

Local Access Forum – Meeting held on Thursday, 14th April, 2016 at the Meeting Room 1, Chalvey Community Centre, The Green, Chalvey, Slough, SL1 2SP

Present:-

LAF Members

David Munkley (Chair)
Trevor Allen (Vice-Chair)
Andy Packer
Tony Haines
Ken Wright

Observers

John Keegan
Arnold Richardson

Officers, Slough Borough Council

Jacqui Wheeler, Rights of Way Officer

207. Apologies

Councillor Davis
Councillor Parmar
Sing Wai Yu
Toby Evans

208. Welcome and Declarations of Interest

None declared.

209. Minutes of the last meeting held on 16th December 2015

Minutes of the meeting held on 16th December 2015 were accepted as a true record. John Keegan to be added to the list of attendees.

210. Matters Arising (other than those on the agenda)

Big Path watch – though the project has come to an end JK confirmed that the data is still being looked at and that members could see the results by searching on Rambler's Big Path watch to access the information. DM made it clear that any report/observations about public rights of way in Slough are welcome.

Local Access Forum - 14.04.16

AP informed the group about an overgrown tarmac path adjacent to the Marriot hotel in Chalvey linking to the Chalvey Recreation ground along Damson Grove. JW stated this is a private route not maintained by the council and she would investigate ownership/status to see if it needs to be dedicated.

Huddle – TH mentioned an interesting online discussion currently taking place on Huddle and suggested that Huddle be a regular feature on the LAF agenda.

The new NE contact for LAF's is Angela Hennell and JW would invite her to come along to a future meeting. Members discussed the potential value of Huddle and agreed having it as a standing item with the intention of increasing familiarity with the way it works and keeping up to date with issues affecting rights of way nationally like the Deregulation Act changes.

Resolved – to arrange time for a refresher on use of Huddle and registering members who do not have login's yet.

South Bucks Local Plan - TH asked that the LAF monitors this as it has included sites within the greenbelt where there are right of way issues. It was notable that the old football site between Wexham Rd and Stoke Rd was not included. There are huge areas of land that have been announced to be included in the Bucks Local Plan. DM noted the loss of greenbelt is becoming a concern with the pressure on housing construction in the SE, though TH felt that South Bucks has not given up any green belt for quite some time and now is being pushed to do so.

Resolved – to investigate the consultation documents for South Bucks Local Plan and seek to make representations if necessary to protect the local row network adjoining/linking to Slough.

Pavement Parking Scheme - TA raised the fact that problems with the first phase have not been rectified still and the expansion of the scheme not taking into account the worst areas.

JW updated that the scheme would be implemented in Elliman and Central wards will be started at the end of May 2016 as an experimental scheme open to public consultations for a 6 month period. The scheme is being rolled out to adjacent wards. TH noted that vehicles have been parking on the grass verge on Uxbridge Rd and planters have been located there in an attempt to stop this practice under the PPS. However, this and Goodman Park scheme are causing displacement parking further along the central verge and at the bus stop. TA felt that the scheme is not being policed sufficiently. Members are keen to ensure the scheme continues to be sensible, flexible, fit for purpose and prevent obstruction of the pavement across the borough. JW agreed to send minutes on this issue to Head of Highways & Transport and Parking Enforcement Manager.

Local Access Forum - 14.04.16

Specific locations where members feel there is a problem with pavement parking are noted as:

- Cowper Road
- Uxbridge Road central reservation

Resolved - All agreed that a request is made to have an officer present the roll out scheme to the LAF at a future meeting and all would feed in specific location problems to JW to be forwarded to Parking team.

Linear Park - Members approved the draft chase up letter to the Chief Executive.

211. Canal Basin Interim Scheme Update

JW tabled the updated action plan for the Canal and confirmed that there has been no submission for pre-app advice or planning yet from the Slough Regeneration Partnership. JW explained the successful bid to the Tesco Community Fund (Bags For Help) gaining £8K towards the works and the works that have been undertaken to clear the canal bank near Kendal Close.

The bank has been completely cleared of all vegetation, debris/litter and re-profiled with all the fencing removed. This has left the area with open views across the canal and no areas without natural surveillance which will help reduce anti-social behaviour. It was decided not to erect any new fencing as the situation became complicated with SSE requiring no fencing within 3m of the pylon feet.

Members all agreed that the improvement to the area is dramatic and well worth the effort. JW confirmed the area will be seeded but that further funds are required to construct a path along the bank. The HV cable continues underground at the pylon underneath the hard standing of the tiling company and then on to Chalvey. This means that works to improve the narrow section of path alongside the tiling co. would be increasingly costly. CRT has confirmed they currently will not dedicate any routes as public in lieu of the planning design process.

DM reiterated the LAF position that new public routes must be sought through the planning process when it is submitted on this site. Members agreed.

TH informed members that the Friends of Slough Canal were given a briefing from CRT and Morgan Sindell on 7th April 2016. Plans for the regeneration were shared and the Friends were concerned to ensure that the public space available around the basin was increased. They also requested a boat slipway at the Basin but this may not be feasible. The existing Travis Perkins and Apple Coaches entrance would be the future access points to the Basin development. The existing entrance would be fenced off with some kind of pedestrian/cycling access only.

Local Access Forum - 14.04.16

A third of the Bowyer playing field would be developed with 6 storey blocks of flats with over 233 dwellings overall. Advantages for the canal are; increased public open space and improved safety. TH felt that 6 storeys were too imposing and not necessary. KW mentioned the relaxation of the planning laws to allow conversion of office blocks for housing purposes.

Members felt the size of the development was excessive and should be scaled back; it is imperative that such a huge development is designed to minimise anti-social behaviour. Members felt a major concern would be the extra traffic in the area due to the flats.

Resolved - JW would ask Morgan Sindell for sight of the tweaked plans and for further update on when something concrete would be available for comments.

Bloom Park – JW tabled the plans for the improvements in Bloom Park. Informal access points are to be formalised. The existing vegetation buffer between the canal towpath and the park is to remain which is seen as unfortunate. Members felt this would have been an opportunity to open up the area thereby improving safety. TH informed the group that Morgan Sindell has stepped in as sponsor of the canal festival in place of Akzonobel who are moving out of Slough. Football pitches are to be located where the festival parking normally happens which could be problematic.

JW would investigate with Parks what maintenance of the corridor nearer to the Uxbridge Rd Bridge is included in the plans as this area is prone to fly tipping and littering. Members acknowledged this as a massive problem across the borough. Parks will forward detailed designs of the entrances when they have been drawn up via JW.

212. Summer Site Visits

JW tabled the list for the 2016 Summer Site Visits. The list will be circulated amongst the RBWM, Bucks and Bracknell LAF Officers so that anyone who wishes to attend from other LAF's can do so.

Discussions ensued about the dis-used railway land in Colnbrook. Improving safety along the path could be used in arguing for better width and surface. Members were reminded that the LAF has previously objected to an application for development of this site and has more recently asked for it to be added to the list of allocated sites in the Slough Local Plan. If accepted this would ensure development on this site is restricted to nature reserve with public access rights.

Poyle New Cottages residents have a private right of access along a route alongside the dis-used railway land. This private route has been blocked for years and residents as well as members of the public have been using the dis-used railway land instead. JW recalled the attempt to block the dis-used railway land with a gate in 2008 which almost resulted in an application to

Local Access Forum - 14.04.16

claim the path as a public right of way. At the time the level of outcry particularly from the residents caused the landowners then to remove the gate. Cllr Smith is keen on this route being public and is concerned about illegal use of the land. LAF members continue to support the action plan as detailed in the papers.

Resolved – JW to contact the residents of Poyle New Cottages and look to engage in a process to ultimately add this route to the definitive map and statement. At the same time JW to contact landowners to see what their view is on dedication of the route.

213. Joint LAF Meeting 8th March 2016

JW tabled the minutes of the meeting attended by DM and JW on the 8th March 2016. TH felt we need to engage with the Bucks LAF as we have a variety of cross boundary issues with them. JW would investigate the current contacts at the County Council and District Council for the rights of way function.

SMART Motorway – The request for rights of way mitigation and improvements asked for by Slough Borough Council, due to this development were tabled by JW. These include improvements to surfacing, signage and compensation for loss of access for maintenance. The list of improvements has been added to an annotated plan and put before the Planning Inspector who will be making a decision on the DCO in the autumn. JW would check that the request to upgrade the FP Bridge at Old Slade Lane to a bridleway is included.

Update to be provided when the Inspector's decision is made.

Market Lane/Gypsy Field - TH noted that the Gypsy Field should be part of a nature reserve and JW confirmed that this site has been submitted by the LAF to the Call for Sites consultation. JW agreed to email the link to the WRLTH consultation which is on-going currently.

The Big Pedal – Schools compete nationally to have the most journeys to school by bicycle or scooter. 12 Slough schools have registered to be part of the competition.

214. Transport Schemes Design - Updates

Updates tabled as per the papers issued.

Walking Bus - TH informed members he'd noticed that a walking bus has started successfully along Elliman Avenue. All agreed the LAF fully supports the introduction of these schemes across the borough and recognises the importance of successful implementation of the PPS to allow obstruction free pavements for such schemes. JW agreed to obtain information on Walking Buses for future meeting.

Local Access Forum - 14.04.16

Members felt that the downloadable walking and cycling map is not user friendly especially for visitors to Slough. This issue is to be discussed at a future meeting.

215. Next Meeting

At 6.30pm on 27th July 2016 in Room 1 at the Chalvey Community Centre.

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.45 pm)