

**Environment and Transport
Executive Director Mark Kemp**



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My ref: NH/308/DIV & CRE
Date: 10th October 2022

Dear Councillor van de Ven

Application to alter the Definitive Map of public rights of way in the Royston area and proposal to extend footpath into Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth, Cambridgeshire

I am contacting you from the Rights of Way Service as I deal with applications to amend the legal record of public rights of way in Hertfordshire. These rights are defined as:

- Footpaths – a right of way on foot
- Bridleways – a right of way on foot, horseback and bicycle
- Restricted byways – a right of way on foot, horseback, bicycle and for non-mechanically propelled vehicles (i.e. horse drawn carts or carriages)
- Byways Open to All Traffic – as above plus mechanically propelled vehicles (i.e. motorbikes and cars) but mainly used in the same way as a bridleway.

What is being proposed?

As part of its campaign to improve safety on the railway, Network Rail has applied to divert Royston Footpath 17 away from the existing pedestrian level crossing using powers under section 119A of the Highways Act 1980. If successful, the diversion will re-route the Footpath under the railway, at a point east of the existing pedestrian level crossing. Accordingly, enclosed is the draft Hertfordshire County Council (Royston 17) Rail Crossing Diversion Order 2022.

HCC has power to make rail crossing diversion orders in the interests of public safety.

HCC is aware of public desire to create a safe off-road link between Bassingbourn and Royston via the bridge crossing the A505 Royston Bypass, to the north west of Durham Way in Royston. HCC is therefore consulting on a proposal to create a footpath which would link the proposed rail crossing diversion of Royston Footpath 17 with Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Footpath 17 on the north side of the A505. Accordingly, attached is the draft Hertfordshire County Council (Royston and Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth Footpath) Creation Order 2022.

HCC has power to create public rights of way where there is a need to do so for the convenience and enjoyment of the public.

Together, the two orders would record a public footpath linking Bassingbourn-cum-Kneesworth with Royston without the need to cross the A505 or the Railway line at road

County of opportunity

Environment and Transport Executive Director Mark Kemp

or railway level. A basic plan, indicating how the two orders would work together to amend the rights of way in the area is inset at the end of this letter.

How are such changes made?

As the surveying authority, Hertfordshire County Council has a legal power to consider such amendments to the Definitive Map.

The making of an order is a two-stage process. Firstly, the order is made (ie. sealed), whereupon it is advertised so that any injured parties can object. If no objections are received, or those that are received are withdrawn, the order can be confirmed. When an order is confirmed it takes legal effect – i.e. the changes are legally made to the right of way.

How could this affect me?

I am contacting you as I believe you are interested in the proposal. Your opinion is therefore important in deciding whether the proposal is suitable in its current form or whether changes need to be made. The focus is on negotiation, with the intention of resolving any difficulties before an order is made (thereby reducing the risk of any objections to the order which could lead to a costly and time-consuming public inquiry).

What is the role of Hertfordshire County Council?

Our role is to act impartially by consulting with local people and local and national user groups to assess whether the proposal is a suitable one and, if not, what changes should be made.

Consultation

I enclose copies of the following documents for your attention:

- an extract of the Definitive Map, which shows the existing public rights of way network
- a basic plan showing how the network would be if the two orders were confirmed,
- the draft orders which provide detail of how the network would change.

If you have any comments that you would like to make with regard to the application and proposal, please contact Richard Cuthbert in writing by **Friday 18th November 2022**: Richard.cuthbert@hertfordshire.gov.uk, 01992 555292.

Please remember that this stage of the consultation is based on negotiation, and so if you have any particular views regarding the proposals they will be taken into account before an order is sealed.

Decision

After the end of the consultation period all of the comments received in relation to the draft orders will be collated. A meeting will be held between the Definitive Map Team Leader and the case solicitor to discuss whether the orders should be made as drafted, or whether changes should be made based on the comments received.

**Environment and Transport
Executive Director Mark Kemp**

Who else is involved?

We contact local people affected by the route, the applicant, the parish and district councils, the county councillor for the area and the relevant user groups. South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council are also consulted as part of the land affected by the draft creation order is in Cambridgeshire. Everyone who is consulted at the start is informed of the final decision.

TO SUMMARISE:

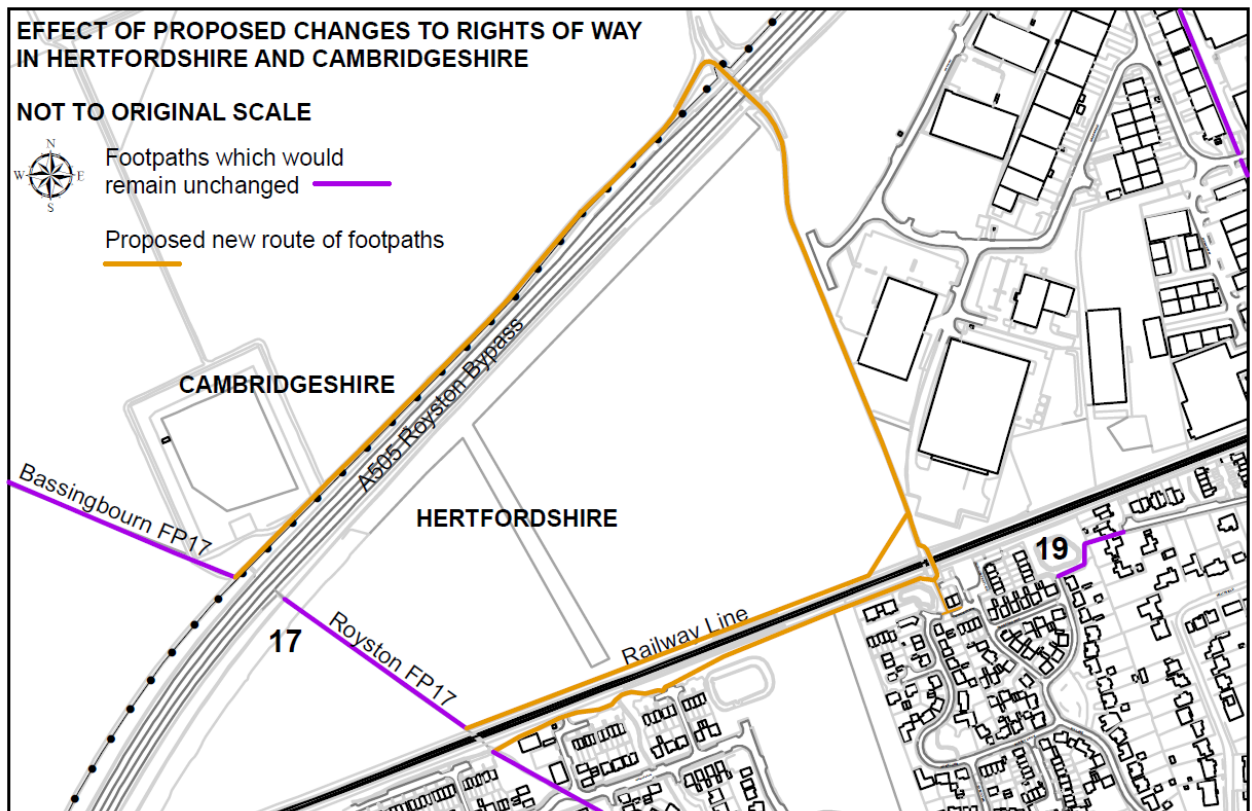
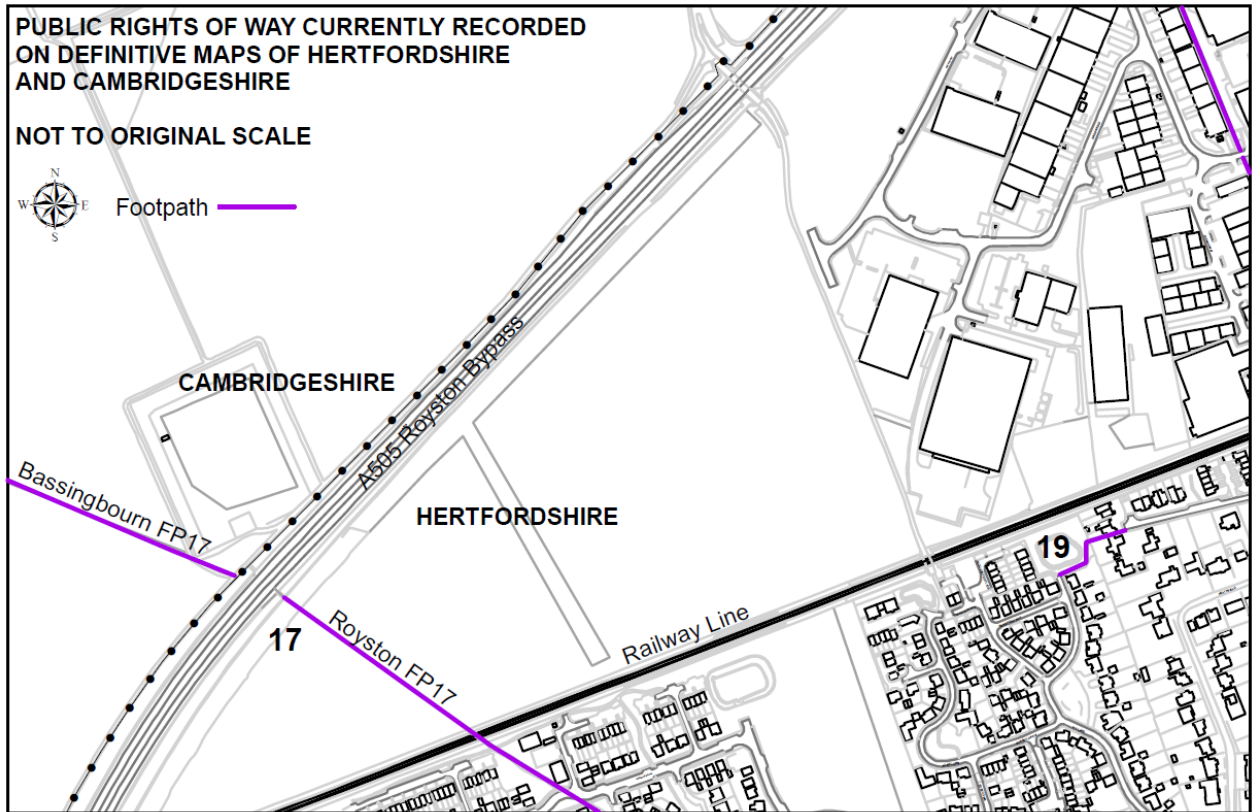
Please send Richard Cuthbert any comments that you may have in relation to the proposals by **Friday 18th November 2022**.

Yours sincerely



Angela Simpkins
**Definitive Map Officer
Countryside & Rights of Way**

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