



Hackbridge & Beddington Corner
Neighbourhood Development Group

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Andy Webber
Iain Williams
Planning Department
Sutton Council
24 Denmark Road
Carshalton
Surrey SM5 2JG

15 July 2020

Dear Mr Webber and Mr Williams

CLC2020/00087 | Application to clear condition 42 (Landscaping) of approved application D2012/66220 – Beddington Farmlands

We are writing to **OBJECT** to this application by Viridor to amend the route and makeup of the accessible cycle track across Beddington Farmlands, that was approved as part of the Restoration Management Plan of 2015.

You will be aware of the long and tortuous story of broken promises to make the Farmlands accessible to the public. It is unfortunate that neither the NDG, or wider local community was consulted at the earlier stage of writing the Restoration Management Plan, as there could have been better provision provided for access, especially including east/west routes and up to the Wandle Vista area.

However, we were pleased that we were invited at the beginning of the year to attend the Conservation and Access Management Committee. We believe that the one virtual meeting we attended and a recent onsite visit, has led to more constructive and positive dialogue between Viridor and the local community.

As part of that dialogue we had requested that this application be withdrawn, to enable more time to continue the positive discussions regarding access onto the site.

We therefore regret Viridor's proposal to issue a Statement of Common Understanding at this late stage, allowing insufficient time for discussions and amendments that we consider are essential for the Farmlands to fulfill the long-delayed promises to residents.

We therefore ask Sutton Council to reject this application. This will enable discussions to continue regarding this path, and for wider access including east/west routes on Beddington Farmlands, with Viridor, stakeholders and the wider community.

Reasons for our Objection:

1. Beddington Farmlands is located just outside our neighbourhood boundary. The site borders with Hackbridge, Beddington Corner, Beddington and Mitcham and all sit within the Wandle Valley Regional Park. The Wandle Valley Regional Park is within an area of Supplementary Planning Guidance in Section 8 of the All London Green Grid Framework, which supports access to nature.
2. The application has not taken into consideration the following policies in our adopted Neighbourhood Plan and Sutton's Local Plan in the re-routing of the cycle path:-

a) Hackbridge and Beddington Corner Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Policy EP1 – Access to the Wandle Valley Regional Park

- Consideration of the needs of people with disabilities to enable independent exploration of the park and the development and provision of access to Beddington Farmlands.
- Hackbridge provides the single most significant area of opportunity for public access and nature improvement in the park. It is noted that Mile Road Bridge access needs to be improved and Hackbridge is a gateway to Beddington Farmlands.
- There is significant potential in Hackbridge to develop access, information, interpretation, education and visitor facilities to this important area with leisure and employment opportunities.

EP6 – Green Infrastructure

- Looks to extend the biodiversity and amenity value of the surrounding open spaces through the neighbourhood via new and enhanced green infrastructure linkages.
- Map 8 shows the provision of proposed and existing green links to Beddington Farmlands.

MP1 – Pedestrian and Cycle Networks

- Encourages walking and other modes of transport to reduce emissions from road vehicles.
- Improvement in east-west movement for pedestrians and cyclists in the neighbourhood area to the River Wandle and Wandle Valley Regional Park.

b) Sutton Council's Local Plan Policies

Policy 5 – Wandle Valley Renewal

- New open space – The Council will ensure that Beddington Farmlands is restored to become the significant new element of Wandle Valley Regional Park. The council will ensure Beddington Farmlands provides high-quality green space, progressively becoming open to the public, and high-quality habitats for common and protected species.
- The Wandle Valley Renewal map on page 37 shows new areas of access to green spaces and proposed new footpaths.

Policy 25 – Open Spaces

- The Council will work with partners and stakeholders to support and promote measures to help deliver the vision of the Wandle Valley Regional Park as a network of high quality, accessible and interconnected open spaces ...

Policy 26 – Biodiversity

- The council will protect and enhance Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, Green Corridors and biodiversity. It will ensure the restoration of Beddington Farmlands is completed to the agreed quality and implement its Biodiversity Action Plan and agri-environment schemes.
- The council will grant permission for developments that create, conserve or enhance biodiversity and improve access to nature ...

In short, this disregard of the Policies, and moving the cycle route to the permissive path and replace it with a mown path up to the Viewpoint is unacceptable.

The changes will:-

- result in a path that is no longer compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and thereby limiting access for all up to the Wandle Vista views and different habitat areas
- confine the Sustrans cycle route to the perimeter of the Farmlands only. Over time the existing views of the lake will diminish as trees mature.
- not fulfil the existing obligations to restore the permissive path to a suitable standard
- limit access in wet weather due to heavy clay.

Yours sincerely

JArmstrong

Julia Armstrong
Chair