



Hampshire County Council

ARTS, COUNTRYSIDE
AND COMMUNITY

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Dear Mrs Comber

Thank you for your letter dated 3rd January 2001. I am afraid that your letter didn't arrive until 12th January so I am sorry that you have not received a reply sooner.

I enclose a copy of the site plan that I have received from East Hampshire District Council as requested.

I have read and noted your comments regarding the proximity of the rifle club to the road and indeed this is one of the issues you took me to see when we met on site. It seems to me however - from my understanding of the duty admitted in the High Court that you refer to - to be an unorthodox means of resolving your concerns.

The problem is the proximity of the rifle club to the road and therefore not an issue related to rights of way. I understand that if a right of way were proven to exist in the adjacent woodland this would be an alternative route that riders could take but it still does not remove the safety issue of people using the road. I do not see this as a justification for giving a higher priority to the application to record a bridleway. This must take its turn in the process and should not be seen as an easy fix to the other issues that you have raised with me which are essentially matters of planning and road safety.

It is more appropriate for this issue to be resolved by the County Surveyor and therefore I have forwarded your letter to his Department.

*Contradiction
See over*

Director of Arts, Countryside and Community
Mike Wickenden CPFA

Alice Holt Forest

I agree with the points you have made and I shall pursue this problem until all the measures agreed with Forest Enterprise have been completed. I am sorry that the original target, for these for measures to be completed by the end of 2000, has not been met.

Cradle Lane

Further to our conversation regarding Cradle Lane, I understand that you have heard from Barry Lockyer, the Area Rights of Way Officer. Barry will have assured you that this route is continually monitored and further improvement works will be undertaken in the future. Barry must prioritise the work he undertakes towards surface improvements as there is only so many that can be undertaken each year. I am sure however that you will wish to show me the condition of the route when we meet on February 1st.

Binsted FP61 and Headley FP48

I have noted your comments regarding these routes. I am willing to inspect both these routes with you should you wish to do so. Of course, if evidence is presented to the County Council which demonstrates that either the line on the Definitive Map is wrong or that our interpretation of it is wrong, then I would ensure that the necessary steps are taken to rectify the matter.

Other Issues

With regard to the detail of the conversation you had with Barry Lockyer I would wish to say that the Rights of Way Service will address all matters that are brought to its attention in accordance with the action that is required. This will not be dependent upon past relations with the person reporting the matter. If a route is dangerous or if it is totally impassable then it will be a matter which will receive the highest priority regardless of who the complaint has come from.

Barry is correct to say that as things stand there is no guarantee that the additional funding for local authorities' extra responsibilities arising from the new legislation will be 'ring-fenced' so that it makes its way to the service-providers. I am already working to alert Council Members to this and to try and ensure we receive our appropriate allocation.

Public rights of way are highways and this is recognised by the County Council in the funding allocated to this Department in order for it to carry out its statutory responsibilities. The fact that the Rights of Way Section is not within the County Surveyor's Department is not relevant - it simply means that the highway management function of the authority is split between the two Departments. Many County Councils operate in the same way.