Regulatory Committee – 6 September 2018

Public Statements

Agenda Item 5 – Application to divert part of Footpath 6, Gussage St Michael

Statement from East Dorset District Councillor Simon Tong, Handley Vale ward

- "Resident in Gussage St Michael for 25 years, District Councillor for 11 years. Both wife and I are keen walkers and know the area well.
- Can vouch for the substance of applicant's observations.
- I could only identify seven names of objectors from the immediate locality. The remainder appeared to come from farther afield. Noteworthy that all the supporters are local – including me.
- This is a generous offer from the applicant, who bought the property in good faith and with due diligence.
- It provides enhanced opportunity to appreciate the architecture and context of the bridge."

Statement from David J Hall CBE, applicant and owner of Ryalls

"The exact route of FP6 has been an issue since the mid 70's. The resolution has been hampered by mistakes and misinformation.

The proposed diversion will settle matters once and for all.

The diversion offers wonderful views of the listed 18th century packhorse bridge and of Ryalls also listed.

The definitive route over the bridge is not safe. The diversion enables more people to use the footpath, it is safe for the mobility impaired, safe for families with small children, safe for all.

I very much hope the committee will agree to the diversion."

Summary of address by David J Hall CBE, applicant and owner of Ryalls

"Given the long complicated history of FP 6 it is quite easy to see how the report comes to the conclusions it does. There have been three footpaths in use over the last 30 years not to mention the definitive route over the packhorse bridge making 4 in all! Objectors have clearly been a little confused as to which path is being talked about.

There are two key conclusions in the report that leads to its recommendation.

The first, in Para 4.20 states…'the forms…….show the path has a history of continuous use from the 1960s to the present', because of the complications of the 4 possible paths I will show that the objectors must be mistaken.

The second, in Para 5.6 states 'the public's enjoyment ..would be significantly adversely affected by the diversion', I will show that in fact since the creation of the proposed diversion locals have chosen to walk the diversion rather than the definitive route over the packhorse bridge.

The issue of safety was not addressed in the report, Steve Butler will comment on this

In conclusion the proposed diversion will provide a safer route so more members of the public can use the path and will increase public enjoyment of the listed pack horse bridge and Ryalls."

Summary/Statement from Jill Pigdon-Jones

“Mr Pigdon is unwell and we are unable to attend.

I would like to object to the diversion of Footpath 6 and the extinguishment of the Definitive Route.

My objection is based around the follow points:

As someone who has walked the route over decades I can confidently say that it would result in a lower quality of views for path users, removing significant features of general interest such as the pack-horse bridge and a view of a 500 year old property nearby. The original definitive path and its view and historical relevance should be maintained as it has been for hundreds of years as an option for users of the footpath.

Only offering one route down along the boundary of Mr Hall & Mr Pigdon’s properties would not retain the character of the current route which provides wide open space. As a route on its own this suggested route would negatively impact public enjoyment of the path through this area. It would also increase issues regarding security, privacy, right of peaceful enjoyment and privacy onto Mr Pigdon as it runs all the way along his boundary whilst reducing those of Mr Hall.”