

NORTH YORKSHIRE  
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

THURSDAY 19<sup>th</sup> AUGUST 2010

RECORD OF ACTIONS

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report contains a record of those actions completed following the February meeting of the Forum.

2.0 ACTIONS COMPLETED

- 2.1 Letter sent to Rachel Pillar commenting on the Minerals Core Strategy.(Appendix 1)
- 2.2 Consultation response sent to Local Transport Plan 3 team.(Appendix 2)
- 2.3 Draft response to Duncan Graham regarding the England Access Forum prepared.(Appendix 3)

3.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that members receive this report for information

Contact Officer:  
Aidan Rayner  
Public Rights of Way Team Leader  
01609 533077

**Attention Rachel Pillar**

Dear Rachel

Re: Minerals Core Strategy First Consultation Response (April 2010).

First of all I would like to thank you for the presentation you kindly gave us at our meeting on 20 May 2010. As you understand we could not give a response in time to meet the 28<sup>th</sup> of May deadline but do feel that we have an interest in your activities that clearly impact at times on rights of way (ROWs)

The Forum wishes you to be aware in general of our main operational principles which are highlighted below where we believe they are relevant to your Core Strategy.

A. The LAF's prime interest is to protect existing Rights of Way and any other public access.

B. The LAF seeks to encourage other desirable public access opportunities resulting from any Minerals & Waste proposal.

C. Provision for public access to any proposed new amenity created as a result of M&W activities should be included, from the outset, in the planning application.

D. In the past monies guaranteed for reinstatement work have been lost when the developing company has been sold or been liquidated. We suggest that funds of this type should be held in a manner that prevents the fund from being lost in the event of a change in the status of the developer.

E. All your consultation documents should make reference to Rights of Way issues, in particular, to the affect on existing routes and the potential to improve the ROWs network for the benefit of the community.

F. It would be desirable that planning applications for M & W development are discussed by the LAF, so that it can check for any impact on existing ROWs and explore opportunities for new or improved access and other planning gains.

The forum trusts that you will find these points helpful and relevant to the consultation process and would welcome the opportunity to continue the dialogue during the full consultation period leading to the finalisation of The Core Strategy.

Yours sincerely

John Taylor  
Chairman, NYCC Local Access Forum

## **NYCC LAF Response to LTP3 Consultation**

The LAF previously made two comments following the questionnaire circulated in the initial planning stages of LTP3. For reference they were:

- The LAF is directed by government to be inclusive in approach, and we are therefore concerned that the disabled and equestrians are not mentioned within your initial questionnaire. The LAF expects the LTP to meet the needs of all road users, without discrimination, in the interests of road safety, particularly for the Vulnerable Road User or Non-Motorised User.
- The LAF prioritises the remedy of fragmentation of routes for the non-motorised user (or VRU) to join communities and provide access to places of current and future demand. In doing so this will provide a healthy alternative to motorised travel.

Mr. Bainbridge, in addressing the sub-group of the LAF in April, reassured them that since the DDA disabled travellers are automatically catered for within new schemes, and therefore did not need to be mentioned specifically. However, he acknowledged that horse-riders must be included now within LTP strategy to meet the requirements of PPG 13, and the inclusive approach which is now considered to be the norm.

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The LAF is aware of the constrained budget and the approach taken by the Forward Planning Team, but would not agree that to maintain and manage should always take priority over improvements. If NYCC fail to take long-term advantage of schemes which could satisfy many of the objectives within LTP i.e. accessibility, healthier travel, settlement linkage, it will not be meeting the goals of integration of the LTP and the RoWIP as promulgated by Defra and Natural England. In the Good Practice notes it stresses the many shared aims and links between LTPs and Rights of Way Improvement Plans that serve to strengthen and facilitate the delivery of sustainable objectives. Joined up implementation can also secure more direct and integrated funding. Many of these ideals were written into LPT2 and the LAF would like to stress that they have not lost their worth, and should not be omitted in future strategy.

We are informed that LTP3 should have a greater connection with rural areas than previous LTPs which concentrated on transport and travel to urban service centres, but we do not see this reflected in your document. However, rights of way forms an integral part of the transport system, especially for shorter journeys and in rural areas particularly play a significant part in the safety and accessibility of the non-motorised.

In the final document, we should therefore like to see recognition of the benefits that rights of way bring to the wider transport network, and how they can benefit other parts of the LTP – see the second bullet point. Integration, inclusivity and improvement are at the heart of the LAF's principles.

Finally, there is no mention of cross-boundary transport, and the LAF hopes that NYCC will keep a flexible approach because collaboration with adjacent authorities could create community benefit not possible in isolation.

# ITEM 9 APPENDIX 3

We refer to the letter from Duncan Graham, EAF and Rob Cooke concerning LAFs.

We have discussed this matter within our LAF and put forward the following thoughts:

We do believe that there is a danger of LAFs becoming isolated and ineffective. Certainly a regional structure is a way of addressing this. However it must be borne in mind that LAFs cover very different sizes and types of geographical areas and sometimes there is little similarity to their activities. In reality perhaps a lack of funding or indeed intent have made our regional organisations less than effective. For the regional structure to work there must be a clearly defined and understood organisation. As an example we are represented at national level by regional 'representatives' who we neither know or who have any knowledge of us or our work! The whole thing needs sorting out and formalising.

It is essential that the regional and thus local access forums are co-ordinated at a national level via EAF. In many cases we are not routinely consulted by NE or DEFRA and this problem we think can only be resolved at national level.

We think we must remember that the whole AF structure is essentially based on volunteers giving up valuable time to help improve and protect our ROW network. At times our lack of national and regional structure can undermine enthusiasm levels especially when the LAF is ignored in consultation processes.

In conclusion we strongly support the existing structure but believe that it must become far more robust and authoritative with responsibilities clearly defined. Communication is at best vague at present and again this needs improving so that there is a flow of information in both directions through the structure.

We hope that the present situation can be strengthen and will actively support any action to help achieve this end.

Best Regards

John Taylor

Chairman, North Yorkshire County Council Local Access Forum.