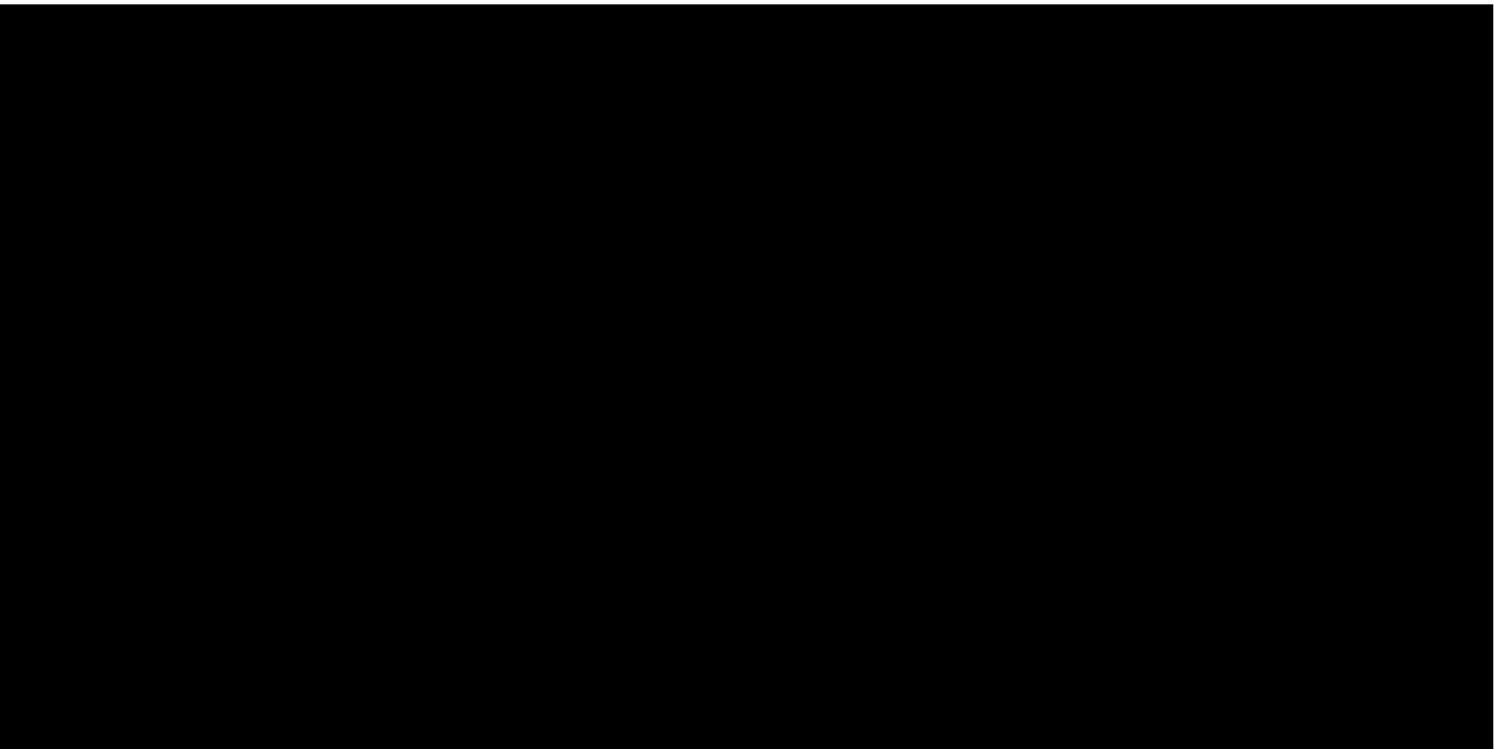




From: Nick Scott [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 September 2015 15:21
To: Planning
Cc: Alison Meeus; Derek Whittington
Subject: Planning Application BN/29/15/PL (Public Rights of Way Comments) F.A.O Richard Temple

Further to the application being submitted to WSCC for comments please see the Public Rights of Way (PROW) teams comments below. Unfortunately the District Councils system was not working to view the application in full so some of these issues may not be relevant but I would welcome these all being considered when deciding this application.

Whilst PROW have no objection to this application there are a few concerns and need for clarification on some issues with regard to access to the site. Firstly the access route into the site is unclear without being able to view the application plans on the District Council website. If access from Church Lane is being acquired through Barnham Court Farm then this is less of an issue however if they are looking to gain access along the red line on the attached plan then this will have to be managed carefully. The north south section of this red line, from the Church south, forms part of a public footpath (146) that also has a permissive cycle route on it that is very well used. If this is the way the vehicles will be accessing the site then it must be clear that users exercising their public right of access along these routes must take precedent over any private rights of vehicular access. The same goes for the section of FP200/1 highlighted red as well. These both have firm sealed surfaces but any damage done to the surface, as part of these works, must be reinstated to the condition prior to works starting so the public right is not interfered with or adversely effected. As well as these points these paths should not be obstructed or restricted in width in any way during or after the works as the public right exists across the full extent of the width of these defined routes. Signage would also be required along these paths informing all users, whether pedestrian, cyclists or vehicular users, of the potential conflict.

From a public right of way point of view clarity would also be welcome on what route of vehicular access will be available when travelling west from the red line, toward the site of the solar farm. The line of FP200/1 actually runs along the southern edge of the old canal and becomes a raised bank the further west it goes and it is hoped that the proposals are for vehicular access to be gained on the old northern bank of the canal, safely away from the legal line of the footpath and pedestrian users. This would seem the most sensible option as

the footpath is not very wide but if this could be clarified that would be appreciated. If it was the case that access was being granted along the legal line of the footpath then surface improvements would be required so the route was useable all year around, even though it was experiencing considerable vehicular use.

The final issue relating to the access itself would be the point it crosses FP200/1 (as shown roughly by the red square on the attached plan) into the actual site of the proposed solar farm. There is a clear crossing of the legal line of the footpath and due to the works taking a reasonably long time to be completed, and future access being required for maintenance it would be required for a stone surface to be laid at the point where the two routes cross so it is useable all year round even though vehicles are using it. If left as an unmade surface this route will become impassable to lawful pedestrian users when wet and this would be unacceptable. A specification for such surface improvements would have to be agreed with the PROW team at WSCC before works took place. At this crossing point where the access to the site and the public footpath cross, signage would be required informing that the public right takes precedent over the private vehicular right and also warning of the potential conflict along the entire east west section where vehicles will be moving close to lawful pedestrian traffic on the footpath.

The final point I would like to make relates to the unofficial layby opposite the church, at the top end of FP146, off Church Lane. Whilst this does not form part of the public right of way it is a useful resource for footpath users who park up to walk the routes and dogs etc. This should be kept clear in my opinion so the use of the surrounding network of public rights of way is not adversely effected by any parking, waiting or storage activities.

Clarification on these points raised would be welcomed and if you could provide a detailed plan of access onto the proposed solar farm this would be very much appreciated so further comments can be made, if necessary.

Kind regards,

Nick Scott

Access Ranger
Public Rights of Way – Countryside Services
West Sussex County Council

Location: 1st Floor Northleigh, Tower Street, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 1RH

We've launched our new website www.westsussex.gov.uk

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