

# **Highways Act 1980 Section 25: Thakeham: Proposed Creation of Two New Lengths of Public Bridleway**

## **Decision Report**

### **1. Background and Location – See [location plan](#)**

Planning consents recently granted by Horsham District Council for large scale residential development in the Abingworth area of Thakeham includes a requirement as part of a 106 Agreement that the developers provide two lengths of public bridleway. The main area of development lies to the east of the B2139 Thakeham to Storrington Road , bordered on its northern side by fp 2480 and fp 2487 to the east. A short distance to the east of the site beyond adjoining farmland runs bw 2483 known as Strawberry Lane and to the west of the B2139 commencing on High Bar Lane and adjoining a further smaller area of future development is bw 2473. These are both important bridleways in terms of their length and recreational value, but at present have no direct connection. The purpose of this proposal is to create a direct bridleway link for the benefit of the local community and general users of the wider path network.

### **2. Proposals**

It is intended the County Council enter into Creation Agreements with the landowners under S25 of the Highways Act to create two new definitive public bridleways A-B-C-D-E-F and G-H-I-J thereby linking the existing routes on Strawberry Lane and High Bar Lane. There will be a direct crossing of the B2139 at a point which with the benefit of the present traffic calming measure offers an optimum crossing point in terms of traffic safety. The provision of the western length will enable walkers/cyclists/horse riders to avoid using both a stretch of the B2139 and also part of High Bar Lane

#### **The Eastern route A-B-C-D-E-F (solid green line on plan [ROW01 RevB](#))**

Commencing at point A on bw 2483 the new bridleway runs west on a field headland and through a wooded area to meet fp 2487 at B. It follows the line of the footpath for a short distance to C and then continues west through the new housing area and crosses a service road at D before passing to the south of sports pitches and doglegging north via E to meet the B2139 at F.

#### **The Western route G-H-I-J (broken green line on plan [ROW01 RevB](#))**

Commencing at point G on the B2139 opposite the western end of the eastern route the proposed new bridleway turns slightly south and then westwards to cross a ditch at H where a culvert or bridge will be required. It continues west to meet fp 2474 at I and then turns south to join the existing bw 2473 on High Bar Lane at J.

The route northwards from point I remains footpath status for the present but is proposed to form part of a future agreement to create an additional bridleway link.

### **3. The Legal Tests**

The routes shown on the proposal plan are offered to the County Council by landowners as definitive public bridleways, which the Council can accept by means of public path creation agreements under the Highways Act 1980 Section 25.

### **4. Consultations**

On 15 April 2020 the County Council consulted with Horsham District Council who has already been closely involved with the negotiations surrounding the proposals as part of the planning process. County Council members were notified of the proposal by its inclusion on the 16 April 2020 edition of the members' Bulletin. The parish council is strongly in support of the proposal.

### **5. Costs and Works**

The surface of the new bridleways is to be constructed to an approved standard and to a width of 3 metres. Much of the eastern route has already been installed but yet to receive final approval. The western route has not yet been provided and will include the construction of a bridge or culvert at point H.

The County Council has agreed to be responsible for the cost of additional signage.

### **6. West Sussex Rights of Way Management Plan, Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010 and Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications**

In considering this proposal the County Council's responsibilities under the provisions of the above have been taken into account.

### **7. Conclusion**

The new paths will provide a valuable connection in the bridleway network and will benefit the local community as well as users of the wider path network and will be in compliance with the S106 agreement.

Judith Grimwood – Rights of Way Officer  
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