

**Objections and Representations to The Wiltshire Council Baydon 2 (Part)  
Diversion Order and Definitive Map and Statement Modification Order 2015**

**1) Mr B Gribble, Baydon 05.09.15**

*"In response to your letter of 14 August I am writing to you again as I am now aware of the reasons why the landowners wishes again to change Baydon 2 and 11.*

*These reasons form the basis of the above application which Wiltshire Council has chosen to endorse and I wish to make the following comments:*

- 1. This application to change Baydon 11, the landowner states, is to 'overcome a long standing problem with the paths' obstruction to provide a useable facility for use by the public' He also states elsewhere that it has been obstructed for more than 30 years.*

*This 'long standing problem' only goes back the six years which was when the current landowner took up residence in Baydon House Farm. I have been resident in Baydon for over 35 years and have had no problem walking Baydon 11 until the current landowner came to the village. This problem is entirely his own doing and could be rectified overnight if only he would undertake his legal responsibility and clear the path of all obstructions.*

*This reason must therefore be discounted.*

- 2. 'It provides a well grassed surface alternative to a section of Bridleway 8'*

*Baydon 8 is a major right of way about 2 miles long and this alternative route amounts to a very small proportion of its total length. There is no demand for a well grassed alternative to part of Baydon 8 and also the current surface of Baydon 11 is well grassed.*

*This reason must also be discounted.*

- 3. 'It provides a much requested local circular route for path users within the village.'*

*As a frequent walker I would not describe the proposed diversion as an acceptable circular route because it consists essentially of two parallel paths, a few metres apart, with one leg clearly visible from the other. This route would provide very little satisfaction and enjoyment compared to the current one. In addition the proposed route is 40% shorter than the current route which the landowner cynically claims is more convenient for 'accessing the countryside'. (If any walker wants to access the countryside they would be well advised to stay on Baydon 8.) The main point is that the current combination of Bridleways 2, 8 and 11 form a sensible and enjoyable circular route and the proposed alternative does not. In fact this application is in conflict with ROWIP2 which is intended to encourage the creation and promotion of circular routes and I cannot see how this proposal meets this requirement.*

*This reason must also be discounted.*

4. *There is no specific need to utilize Bridleway 11 which only returns to Bridleway 8 in any event.*

*This is a statement by the landowner who believes there is no need for Baydon 11 in its current position or even his proposed alternative location. (This was also his attitude several years earlier when he made an application to extinguish this part of Baydon 11 which was clearly rejected by Wiltshire Council and the many residents of Baydon who wrote opposing the application). Footpaths are not solely used as a means of going from A to B by the shortest or most convenient manner, they are used for recreational walking, for exercise or to get some fresh air and enjoy the environment outside people's homes, points that the landowner has failed to understand. In addition, Baydon 11 is particularly important to the residents of Baydon because it is so close to the village centre and is easily accessible by all so any alternative route must be equivalent in all aspects.*

*To illustrate this last point I attach an article from the Times newspaper of 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015 which reports the recent findings that taking a 25 minute brisk walk each day would lead on average to 7 years of extra life. Many of us are not taking this daily exercise. The circular route comprising of Bridleways 2, 11 and 8 will take about 25 minutes to walk from the centre of Baydon but if we implement the changes proposed in this application the route will shorten, its appeal and satisfaction diminished and it will be even harder to persuade Baydon residents to take more exercise. There is a credible public health issue associated with this application.*

5. *It improves the privacy and security of the property...etc*

*This is the only reason which the landowner has presented which contains some significance. However the need for extra privacy is diminished because Baydon House Farm is surrounded by a high wall that no user of Baydon 11 path would be visible from the house or from within its garden.*

6. *'Many users may prefer the option of being away from areas that they might find intimidating or experience uncertainty in their use of the path'*

*Frequent walkers in the country are often uncertain whether they are on the correct path or not. This path is only 500 metres long, if there is any doubt as to where it is, a signpost will eliminate any confusion.*

*I do not understand why the landowner thinks that the current path of Baydon 11 which has a tall wall on one side and an equestrian field on the other is intimidating. I am sure most users would find it extremely interesting to watch the equestrian activities as they walk by.*

*This reason must also be discounted.*

*Of the six reasons mentioned above only one has any significance – the wish to improve the landowners privacy and security. And to do this he is requesting that changes are made to Baydon 2 & 11 bridleways which are part of our historical network of public rights of way. It is very unlikely that Baydon 11 is several hundreds*

*of years old (its direction is from Aldbourne to Baydon church) and numerous previous generations will have used this path. It is not unreasonable for the public to expect to continue using the path for many more generations to come. If we whittle away at these paths by allowing unfair alterations that progressively diminish their appeal and enjoyment we will eventually be left with an amenity that is quite unlike what our forefathers enjoyed.*

*These paths are our heritage which can play an important role in maintaining the health of our community and if a landowner wants to enjoy greater privacy and security by altering any of these routes he must offer an alternative route with attributes that equal or exceed those of the old route. The alternative path in this application does not meet this requirement.*

*There is a simple solution – the alternative route should be re-sited east of Baydon House Farm from a point down Baydon 2 connecting to point C where a more equivalent route could be found. By doing this the walking public will be kept further from the landowners house than with the present proposal thus enhancing his privacy and security even further.*

## **2) Mr C Phillips, Baydon 15.09.15**

*I feel that the proposed path E – F – G – H is no compensation for footpath A – B – C – H. I propose that a good alternative would be to go from H – C to I, the track coming up from Shepherds bottom as marked on the map.*

*The Ramblers Association recommend this route in a previous letter to the council. Let's try and improve our heritage for a change? Instead of the Council losing it.*

## **3) Mr P Gallagher, The Ramblers 02.09.15**

*I refer to your letter dated 14 August, advising me that Wiltshire Council has made a Public Path Diversion Order relating to these paths.*

*I have to inform you that Ramblers objects to this order on the grounds that the diversion will have a negative impact on public enjoyment of the paths as a whole and it is therefore not expedient for the order to be confirmed.*

*Treating the section of Baydon 11 marked as B-C on the order map as if it were unobstructed, path users benefit from its position on the crest of the hill. It offers attractive views in an easterly direction across the valley to the hillside opposite, which at most times of year will include fields put to a variety of uses and some animals grazing. By contrast, because the land rises to the east of section F-G of the diversion route, views from here are limited to the foreground only and include no features of particular interest.*

*Additionally, because of the proximity of the diversion route to the existing bridleway Baydon 8, users of Baydon 8 wishing to vary their return route will find E-H of less interest than A-D and therefore less attractive as part of a circuit.*

*I have a separate query on the order which does not form part of our objection. In Part 3 of the Schedule, the modified statement for Baydon 11 does not include the short length of bridleway which links Baydon 30 with Baydon 2, which is unaffected by*

*the diversion order. Is this an error in the Schedule or is it intended to re-number this section of path to form part of Baydon 30?*

**Officer's comment:** A short linking length of Baydon 11 has been omitted from this Order. This Order cannot change that part of the statement and so the original statement would remain unchanged. However, it is tidier to add it into the full statement in the order and a request to modify the Order with this will be made to the Planning Inspectorate if the Order is forwarded for determination.

#### **4) Mrs A Dobson, Baydon 30.09.15**

*Green Lane (Path A) currently has mud for a surface following The Johnson's attempt to mitigate the huge and impassable puddles and thus the new proposed footpath from point A simply replaces Green Lane.*

*The Johnson's clearly wish not to have the right of way up their drive from A to C and retain their privacy albeit they knew these right of ways were in place when they purchased the property.*

*In order for ramblers and walkers to enjoy a circular walk I suggest that just below point D (on your map dated 23 April 2015) and just higher than the tree trunk the Johnson's have placed in the lane, walkers are once again allowed to walk up the field opening on the right, up along the field edge meeting at the other end of B (between Baydon House Farm and the workers' cottages) at the end of the avenue of trees. Namely, walking at the lower side of their house. This will join up with the alternative to Green Lane.*

#### **5) Mr A Prior, Baydon 24.09.15**

*I write as a Councillor of Baydon Parish Council and as a resident. Due to dates of meetings and communications about the application being out of sync., a collective PC opinion has not been possible.*

*I support approval of the application for the following reasons: -*

- 1. Opening of the blocked route would not allow the privacy and security reasonably expected by Mr and Mrs Johnson and residents in Keepers Cottage to be achieved. By its proposed location those standards can be met.*
- 2. The diversion does provide a circular route through the field onto BAYD 8.*
- 3. The length is quite adequate when compared with the blocked route. If anyone wishes a longer route for pure exercise they could walk the circular route twice!*
- 4. The 4 metre width enables free movement when walkers and horse riders meet.*

#### **6) Mr A Knowles, Baydon 01.10.15**

*As Chairman of the Parish Council for Baydon, Wiltshire and a resident of over 10 years, I write to you with regards to the above notice as an official public meeting was not possible to co-ordinate, though now will be on our next agenda. I have however asked all Councillors to pass on individual views so that informed opinions can be drawn.*

*With specific regards to the proposed diversion application, I support approval of the application for the reasons listed below and hope these are taken into consideration. These are formed from my own opinion and by means of talking to villagers.*

- 1. The planned diversion takes into account the wishes of the villagers to be able to continue on a circular route.*
- 2. The unused part of BAYD11 has never been raised as an issue in my time on the Parish Council, only coming into discussion once plans were raised. The majority not wishing to walk through a residence private property.*
- 3. Mr and Mrs Johnson, when purchasing BHF- BAYD11 was never in use and hadn't been for many years, creating a precedence of historical non-usage.*
- 4. Establishing new and accessible footpaths, is a benefit to the village and gives more walkable routes.*
- 5. The added length of the diversion gives back the lost length from where the unused BAYD11 was.*
- 6. The width given provides substantial opportunity for 'all' user types.*
- 7. The needs of the business being operated at BHF should be considered and people have a right to safeguard their business interests.*
- 8. Security and privacy needs to be taken into consideration for both the house and workers based at Keepers Cottage.*

I hope you find the information provided useful and will take note and consideration of the above facts.

**Officer's comment:** A plan showing the alternative route is attached at **Appendix E**

