

Dear Kayleigh,

Thank you for re-consulting HCC Countryside Service on this planning application. Please take the below comments as the Service's formal response to the new information provided by the applicant. These comments have also been sent to East Hants District Council's planning team, in response to their application for this site, 55625/003.

Following the previous consultation and the Service's response on 3rd July 2024, the applicant has provided a revised Transport Assessment (TA) and a Walking, Cycling and Horse-riding Assessment Review (WCHAR). These documents provide summaries of the applicant's understanding of the condition of the various PROW that interact with the site and some proposals for improvements or alterations to them.

The applicant has stated, "liaison with HCC's Countryside Services team is expected to occur to further discuss improvement schemes for the PROW routes in the vicinity of the site, which are currently in poor condition. This would be done to support the future Reserve Matters application" (TA, para. 4.11). The Service must again be clear that such matters must be resolved at the Outline stage - partly because PROW, as public highway, forms part of this site's access and must, therefore, be considered with the rest of the highway matters at this stage and partly to ensure any PROW obligations that may be required and agreed can be secured in a Section 106 agreement.

Horndean Byway Open to All Traffic 46 (BOAT 46)

The applicant notes in the TA and WCHAR the poor condition of this byway adjacent to the whole of the site's north boundary. The Service, in its previous response, requested a financial obligation be secured from this development to enable the Service to carry out improvement works to the byway for the benefit of the development's future residents, as well as the wider public. However, the applicant is of the view that such improvements are not necessary "due to the presence of better east-west connections within the site" (WCHAR para. 4.33) and that the BOAT is "unlikely to be utilised by residents of the development as they are not the quickest or most convenient routes to local facilities" (WCHAR para. 4.37). The Service makes the following points in response to this position:

1. While the Service acknowledges that some of the proposed routes within the site shall likely be more convenient for some of the new dwellings, it would not agree that this is the case for all of them, particularly those to the north of the western parcel. For these properties a suitably improved BOAT 46, in conjunction with the links to it from the site already proposed by the applicant, can provide a quicker and/or safer alternative to the development's proposed footway and estate road network.
2. The application proposes several connections points from the site into BOAT 46, indicating, presumably, that the applicant believes BOAT 46 likely will and should be utilised as part of the site's walking and cycling access.
3. Given the increase in user volume on the byway that can be anticipated from this 150+ home development, it is reasonable to expect the applicant to contribute towards PROW improvements in close proximity to the site. National planning policy is clear that "planning decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users" (NPPF 2024, para. 105). This application does not currently accord with this policy in regard to BOAT 46, even though the PROW is in

a material proximity to the site and is proposed to be utilised by the development via multiple links.

4. The impact of the development on the value of the BOAT as a recreational route, providing access to the wider countryside and South Downs National Park, is also relevant. While mature vegetation screens much of the byway from the site, there is likely to be a noise impact during construction and occupation, to the detriment of the public's enjoyment of a route that currently runs through a comparatively quiet, more rural landscape. The surfacing improvements outlined by the Service in its previous response would to some extent compensate for this, to the lasting benefit of the development's future residents and local public.

Horndean Bridleway 30 (BW30)

The applicant has not acknowledged or agreed to the Service's request for a contribution to enable the Service to improve this bridleway running along the site's western boundary. It is another key access link to the wider countryside, with links proposed into it from the development and it would provide an off-road access route for residents of the site's western parcel to amenities to the south, including Rachel Madocks School and Wecock Common.

Havant Restricted Byway 523 (RB523) and Havant Bridleway 1a and 1b (BW1b)

The applicant has identified these PROW as likely to be more utilised by residents and has proposed surfacing changes, vegetation removal and the addition of lighting to sections of the routes. The Service needs to discuss internally and with our Hampshire Highways colleagues to establish the Highway Authority's expectations for these routes, in light of the applicant's proposed changes. Further detail of exactly what the applicant is proposing should be provided before the Service can comment further. Such information should include the sections, lengths and widths of PROW on which the lighting, vegetation removal and new surfacing are proposed and specifications for proposed surface treatments.

The Service's position, in relation to BOAT 46 and BW30, remains as stated in its previous response of 3rd July 2024 and re-iterated above and we, therefore, look forward to the applicant's agreement to the requested obligation. It is hoped more details of the applicant's suggested changes to RB523 and BW1a and 1b can be provided to enable the Service to take a clear position on them and the Service would welcome direct engagement with the applicant to progress this.

Kind regards,

Peter Miles

Countryside Planning Officer
Hampshire Countryside Service