

**Applicant's Statement in Response to the Designation of Additional Public Rights of Way -
Land North West of Southwater (Ref. DC/26/0366)**

Introduction

This statement has been prepared by Berkeley Strategic Land Limited ('Berkeley') in response to the designation of additional Public Rights of Way pursuant to the West Sussex County Council (Horsham No.1:Southwater (Addition of Public Footpaths)) Definitive Map Modification Order 2026.

The statement relates to planning application DC/26/0366, comprising:

"Outline planning application, with all matters reserved except for primary access to the highway, for a phased development comprising the demolition of existing buildings and the construction of up to 1,000 dwellings (including affordable housing); up to 80 specialist accommodation units; a mixed-use neighbourhood centre; education facilities; business and employment floorspace; redevelopment of existing agricultural buildings including community uses; improvements to public rights of way; sports pitches; gypsy and traveller pitches/plots; public open space; landscaping; and associated infrastructure".

Planning Application Context

An outline planning application on Land North West of Southwater was submitted to Horsham District Council on Friday 27th February 2026. The submitted masterplan, parameter plans and supporting technical assessments were prepared having regard to the Public Rights of Way network that existed at that time and which formed part of the baseline conditions informing the design evolution of the scheme.

Existing Public Rights of Way were incorporated within the design framework and helped shape the proposed masterplan including the layout of development parcels, green infrastructure and movement corridors across the site.

Subsequent to the submission of the planning application, the West Sussex County Council (Horsham No.1: Southwater (Addition of Public Footpaths)) Definitive Map Modification Order 2026 was publicised, proposing the addition of a network of public footpaths within the application red line boundary. The proposed routes comprise:

- (i) a footpath connecting existing Public Footpath SOW-1658 on the southern boundary of Courtland Wood to SOW-1660 to the north-east
- (ii) a further footpath linking the central part of the route to SOW-1660; and
- (iii) a footpath connecting the route network back to SOW-1658 on the eastern boundary of Courtland Wood.

The current land owner and tenants opposed the creation of these new routes across privately owned farmland. However, collectively, the footpaths establish a series of new connections between SOW-1658 and SOW-1660 within and adjacent to Courtland Wood in the western part of the Site, expanding the existing PRoW network in this location.

The new routes are shown on the order plan at Appendix 1.

Applicant Position

Berkeley did not support the creation of these new footpaths. However, as the Order is now in place, the new footpaths have been reviewed against the submitted masterplan, parameter plans and supporting application documents.

The majority of the additional routes broadly follow existing field boundaries, hedgerows and historic landscape features the vast majority of which are proposed to be retained. As such, Berkeley

considers that these routes are generally compatible with the strategic design principles underpinning the submitted masterplan and parameters.

Berkeley remains committed to delivering a highly connected development at Land North West of Southwater, comprising significant areas of public open space, enhanced green infrastructure, improved public access and upgrades to the wider Public Rights of Way network. Collectively, these measures will promote connectivity both within the development and between the Site and the existing settlement of Southwater.

Given the outline nature of the application, the detailed treatment of Public Rights of Way will be progressed through subsequent Reserved Matters. At that stage, further consideration will be given to the alignment and integration of the proposed footpaths within the detailed design of the development.

As noted, it is Berkeley's position that, whilst a number of the proposed routes appear capable of being accommodated within the submitted masterplan, a review of the proposed footpaths has identified that at least one route warrants further consideration. In particular, the proposed footpath between Points G and C, connecting to existing Public Footpath SOW-1658, would pass through the development parcels identified as part of the submitted scheme. As such, whilst Berkeley will consider the incorporation of the proposed routes on current alignments insofar as reasonably practicable, limited diversion will need to be explored to ensure an appropriate relationship with the proposed development.

Overall Berkeley considers that the proposed additional footpaths do not prejudice the principles of the submitted outline application and that any necessary modifications can be addressed through the detailed design process and subsequent approvals.

Conclusion

Berkeley has reviewed the new routes in the context of the submitted outline application and will consider their incorporation, insofar as reasonably practicable, through future Reserved Matters and, only where necessary, the relevant approvals process for diversion.

Berkeley does not consider that the proposed modifications to the Public Rights of Way network prejudice the principles of planning application DC/26/0366 and therefore considers that they should not affect the determination of the application. Berkeley will continue to work collaboratively with both Horsham District Council and West Sussex County Council in relation to this matter and would be pleased to provide any further information required.

Appendix 1 - New PRow Routes at Land North West of Southwater

