

Appendix 1

Eco-towns: Living a Greener Future - Consultation Paper - Countryside Access Forum for West Sussex Response

The Forum would like to make the following high-level comments on the Consultation Paper with specific reference to the proposed Eco-town at Ford, West Sussex:

1. The area covered by the study is an attractive open area of countryside just south of the boundary of the proposed National Park and contains part of the beautiful Arun Valley. It is a popular area for walking, cycling and riding by locals and visitors, and there are a number of well-used paths and routes that connect the villages. If the proposals go ahead, we would wish to see these rural paths and routes protected and as much as possible of their rural character preserved.
2. The road network still largely consists of country lanes, although traffic numbers have increased dramatically. Nonetheless, they are still used by cyclists getting to work and for recreational purposes, as well as by walkers and equestrians. At present there are no bridleways or cycle tracks serving this area and the establishment of the Eco-town should remedy that deficiency. Likewise it may help to create the Cycle Link between Arundel and Littlehampton - a proposal that for many years has not yet been realised.
3. The large increase in local population that would result from the Eco-town would put great pressure on the existing paths and roads and it would be essential to develop a new network of off-road multi-use paths and routes to meet this new demand. Existing paths and routes radiating from the site would also need upgrading.
4. If the Ford Eco-town proposal is successful, CAFWS looks forward to involvement in all elements of its development.

16th June 2008