

David Clarke
Chief Executive
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10th July 2009

Dear Dave

Poundbury Development Brief

I am writing in response to David Barrett's letter to you dated 4th July, passed to me by our Footpath Secretary. Whilst clearly well-meaning, Mr Barrett seems to have missed a few significant points.

What we are requesting is simply that the Development Brief, which underwent an extensive, six week formal public consultation process before being adopted in December 2006, is adhered to. To say that this "wrongly suggests a proposed dedicated right of way" dismisses the enormous effort that was expended in preparing the Brief. Not only does the Development Brief specify quite clearly the need to develop pedestrian rights of way using the A35 underpass it also states this should be "towards Maiden Castle" (page 34). Indeed the map (page 33) indicates exactly where these routes should be and that includes utilising the existing farm tracks. Naturally the tenant farmer does not support this but to argue his sheep would be endangered (the track is fenced on both sides) is not tenable. If farmers had the right of veto, as Mr Barrett's letter suggests, we would not enjoy the extensive network of footpaths in this country which is the envy of the rest of the world.

Indeed feedback from our own members, and the local public, leaves us very optimistic that the Duchy will appreciate that they have been out of step with modern thinking on rural access. Hence we welcome the news that the Duchy are considering meeting the Development Brief's requirement to provide access under the A37 sooner rather than later (currently proposed for 2025) but do not see why this should be conditional on acceptance of an inferior solution to the A35/Maiden Castle access route.

Finally I must also refute Mr Barrett's final paragraph regarding the Ramblers' support for widening the Maiden Castle Road. No such proposal has been made and a recent impression that may have been given by the local press that this is the case is inaccurate. Improvements to Maiden Castle Road may well have value but the issue at hand is public rural access from Poundbury to the surrounding areas, in line with the 2006 Poundbury Development Brief.

Yours sincerely

Peter G Evans
Secretary, South Dorset Ramblers