

Statement of Countryside Access

Appendix 3

Correspondence with Poundbury Pathfinders

21 MAY 2008

POUNDBURY PATHFINDERS

Mr S Conibear
Estates Director Dorchester
Poundbury Development Manager
Duchy of Cornwall
Poundbury Farm House
Poundbury
Dorchester
DT1 3RT

21 MAY 2008

20th May 2008

Dear Mr Conibear

Public Consultation on Outline Application for Poundbury Phases 3 & 4

Countryside Links - West Dorset District Council's adopted Poundbury Brief

I write on behalf of Poundbury Pathfinders, an informal walking group which meets in Burraton Square every Thursday at 9.00am for 10 months of the year. The size of the group meeting for the programmed walk can be anything from about 8 to 30 people, depending on the length and ease of the walk and the weather! Our programme regularly includes circular walks starting and finishing in Poundbury, utilising the presently rather poor accesses to the surrounding footpath system in the countryside.

We welcomed the two new accesses under the bypass proposed in the Poundbury Brief, as trying to cross the bypass safely with up to 30 people on Footpath S2 - 46, with traffic at 60 mph, is very dangerous.

I visited the Duchy's display on Friday 25th April and carefully noted the proposals for footpath links, shown on Environs Partnership Dwg.No.396/5/14, which are to be incorporated in the Outline Planning Application and asked Mr Savage some questions about them.

Poundbury Pathfinders put forward the following comments for the consideration of the Duchy, the District Council and the County Council, which has responsibility for public footpaths. Unfortunately I was informed that it would not be possible to obtain copies of any of the plans on display, so these comments must necessarily be based on my notes and the plans in the Poundbury Brief, which differ a little from the Duchy's current proposals.

Comments on proposed footpath links to the countryside

A NW link by existing tunnel under the bypass to Bridleway S8 - 5

1. We welcome the opening of this link. It will have to be a Dedicated Right of Way to be of long term use to the residents of Poundbury and Dorchester, as the right to use a Permissive Footpath could be withdrawn at any time.
2. We were told by Mr Savage that this access would not be available for about 20 years, when the development is fully complete. This would deprive the steadily growing numbers of residents to the north of the Bridport Road, of an opportunity of gaining safe access to the footpath network immediately to the west of the bypass for an inordinate length of time.
3. This was justified by Mr Savage as the proposed Haul Road for removing excavated material and delivering building materials passes across the line of any temporary footpath and, of course, there would be building works in the area in the final phases of the development.
4. However, since the area where a temporary footpath would cross would remain undeveloped until the last phase, a temporary footpath could easily be provided. Crossing the Haul Road would be far less dangerous than crossing the bypass !
5. We will request the Council to impose a condition on the outline planning permission requiring a temporary footpath access to Bridleway S8 - 5, to be diverted / stopped up during the phase of development directly affecting it and for it to be replaced by a Dedicated Footpath link on completion of the development.

B Proposed footpath using the southern tunnel under the bypass

1. The Poundbury Pathfinders welcome the proposed opening of this tunnel and approve of the diversion of Footpath S2 - 46, to provide a safe access towards Monkeys Jump.
2. We are concerned that this proposed diversion should have a dedicated access route to the tunnel across the land owned by the Duchy from a public highway. We suggest either or both of the routes shown on attached Plan A to bring the diverted Footpath 46 to the public footways bordering the Parkway around Phase 1. Both of these routes has a 'footpath' already laid out.

3. We are very disappointed that the Duchy does not intend to provide a footpath link from the tunnel to Maiden Castle Road, shown in Figure 10 of the Poundbury Brief. Mr Savage made it clear that the farmer is resisting this and that he has some support for his view from the Duchy.
4. The Duchy's proposals for the diversion of Footpath 46, include a locked gate across the farm track at the southern end of the tunnel. From the tunnel, the track has gates to each of the fields on either side and a locked gate on to Maiden Castle Road. It would be possible to provide pedestrian 'kissing gates' alongside the locked gate at the tunnel end and the locked gate on to Maiden Castle Road. By this means there would be no 'threat' of livestock escaping as a result of careless walkers and no public access would be provided to the adjoining fields.
5. This link is in the Poundbury Brief and is specifically mentioned in the text. The Brief was adopted after considerable public consultation and represents both the views of the Council and the public. The link is needed to reduce the extent to which walkers have to walk along the carriageway of Maiden Castle Road to reach Maiden Castle. This is probably the most used pedestrian route from Poundbury, but is also a well used vehicle route, with no footways or verge to walk along. We will request the Council to require an explanation of why two kissing gates, with locked gates across the track, would not overcome the farmer's concerns about livestock and what other concerns he may have.

C Pedestrian Access to Poundbury Road, Poundbury Hillfort and Access Land

1. Only one footpath link to Poundbury Road, adjoining the cemetery, was shown on the Poundbury Brief and this is the only one proposed by the Duchy.
2. Plan B is an extract from the O.S 1:25,000 map. It shows a sizable area of Access Land adjoining Poundbury Hillfort, which extends westwards alongside Poundbury Road to a point west of the Development Boundary. This land has an access from Poundbury Road about the most northerly point where the development adjoins the road. It would be helpful if there was a clear footpath link from the development to Poundbury Road at this point so that walkers could enter the western end of the Access Land and re-enter the development at the eastern end, or vice versa.

We are sending these comments to the West Dorset District Council and the Dorset County Council in the hope that they may be taken up by these Councils when they are in discussion with the Duchy, prior to the submission of the formal planning application. We will, of course, be pressing these points when the application has been submitted, if amendments are not included in the submission.

Yours sincerely

BRIAN WHITE FRICS MRTPI

Cc Mr D. Evans - Director of Planning & Environment - West Dorset D.C.
Ms.S Lloyd-Jacob - Principal Planning Officer - Urban Design - WDDC
Mr A Martin - Principal Planning Officer - Development Control - WDDC
Mr T Sweeney - Countryside Operations Manager - Dorset County Council

PLAN A

ACCESS TO ACCESS LAND

FOUNDBURY
Figure 10: Pedestrian and Cycle Routes

