

The Private Secretary to
His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales
Clarence House
London
SW1A 1BA.

30th June 2009

Dear Sir

Poundbury Rural Access Issues

I am secretary of the South Dorset Ramblers and I am writing to you on behalf of my committee regarding two campaigns we are running to try to improve public rural access to Maiden Castle from Poundbury and Dorchester. The background and details of this campaign are explained in the enclosed leaflet and also on our website at <http://campaign.southdorsetramblers.org.uk/campaign/index.html>.

My purpose in writing to you is to bring to your attention the fact that our intention is to object to Planning Permission for phases 3 & 4 of the Poundbury Development. Our reasons are that rights of access from Poundbury to Maiden Castle, previously agreed as part of the 2006 Poundbury Development Brief, have not been provided. Underpasses exist on both the A35 and A37 trunk roads but no footpaths have been established for their use. Furthermore we have been informed by the Poundbury Development Manager that the Duchy have no plans to implement this aspect of the Development Brief in the foreseeable future.

At the moment our campaign is local, targeted at Planning Application decision makers and local politicians who may influence them. Once the campaign gains momentum however it is inevitable that it will attract national interest, especially once the formal planning application processes commence (we believe this to be imminent). Any apparent conflict between The Ramblers and The Duchy over such a sensitive subject as the denial of rural access will no doubt be seized upon by certain elements of the media with potential damage to both parties.

I should stress that this approach to you is informal and comes from the committee of our local group and not from our Association. We are anxious to resolve the matter as quickly and harmoniously as possible and would ask for your help, and intervention, in ensuring that public rural access is provided in line with the Brief for the Poundbury Development – a development in which we know the Prince has been directly involved. We believe that the interests of the Duchy, its tenant farmer at Maiden Castle and those wanting rural access from Poundbury can be reconciled given common sense and goodwill.

Yours faithfully,

Peter Evans
Secretary, South Dorset Ramblers