

PROPOSALS FOR THE
DIVERSION OF A PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY
AT
CANFORD SCHOOL
WIMBORNE, DORSET
BH21 3AD

Version 1.4
October 2018



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1.0 Executive Summary

Canford is a co-ed boarding and day School for some 655 students in years 9-13 (ages 13-18), set in historic parkland near Wimborne in Dorset. The nucleus of the School is a Grade I listed mansion by both Blore and Barry, and since the School was founded in 1923, the campus has evolved into a complex arrangement of buildings, sports pitches and facilities with the original manor house at its heart.

Following the Borough of Poole and the Government Inspector's agreement in principal to the modification of the Green Belt around Canford School, and the expected conclusion of the Local Plan in November 2018, the School intends to submit proposals for the construction of a small number of new facilities in the Southern part of the site. The School naturally intends to use this opportunity to improve the safety and security of the public as well as the School's pupils, parents and visitors in this area.

The purpose of this report is to set out the School's justification for the proposed permanent diversion of a section of the Stour Valley Way (Footpath 29).

As part of the development of our proposals, the School has consulted with the Ramblers Association and Open Spaces Society. The British Horse Society has not been consulted as this section of footpath is inaccessible to horses. The Ramblers Association visited the School on 21/09/2018 to review the proposals and walk the new route, accompanied by a member of the School's Estates Department. The Ramblers Association maintain a neutral position on the School's proposals and their report is included under Appendix A. The Borough of Poole Rights of Way Team visited the School on 03/10/2018 and walked the proposed route. Some minor comments were made which have been addressed as part of the School's proposals.

Irrespective of the controls the School puts in place, the ability for the public to have free access to the School at any time along the current route undermines those controls. Canford's proposals go a long way towards mitigating the risk to their boarding children, staff and visitors as well as to School property. The proposals have also been developed with careful consideration of the public's experience along this part of Stour Valley Way and with road pedestrian safety along Canford Magna in mind.



2.0 Existing Public Right of Way (West to East)

The public right of way in question forms part of Stour Valley Way and enters the West side of the School campus from Canford Magna village. The right of way (Footpath 29) traverses across Franklin Field, the Southern half of the playing fields and the School's golf course. The right of way exits the School into the former golf course site, as illustrated in Appendix B. The route then continues on towards Knighton and Bear Cross.

3.0 Proposed Public Right of Way (West to East)

Canford's proposed diversion of the right of way creates a desirable improvement for walkers, whilst addressing the School's serious concerns about the current route. The School's proposal is to divert the right of way south, around the perimeter of the School's site. Upon entering the School on the Western boundary, walkers would turn immediately right and follow the tree line past the apple orchard. The right of way would then continue around the perimeter of the School's grounds along a suitable path measuring as least 2m in width. The route would continue in a straight line past the School's Grade 2 listed 'Blue Gates' and on through the wooded area in the South East of the grounds, before exiting the School in approximately the same location as the existing Right of Way. The proposals would take advantage of much of the natural woodland that is missed along the current route, whilst minimising any imposition on the School and its day to day operations.

As part of the proposals, and as a gesture of goodwill, Canford School would offer to install a suitable kissing gate in the South West of the site, to provide the public with a far safer and more scenic alternative to walking along the road through the village. The stretch of road in question does not have any pavements for pedestrians and, with its blind bends, is considerably unsafe at present. The gate location is also shown in Appendix B.

The Ramblers Association have raised some minor concerns regarding the privacy of a staff house, owned by the School, known as 'South Lodge'. There is a window to the property on its North side, adjacent to where the proposed footpath will run. The School will address this issue by filling in the window if required. The School will undertake all necessary liaison with its tenant to ensure there are no issues.



The proposed route will be segregated by existing tree lines or a newly installed post and wire fence, installed by the School. The School will ensure barbed wire is not used and any existing barbed wire that is found will be replaced with smooth wire to remove any risk of injury to the public. The proposed route currently includes a flight of 12 steps, which would be removed and a 1:15 gradient slope would be provided by the School in accordance with recommendations by the Borough of Poole Rights of Way Team. Appendix B also includes details of the location of these works.

All works would be undertaken to a high standard by Canford's experienced grounds team.

4.0 Current Risks and Concerns

4.1 Security Review

In September 2016, Securus Global were commissioned by Canford School to conduct a security review of their site and current procedures, focusing on the physical security of the site and current state of policies and procedures. Securus Global considered the effectiveness of the security controls currently in place within the context of the School; its priorities, vision for the future and current level of risk exposure. The report concluded that there were several areas that required investment in order to reduce risk and ensure that the children are in an adequately secure environment whilst still maintaining the ambiance and essence of the School. Many of the recommendations have already been actioned by the School, however it is clear that, should the School be granted consent to develop areas of the site, then consideration should be given to how the general public interacts with these developments, if at all.

4.2 Trespass, Vandalism and Theft

The School's security review concluded that, despite there being relatively low pedestrian traffic along the foot path in question, it is still the source of much of the trespass on site, whether intentional or not. This brings with it School-wide security issues associated with unauthorised access. Google Maps identifies much of the School grounds as being "Canford Park" rather than Canford School, potentially adding to confusion of disorientated walkers and visitors to the area and enhancing the risk of trespass. The Security Review undertaken deemed the risk of security to be in the highest category (Category 5). The diversion of the public right of way would cause a significant reduction in risk levels, granting the School greater control of pedestrians on the site.



As a result of the level of trespass on the site, there has, in recent years, been a spate of vandalism and theft by individuals not associated with the School, particularly from the areas around Court and Franklin boarding houses and bike sheds at the southern end of the School, as well as from staff properties in this area. The School advocates that, by diverting the right of way around the perimeter of the grounds and away from existing and proposed developments, the risk to people and their possessions is mitigated.

4.3 Safeguarding and the Independent School Inspectorate (ISI)

National Boarding School Standards, safeguarding and ISI inspection standards have greatly increased in complexity and demand over the last ten years, and Canford's reputation is built around excellence in meeting these standards. As a result, the retention of the current public access to this area would now cause the School significant difficulty.

The School has a duty of care to ensure all measures are taken to look after the safety and wellbeing of everyone in the School. The diversion of this public route would allow the School to further fulfil this duty, by lessening the risk associated with security.

4.4 Dog Walkers

There is currently a significant problem with dogs not being kept on leads along the existing right of way. The current right of way route passes regularly used playing fields and traverses over the School's golf course, meaning that disturbance to the users of these sports facilities by dogs is an occasional occurrence.

The mess associated with dogs is a big issue, despite the School erecting dog waste bins in strategic locations along the route. Aside from the playing fields often being the main School facilities seen by visitors, and the importance to the School of ensuring that the grounds are tidy and well presented, there is also currently a health hazard from dog mess. The risk of Toxocariasis is present, and Canford's groundsmen currently spend a significant amount of time clearing dog mess prior to sporting fixtures adjacent to the right of way. The proposed diversion ensures that the distance walked within School grounds is reduced and the new route can be hedged off from School playing fields, therefore containing the this issue.



4.5 Golf Course Safety Hazard

The School's golf course is in constant use, particularly during the summer months. This continues through the School holidays as public memberships are also available. The current right of way route takes walkers directly over the golf course. This naturally presents a significant risk to the public from golf balls being hit. The School's proposals eliminate this risk entirely.

The School has taken steps to improve the situation in this area, such as installing bike proof gates to prevent damage to the golf course and to prevent the theft of bikes. However, the ongoing damage to the fairways, disturbance to golfers and the safety hazard to the public when play is underway, means that the golf course does not lend itself to a viable right of way for the public.

5.0 Conclusions

The School has carefully liaised with its planning consultant and taken advice from other designers and suitable consultees to ensure that any proposals of this nature are implemented for the benefit of the School and the public. We understand that, under the Highways Act 1980, landowners may apply to divert a public right of way on their land if it can be demonstrated that it is beneficial to move the path and that the alternative route will not be less convenient or less enjoyable to the public. We believe the School's proposals fully meet these criteria. We acknowledge that the proposed route is approximately 350m longer, however this is offset by the many benefits to the public and the land owner, as summarised below.

1. Improvement of the foot path itself and enhancement of the walking experience along this section of the Stour Valley Way by exposing walkers to a more varied landscape and taking advantage of the natural woodland. The proposed route will also allow walkers to view the Grade 2 listed blue gates as well as parts of the original driveway into the estate.
2. More effective segregation between the School and the general public, allowing for reductions in trespass, vandalism and theft.
3. Protection of the School's children from intruders in this vulnerable part of the School.
4. Elimination of the current safety risk to the public on Canford's golf course, and ensuring less disturbance to golfers.



5. Removal of the health and cleanliness issues associated with dog mess on the School's sports pitches.
6. Less disturbance to School sports fixtures and other day to day operations of the School.
7. Keeping walkers on slightly higher ground, meaning that they will avoid boggy conditions in the winter due to the high clay content in the ground, and lack of water permeability.

We trust this report has suitably justified the School's application and we look forward to working with the Borough of Poole and it's consultees to reach a satisfactory resolution for all involved.

APPENDIX A
REPORT FROM THE RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION



East Dorset Group

Draft

Poole Footpath 29 (FP 29) – Canford Magna

Notes of visit Friday 21 September 2018 concerning proposed diversion of the above footpath by Canford School across Canford Golf Course and school fields

The present route of Poole FP 29 (west to east) is from the road known as Canford Magna due east across school fields and the three fairways of Canford Golf Course to the junction of an old access road from Poole to Canford House known as Longfleet Drive. This is the section of the existing route of FP 29 that it is proposed to divert. Continuing in a south easterly direction via Knighton Farm to the Borough boundary between Poole and Bournemouth and then to the A 348 road between Bear Cross and Longham.

The whole route is a part of a promoted footpath known as the Stour Valley Way and the proposed diversion would also divert the Stour Valley Way.

Starting from the road known as Canford Magna the proposed route would pass through an existing wooden kissing gate and then turn southwards with trees and hedges to the west to a point at the junction of Magna Road and Canford Magna. It is proposed to make an access point from the road at this point so that walkers have a safer walking route. The road known as Canford Magna has no footway between its junction with Magna Road and the entrance gate to FP 29.

The route then turns south eastwards along slightly higher ground than the existing footpath with hedges to the south but with good views to the north across the grounds of Canford School continuing to a residential building known as South Lodge. These buildings are owned by Canford School and are used as residential accommodation by school staff.

The diverted route proposes that a new footpath is provided to the south of the properties, this would take it very close to the windows of the properties and it is recommended that the diversion is along an existing path to the north of these properties.

It is noted that it is not proposed to use the ornamental gates at South Lodge as an access point to the path.

The proposed diversion then continues over a grassed route to steps leading up to a raised carriage way.

To ensure that walkers in the future continue along the route of the proposed footpath it is suggested that a clearly marked route is provided across the grassed area and even a gravel or similar path may be considered beneficial.

2)

2)

The steps are fairly steep with risers formed of old railway sleepers, whilst this is not considered a problem for most walkers, it is suggested that consideration is given to these being rebuilt or replaced with steps with lower risers.

The proposed diversion then turns north eastwards along a raised carriage way with a centre path only available at present to walkers to a junction with the existing footpath.

The raised carriage way appears to be a continuation of Longfleet Drive, which was originally used by the owners of Canford House as a route across Canford Heath from Poole. The route across Canford Heath is an existing right of way known as Poole Footpath 125. Whilst the route of Longfleet Drive now crosses Magna Road on the level, originally it is believed that Magna Road was bridged at this point until the mid-20th Century. Although it seems that it was the intention that the whole of Longfleet Drive should become a right of way, the section within the grounds of Canford School has not been made available to the public and no access exists on the north side of Magna Road. It is suggested that this situation is now legalised and an access gate is provided at the junction with Magna Road. The route between Magna Road and the existing route of FP 29 is shown as a right of way/ footpath on Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 118.

The route along the carriage way is pleasant and runs through mature deciduous woodland.

Although the new route is longer than the existing route and could be considered more inconvenient and less commodious than the existing route, the wishes of the landowners, a public school, must be taken into consideration and also the fact that the existing path crosses a golf course with the added danger of walkers being hit by golf balls. This may not be considered a major risk and I am not aware that an accident of this type has happened in the past but the proposed diversion does remove the risk.

It is noted that the existing route is currently used from time to time by dog walkers, some who fail to clear up after their dog(s) and this causes a problem when the area is used by other users.

The Ramblers is happy to remain neutral as far as the application to divert Poole FP 29 is concerned, it does not support or object to the proposal as both the existing and the proposed routes are acceptable to the organisation.

Mike Heckford

Footpath Secretary – Poole
Ramblers - East Dorset Group
76 Bloxworth Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset BH12 4BW

28 September 2018



East Dorset Group

Final draft

Poole Footpath 29 (FP 29) – Canford Magna

Notes of visit Friday 21 September 2018 concerning proposed diversion of the above footpath by Canford School across Canford Golf Course and school fields

The present route of Poole FP 29 (west to east) is from the road known as Canford Magna (Point A) due east across school fields and the three fairways of Canford Golf Course to the junction of an old access road from Poole to Canford House known as Longfleet Drive, (Point E). This is the section of the existing route of FP 29 that it is proposed to divert. Continuing in a south easterly direction via Knighton Farm to the Borough boundary between Poole and Bournemouth and then to the A 348 road between Bear Cross and Longham.

The whole route is a part of a promoted footpath known as the Stour Valley Way and the proposed diversion would also divert the Stour Valley Way.

Starting from the road known as Canford Magna (Point A) the proposed route would pass through an existing wooden kissing gate and then turn southwards with trees and hedges to the west to a point at the junction of Magna Road and Canford Magna (Point B). It is proposed to make an access point from the road at this point so that walkers have a safer walking route. The road known as Canford Magna has no footway between its junction with Magna Road and the entrance gate to FP 29.

The route then turns south eastwards along slightly higher ground than the existing footpath with hedges to the south but with good views to the north across the grounds of Canford School continuing to a residential building known as South Lodge (Point C). These buildings are owned by Canford School and are used as residential accommodation by school staff.

The diverted route proposes that a new footpath is provided to the south of the properties, this would take it very close to the windows of the properties and it is recommended that the diversion is along an existing path to the north of these properties.

It is noted that it is not proposed to use the ornamental gates at South Lodge as an access point to the path.

The proposed diversion then continues over a grassed route to steps leading up to a raised carriage way (Point D).

To ensure that walkers in the future continue along the route of the proposed footpath it is suggested that a clearly marked route is provided across the grassed area and even a gravel or similar path may be considered beneficial.

2)

The steps are fairly steep with risers formed of old railway sleepers, whilst this is not considered a problem for most walkers, it is suggested that consideration is given to these being rebuilt or replaced with steps with lower risers.

The proposed diversion then turns north eastwards along a raised carriage way with a centre path only available at present to walkers to a junction with the existing footpath (Point E).

The raised carriage way appears to be a continuation of Longfleet Drive, which was originally used by the owners of Canford House as a route across Canford Heath from Poole. The route across Canford Heath is an existing right of way known as Poole Footpath 125. Whilst the route of Longfleet Drive now crosses Magna Road on the level, originally it is believed that Magna Road was bridged at this point until the mid-20th Century. Although it seems that it was the intention that the whole of Longfleet Drive should become a right of way, the section within the grounds of Canford School has not been made available to the public and no access exists on the north side of Magna Road. It is suggested that this situation is now legalised and an access gate is provided at the junction with Magna Road. The route between Magna Road and the existing route of FP 29 is shown as a right of way/ footpath on Ordnance Survey Explorer Map 118.

The route along the carriage way is pleasant and runs through mature deciduous woodland.

Although the new route is longer than the existing route and could be considered more inconvenient and less commodious than the existing route, the wishes of the landowners, a public school, must be taken into consideration and also the fact that the existing path crosses a golf course with the added danger of walkers being hit by golf balls. This may not be considered a major risk and I am not aware that an accident of this type has happened in the past but the proposed diversion does remove the risk.

It is noted that the existing route is currently used from time to time by dog walkers, some who fail to clear up after their dog(s) and this causes a problem when the area is used by other users.

The Ramblers is happy to remain neutral as far as the application to divert Poole FP 29 is concerned, it does not support or object to the proposal as both the existing and the proposed routes are acceptable to the organisation.

Point A – start of Poole FP 29 at Canford Magna (start of proposed diversion)

Point B – suggested access at junction of Magna Road and Canford Magna

Point C = South Lodge

Point D – suggested access point Magna Road and Longfleet Drive

Point E – junction between Longfleet Drive and Poole FP 29 (end of proposed diversion)

Mike Heckford

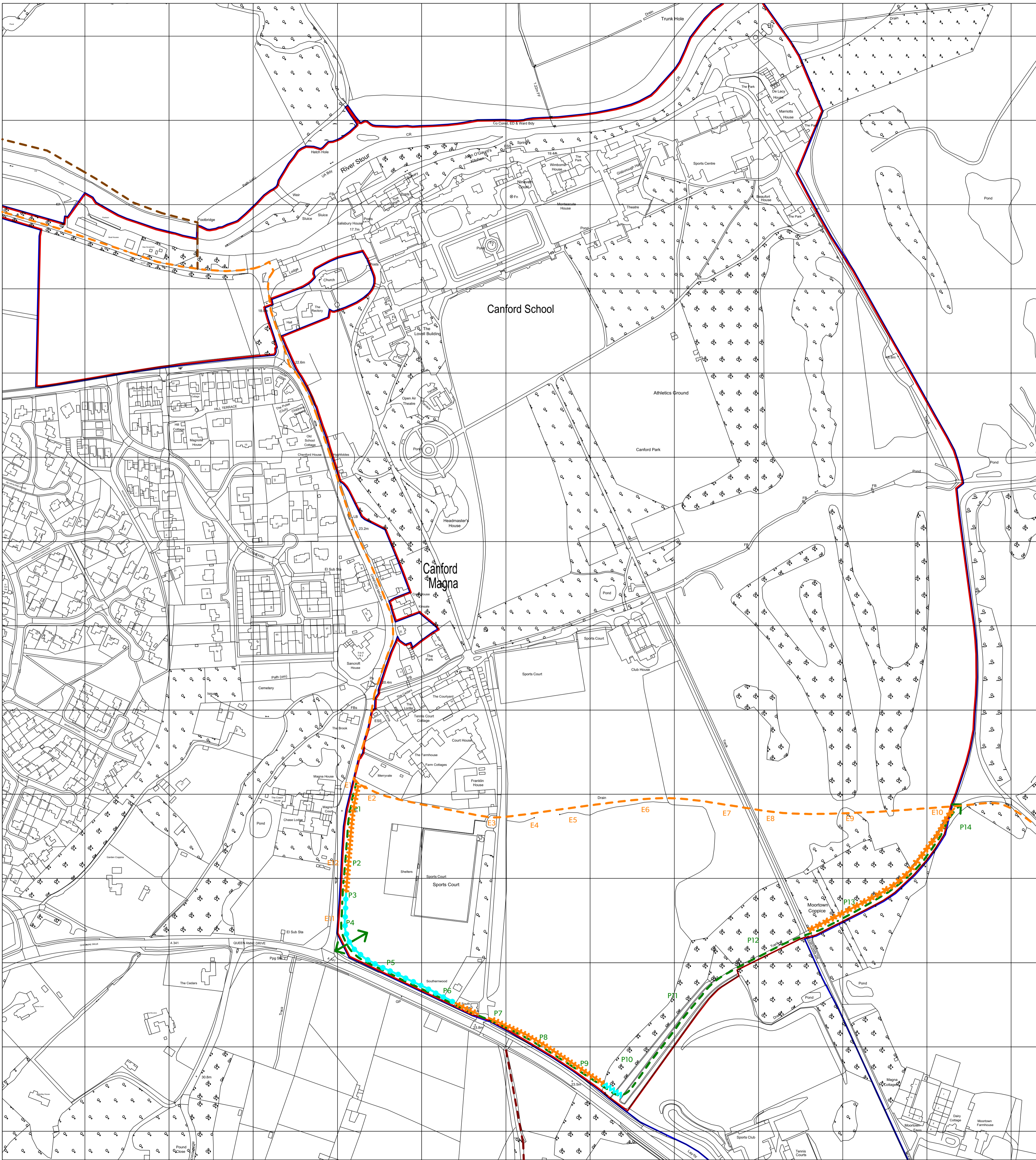
Footpath Secretary – Poole

Ramblers - East Dorset Group

76 Bloxworth Road, Parkstone, Poole, Dorset BH12 4BW

28 September 2018

APPENDIX B
OS MAP SHOWING EXISTING AND
PROPOSED PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY



NOTE: The contractor is responsible for checking all the dimensions and levels. These should be checked prior to setting out any components and before commencement of the works on site. All discrepancies should be brought to the immediate attention of the Contract Administrator.

- KEY:
- Owndership Boundary
 - Site Boundary
 - - - FP29 Existing public right of way
 - - - FP29 Proposed 2m wide public right of way
 - ↔ Safe access to / from Magna Road
 - EXX Existing image reference no.
 - PXX Proposed image reference no.
 - - - FP18 Existing public right of way
 - - - FP125 Existing public right of way
 - + + + Location of proposed post and wire fence
 - ◆ ◆ ◆ Location of existing tree line serving as natural footpath segregation
 - + + + Location for replacement of barbed wire with smooth wire on both sides of footpath
 - ~ ~ ~ Location of proposed incline at a minimum of 1:15 to replace steps

Note:
Public right of way shown as interpreted from public data source.
Source: Borough of Poole archive Footpath Map. archive.poole.gov.uk
Positions of public rights of way should be verified by a legal professional.

UPDATED
SEE REVISED
PLAN

02	04.10.18	ISSUED FOR INFORMATION	CVG	RG
01	30.08.18	ISSUED FOR INFORMATION	CVG	RG
00	29.08.18	ISSUED FOR INFORMATION	CVG	RG
rev	date	notes	drawn	chkd

DESIGNENGINE
ARCHITECTS

Project Name: Diversion of Public Right of Way August 2018 1:2500
Client: Canford School
Drawing Title: Site Plan to show diversion of Public Right of Way

APPENDIX C
SATELLITE IMAGE SHOWING EXISTING AND PROPOSED
PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY

APPENDIX D
PHOTOGRAPHIC SCHEDULE OF EXISTING
AND PROPOSED PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY



E1



E2



E3



E4



E5



E6



E7



E8



E9



E10



E11



E12



P1



P2



P3



P4



P5



P6



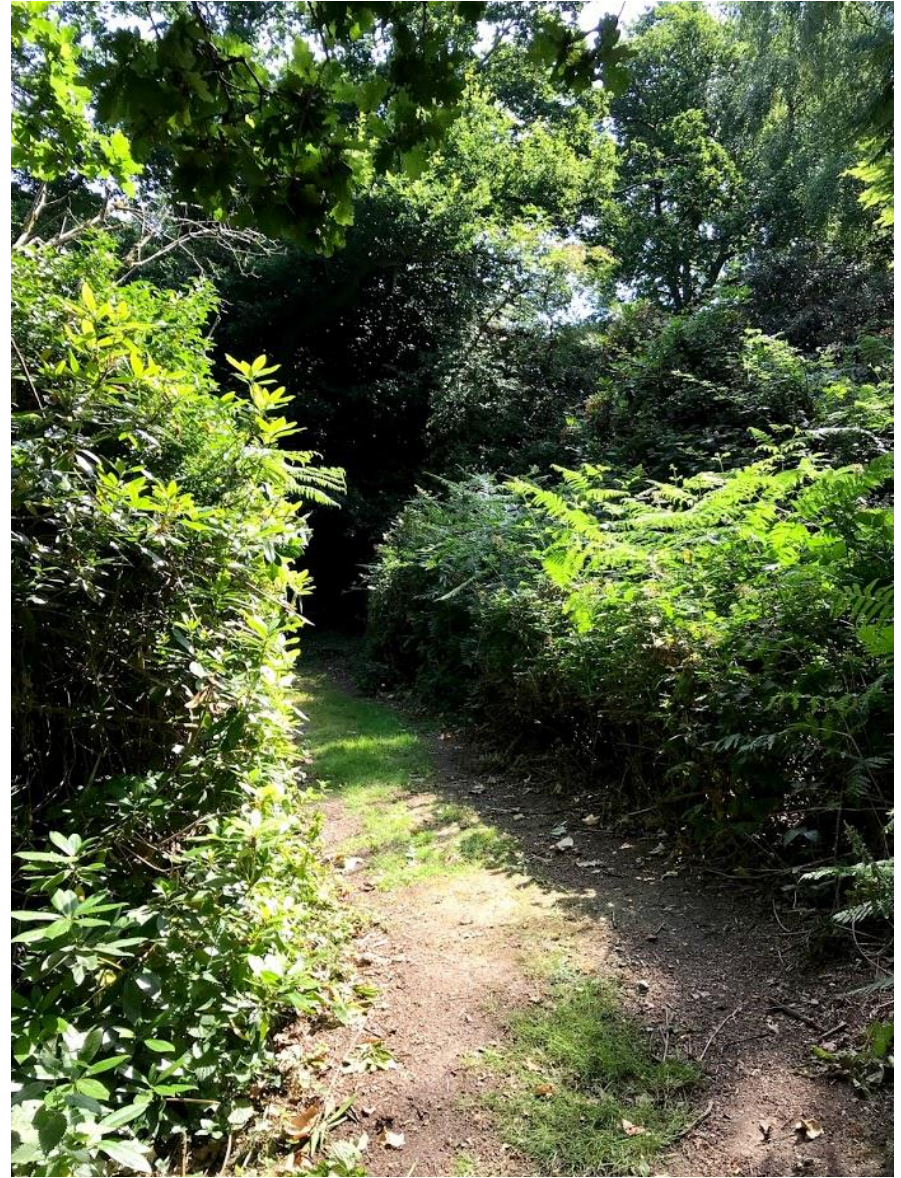
P7



P8



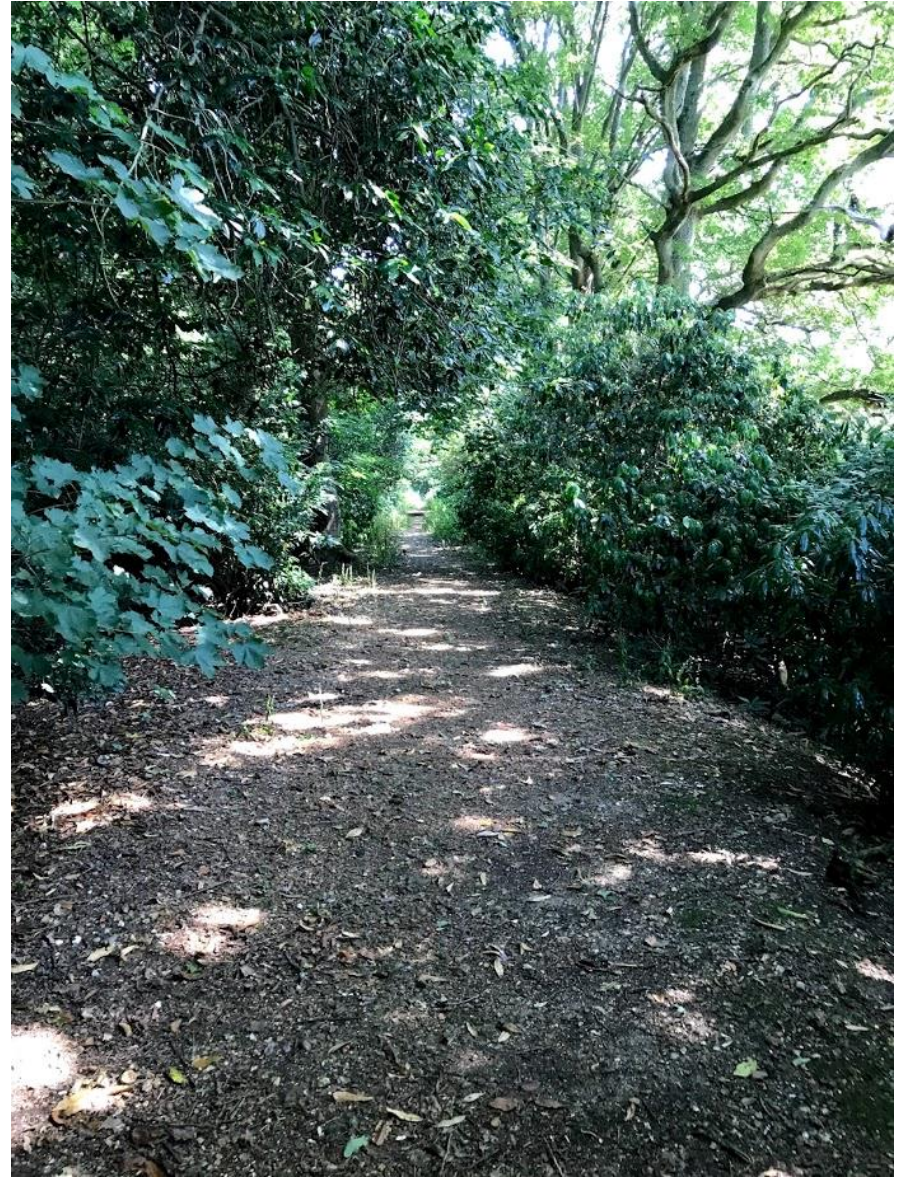
P9



P10



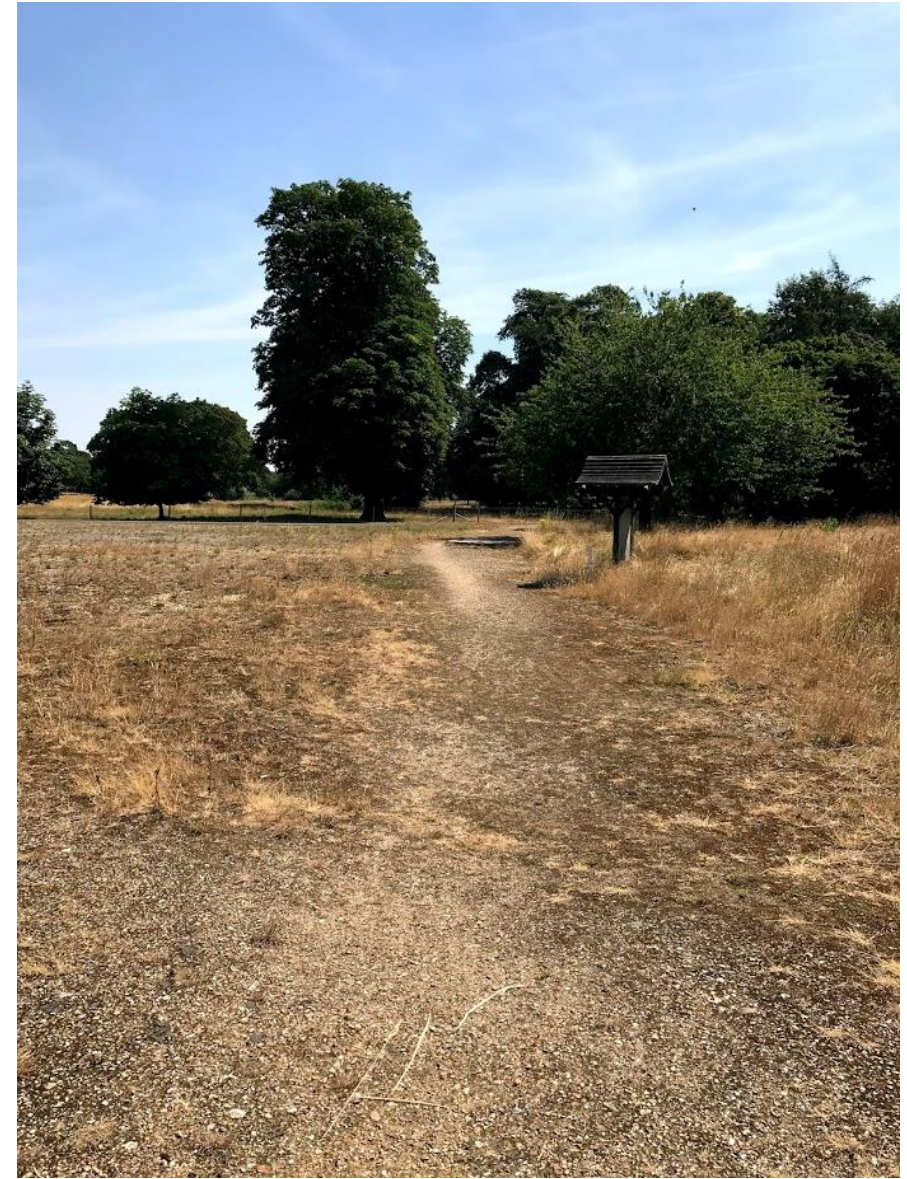
P11



P12



P13



P14

APPENDIX E
E-MAIL CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE
OPEN SPACES SOCIETY

Tristan Hutton

From: Harry Alexander <harryalexander@outlook.com>
Sent: 05 September 2018 16:55
To: Tristan Hutton
Cc: Andrew J. Bruce; Philip J. Elias
Subject: RE: Canford School | Proposed Diversion of Public Footpath | Pre-Application Consultation

Dear Mr Hutton

As I work on a voluntary basis on behalf of the Open Spaces Society, where any additional time is now spent on further review and potential suggestions of PRow for a third party, then we would look at a suggested donation of £ 250. Although please understand that any review and its conclusions may not agree with your wishes/ requirements.

Best wishes
Harry

From: Tristan Hutton <tristan.hutton@canford.com>
Sent: 05 September 2018 13:59
To: Harry Alexander <harryalexander@outlook.com>
Cc: Andrew J. Bruce <ajb@canford.com>; Philip J. Elias <P.Elias@poole.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Canford School | Proposed Diversion of Public Footpath | Pre-Application Consultation

Dear Harry,

Thank you for reviewing this so promptly. Are you able to expand on your reasoning for the objection? If we are able to understand your concerns in more detail, then we will aim to address these with a more suitable proposal.

Many thanks,

Tristan

Tristan Hutton BSc (Hons) PGDipSurv MRICS
Project Manager (Capital Projects)
01202 847559

From: Harry Alexander <harryalexander@outlook.com>
Sent: 05 September 2018 13:49
To: Tristan Hutton <tristan.hutton@canford.com>
Cc: Andrew J. Bruce <ajb@canford.com>; Philip J. Elias <P.Elias@poole.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Canford School | Proposed Diversion of Public Footpath | Pre-Application Consultation

Dear Mr Hutton

Thank you for the attachments. However, the school's proposed diversion of FP 29 is not one that the Open Spaces society could support, and therefore it would object to such proposals. The proposed diversion is less commodious for the Public and all users of the Public Right of Way.

With regards

Harry Alexander
Open Spaces Society – Poole & Bournemouth

From: Tristan Hutton <tristan.hutton@canford.com>
Sent: 30 August 2018 15:32
To: Harry Alexander <harryalexander@outlook.com>
Cc: Andrew J. Bruce <ajb@canford.com>; Philip J. Elias <P.Elias@poole.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Canford School | Proposed Diversion of Public Footpath | Pre-Application Consultation

Dear Harry,

Please find attached the marked up OS Map as requested. This is the same as the one in the appendix of our report, however also shows all other Public Rights of Way within/adjacent to the school lands. We have also attached the source of information from the archives at Borough of Poole for your information.

Many thanks,

Tristan

Tristan Hutton BSc (Hons) PGDipSurv MRICS
Project Manager (Capital Projects)
01202 847559

From: Harry Alexander <harryalexander@outlook.com>
Sent: 30 August 2018 11:11
To: Tristan Hutton <tristan.hutton@canford.com>
Cc: Andrew J. Bruce <ajb@canford.com>; Philip J. Elias <P.Elias@poole.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Canford School | Proposed Diversion of Public Footpath | Pre-Application Consultation

Dear Mr Hutton

Thank you for your email and attachment.

Can you please provide an OS map showing both the proposed diversion, along with all other Public Rights of Way within/ adjacent to the School's lands ASAP. When I am in receipt of such, I shall review your proposals and provide you with my thoughts.

Best wishes
Harry Alexander MA MIEEx

On behalf of Open Spaces Society (Poole & Bournemouth)

From: Tristan Hutton <tristan.hutton@canford.com>
Sent: 29 August 2018 15:06
To: harryalexander@outlook.com
Cc: Andrew J. Bruce <ajb@canford.com>
Subject: Canford School | Proposed Diversion of Public Footpath | Pre-Application Consultation

Dear Harry,

By way of introduction, I am a Project Manager within the Estates Department at Canford School, near Wimborne. We have been liaising with the Rights of Way Team at the Borough of Poole regarding the diversion of a footpath, which currently crosses the Southern end of the school.

We have been advised to liaise with the Open Spaces Society prior to submitting our application to the Borough of Poole. We appreciate you are a key stakeholder in this process and we would like to work with you to ensure a positive outcome for all.

Please could you spare some time to review the attached report and provide some initial feedback. Our Director of Estates Andrew Bruce or I would be very happy to meet with you should you wish to discuss our proposals on site.

Kind regards,

Tristan

Tristan Hutton BSc (Hons) PGDipSurv MRICS
Project Manager (Capital Projects)
01202 847559