

## Horsham District Cycling Forum: Comments on Planning Application DC/14/1090 Worthing Rd Football Ground, October 2014

***The Horsham District Cycling Forum objects to the detail of the current application on the grounds that it fails to comply with NPPF and local policy requirements to provide safe cycling infrastructure.***

NPPF states:

*“The transport system needs to be balanced in favour of sustainable transport modes, giving people a real choice about how they travel.”*

*“[Developments should] give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements.”*

*“Decisions should take account of whether: the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up.”*

Policy CP19 of Horsham District Council’s Core Strategy states:

*“[The Core Strategy favours] a rebalancing in favour of non-car modes as a means of access to services and facilities.”*

*“[Priority will be given to schemes that] enhance the facilities for pedestrians, including those with reduced mobility, and other users such as equestrians and cyclists.”*

The HDPF states:

*“Development will be supported if it:*

*... maintains and improves the existing transport system (road, rail, cycle)*

*... is integrated with the wider network of routes, including public rights of way and cycle paths*

*... minimises conflicts between traffic, cyclists and pedestrians;*

*... provides safe and suitable access for ... cyclists”*

**The current cycle routes to the site are extremely poor; improved cycle access to the site is particularly important because many football club users including players, supporters and officials will be too young to drive or will not have a car. Many will, however, be likely to use active travel if conditions are made attractive.**

**There should be a requirement for Section 106/CIL monies to be used to contribute to improvements to the cycle routes to 1) Southwater and 2) Horsham. This should be in addition to the contribution already required from the West of Southwater development DC/14/0590.**



## 1) Cycle Access to Southwater

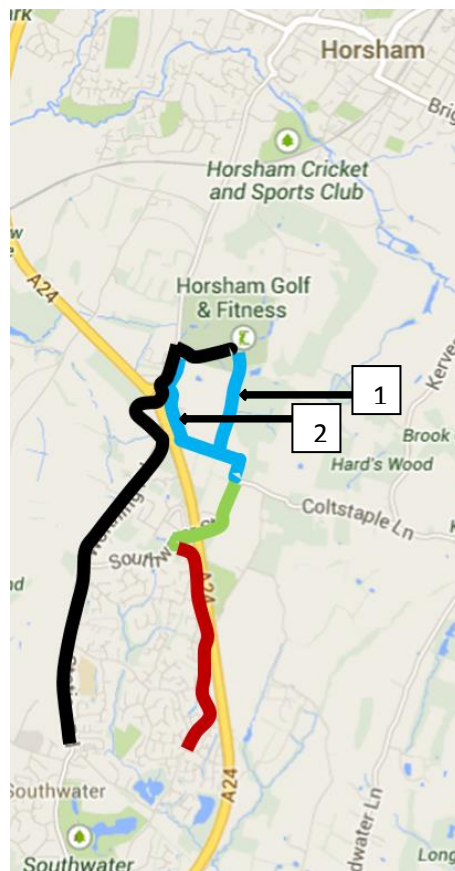
Southwater is a growing settlement and is closer to the site than many parts of Horsham, so a significant and increasing number of trips will potentially come from Southwater.

### Hop Oast roundabout is highly dangerous to cyclists:

Currently the only way to cycle to the site from Southwater is via Hop Oast roundabout (shown in black on map below). This roundabout is so dangerous that almost all cyclists avoid it: 2012 Traffic Census data show just 38 cycles per day on the Worthing Rd south of the roundabout at ID946546 and 17 cycles per day on the A24 to the north at ID56247). Even this overstates the number of people riding across the roundabout itself as many dismount and cross the A24 as pedestrians on an unsatisfactory and unmarked crossing.

**Despite the tiny number of cyclists braving the roundabout, PIA data from March 2009 to February 2014 show that there is a shockingly high injury rate to cyclists. Cyclists were injured in 22% of the total recorded collisions (7 out of 32). Cyclists account for roughly 0.1% of traffic here but make up 33% of all serious injuries/fatalities (2 out of 6). In all cases where a cyclist was injured, the motorist was at fault.**

The ideal solution is a bridge over the A24 which would be in line with Government policy to reduce severance on major roads. Preliminary cost estimates for this were £1.27m. If sufficient funding is not currently available for a bridge, **it is straightforward to create a safe and largely off-road cycle route that entirely avoids Hop Oast.** This route is indicated on the map below (further detail is available in the earlier HDCF document 'Southwater-Horsham Cycle Link –Shorter, Safer and More Attractive' ).



**The northern part of the route (shown in blue on the map below) has two sections both of which will make valuable improvements for cycling:**

**Section 1:** is on the desire line for cyclists going between Southwater and the football club as it is the most direct route. It follows an existing footpath (FP1666) and BOAT (1668) through the golf club and can be upgraded (ideally with a sealed all-weather surface) at little cost. Although cycling on the

footpath could be enabled via a permissive path agreement, changing the status of the footpath to a bridle path is preferable because this will ensure a permanent cycling right of way. Preliminary talks have been held between Neil Burke (Horsham Golf and Fitness), Jon Perks (WSCC PRoW) and Horsham District Cycle Forum.

**Section 2** follows the existing footway alongside the road before linking with the BOAT. There is space available to upgrade the footway for shared use in line with the standards in LTN1/12. We welcome WSCC's undertaking to seek a contribution from the developer of DC/14/0590 to achieve this as it is the most direct route between Horsham and Southwater. However, Section 1 is the more direct route to the proposed football club, so it should be upgraded as a condition of planning permission for the current application.

NB Upgrading existing paths to permit cycling is in line with advice from the Decision Notice for DC/09/0746 from when the golf course was created (details attached). WSCC undertook some preliminary investigations when the golf course was created.

**The middle part of the route is along Southwater St and Coltstaple Lane (shown in green on map below)** which are relatively quiet roads although they are busy at rush hour with some motorists travelling at excessive speeds and there is a tight bend. Apparently there has been a serious accident to a pedestrian along this road. There should be some traffic calming, perhaps including carriageway narrowing on Coltstaple Lane, and a cycle lane on the flyover.

**The southern part of this route follows part of the Southwater 'Red Routes' (shown in red on map below)** which are in Parish council ownership and are built to a generally high standard. They need fairly minor improvements including signage, removal of some overly restrictive barriers and improvement where the path meets Southwater Street to make it both more legible and safer. Preliminary talks have been held between Southwater Parish council and Horsham District Cycling Forum: the parish council are interested in improving cycle access to the Red Routes, but funding and project management will need to be arranged.

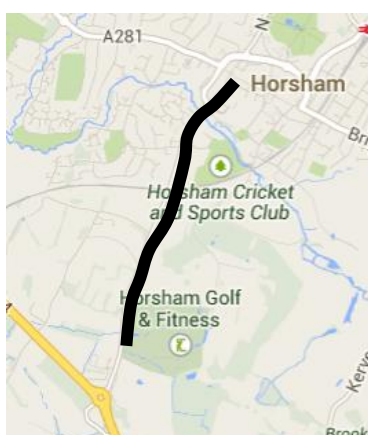
### Legibility

Since the route deviates significantly from the main Worthing Road, it is essential that it is clearly legible with good signage at key points and smooth transitions between the road and the off-road paths. It would be helpful to have signs that indicate that the route avoids the A24 and that show distance as well as destination to make it clear that cyclists are not being sent on a long detour.

## 2) Cycle Access to Horsham

### Worthing Rd is highly dangerous to cyclists

Currently the only way to cycle to the site from Horsham is via the Worthing Rd (shown in black on map below).



The road is busy (11,000+ vehicles per day, forecast to rise to 14,000+ following the West of Southwater development), narrow and fast. There are many large vehicles including frequent buses and the junctions, particularly at the Boar's Head, are hazardous. Many cyclists avoid riding along here because it is dangerous and unpleasant: the WSP report for DC/14/0590 confirms that this section of road has a "high level of fear and intimidation" and "poor cyclist amenity".

The PIA data from March 2009 to February 2014 show that there were 12 accidents with 17 casualties including 7 seriously injured. **Despite the low level of cycling, 2 out of the total of 7 serious injuries were to cyclists.**

The Denne Rd estate access road would provide a direct and nearly traffic-free alternative route and it has been used by cyclists in the past. Although permission to use this route currently looks unlikely, any future opportunity to do this should be investigated. Similarly, it may be possible to obtain access across to Pedlar's Way which passes close to the rear of the site. This latter option would, of course, have limited use during the football season as it would only be practical in dry, daylight conditions.

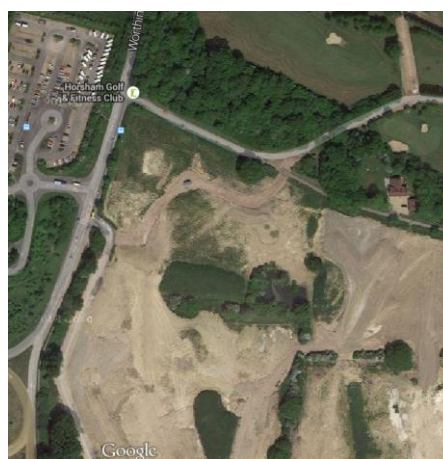
In the absence of a viable off-road route, measures need to be taken to improve safety for cyclists (and pedestrians, motor cyclists equestrians and car drivers) along Worthing Road. This is an important link between Horsham and nearby Southwater and should be, but isn't, safe for cycling. Measures could include extending the 30mph limit southwards, widening the highway to increase the width of the footways for shared-use, signalisation of the Boar's Head junction, changes to the road markings to calm traffic and provide safer space for cycling, a visual 'gateway' to the 30mph limit, increased speed limit enforcement and even restrictions on two-way motorised through-traffic. Solving the safety issues here is not trivial but it has an importance beyond this planning application alone.

### **Junction of the site with Worthing Rd**

Traffic here is fast (40mph speed limit) and heavy with many vehicles turning in and out of the three closely-spaced junctions on Worthing Road. There are significant numbers of buses and HGVs, which are especially dangerous to cyclists and other vulnerable road users. The uncontrolled junctions at Tower Hill and Salisbury Rd along this road have poor safety records, especially for cyclists, so it is expected that a busy uncontrolled junction here will also be hazardous.

Despite this, there do not appear to be any proposals to change the layout of the site entrance onto Worthing Road to make it safer for cyclists or pedestrians, for example: signalising the exit; using the more southerly exit which can be more easily signalised; providing formal cycle and pedestrian crossings; lowering the speed limit, changing road markings and speed enforcement.

### **Aerial view of the three junctions:**



**Site entrance off Worthing Rd. Heavy 40mph traffic here:**



**Signalised junction for the Park and Ride – a fast two lane approach from both directions. It is hazardous for cyclists and lacks any specific cycling infrastructure.**



## Notes on Previous History Regarding Cycle Routes Through the Golf Course

### From decision notice for DC09/0746:

#### Note to Applicant

The applicant is advised to contact the Local Planning Authority and the County Cycling Officer at  
West Sussex County Council, Simone Makepeace on 01243 777516 e-mail  
simone.makepeace@westsussex.gov.uk to explore the potential for cycle within the site to link to  
existing public rights of way.

<http://62.189.105.75/NorthgatePublicDocs/00031569.pdf>

It was resolved that the application DC/09/0746 be determined by the Head of Planning & Environmental Services, in consultation with local Members, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Councillor Sheila Matthews and Councillor David Jenkins, following further negotiation and amendment in respect of the following:

- Clarification as to the capacity of the site to accommodate both 18 and 9 hole courses
- Relocation/amendment of the two fairways through woodland (Home Wood)
- Amount of hedge removal and conditions to protect hedges on the site
- Further consideration of County Council landscape objection and comments on the amended proposal together with ecological implications
- Further consideration of the proposed condition in respect of development within Home Wood
- A survey of Home Wood to be undertaken
- Implications of the import of infill in terms of traffic, monitoring of inert material etc
- Routing of public rights of way through the site and provision of additional cycle routes
- Provision of appropriate protective measures in respect of Badgers, an adjacent property.

f) Routing of public rights of way through the site and provision of additional cycle routes - existing public rights of way would be preserved. With respect to cycle routes, this matter will require further investigation and dialogue/agreement with WSCC regarding links to wider cycle network. With holding decision on the basis of the cycle route would not be reasonable however recommended that an informative be added to request the applicant to discuss this matter further with a view to exploring the possibility as the development progresses.

- 7 No development, hereby approved, shall be occupied until covered secure cycle parking spaces have been provided in accordance with a detailed construction plan to be submitted to and approved by the planning authority.

Reason: To provide alternative travel options to the use of the car in accordance with PPG 3 and PPG 13.

- 13 The development hereby permitted shall not be commenced until such time as a scheme to control the potential increase in surface water has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall be fully implemented and subsequently maintained, in accordance with the timing / phasing arrangements embodied within the scheme, or within any other period as may subsequently be agreed, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority.
- 19 Within 12 months of the date of the decision a Landscape Management Plan to include the management responsibility and maintenance schedules for the whole of the area as illustrated on drawing 359 10d (to include any use of chemicals as part of maintenance regime) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 20 Prior to the construction of fairways 4 and 7 and the construction of the car park as shown on drawing number 09/1789 -20A details shall be submitted to an approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority of:
- i) the surface treatment of the crossing points on Public Byway 1668;
  - ii) the details of the landscaping between the car park and Public Footpath 1666;
  - iii) the details of the landscape management regime to ensure that the public rights of way are preserved.

The scheme shall thereafter be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure that existing footpaths and byways are preserved and managed in the interest of maintaining public access in the countryside in accordance with Policy DC22 of the Horsham District Council Local Development Framework: General Development Control Policies (2007).

See also plan of golf course:

<http://62.189.105.75/NorthgatePublicDocs/00029849.pdf>