

From: [David Willis](#)
To: [Roberts, Ali](#)
Subject: SMAN13
Sent: 05/06/2025 15:26:14

Dear Ms Roberts,

I previously lodged an objection to the original application and although I am conscious that modifications have now been made, I remain of the view that the original footpath should stay in place.

In order that I can give further thought to the matter, I would be interested to hear how you see your role in this matter. Are you an impartial arbiter, hearing both sides and then coming to a recommendation or is your role to facilitate the application?

You seem to ignore the fact that the applicants have brought about this problem for them so it would be very wrong, in my view, for their reward to be a revision to a historic footpath. This would create a terrible precedent and I think that future generations will deem the destruction of an historic right of way to be a great tragedy.

You seem to dismiss historic significance but even if you are right (which I do not accept) there remain valid objections to the revised route which have been well expressed in the other objections that you have received.

Subject to any further comments from your self or others, I adhere to my original objection>

Yours

David Willis

P/2023/016 SMAN 13

1-I am a long term resident of Sutton Mandeville and a regular user of the network of footpaths in our area. I wish to object to the proposal that SMAN 13 should be closed in its entirety and be replaced by a totally new footpath.

2-I quite understand the attraction of this proposal to the applicants. However it seems to me to be highly relevant that the extensive works carried out by the applicants to their property have increased the visibility of SMAN 13 so they can be said to be the authors of their own misfortune. If the original hedging had remained in place, they would be much less exposed.

3-I do not think that the proposed new footpath can be said to be in the “wider public interest” (the phrase used in the leading authority Open Spaces Society -v- The Secretary of State for The Environment (2021) EWCA Civ 241) for various reasons

3.1 Coming through the churchyard (a very popular walk) a pedestrian at present crosses the road and only has to walk a very short distance to connect to SMAN 13. The proposal would necessitate a much longer walk along the road (which is narrow and has no pavement) to connect to the access point. There is no speed limit and this road can be quite busy with cars tractors etc.

3.2 The new access point is to be sited near a T-junction adjacent to 2 drain manhole covers. It is not clear to me what type of access would be intended. Ideally this would not be right on the road to minimise risk to pedestrians. I would not think that access at a T-junction is intrinsically as safe as the existing access point.

3.3 I have not walked up the proposed new footpath but I understand that it is quite steep at the top which may necessitate steps being constructed. I would imagine that this might conflict with the Council’s obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

3.4 At the moment 3 footpaths run off the road which are broadly equidistant. The new footpath would be much nearer to SMAN 3 and much further from SMAN 10

3.5 The creation of the new footpath would require removal of a significant chunk of hedgerow thereby potentially affecting wildlife and biodiversity

3.6 The new footpath would be close to the solar array for heating the swimming pool-hardly an attractive feature for walkers

3.7 Preservation of the heritage/history of the footpath network

Finally it seems to me to be highly relevant to look at the enormous volume of highly cogent objections. No-one supports the proposal apart from the applicants! Taking all the above into account, it seems to be that the public

interest far outweighs the interests of the applicants and on that basis it seems to be clear that the application should be refused.