

## **The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Access Forum**

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[http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/prow\\_local\\_access\\_forum.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/prow_local_access_forum.htm)

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## **RBWM Local Access Forum Fast Response Team**

### ***Consultation response:***

### ***14/03904/FULL | Repositioning of garden wall at number 4 Bridge View, removal of walls at numbers 3 and 5 and construction of footway in front of numbers 1-4 Bridge View***

*The Local Access Forum (LAF) Fast Response Team has examined the proposals for the above applications and wish to make the following comments:*

#### **Riverside route vs Roadside route**

The Forum submitted advice to the RBWM Cabinet on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2014 stating that the riverside route is the preferred option for the Thames Path and is the best solution in the longer term, given its status as a National Trail of great benefit to the community. This position has not changed however the forum understands the current difficulties and supports the need to improve safety. The application to create a roadside route is an expedient solution to the immediate problem in the short to medium term but the creation of a riverside path should remain the long term objective of the Council.

#### **Parking**

The Forum considers that the issue of parking is the most problematic aspect of the application, and notes the revised plan which details the refreshed double-yellow lines to be painted along the road.

It is understood that these lines apply to the footway as well as the road and thus will allow the Council to enforce the full width of the path to be clear. If this is the case the Forum consider that it would go some way to resolving the parking issue, providing effective monitoring and enforcement are put in place. Without monitoring or enforcement it is likely to be ignored.

The Forum consider that in addition to the yellow lines, "No parking" signs will need to be erected on site in clear locations.

#### **Surfaces**

The forum consider that the psychology of the surface will be important and the entire surface of the path should be different to the private land. This will distinguish the path in the eyes of the public and the landowners and deter any parking or overhanging of the footpath. This would also be beneficial should any enforcement be necessary.

The Forum recommend that the path is surfaced with a green macadam wearing surface along the entire length of the path.

**This letter constitutes formal advice from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead Local Access Forum. Local Authorities are required, in accordance with section 94(5) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to have regard to relevant advice from this forum in carrying out its functions.**

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# **RBWM Local Access Forum Fast Response Team**

## ***Consultation response:***

### ***Proposed restriction of Eton Footpath 51, Eton Thameside***

*The Local Access Forum (LAF) Fast Response Team has examined the proposals for the above path and make the following comments on behalf of the forum:*

The Local Access Forum does not object in principle to the proposal to close the path during night-time hours, however they consider that there are a number of issues that the Panel needs to be consider before granting the request.

#### **1. Timing of the closure**

The forum consider that the timing of the closure is important and needs to be properly defined.

If the closure was based on a certain time this would need to take into account the summer months where the path is likely to be popular for lawful recreational use at a much later time than it would do in the winter months. Depending on the nature of the crime and anti-social behaviour a suggested time frame could be from 10pm until 6am.

If the closure is based on a “dusk until dawn” approach this would need to be carefully defined to ensure that the public and the owners of the property are fully aware of the expectations when the path will be open and closed.

#### **2. Management of the closure**

One of the key concerns regarding a night-time closure is the issue of management. The forum recommend that the Panel consider carefully how the path will be closed and opened, who is responsible for making sure this will operate as planned, and who is responsible for enforcement should the path not be opened as expected, both now and in the longer term.

If the Council is expected to enforce the order the Panel is urged to consider the effect this will have on Council resources and the likely response times that the public could expect.

There is a risk that the path could be left closed in the mornings due to holidays, illness, oversight or due to a change on ownership.

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It may be the case that an automatic locking/unlocking system could alleviate the need for people to take time and unlock the gates and mitigate the risk that the gate would be left locked to the public for any reason

### **3. Nature of the closure**

The forum consider that there is a risk that the public would be deterred from using the path if they encounter a closed gate, even if the gate was not locked. The forum consider that it would be better for the public if any gate is left in an open position during the daytime so that the public are not deterred from using the path.

### **4. Suggested ways forward**

#### **a. Trial period**

The forum recommend that a 6-month trial period be considered for the closure, with a defined review date. This would allow for any problems to be identified and allow time to ascertain whether the proposal is suitable for a longer term. It may also be the case that a temporary closure period may result in the crime and anti-social behaviour issues being resolved as those causing the problem move on. In such a case the Panel could consider lifting the restrictions after the trial period.

#### **b. Site notices**

As part of the closure the forum recommend that permanent site notices are erected to advise the public of the closure times and the reasons why the path is closed. In addition it is recommended that the notices include contact details for those responsible for ensuring the path is opened and closed as planned in case of any issues. If the path is being closed for a trial period this should be specified in the notice.

#### **c. Other options**

The forum consider that other options might also deter the crime and anti-social behaviour without the need for a closure. Bright security lighting, activated by a proximity sensor, might make the area less attractive for crime and anti-social behaviour and solve the problems that are being experienced.

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