

Secretary to the Forum

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**Countryside
Access Forum
for
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If calling ask for

Our reference

Your reference

Fiona MacLeod

14th December 2007

Dear Sir,

**Land West of Horsham Masterplan – Draft Supplementary Planning
Guidance September 2007**

The Countryside Access Forum for West Sussex (CAFWS) is an **independent statutory advisory body** established by West Sussex County Council (WSCC) under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Members are volunteers and represent a great range of experience and knowledge of access issues in the county. They are able to comment with authority on access matters relating to conservation, landscape, farming and forestry as well as all matters referring to public rights of way for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

The Forum is keen to contribute to the process to ensure that the proposed large-scale development meets the needs of local people and that the chance is taken to improve opportunities for countryside access for present and future residents. Some new routes may be necessary and, with an increase in population of several thousand, existing paths will need to be upgraded.

Before commenting on the document, CAFWS would like to emphasise in its positioning statement the importance of considering the needs of the three main users of public rights of way (prows):

- **Walkers** – the need is to access the countryside, especially using circular routes of various lengths; internal paths need to link up with the wider network of prows and other means of accessing the countryside. Areas for **dog walking** must be accommodated.
- **Cyclists** – using cycle tracks and bridleways – an improved network will contribute to sustainable access to work and school
- **Horse riders** – riding is becoming a more and more important recreational activity around the urban fringe and contributes to the local economy.

I am enclosing the preliminary response from a walking interest group member on the documentation on behalf of the Forum for your attention. It should also be noted that as you go away from this area it becomes more rural and as a result more bridleways are affected. It is important to remember the wider network and integration of urban fringe requirements and the consequent impact on rural elements beyond that fringe.

Due to timescales, this response has not been ratified at a full Forum meeting. It has, however, been approved in principle by the Chairman and Vice-Chairman albeit without the Masterplan documentation.

In closing, may I emphasise that the Forum is keen to continue to contribute to the process to ensure the design of this area meets the needs of this part of the county in terms of access to the countryside. We will be taking steps to work with all concerned to bring forward specific proposals to enhance the network for all users. The Forum hopes these comments are helpful and looks forward to being involved at all stages of this and future consultations. I

Yours sincerely,



Fiona MacLeod
Secretary
Countryside Access Forum for West Sussex

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CC
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