

Culture, Communication and Rural Affairs  
Countryside Service, Rights of Way Officer  
Mottisfont Court,  
High Street,  
Winchester  
Hampshire  
SO23

Attn. Colin Piper

28<sup>th</sup> December 2009

Dear Colin,

**Re: Dismantled railway line between Burgate and South Charford**

Further to your consultation letter of 6<sup>th</sup> November regarding the above, I reported this matter to Breamore Parish Council on 7<sup>th</sup> December.

The Council unanimously rejected the alternative proposals put forward by the two landowners. The Council asked their District and County Councillor, Edward Heron, to have regard to these views in formulating his response on this matter.

The Council has previously fought hard to protect the principle of the 'linearity' of the proposed footpath when negotiating the affordable housing proposals at the former Breamore Station and it was felt that this principle should be maintained at the southern end of the line.

It was also felt that the proposed 3m zone was unnaturally narrow given the wider land holding of the existing line. It was considered that the proposed crossing of the residential drive adjacent to the A338 was potentially more dangerous than the existing route. Finally, without addressing all of the details of the proposals, and contentions made (including a direct communication received by the Parish Council), it was felt that the benefits would be of questionable benefit in the context of the route already owned and controlled by HCC.

Therefore, in conclusion, the Council asked me to write to HCC to report the above, and to request that the footpath proposals are progressed solely along the route of the former railway track, as originally conceived.

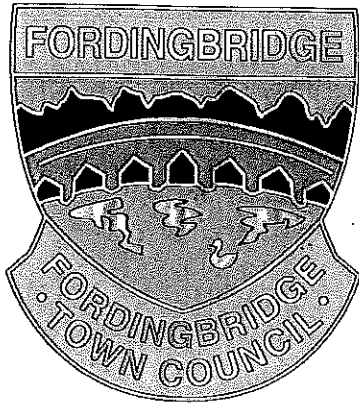
If you have any further queries on this matter, please

Yours sincerely

Peter Turner

Chair, Breamore Parish Council

cc. B Dixon, Clerk to BPC



The Town Hall, 63 High Street,  
Fordingbridge, Hampshire SP6 1AS  
Tel/Fax – 01425 654134

[www.fordingbridge.gov.uk](http://www.fordingbridge.gov.uk)

[town.clerk@fordingbridge.gov.uk](mailto:town.clerk@fordingbridge.gov.uk)

Town Clerk – Ms Kate Mason

Colin Piper  
Rights of Way Map Review Officer  
Countryside Service  
Department of Culture, Community & Rural Affairs  
Hampshire County Council  
Mottisfont Court  
High Street  
Winchester SO23 8ZF

9th February 2010

Dear Colin

### **Burgate Railway footpath**

Members agreed at their last Planning meeting to give their support to the original footpath route along the old railway line. This was unanimously agreed.

Yours sincerely

Kate Mason  
Town Clerk

**Piper, Colin**

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**From:**

**Sent:** 29 December 2009 20:58

**To:** Piper, Colin

**Subject:** Dismantled railway line between Burgate and South Charford

Dear Mr Piper,

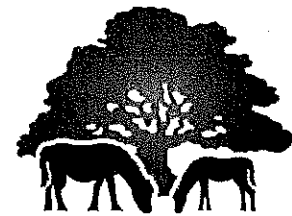
Further to your letter of the 6<sup>th</sup> November I have visited the section of dismantled line and met with the two landowners. I have also attended a meeting of Breamore Parish Council where the matter was discussed and have seen the comments made by Cllr Shañd one of the two New Forest District Councillors within whose Ward the section in question falls.

Whilst I do not accept many of the arguments put forward by the two landowners, I would support the alternative route offered by them with a couple of conditions. Firstly they must cover all the costs of any works required to put the footpath in place and all légal and other costs for any "land swap". Secondly we must have an agreement from the landowners binding them and any successors, that they will not erect any fencing or barrier that will obscure any views eastwards from the path.

Kind regards,

Cllr Edward Heron  
Fordingbridge Division  
Hampshire County Council

30/12/2009



NEW FOREST  
NATIONAL PARK

Colin Piper  
Definitive Map Review Officer  
Hampshire County Council  
Mottisfont Court  
High Street  
Winchester SO23 8ZF

Our ref : 7/5/3/14/3  
Your ref: CEP/Breamore

9 December 2009

Dear Colin

**Dismantled railway line between Burgate and South Charford**

Thank you for your letter dated 6 November 2009.

The National Park Authority strongly supports the use of the dismantled railway line between Burgate and South Charford as a public path. As you are aware, the Authority has already funded some of the necessary works to enable the use of northern half the route. Whilst we understand that initially the route will be for walkers, we would support any future initiatives to make this into a multi-use route.

The New Forest Access Forum has also identified the need for an off-road alternative to the A338 passing through Breamore. This need is met by the proposed use of the dismantled railway.

In my opinion, it would not appear to be in the interests of the public to alter the Breamore Railway Line path from the route of the disused railway to that which has been proposed as an alternative.

There are several reasons for this:

A straight, direct route is easier to use and more convenient for the public. The proposed alternative route involves two sharp corners and runs closer to the main A338 – it is almost adjacent to the road and the road noise is likely to be intrusive

That the route follows the old railway line provides a heritage interest. There are some railway related artefacts along the route that have the potential for restoration, and there is also potential for some railway-related interpretation of the route. To deviate from the original route at the southern end would detract from this interest.

New Forest National Park Authority  
South Efford House, Milford Road, Lymington, Hampshire SO41 0JD  
Telephone 01590 646669 Fax 01590 646601 Email [sarah.manchester@newforestnpa.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.manchester@newforestnpa.gov.uk)  
[www.newforestnpa.gov.uk](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk)

CHAIRMAN CLIVE CHATTERS INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE BARRIE FOLEY

In general, walkers prefer unfenced routes. Fencing, and especially six-foot high fencing, detracts from the experience of walking in the countryside and can make walkers feel restricted and closed in.

The original proposed route would be located within the boundaries of the old railway. There would be a substantial width available to the public. The proposed alternative route appears to offer a much reduced width.

It is stated that the proposed alternative route would need to be raised up. The original proposed route is likely to have a firm, solid base, as it used to be a railway. It seems unlikely that a newly created, raised surface would provide as good a walking surface as the original route.

The proposed alternative route stops short of the junction of the originally proposed route with the A338. Whilst there are no current plans to extend the path south-west of the A338, for example to join up with the Avon Valley Path, this would obviously be a desirable connection. If a south-west extension ever became a possibility then the crossing of the A338 would be safer from the original proposed route.

There are many instances of public paths crossing land which is under environmental stewardship agreements. The Higher Level Stewardship scheme offers payments for providing public access. In general, public access is not contrary to HLS objectives. In this case, walkers will be restricted to the route. The original proposed route is tree-lined and only the southernmost 100 metres are adjacent to a SSSI. It seems unlikely that walkers would disturb waders or other wildlife on the SSSI. If there are any concerns about this, then they could be alleviated by physical management of the route – for example, directing walkers to the north-west side of the disused railway, or planting additional screening material.

Please contact me if you have any questions, or wish to clarify any of the above points.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Manchester  
Countryside Access Officer

Greyfriars  
Christchurch Road  
RINGWOOD  
BH24 1DW



Please reply to:-

Mr C Piper  
Definitive Map Review Officer  
Hampshire County Council  
Countryside Service  
Rights of Way Office  
Mottisfont Court  
High Street  
Winchester  
SO23 8ZF

25 November 2009

Dear Mr Piper,

### **Dismantled railway line between Burgate and South Charford**

We welcome the establishment of a footpath throughout the section of the disused railway track bed between Burgate and South Charford, however we would not support deviating the route of footpath from that previously used by the railway. The historic feature of the railway should be maintained unless it can be shown that it would be impracticable to do so.

We refute the stated benefits to walkers of the proposed diversion and the detrimental effects of the original route.

1. The use of the railway line would have no impact on the water meadows or the areas of HLS and SSSI land (point 6), as the path would be bounded by a drain on its eastern side and emerge on to the A338 north of the SSSI land.
2. The suggestion that people would stray from the path (point13) we find rather strange as the only way to "stray" into the water meadows is by climbing a gate which is visible from the A338 now, or by jumping over the drain.
3. Access to the A338 would only require a minor change in surface level with a small ramp up to the road from the railway bed.
4. Visibility to cross the A338 (point1) is good in both directions and crossing the A338 is little different from that of the proposed alternative point. The fact that the proposed diversion connects to the bus stop is irrelevant, as the short distance along the grass verge between the bus stop and the existing end of the railway line would not inconvenience the few walkers who may wish to use the bus in that particular direction.
5. The diverted path would run unacceptably close to a busy road bounded by a high fence. Walkers would have views in one direction only with the noise of traffic on the other side of the fence and would certainly not feel safe and secure (point4).
6. The two right angle changes of direction are unacceptable on such a path.

7. The question of flooding (pont5) is a bit of a red herring, as presumably when the railway was built the presence of the Burgate drain was taken into account.

8. In no circumstances do we think there should be an exchange of land ownership

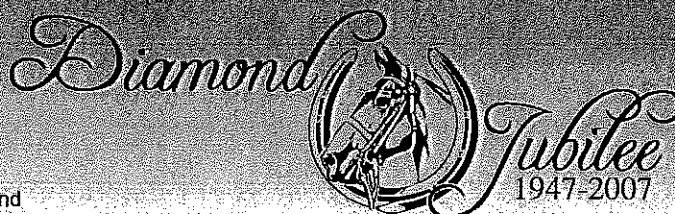
9. The last point (14) made by the land owners we find a little disconcerting, with the implied threats.

Yours sincerely

Kelvin Winch  
Footpath Secretary  
Ringwood & Fordingbridge Footpath Society  
and on behalf of Ramblers Association.

Registered Offices  
The British Horse Society  
Stoneleigh Deer Park  
Kenilworth  
Warwickshire  
CV8 2XZ

Limited Liability  
Registered No. 444742 England  
Registered Charity No. 210504  
Email: enquiry@bhs.org.uk  
Web Site: www.bhs.org.uk



**The British Horse Society**  
Patron: Her Majesty The Queen

Colin Piper  
Countryside Service  
Mottisfont Court  
High St.  
Winchester  
SO23 8ZF

18 January 2010

Dear Colin

### **Dismantled Railway, Breamore**

Thank you for the extra information. I have also visited the site between A and B at the invitation of the owners, who have also supplied me with a copy of their proposals for this section. I am assured that their alternative path can be made of equivalent usable width to the old railway line, and no stock will be kept on this land, so fencing can be kept to the minimum required to ensure users stay on the right-of-way, so am satisfied on this point.

The lack of connectivity remains a problem. I understand that until recently HCC leased the former railway land to adjacent landowners, several of whom keep horses. They have been able to use it as part of their exercise routes, and we would expect your plan for the line to make provision for this to continue, with suitable gaps/gates in the fencing. I agree with you that the best point to cross the A338 is from the bus stop layby to Friern Court road, and the alternative proposal appears to be the best way of achieving this, particularly as the landowners are willing to pay to construct and maintain this! The dismantled railway at this point is an overgrown bog which would be very expensive to clear and surface, and it would also require an extra 55m. of highway margin to reach the crossing point. We walked along this, and it was strewn with litter which is not only unsightly, but could be dangerous to humans and animals.

If the section of line between C and A can be brought into use, riders who can access it would be able to make it part of a circular route, though part of this would depend on paths not on the definitive map. On other disused railway lines HCC has usually dedicated them as footpaths with permissive bridleway status. This would seem to be the best solution in this case, provided access agreements are made with adjacent landowners. This would probably be necessary anyway where they own land on both sides of the line,

Yours sincerely

Brenda King (County Access & Bridleways Officer)



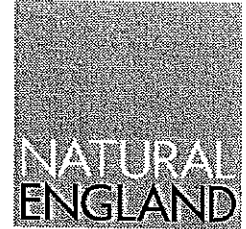
INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Working for the good of every Horse and Rider

The British Horse Society is an Appointed Representative of South Essex Insurance Brokers Limited.  
who are authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority



Date: 22 December 2009  
Our ref: SU10.3/HCC/HI  
Your ref: CEP/Breamore



Colin Piper  
Hampshire County Council  
Mottisfont Court  
High Street  
Winchester  
SO23 8ZF

1 Southampton Road  
Lyndhurst  
Southampton  
Hampshire  
SO43 7BU

T 0300 060 0378

**By email only, no hard copy to follow**

Dear Colin

**RIVER AVON SYSTEM SITE OF SPECIAL SCIENTIFIC INTEREST (SSSI)  
AVON VALLEY SPECIAL PROTECTION AREA/RAMSAR (SPA/RAMSAR)**

**Dismantled railway line between Burgate and South Charford**

Thank you for your letter dated 06 November 2009 consulting Natural England on the above planning application.

**Assessment under the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994  
Advice under S281 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000)**

Based on the information provided, Natural England has no objection to the proposed development. It is our view that, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, it would not be likely to have a significant effect on the interest features of the Avon Valley SPA/Ramsar site, or any of the features of interest of the River Avon System SSSI.

If you require any further information regarding this response please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Holly Niner  
Government Team  
South East Region, Western Area Team  
Tel: 0300 060 0378 Email: [holly.niner@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:holly.niner@naturalengland.org.uk)

S:\Designated Sites\SSSI Sites\River Avon\Planning Casework\HCC Dismantled railway line between Burgate and South Charford SP0  
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## **Proposed routes of Breamore Rail Path**

In response to the consultation letter on the proposed routes at the southern end of Breamore Rail Line, I offer my comments below.

In consideration of the two proposed routes at the southern end of Breamore Rail Path in terms of the conservation value and the impact on biodiversity.

### **Route on the existing rail bed**

Clearance of vegetation along the route will need to be timed to avoid any impact on breeding birds and with due consideration to European Protected Species (EPS). However such work should not have a long term, adverse impact on the biodiversity. The rail bed is unlikely to require the importation of large amounts of material. With active management of the route and adjacent trees and scrub the biodiversity value may be enhanced.

### **Alternative route adjacent to the road**

Clearance of vegetation along the route will need to be timed to avoid any impact on breeding birds and with due consideration to European Protected Species (EPS). This route lies at the edge of and within derelict watercress beds. In some places with seasonal drawdown on the edge and freshwater springs, this area is likely to contain a high diversity of species of fauna and flora. In order to create a suitable route in this area the importation of material would either adversely affect in the long term, or destroy its current biodiversity value.

Whilst this area currently carries no conservation designation, it is of a quality, if it were surveyed, to meet the standards of Site of importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) under criteria 5B; *Fens, flushes, seepages, springs, inundation grassland, etc. that support a flora and fauna characteristic of unimproved and waterlogged (seasonal or permanent) conditions.*

Whilst active management would be undertaken, the changes here would not replace the particular habitats damaged or destroyed by the required construction of a suitable surface.

Andrew Davidson MSc  
Conservation Officer  
Hampshire County Council Countryside service

22.02.10



# Hampshire County Council

*From* Sam Jones  
Breamore Dismantle Railway Line  
Consultation

*To* Colin Piper  
Countryside Access Team  
Mottisfont Court  
Winchester  
Hampshire

*Your  
reference*

*Direct line* 02380 605109

*Date* 25th January 2010

Dear Mr Piper,

Thank you for your consultation letter and attachments. We believe that the existing section of the dismantled railway line shown on your plan provides the more preferential route to be used as a Public Footpath or Permissive Bridleway. Barring vegetation clearance it requires no significant ground works to open up this route for use. Further long-term maintenance would be minimal given it is an established, raised surface (surrounding area is meadow with high water table) designed to carry significantly heavier traffic.

The route marked A - B on your plan raises three main concerns from our perspective:

- The proposed route follows a currently un-made surface. If this surface was upgraded to the usual standard for footpaths or Bridleways as proposed in the consultation letter, it has the potential to be to a lower standard than that already existing on the railway line. Thus greater cost implications for long-term maintenance would result. These maintenance concerns are exacerbated by the East-West section running perpendicular to the main line. Initial site visits show this to be crossing a low-lying section of land that is prone to holding surface water. The proposed surface would have to be built up significantly and retained to avoid water logging and damage to the surface. Again this would impact significantly upon both costs of path construction and its maintenance, both of which are not of concern with the existing railway line.
- The route A - B would take the users alongside the busy main road. Even with the fencing this would detract significantly from the user experience and increase risk to public safety.

Memo

- The detour itself from the existing railway line would detract from the social and historical experience of using the route. Significant efforts have been made to retain the routes original identity for example the Breamore Station. This feature will attract a significant number of users and enthusiasts.

Regards

Denise Hewlett - Area Countryside Access Manager

Sam Jones - Senior Countryside Access Ranger - New Forest