

Mike Chislett – Areas of Responsibility – report for 8th June Lacock Parish Council

Responsible Finance Officer

Nothing to add since last meeting – when the following was noted:

*The completed Notice of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return should be on our website by the following **suggested** dates: Monday 17 June – Friday 26 July 2019. (The latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements are Monday 1 July – Friday 9 August 2019).*

Flood

- Jane Durrant reported a tree fallen into the Avon, south of Abbey Bridge. The landowner (J Fox) tells me that clearance has been actioned.

Grit Bins

- Nothing to report – as far as I am aware, Naish Hill lower is still not replaced.

Footpaths

- The line of LACO8 was cut for a second time through the growing wheat approx 21 May, thus keeping open the line of the RoW. This is a much valued local track – and once again, I thank Philip Stevens at Lackham for organising this.

Bruce Avison correspondence:

- I printed Bruce's email at the end of my last report and promised a response in this one. Bruce had shared concern about the state of several stiles between Lacock and Reybridge and around the Abbey Fields. Specifically, he reported that the stile at the top of Lovers Walk (to LACO11) was in a poor state and potentially dangerous. This was subsequently also mentioned to me by Stuart Gregory along with a photograph. I logged the issue with 'My Wiltshire'.

Pic of this stile is below – the uprights are rotten near the bases and the whole construction wobbly and unsafe. Note also the dog flap (my dog approves) and also the high fixed bar (awkward for anyone of limited mobility, buggies, small children & others with short legs).



Bruce's other points related to access, pointing out two further stiles off Mons Lane and Reybridge which have high bars/rails and are therefore difficult for anyone with limited mobility. This one illustrates the problem (Mons Lane opp Whitehall Farm south to LACO12) ...



Similar comments have been made to me by others (Linda Mowday, Andrew Barley) and I have much personal experience of struggling with several of our stiles while accompanied by small children and buggies (baby-strollers). Dog-walkers also face challenges (subject to size of dog), since there are few stiles with a helpful flap (as seen in Lovers Walk pic above) and many others

are wired between the rails.

Conversely, the stiles between Nethercote and Reybridge offer good examples of accessibility for almost all. In my view, whenever a stile is in need of replacement or repair, we should endeavour to accomplish that **and** increase ease of use at the same time. Colleagues thoughts are appreciated and meanwhile I will speak to Wiltshire's Footpath Officer to try and find out what options may be available for Lovers Walk/LACO11.

Bruce's final point was to request that we look at *'the far eastern corner of the field closest to the medieval bridge, there is no easy access from/to the field from the Wharf/road bridge ... is it feasible to investigate the installation of steps here, allowing ready access to the field for those walking between Bowden Hill and Lacock village (I recognise this is not a footpath, but is much used by locals .. could the NT be approached with a request to allow this I expect there are many NT visitors who could make use of such as well)'*.

Again, colleagues' thoughts would be appreciated and I shall seek a view from NT.

Lacock Rights of Way and Wick solar power application

LACO1 / LACO1A/LACO2/LACO5/LACO7 are all close to, or partly within, the area of the Wick Farm solar application. As far as I can tell from the Solar Farm's web-site, the RoW lines are almost all protected by the proposals as advertised at present.

LACO1 has two parts. North of Wick Lane it is wonderful wide field path that runs from the parish boundary near Gastard, downslope SE to Catridge, with wide views towards Salisbury Plain. The solar farm will fill the middle-ground view from this path and, if it goes ahead, this may be the best overview point for anyone interested. This section of the RoW is not affected otherwise.

South of Wick Lane **LACO1** heads due south from Catridge to the boundary of the SW section of the solar application. It stops at the old Roman road (now parish boundary) where highway rights were long ago extinguished, perhaps by the Anglo-Saxon invasion. I wonder if we could support opening the line up again as an east west connection?

LACO1A is an alternative continuation of LACO1 through Catridge, across fields to SE, under the railway and onto the bridleway which becomes Chapel Lane in Beanacre. It crosses the southern section of the solar farm, but the line is protected on the proposal map.

LACO2 traverses SW to NE between Catridge and Piccadilly (Folly Lane), currently including an accessibly double-stiled crossing of the railway line. Much of its length will be through the solar farm, but the main route appears protected. At the Piccadilly (NE) end, the solar plans appear to show an installation in the field due west of Piccadilly camp site and this would seem to compromise the path at this point. This installation feature can be seen top-right in the screenshot below & in the photo on next page – I can find no other information at present.

LACO5 leaves LACO2 SW of Piccadilly, passes NW through a stretch of proposed solar panels, continues along the site boundary and exits on to Folly Lane just east of the railway bridge. The line appears safe in the plans.

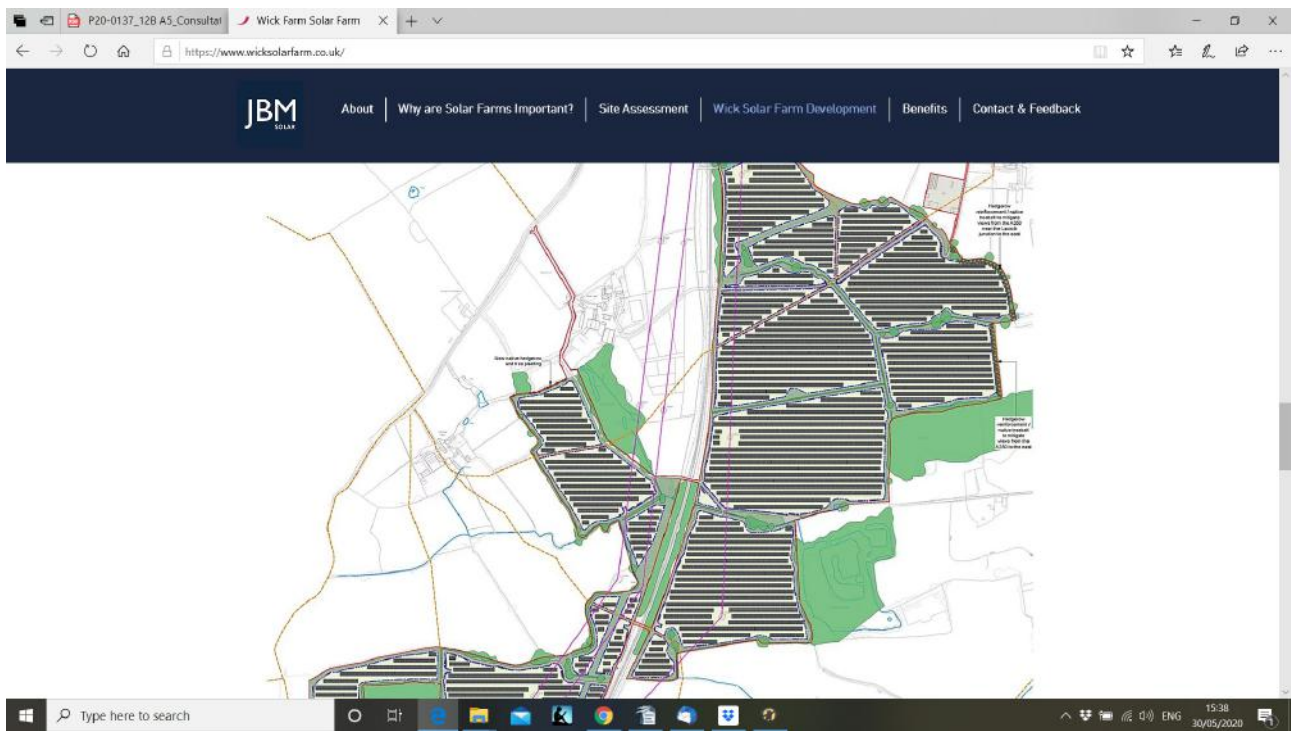
LACO7 ('Waterly Lane') is a deep and ancient bridleway running from Catridge down over the Roman road and onto Westlands. I recommend exploring it, if colleagues haven't already but take wellingtons.

In summary – (subject to LPC's views on the application) we should seek to ensure that the lines of all these RoWs are maintained through the solar farm and that stiles and other controls are enhanced as necessary to ensure access by as many walkers and strollers as possible. Some access by (such as) mobility scooters and wheelchairs may be worth arguing for. If we are to support the solar application, we should encourage public education through folk being able to see and appreciate it at first hand, as well as ensuring our ancient RoWs are protected for future generations.

LACO2 at Piccadilly will require detailed examination to ensure the line of the RoW is maintained or that any deviation can be supported. At present, LACO2 exits onto Folly Lane through Piccadilly Camp Site – and is accessible and not obstructed.



(above) LACO2 SW of Piccadilly (below) the square feature top right (NE) of solar proposal does not exist at present.



Notton Cross (war memorial)

I duly reported back the two quotes (£2K for restoration & £9K for moving). The few views I received felt restoration was a reasonable case. However, this has not firmed into a proposal from any of my neighbours, thus far.

Mike Chislett
1st June 2020