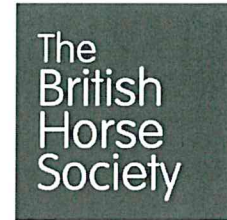


Patron Her Majesty
The Queen

Fulfilling your
passion for horses

The British Horse
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Planning Strategy and Regeneration
Fareham Borough Council
Civic Offices
Civic Way
Fareham
Hampshire
PO16 7AZ

6th December 2017

Dear Sirs

Local Plan Consultation

I am writing to you as a representative of the British Horse Society (BHS) in Hampshire. We wish to respond to the Fareham Borough Local Plan on behalf of our members and other local equestrians. We are also mindful that many of comments made may also apply to other non-motorised user groups.

Three key statistics that provide context to this response:

- 4000+ horse riders and carriage drivers were admitted to hospital in 2015-2016 due to road accidents (source: NHS episode statistics).
- 80% of horse related accidents are caused by vehicles passing equines too close and too fast (source: British Horse Society).
- Hampshire is one of the most densely populated horse counties in the UK (source: former National Equine Database).

It is estimated that there are 87,000 horses in Hampshire contributing approximately £313m to the local economy through the supply of goods and services by mainly small businesses. The area in and around Fareham has a large horse population which makes use of these businesses. A current example is Crofton Equestrian Centre where there are nearly 100 horses.

On examining the OS map of the area it is clear that the public rights of way network is fragmented and we suggest that thought could be given as to how communities in the area could re-establish connectivity to allow non-motorised users to navigate their way around the Borough with as little interaction with road vehicles as possible. The BHS understands that this is a big 'ask', but this consultation does present an opportunity for decision makers to enhance Fareham Borough as a place that people wish to live and work in.

Equestrians are a legitimate vulnerable road user group and should be able to exercise their horses in a safe environment, enjoying parity with walkers and cyclists. Horse riders do not want to ride on carriageways, but due to the increased, and increasing, amount of urbanization of rural areas they often have very little choice but to ride on busy roads.

One solution is the creation of more shared routes. People often express concern about this idea. However, horse riders, cyclists and dog walkers all currently share bridleways,

Add letter to:
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the plan:
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Housing: H1.

restricted byways, byways open to all traffic and multi-user routes quite happily. It is worth noting that bridleways have also been diverted by local authorities onto cycle ways to enable development to take place.

On the 22nd November 2017 the BHS held a drop-in session at Crofton Community Hall for BHS members and other equestrians. We wanted to better understand the issues they currently face and what ideally would be of benefit to them.

Some of the information is relevant to the Welborne development and a copy of this response will be sent to the project team for consideration.

The following generic issues arose:

- Lack of bridleways and safe riding in and around Fareham.
- Having to ride on very busy roads in order to reach safe riding.
- Lack of inclusion in transport and housing development policies, especially where road improvements are being made and new roads built.
- Lack of parking for horse boxes and trailers where there is access to safe off-road riding.

The following generic suggestions were made:

- Upgrade strategic footpaths where appropriate to create multi-user routes to accommodate walkers, cyclists and horse riders.
- Create circular routes.
- Permit horse riders to use cycle ways and grass verges using Highway legislation to facilitate this.
- Dedicate bridleways that are currently permissive, i.e. around the sewage works at Peel Common.
- Inclusion in transport policies especially where road improvements are being made and new roads built.
- Parking for horse boxes/trailers in areas where safe riding is accessible.
- Where open space is being made available to the general public consider how this could also be opened up to all non-motorised users.

Specific issues:

- Difficulty in negotiating the bridleway underpass between Junctions 9 and 10 of the M27 – it is too low. Horse riders have to dismount and lead their horses through and some people find difficult in remounting due to physical disabilities. Need to have mounting blocks positioned either side of the underpass.
- Difficulty in accessing the Meon Valley Trail as it severed by the main railway line at Knowle.
- No suitable parking for horse boxes/trailers to enable people to travel their horses to use the Meon Valley Trail.
- The impact of the Stubbington by-pass on horse riders.
- Access to Hill Head from Crofton.

The following briefly describes new routes that we would ask you to please consider as potential routes for equestrians.

Crofton

Access to Hill Head by upgrading local footpaths in the area into multi-user routes such as footpaths 49, 50 and 51.

Access to the Meon Valley Trail by upgrading footpaths 43, 47, 48 and 41a, the latter of which nearly joins up with the southern end of the Trail.

Could Fareham Borough Council approach the landowners of Hollam Hill Farm and Posbrook Farm for permissive routes around the boundaries of fields. This could potentially be a revenue generating scheme for the landowners.

Peel Common/Stubbington

Obviously the Stubbington Bypass will have a big impact upon this area. However, it has been suggested by equestrians that they would like the current permissive route around the sewage works to become a dedicated bridleway.

It was also suggested that the following footpaths could be upgraded to multi-user routes to provide circular access to Hill Head from Peel Common:

- Footpath nos.: 71b; 74; 68;

Create new multi-user route running alongside Bardon Way/Longfield Avenue, West End. We believe these roads provide a boundary to Newlands Farm and Oxleys Coppice. The route would then

- join with Ranvilles Lane
- joining up with footpath no. 65 (to be turned into a multi-user route)
- joining up with Cromatry and Old Street through to Hill Head.

Daedalus

Would it be possible to provide a multi-user route around the perimeter of Daedalus?

Hill Park

People would like to be able to access the Meon Valley Trail. Bridleway No 82 goes under the M27 between junctions 9 and 10.

The height of the underpass does not meet with British Horse Society recommendation of 3.7m and is unsafe for horse riders to ride underneath the bypass without first dismounting. We would like mounting blocks to be positioned either side to enable horse riders to remount easily. Please bear in mind that some horse riders are disabled or there are others who are less agile and this issue currently presents potentially restricted access to equestrians.

Brownwich

Footpath No. 37 is called Brownwich Lane. This suggests that it has a higher status and should either be classed as a bridleway or restricted byway.

Welbourne

We would support Hampshire County Council's suggestions for the creation of new bridleways as part of the green infrastructure for the Welborne development that will link the communities of Fareham and Wickham/Wickham Common.

One suggestion would be to create a green loop around the new development that would be open to all non-motorised users including horse riders and carriage drivers.

Meon Valley Trail

People wish to access the Meon Valley Trail from the bridleway. The HCC online map indicates that Bridleway No. 515 joins Mayles Lane, crossing over the railway line through to North Park Farm and onwards past Wickham Lodge towards Mayles Farm. It is suggested that Wickham footpath nos. 16, 15 and Fareham footpath 86 into bridleways and to create

one route to the west from Ravenswood House through to Wickham Lodge and onto the MVT.

It was also suggested that by using upgraded Wickham footpaths 15, 16 and Fareham 86 as bridleways these could link into footpath 23b (subject to it being upgraded to a bridleway as well).

Whitely

Would it be possible to reduce the speed limit on Whitely Lane from 60mph to 40mph? Also could the Council look at how it could help in providing access to the woods at Whitely (are the owned/managed by the Forestry Commission?) with access to the Meon Valley Trail using the road network for connectivity.

Open Spaces

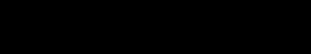
We would request that consideration is given as to what multi-user routes could be created in open spaces/green infrastructure areas that could provide leisure facilities for all non-motorised users.

Summary

The undersigned BHS representative has limited personal knowledge of the areas mentioned above and is relying on local knowledge. We also realize that some of the suggestions for routes cross over into Winchester City Council's control. The BHS would be happy to undertake site visits with Fareham Borough Council to assess the feasibility of any of the routes suggested in this response.

We would also ask the Council to take into consideration the Hampshire Countryside Access Forum's (HCAF) recommendations that new routes should be created as multi-user routes, including cycle ways. HCAF is a statutory body formed under the 2000 CROW Act that provides advice to Hampshire County Council and its recommendations are required to be considered.

Yours faithfully,


BHS Access and Bridleways Office
For and on behalf of the British Horse Society
Hampshire