

25/03210/DOC Land South of Sperberry Hill

I note that the application has outline planning consent, along with other applications in the Graveley & Wymondley area. Personally, I deplore the combined loss of arable land and the effect on local wildlife but for this application that seems inevitable. My aim now is to make this change of use more acceptable to local residents and visitors, especially walkers, in the area.

PLAN from [document](#) portal

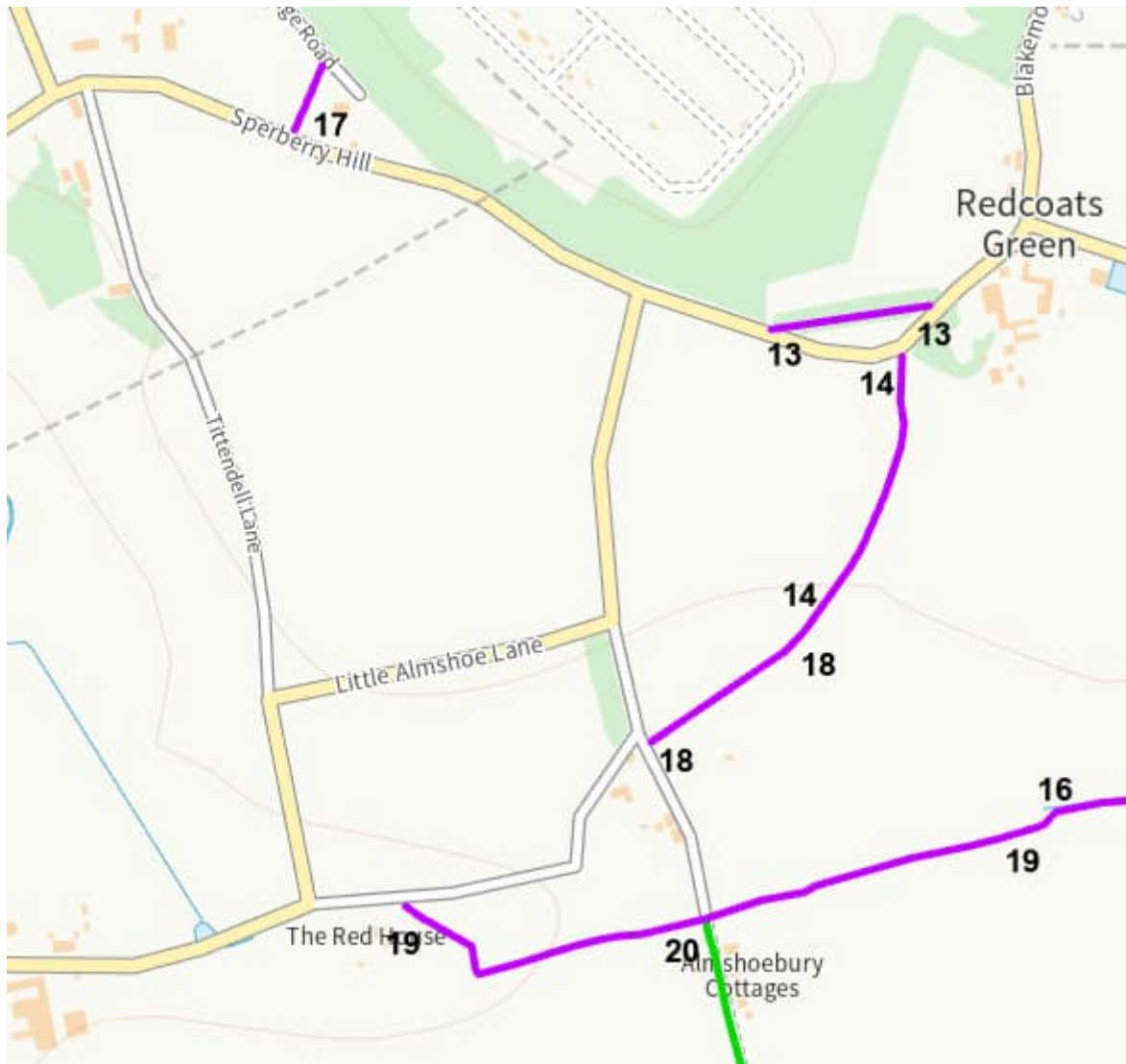


The site is bounded by many roads, some single carriageway with only a few passing places, with more traffic than is comfortable on such country lanes. They are along the northern edge and another North-South through the centre and then along a southern edge. (See also map below)

All these roads south east of St Ippolyts are narrow with little in the way of verges or other footways, so dangerous for pedestrians. The exception is Tittendell Lane on the west but that only connects two narrow busy roads. I trust the developers can see that this is an opportunity to help the local community by improving safety. They

deserve improvements as are being deprived of the local amenity of open arable countryside.

From HCC RoW Webmap -



The purple lines are Footpaths but with no safe route between them and St Ippolyts village (I use the same spelling as on the maps). One footpath, IPPOLLITTS FP19 crosses the SE corner of the site and another, FP14 goes south west from Redcoats Green.

It would appear from the larger version of the site plan, that there will be space, coloured there in a sandy hue, between the stock fence and the roads. That sandy hue is also used for other open areas outside the fence including FP 19. It is hoped that these areas will be available to pedestrians. Alongside roads they should be surfaced as footways with at least 2m level surface. If my interpretation of the map is wrong, I think the developers should find a different way to provide footways.

Where existing FPs on the site are to be bounded by hedges, they should be wider than the 2m customary for alongside open fields. Hedges will no doubt grow wider

so space must be allowed. It is not just space to pass another pedestrian, possibly with a dog or two but a 2m corridor bounded by high hedges would feel oppressive.

The site's fences should keep large animals such as deer safely away but there should be good access for smaller wildlife by leaving low small gaps in fencing.

I note that there are many holes, presumably badger setts, under the existing hedge line for FP19 to the east of the site. I see no mention of what is to be done to protect those badger dwellings and their environment for food supplies.

Nor have I found any mention of maintenance of areas with public access and who should take responsibility. The current footpaths have signage but otherwise need just a little maintenance to the surface. The exception is at the entrance to the site along FP 19 from the east; there is a major change of ground level here so that will need special provision. Grassland will need mowing a few times each year, or it will become ugly scrubland, resulting in seeding of unwelcome species into the array area.

I am also very concerned about the dangers during construction to pedestrians especially ramblers. I expect the builders will want to close RoWs but this should only be allowed for limited periods and without repetitions and if safe off-road alternative routes are provided.

The roads bounding the site also supply a very useful E-W route between Stevenage/ A1 and the Hitchin - Codicote Road. I used to commute that way. Should there be any road closure, the only sensible alternative I can see, would be a frustrating major diversion via the large roundabout on A602 in south Hitchin.

The main entrance to the site seems to be on the northerly section of Little Almshoe Lane; the maximum limitation during construction I consider tolerable is traffic light controls there and only to be red, controlled by staff at delivery times.

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