



LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

For the attention of:

Mark Andrews

Head of Planning

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

The Council House, Manor Square

SOLIHULL B91 3QB

22 November 2022

Dear Mr. Andrews, Mark

Ref: PL/2024/02622/HS2DIS

Land Adjacent to A452 Kenilworth Road, Between its Junctions with Marsh Lane and Meriden Road Berkswell Solihull

This letter constitutes formal advice from the Warwickshire Solihull and Coventry Local Access Forum. Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, its Planning Department and Planning Committee is required, in accordance with section 94(5) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, to have regard to relevant advice from this forum in carrying out its functions.

Our formal advice and recommendations are directed at the provisions made under the above planning application for the multi-user Public Right of Way crossing for M216.

The provision for pedestrians and cyclists although not ideal or well thought out is acceptable with only few minor changes to the alignment of the barriers, however, that same provision is unsatisfactory and potentially dangerous for equines and their riders.

Equines are inherently unpredictable and only see from the front. Vehicles, of all sizes and at fast speed, approaching equines from behind or from the side together with the associated noise is likely to produce a flight and fight response which poses a serious danger to the horse and rider and all other Public Right of Way users including motorists.

Yet again HS2 Ltd, even after many similar historic discussions about the dangers surrounding the unpredictability of horses have been raised, continue to show an unwelcome unwillingness to recognise those dangers and the potential catastrophic outcomes for horses, riders, motorists and all other users of M216.

Yet again the design of the above crossing has in-built potential dangers for the horse and rider and in turn for all other road and public right of way users. Furthermore, it is also vital for future safety to ensure regular maintenance to control the growth of vegetation is carried out to prevent further loss of vision for all.

We also understand from our discussions with the British Horse Society that they are also concerned about many elements associated with the design of the bridleway as a whole and also with this proposed crossing. It appears their very real fears have been ignored especially their request for separation from HGVs and provision of appropriate surfaces. With the exponential increases in size and numbers of vehicles and lack of awareness and respect for the safety of equestrians their advice at all points of the consultation and planning due process should be taken very seriously.

We, therefore, respectfully urge Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council to bring this application before the Planning Committee for detailed discussion on the public platform which will, hopefully, result in changes being made to the design of the crossing to ensure the safety of ALL users.

One preventable accident is one too many and only adds to the increase in catastrophic road traffic accidents reported that involve horses and riders. Sadly, in some cases these accidents predictably end in the death of the horse and/or one or more of the individuals involved.

We should all do everything we can to prevent such accidents. In this case ignorance cannot be used as an excuse as discussions with HS2 Ltd on similar issues which were ignored at previous consultations have gone on to be the cause of accidents on local multi-user rights of way.

The Warwickshire Solihull and Coventry Local Access Forum advise and recommend that application **PL/2024/02622/HS2DIS** is brought before the Planning Committee, on the Public Platform, for detailed discussion prior to determination.

At this time, we advise **REFUSAL** until and when design changes are forthcoming which eliminate the very real in-built safety issues for ALL users of Public Right of Way M216, especially equestrians.

We request an acknowledgement of receipt of this **OBJECTION** and ask to be kept apprised of its passage through the planning due process including notification of when it will be brought before the SMBC Planning Committee for determination.

The Warwickshire Solihull and Coventry Local Access Forum request the right to speak at the Planning Committee Meeting.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sheila Cooper', with a large, sweeping arch over the first part of the name.

Sheila Cooper

Chair Warwickshire Solihull and Coventry Local Access Forum
Please Respond Directly to: sheila.ann.cooper41@gmail.com
Copy to LAF Secretary: charlesbarlow@warwickshire.gov.uk

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