



Sandbach Footpath Group

Aiming to protect, improve, extend and make accessible the network of footpaths in and around Sandbach.

Cheshire East Planning Dept.
planning@cheshireeast.gov.uk

30 March 2022

Re 21/2412C,

Land South of Old Mill Road, Sandbach

Please note, in this document the above is referred to as "the site".
PRoW is Public Right of Way.

Sandbach Footpath Group (SFG) comments and objects to the proposal as below:

Introduction.

Sandbach Footpath Group is a very active organisation, with two or more group walks a week, 600 email members and over 4000 Facebook followers.

The site for 21/2412C is well endowed with footpaths at present, regularly walked by local people and forming part of the Sandbach Walking Festivals, 2019 and 2021.

The three Public Right of Way (PRoW) relevant to the site are, **at present:**

Sandbach Footpath 19 is the longest footpath on the site and goes from FP50 in a generally southerly direction through the central part of the site to Houndings Lane Farm.

Sandbach Footpath 18 goes from FP50 in a slightly east of south direction to Houndings Lane along the eastern boundary of the site.

Sandbach Footpath 17 follows a line going generally east-west from FP18 via a cluttered yard, then veering south west to join FP19 near the transmitter mast.

Sandbach Parish has remaining only about 20 PRoW that go somewhere, rather than ending on a busy and treacherous main road or finishing at a dead end. This planning application takes in and degrades 3 of those PRoW, leaving a mere 17 PRoW, amounting to a 15% reduction.

It is important that these Footpaths, as Rights of Way enshrined in Law in perpetuity, be retained as best as possible, according to the Town & Country Planning Act and other relevant Laws and Guidance.

Regarding the PRoWs, it seems that 21/2412C is an improvement over 19/5736C

Comments from CEC PRoW dept.

Clare Hibbert at CEC PRoW has made a very clear and strong objection to this planning application, and this was published on the 21/2412C website on 16th November 2021.

Since then, the route of FP17 has been revised away from the cluttered yard (Fields Farm).

Comments

FP17. It would be preferable to have a more open aspect for the PRoW, but on balance, the new route, even though it is mainly urban is preferable to the previous route via the cluttered yard. However, the route (**A**) is traversed by about 22 driveways with people driving in and reversing out, with the resultant safety issues. The alternative route (**B**) would be traversed by 14 driveways, so a slightly lower safety risk, but still not what a PRoW footpath should be. In Fig 1 (page 3 of 3), Route **A** is shown as red dotted, Route **B** as blue dotted.

A proper diversion application or extinguishment, as appropriate, should be done before building work starts.

In all cases, the **stile** to Laurel Close should be converted to a gate or kissing gate. Another consideration is to make the route **accessible**, with accessible gate, and wheelchair friendly so that new residents and residents of Cold Moss Heath would have a route through to Sandbach via FP17 (A or B as preferred) and the Spine Road. This would need FP50 to be re-instated (as it was a few years ago) with a proper surface and suitable gradient.

FP18. The letter from Harris Lamb to Mr Daniel Evans (see website "Response to D Evans" 21/02/2022, ref 08372486, actual letter dated 18Feb2022) stated that the width of the area for FP18 will be no less than 6m. If true, this is a reasonable compromise. It will be up to CEC Planning Dept. to follow through and enforce this. FP18 is shown blue dashed in Fig 1. There should be gates or kissing gates, rather than stiles, where necessary.

Objection, FP19

21/2412C should be compliant with the various Laws and Guidance (e.g., Defra Guidance 1/09).

FP19. From Houndings Lane, FP19 goes generally in a northerly direction and then turns west. At this point it is squeezed between the farm buildings (Houndings Lane Farm) and the proposed future care home. Like FP18, this section needs to be no less than 6m wide. FP19 then turns generally northerly into a reasonably open area. However, it then turns east to join the estate spine road and then turns north-east along the spine road to meet FP50. Being on an estate road, this would not be in compliance with Defra 1/09 (e.g., clause 7.8), so SFG **objects** to this part of the route. The route would be traversed by driveways to about 12 houses, with people driving in and reversing out. This would not be safe or satisfactory for a footpath route.

It would need an extinguishment, which would probably meet a lot of local opposition.

Suggested alternative route for FP19

SFG suggests FP19 be diverted to the west of the site through the green corridor and then at the northern end turn east between what appears to be an avenue of trees shown on the map. The Map referred to is identified on the website as Prop Coloured Site Layout (ref 08376730). See Fig 1, on page 3 of 3, for the route suggested, shown as a red line on. The suggested route would not be traversed by any driveways. Gates or kissing gates, if necessary, should be installed rather than stiles.

NOTE

Footpaths diverted or routed on a pavement traversed by driveways or extinguished are likely to be objected to by SFG membership. This will probably result in a time-consuming public inquiry.

Thank you for your consideration,

Chairman, Sandbach Footpath Group

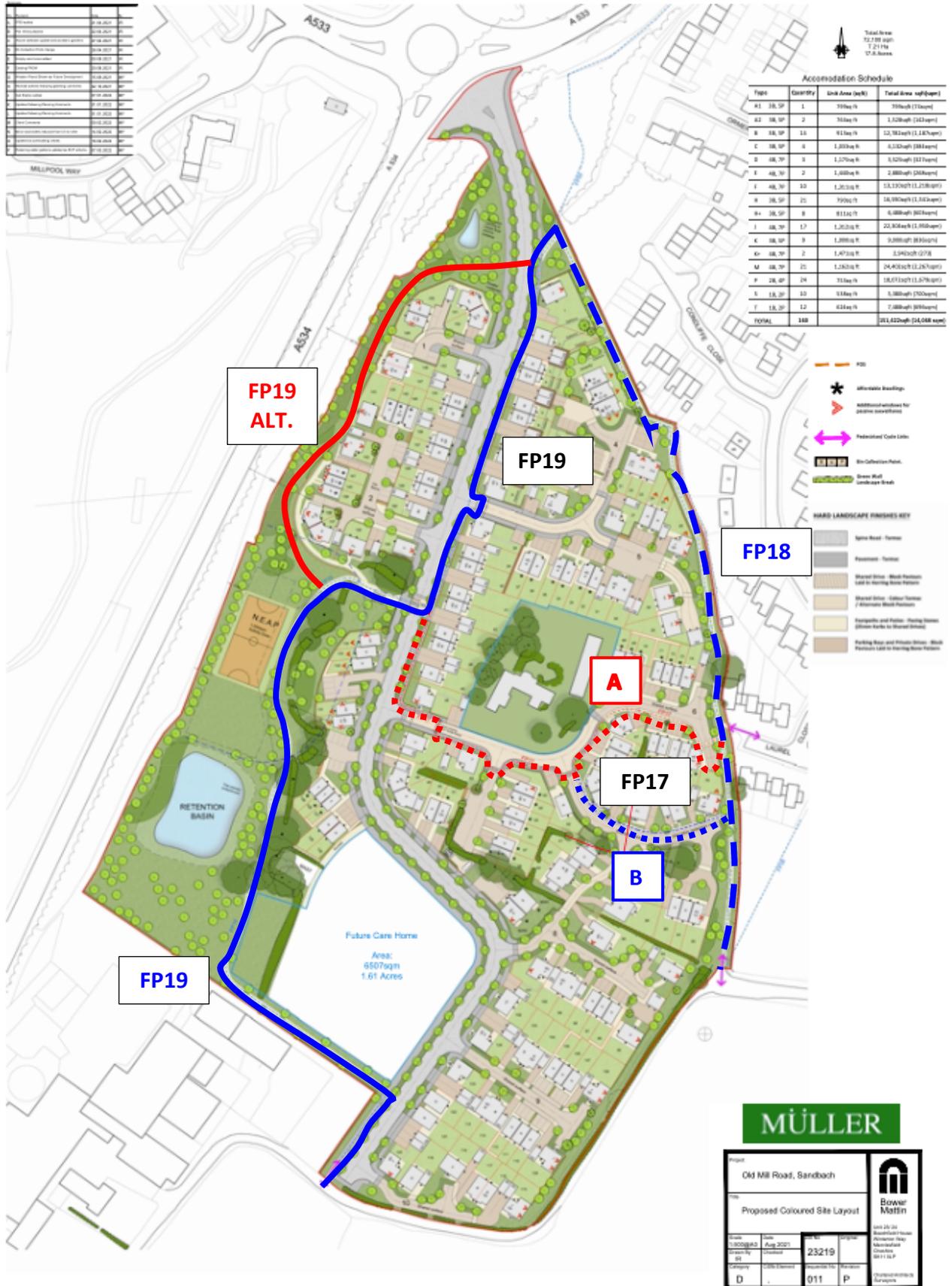


Figure 1. Planning application 21/2412C

FP19 Suggested alternative route for northern half of FP19, with no traversing driveways, shown in red. Solid blue line is the route proposed in 21/2412C for FP19.

FP18 in blue dashed.

FP17: Route A in red dotted as proposed in 21/2412C, alternative Route B in blue dotted, joining route A.