

Order of Processing of Definitive Map Modification Order Applications:

Prioritisation and Ranking

- 1.1. Applications (both new and those yet to be processed) are now prioritised (ranked) according to the criteria set out below in order to make the best use of limited Council resources and to provide the greatest improvement to Central Bedfordshire's public rights of way network. Further details of how each criterion is weighted can be found in the *Revised Applications Policy (2017)*.

Criterion	Summary
Basic Evidential Test	This test has yet to be applied under the Deregulation Act 2015 and so these scores are not currently used in the ranking process
Secretary of State's direction	Applicable following successful appeal to the Secretary of State under Sch. 14 S.3(2) to the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
Early determination required	Where the position/status is required to be ascertained prior to legal action taking place, or prior to commencement of a CBC scheme, or for any other valid Council reason that requires the determination being expedited
Obstructed route	Whether a route is obstructed, either recently or long-term
Alternative route	Whether there is an alternative route and whether this is suitable and safe for the relevant class of users
Development threat	Whether a route is threatened with imminent or likely development
User Evidence	Whether there is a risk of loss of key witnesses or whether evidence is accessible documentary evidence
Connectivity	Whether the route is a critical connection, new path or provides a duplicate path or no enhancement
Level of use	Whether use is frequent by many people or infrequent by few people
Changes on ground	Whether there is a change of route/new route, removal of structures/obstructions or no physical change on the ground
(For deletions / downgradings only)	Would remove a well-used/critical route or where a route has valid security/privacy considerations or would remove a route over arable farmland

- 1.2. Each criterion is weighted with a bias towards the enhancement and development of the public rights of way network. This bias applies **only** to the order in which applications are processed: each application will be impartially determined on the evidence available at the time of determination.
- 1.3. Once an application is accepted as being “duly made” it is assigned a case number and ranked. The ranked application is added to the list of pending applications held within the public Section 53B Register. Changes in circumstances of applications and the submission of new applications may change rankings thus promoting or demoting existing applications.
- 1.4. The Council will process duly made applications in order of the ranked priority at the time the case is started. Cases started before the onset of the new prioritisation scheme will continue to be processed in parallel with ranked applications.