

Sent: 28 August 2018

To: 'Charlotte Leach'

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Subject: HNRFI | Informal Consultation

Thank you for the opportunity to have an advance look at these suggestions. The Leicestershire Local Access Forum (LLAF) wishes to make what we trust you will find constructive comment

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The LLAF is an independent statutory body, set up as a result of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act (CROW) 2000, and exists to represent the interests of everyone concerned with access to the countryside and the public rights of way network including footpaths, bridleways and byways, cycleways and areas of open access.

Section 94 of the CROW act makes it a statutory function of the Forum to give advice to a range of bodies, including local authorities, on access issues in respect of land use planning matters.

Ministers have advised that in particular forums were asked to focus on the impact and options for minimising possible adverse effects, of planning policies and development proposals in respect of future public access to land and identifying and expressing support for opportunities to improve public access, or associated infrastructure, which might be delivered through planning policies or new development.

First we would make some general observations. You talk of the state of the existing PROWs but where one person sees the hindrance of over hanging vegetation and a less than perfect surface another would consider this a natural route through the countryside. Wildlife does not like manicured and sanitised routes and neither do many leisure walkers etc. The diversions etc you are contemplating seem reasonable if trying to get from A to B but without much more information about the landscaping and masking within the site it is hard to make a judgement on the probable loss of visual amenity and the natural surroundings of these rural routes.

If the cycleways, bridleways, footpaths are within broad green corridors then they could have some merit as recreational routes but if they are hemmed in by mega buildings they would not be welcome and we can only imagine that noise will also be an issue.

There is talk of upgrading some paths to bridleways. If so the surface must be suitable and be maintained as such, as in inclement weather a heavy horse can chew up a footpath surface making it unusable by pedestrians and cyclists. Ideally a separate horse track should run alongside a footpath rather than be shared space.

It would also help make judgment if we had a fuller picture. Do we take it that Burbage Common Road will still be open for car traffic? If it is then a parallel off road bridleway would be safest if heavy vehicles are now to use it.

Looking at individual proposals; U50, U52 and V23 being diverted alongside a railtrack is not a welcome option. If for the purposes of the site design there is to be no route close to the original line, then we recommend that V23 be moved to run alongside U52 bridleway and that U50 be diverted round the fish pond and then out to join U52 and V23 where they cross each other. Some correction of the line of U50 in Elmsthorpe is also required which could be dealt with under the same diversion order

We trust you find our observations of help and look forward to eventually studying more detailed plans

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