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West Sussex Local Access Forum



18th November 2019

Sent by email to: LDFconsultation@midsussex.gov.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

Draft Site Allocations DPD (Regulation 18) Consultation

I am responding to the above consultations on behalf of West Sussex Local Access Forum (WSLAF).

West Sussex Local Access Forum (WSLAF) is an independent advisory body, established under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to give access advice to local authorities, statutory organisations and non-government organisations. In giving that advice the Forum's main objective is to ensure the existing network of public rights of way (PRoWs), as well as the wider access network, is protected and where possible enhanced. The Forum has a balanced membership of knowledgeable and experienced users (walkers, cyclists, horse riders and carriage drivers), landowners and other interests (including conservation, disabled access, landscape). For further information about the Forum please visit www.wslaf.org.

The above consultation was discussed at our Forum meeting on 23rd October 2019. Whilst understanding that the draft document is required to ensure the provision of homes, jobs and infrastructure, Members note that one of the four main aims is "to set out additional Strategic Policies necessary to deliver sustainable development".

WSLAF believes that infrastructure in sustainable development should include, wherever possible, PRoW and access to create a strategic multi-functional (walking, cycling, equestrian, disabled) network which, as highlighted on page 93, para 3.24, *would bring multiple benefits including the potential to promote road safety by taking such users away from the road highway.....*

The National Planning Policy Framework, para 98 states that "*Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example adding links to existing rights of way networks....*"

The Forum welcomes (page 88, para 3.11) the draft documents support for the West Sussex Transport Plan, and its statement that all new developments should contribute to "*improving the public rights of way network in accordance with the Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP).*"

However, we would point out that following a statutory 10 year review of the RoWIP, the County Council published the West Sussex Rights of Way Management Plan 2018-

2028 in April 2018. This document fulfils the requirements of the Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000 to produce and publish a RoWIP.

WSLAF strongly supports Policy SA37: Burgess Hill/Haywards Heath Multifunctional Network. We have been aware of and supported the local desire of all non-motorised users (NMU) for this link over many years, and we very much welcome MSDC's strong commitment to delivering the scheme.

This letter constitutes formal advice from the West Sussex Local Access Forum. Mid Sussex District Council is required, in accordance with section 94(5) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to have regard to relevant advice from this Local Access Forum in carrying out its functions.

The Forum would be happy to give further advice to MSDC if required, and looks forward to being advised when the consultation report summarising the issues raised, and how these comments have been used, is published.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Noble', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jane Noble, Forum Officer
West Sussex Local Access Forum

Copy for information to: All WSLAF members