

# **Highway Act 1980 S26 - Selsey: Proposed Upgrade of part of Public Footpath 76 Golf Links Lane to Bridleway as Part of a Route Linking Selsey with Medmerry**

## **Report for Consultation**

### **1. The Proposal**

There has been a long held ambition shared by the County Council, Selsey Town Council and others to create an off road route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders connecting Selsey with the extensive package of footpaths and bridleways already in place around the Medmerry coastal area. See attached [Location plan](#) (PDF, 409KB).

Agreement has already been reached with landowners to create 2 lengths of bridleway over farmland continuing west from Golf Links Lane and in order to complete the link it is proposed that Golf Links Lane become part of the intended route. However, before incorporating Golf Links Lane it is necessary for its legal status, presently public footpath 76, to be formalised as a definitive bridleway so as to allow its present use by walkers to be extended to cyclists and horse riders. This part of the scheme is identified between points A and B on the attached [Consultation plan](#) (PDF, 299KB).

Golf Links Lane serves as access for a number of private properties as well as the Selsey Golf and Country Club. It has an all-weather surface but not fully black topped throughout its length. As well as the public footpath, it carries a fair amount of private vehicular traffic and also private and unofficial cycle use, which is accommodated by the adequate width and generally good visibility.

### **2. The Legal Tests**

The County Council has powers to make a S26 Order to create a public bridleway where it is advantageous to the public to do so, having regard to the extent to which the bridleway would add to the convenience or enjoyment of the public and local residents and also the effect which the new path would have on the rights of persons interested in the land. The process includes notification to all landowners and other interested parties and is open to objection.

### **3. Consultations**

The whole of the Medmerry package of new paths was the subject of wide consultation with the path users and other interested parties prior to being approved by the Rights of Way Committee in 2015. It met with undivided support at the time as borne out by the paths' present day popularity and it is reasonable to assume that the opening up of this important link for all users is likely to be welcomed as a valuable enhancement to the network.

On 7 April 2021 letters of consultation were sent to Chichester District Council and to the relevant user groups and other interested parties with the request that any comments be submitted by 6 May 2021. Notice of the consultation was included in the Members Bulletin. Careful consideration will be given to all responses received.

#### **4. Costs and Works**

Apart from changing waymarking from Public Footpath to Public Bridleway it is not expected to bring about any change to the character of the Lane and its status as bridleway would not extend use to public vehicular access. Private access would, of course, remain unchanged. The cost of making the Order is to be borne by the County Council.

#### **5. 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.

#### **6. Conclusion**

The formal designation of Golf Links Lane as a bridleway would make a valuable enhancement to the path network and an important recreational link for Selsey residents, especially for cyclists who would be able to enjoy a safe off-road route to the popular Medmerry area. It may also offer an attractive new recreational facility in support of the local tourism economy.

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