



BUCKINGHAMSHIRE LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

Report

AGENDA ITEM 4

Date: 6th November 2024

Title: Summary of Rights of Way Response: Rosefield Solar Farm Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)

Date: 9th October 2024

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Buckinghamshire Council has recently been consulted on the Rosefield Solar Farm PEIR and will shortly be submitting our formal response. With our scope limited to rights of way matters only, Jon and I provided a response to the plans and impacts identified thus far on 9th October 2024.

To summarise our response for the LAF, the PEIR outlines three main changes to the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network. I have included plans in the Appendix for reference.

1. **Footpath ECL/4/2 (East Claydon Parish):** A permanent diversion is proposed, adding approximately 106m to the route. While the diversion is generally satisfactory, we have recommended that the infrastructure be designed around the footpath.
2. **Footpath SCL/13/2 (Steeple Claydon Parish):** We are disputing the assessment of this diversion as being 'significantly beneficial' as it is less convenient when travelling from Calvert and Addison Road, although it is more convenient to access SCL/8/1. Amendments are recommended to avoid objections. We have recommended a connection to the existing exit of SCL/12/2 using a route behind the highway boundary edge (plan below).



3. **Permissive Footpath:** A new 1.9km permissive footpath is proposed, offering significant access improvements across the previously inaccessible Knowl Hill. However, its temporary nature raises concerns. Upgrading it to a public right of way is recommended to ensure long-term access

Broader Themes:

- **Widths of PRow:** Greater clarity is needed on the available widths to avoid excessive maintenance burdens. Rosefield have stated they will provide:
 - A minimum 55 m offset to Bernwood Jubilee Way;
 - A minimum 20 m offset to Midshires Way;
 - All other PRow will have a minimum 10m.

A maximum usable width of around 7m is suggested.

- **Opportunities for Enhancement:** Enhancements such as improved signage, regular maintenance, and surface upgrades are recommended to provide safer and more convenient access. We will look to review and remove all stiles within Rosefield with a BS5709:2028 compliant gate replacing them only where strictly necessary. There are opportunities within the Rosefield Site to upgrade Bridleway rights over existing footpaths.

Conclusion: The PEIR provides a good foundation for protecting and enhancing local rights of way. However, some assessments need revising, and there are opportunities for significant enhancements, particularly by dedicating new public bridleways.