corridor and the future maintenance responsibilities for the path surface, verges and other path infrastructure.

The route exited onto an existing roadside footway near Redgorton and to a one-way entrance road at the Battleby Conference Centre. The route also crossed the exit road from the Battleby Conference Centre and which necessitated installation of a more formal, uncontrolled crossing point.

Technical Detail (contd.)

The uncontrolled road crossing included double row, buff coloured tactile paving at path ends, reflective bollards made from recycled plastic, cycle crossing signage (Dia. 950) and post and rail fencing to 'channel' path users and restrict the ability to enter or exit this crossing point from the sides. The post and rail fence was also installed with a capping rail for added user protection when located next to a route that will be used by cyclists and horseriders. The fence rails were cut flush with the end posts to avoid risk of horse tack becoming hooked.

Uncontrolled crossing

To maintain a familiar / natural look, and to ensure value for money, the path was constructed with a whin dust wearing course. A standard 'half-tray' construction technique was used.

This technique removes approx. 75mm depth of material before infilling with Type 1 aggregate (typically 150mm depth over a geotextile) and using the excavated spoil to form path verges that slope down from the path surface. Building a path in this way helps to slightly elevate the finished path surface above existing ground level; greatly aiding drainage.

Whin dust surface showing path elevated above adjacent ground levels

Care was taken to ensure a flowing and pleasing line was taken through the woodland areas. The section along the field edge was, by its nature, fairly straight however path users were seperated from the adjacent field with new stock fencing and 2no. right angled deflections were installed at the bottom of the slope to slow path users prior to existing onto the roadside pavement.

Path end near Redgorton

Project Outputs and Outcomes

- 1018sqm of new, shared use path constructed.

- 430m of new stock fencing installed.

- Directional wayfinding installed at either ends of the route.

- Tactile paving installed at all path ends and with reflective bollards and warning signage at road crossing.

- New route allows users to connect with a network of other paths within the area and helps them avoid busy roads when doing so.

Evaluation

The project provides a new link which has proven to be very popular with the local community and is used by many on a daily basis.

Path width of 2m was able to be maintained throughout providing space for different user types and including horse riders, cyclists and pedestrians.

Additonal care taken at a road crossing and path ends has been greatly appreciated and improves safety of users whilst promoting a more inclusive design approach.

Proper design and careful construction will provide a cost effective, hard wearing and durable shared-use path surface.

Key Learning Points:

- Involve an outdoor access specialist to help develop the path design: they will help to ensure the route complies with current best practice, is built to the required specification and meets the available budget.

- Appraise the route within the context of the wider local access network. Ensure that it is, or will be, integrated with the local network rather than an addition to it.

- Work with landowners at all times to ensure proposed works meet with their acceptance and allow a path agreement to be put in place.

- Involve the Local Authority to check whether Planning Consent is a requirement.

- Consider inclusive design at all times to improve access for all types of users.

- Draw up tight contract specifications and tender documents to help manage expectations and limit ambiguity and uncertainty.

- Supervise contractors carefully, especially if you don't have prior experience of working with them.

- Where possible, ensure all aspects of the work are included in the project plan and budget.

- Build in an on-going maintenance budget to ensure the route continues to meet users needs and does not fall into disrepair due to erosion or other factors.

- Allow some flexibility / contingency in the budget for any additional features like drainage.

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