

From: [REDACTED]
To: [A303 Sparkford to Ilchester; Dean Alford](#)
Subject: SSBA response to questions in table 2, deadline 2
Date: 22 January 2019 13:38:23
Attachments: [Responses to questions table 22 January 2019.docx](#)

Please see attached. I would be grateful for acknowledgment of this email.

Please contact me if you have any queries: email as above, or [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

thank you,

Sarah Bucks
chair, South Somerset Bridleways Association

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To: A303Sparkfordtollchester@PINS.gsi.gov.uk

From Sarah Bucks, chair of the South Somerset Bridleways Association

Registration ID numbers 20015184 and 18891288

Date: January 22nd. 2019

Response to Deadline 2,

Request for a site visit to the bridge at Podimore

Request to attend the Compulsory purchase meetings

Request to attend any meetings concerning public rights of way.

In general:

1. TRO 10036 6.1 Environmental Statement, Chapter 12 People and Communities which list the potential benefits of NMU routes list them for the use of walkers and cyclists. It is most important that equestrians are included in the list of vulnerable road users. They are the most vulnerable of road users and if they are not included on NMU routes, they will be obliged to use the new vehicular carriageways.
2. The glossary should define what rights will be created on NMU routes. The list should include all equestrians, both horse riders and carriage drivers.
3. Many of the plans (eg paper 131) show public rights of way in green and termed 'footpath in verge' or 'public right of way', even where these are definitive bridleways. Please can the status of all public rights of way be clear.
4. It would be helpful to have a list, including coordinates, of all the NMU routes being created.
5. There is some historical evidence of a route from the bend in the Steart Hill Road south of Babcary (at ST 5745 2628) doing southeast, then across to Vale Farm, then round Rewber Copse, and on to Camel Hill. Could reinstating/upgrading/dedicating this as a route connecting Babcary be considered?

Responses to questions in table 2:

1.1.1 Under-bridge at Traits Lane to Camel Hill. This matter was also raised by South Somerset Bridleways Association with Mott MacDonald when on site, although we considered a location at the point where Gason Lane crosses the existing A303 at ST 5898 2553 rather than one at the northern end of Traits Lane (ST 5873 2551). Either location would do and the topography may suggest one over the other. Our concern is the length of the diversion for horse riders from Slate Lane to Camel Hill on the north side of the existing A303. We have asked (verbally, not a formal request) for consideration to be given to an underpass or bridge for all non-motorised/vulnerable road users. If a route were dedicated along the construction track from the eastern end of Slate Lane (Restricted Byway Y27/20) to Camel Hill, without the need to come south of the A303, this would not be so important.

1.1.17 There is evidence of historical routes through /round the edge of the park. DMMO applications for bridleway status have been submitted for 2 of these, which would reconnect bridleway routes between Sparkford and South Barrow. Will these be taken into account and made provision for?

1.1.28 There is a 'Milestone Society' who may have a view.

1.1.29 See response to 1.1.17 above.

1.1.31 See response to 1.1.17 above.

1.4 Road noise along the new carriageway northwest of the Hazlegrove roundabout will impact on the users, including equestrians, of the underpass below. Please could consideration be given to having a low noise surface within the vicinity of the underpass.

1.6.14 Re-siting the menage at Camel Hill – this indicates that a substantial equine establishment is here, and all the more reason to make provision for horse riders and carriage drivers away from the new carriageways and enable them to connect to other communities safely.

1.6.21 NMU routes should put safety first. Tranquillity, views, etc should be secondary to safety.

1.6.22 a) The benefits of horse riding, both mental and physical, are evidenced in the British Horse Society's survey <http://www.bhs.org.uk/enjoy-riding/health-benefits>. Thus providing safe off road routes as an alternative to the new carriageways will provide opportunities for equestrians – if, and only if, equestrians are included on NMU routes. If they are not provided for, and thereby expected to travel on the new carriageways, they are likely to take less exercise.

b) **Why are equestrians excluded from this list?**

Tranquillity may be aspirational, it is not as important as safety. See annex A.

1.6.23 Restricted Byway rights over Podimore bridge are fundamental to connectivity of NMU routes, see annex A. The length of a diversion is important. A horse rider may travel at around 4 miles an hour on a longish route.

1.6.24 a) The plans show that provision has been made for NMU routes (we hope for all vulnerable road users including equestrians) to use the underpass, but the possible continuations for higher rights are not shown. Two DMMO applications have been submitted, one (DMMO reference 859) is for Hazlegrove Lane which runs along footpath (part of WN 23/12 and WN 23/38 and WN 23/40) leading from the existing A303 west of the Sparkford roundabout up to the bend in the road in South Barrow. The other DMMO application (DMMO reference 858) is for the historic route from the Sparkford Inn, across the A303 at grade just north east of the Sparkford roundabout, and up to join the route (DMMO application reference 859).

b) Typically equestrians would not be riding or carriage driving at night, thus any lighting would only be advantageous during daylight hours in order to show the tunnel/underbridge in light, and lessen the effects in the darkened underpass of vehicle headlights, many of which are now on all the time a vehicle is in use, causing possible problems to equestrians.

1.6.25 **Why are equestrians excluded from this list? Equestrians should be included as vulnerable road users.**

No provision has been made for travelling between Podimore and Eastmead Lane. Dedicating Restricted Byway rights over the bridge at Podimore and then eastwards to Eastmead Lane would provide route of realistic length to join Podimore to the southern end of Eastmead Lane and the network of NMU routes north of the A303. The alternative route from Podimore to Cary Fitzpaine is along the A37, which we consider to be dangerous for equestrians, and motorists do not expect to encounter horse being ridden or driven on major roads such as the A37.

1.6.26 a) DMMO applications have been submitted for some unrecorded rights which will be effected by the proposed scheme.

c) There is also historical evidence of a route from the road south of Steart Bridge to Vale Farm.

d) If not incorporated in the scheme, unrecorded public rights of way will, when eventually processed and have orders confirmed, be severed by the new carriageways.

1.6.27 Installing cycleways rather than Restricted Byways is discriminating against equestrians, many of whom are older and predominantly female. A better use of public money would be to specify Restricted Byways.

1.6.28 Again, provision is being specified for walkers and cyclists and to exclude equestrians. Please include equestrians in the group of vulnerable road users. A tunnel or bridge would provide a more realistic length of diversion route. If the diversion routes are too long, ie without the crossing point at Gason Lane or somewhere nearby, either the equestrians will be obliged to take a shorter route and to use or cross the carriageways, possibly in dusk, or they will give up riding out and the pleasure and physical activity of riding out and associated sports will die. See annex A

1.6.29 The most all encompassing status is Restricted Byway, which permits walkers, cyclists, equestrians, and mobility vehicles for disabled Ramblers.

1.7.2 If in the future this road is made an expressway, what provision and when will be made for those users who will then be excluded? Surely it is prudent to build in routes for vulnerable users, including all equestrians, during this current project.

1.7.6 Access to Yeovilton air museum from the north should also be considered, and a grade separated crossing, at a minimum of footpath status, from Eastmead Lane considered. This is a visitor attraction and tourists walk as well as drive.

1.7.21 a) Equestrians will not want to be on the roads after dark. Thus there is an advantage to be had in making the length of diversions as realistic as possible. If a diversion is over 5 kilometres long, there is a chance that equestrians will be obliged to take a shorter route to be home before dark, which may necessitate using the new carriageways. See annex A.

b) There is at least two historical routes which do not currently show the higher rights (bridleway) that have been applied for in the DMMO application (858 and 859). Until these applications have been assessed and processed, the public rights have not been fully examined. Thus the public may use these routes whilst they believe them still to carry public rights.

1.7.23 This will depend on the volume of traffic. There is no need for any installation to stop the traffic unless a horse rider or cyclist or walker is crossing the road. The users of Restricted Byway (route Y 27/27) and Slate Lane (Y 27/20) and any other new NMU routes (designated for all vulnerable users including carriage drivers and the disabled) can expect to cross the road safely

unless there is a constant stream of traffic. A Pegasus crossing would only stop the traffic when required and otherwise not interfere with traffic flow.

Equestrians includes carriage drivers and this should be made evident in the list of NMUs.

1.8.6 see answer to 1.8.9 below.

1.8.9 As a request, could consideration be given to creating a Restricted Byway along the maintenance track along the northern side of the drainage pond, ie along the south side of the hedge south where bridleway (Y 30/29) extends long the northern side of the hedge. This could, if dedicated as a Restricted Byway, also be used by both maintenance vehicles. It would allow all non motorised users (including equestrians) a route connecting Podimore with Eastmead Lane and other off road routes north of the A303 and connect up to Cary Fitzpaine and Barbary. A DMMO application has been submitted to upgrade Eastmead Lane which then connects the two Restricted Byways (Y27/26 and L 6/26) to Restricted Byway status. Dedicating such a route to join Eastmead Lane may reconcile the conundrum of the status of Y 30/29 which was dedicated in the side roads order of 1996 and never legally processed. Obviously NMU users would have no inclination to use the maintenance track/Restricted Byway in times of flood.

1.10.12 Would the suggested tunnel/over bridge at the end of Gason Lane or nearby be considered here? Likewise, a grade separated crossing at the southern end of Eastmand Lane.

1.10.17 a) Could works such as the construction track from the eastern end of Slate Lane to Camel Hill be dedicated as a Restricted Byway. As a Restricted Byway on the Definitive Map, the rights of the public could not be removed by lack of use or lack of maintenance. The dedication of this track as a Restricted Byway would go some way to mitigating the unreasonably long route from Camel Hill round to Slate Lane. (see response to 1.1.1 above).

b) Are the proposed NMU routes part of this?

Could the land on the north side of the new eastbound carriageway to the east of the bridge at Podimore be dedicated as public land, eg 'highway verge'?

1.10.30 Would referring to 'current British Standard xxxx' satisfy this?

1.10.31 a) Could all dedications of NMU routes be legally added to the definitive map and statement within a set time frame.

b) there should be a time limit as historically side road orders have not been processed (eg those from 1996).

1.10.40 see answer to 1.10.31 above

1.10.44 a) Routes dedicated as footpaths will only be available to walkers. Other users such as cyclists, horse riders and carriage drivers will not legally be allowed to use footpaths, and therefore will be obliged to use the new carriageways.

Annex A:

Reasonable lengths of diversions.

In general, assuming the routes are clearly marked and kept in passable condition, a horse rider and carriage driver will plan their outing and know that they will be back home in daylight.

However, through no fault of anyone or organisation, the situation can change. If there is an obstruction near the end of a circular/petal ride, the horse rider will have to find a way of resolving the situation.

The option of turning round and retracing the route can result, as well as a tired horse, riding in the dusk/dark. At that point the options may be a shorter route on a main road or crossing a main road, or the previously ridden longer route on the bridleways, byways and minor roads. Which is the safer option will depend on the horse and the roads and lanes concerned. The lanes may be more dangerous as drivers will assume their way is clear when they see no other head lights coming round a bend – this can be too dangerous to risk on routes where there are no verges. Wearing Hi Viz, as most riders do, will offer no protection as it will not be seen until the oncoming vehicle is through the corner.

A safer option may be to take a shorter and more direct route, but that depends on the level of traffic and how used the horse is to traffic; the more main the road, the better the visibility, and the possibility of lighting.

A diversion of more than 5 kilometers should need to be justified.