

Mike Chislett – Areas of Responsibility – Lacock Parish Council – April 2021

Footpaths / Rights of Way

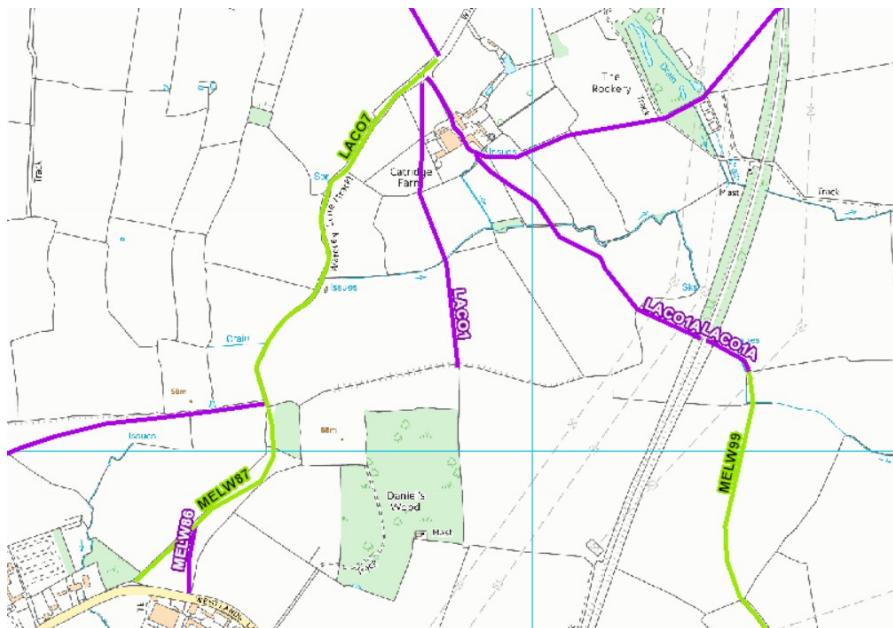
Apology

to Ann Nunes – for miss-spelling Ann’s surname on my March report!

Wick Solar farm

I’ve set out in previous reports how this planning application maintains and enhances the existing rights of way which traverse the site (LACO2, LACO5, LACO1a). If the development goes ahead then access from Piccadilly to LACO2 should be wheelchair accessible, all the rights of way should be at least the minimum 1.5m width and surfaces should be improved.

Wiltshire’s Countryside Access Development Officer has requested that one more enhancement be inserted as a planning condition: (he notes that) *‘bridleway MELW99 comes into the site from the south but is then recorded only as a public footpath’* (which is LACO1 around the NW edge of the small Roman archaeology site) *‘we feel the developer could dedicate a bridleway link through the site from MELW99 west to link up with bridleway MELW87 We would be happy to discuss with the developer exactly what route would suit them best through their site.....Conditions/legal agreement: Prior to commencement of development, the proposed surfacing of the public rights of way through the site and its width are to be agreed in writing with the LPA..... ’*

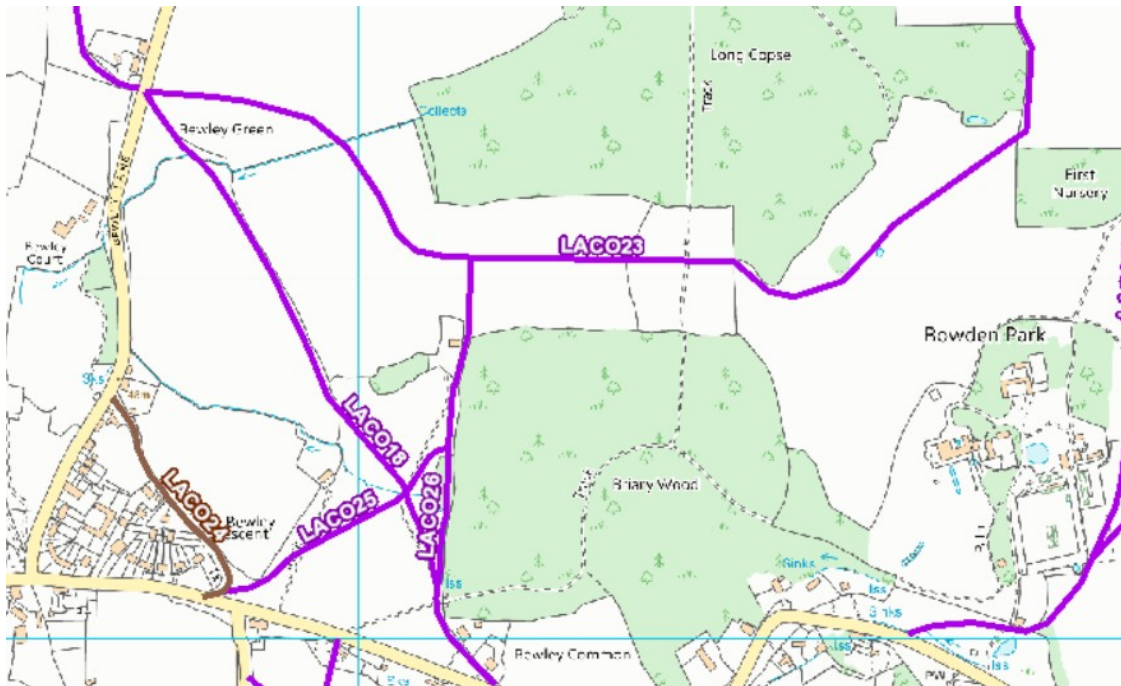


As the above map extract shows – this link would be in Melksham Without if it ran south of the Roman Road (the northern edge of the solar farm at that point). If it runs through ‘adjacent farm land’ north of the Roman Road, then it would become a Lacock bridleway.

This would be a useful enhancement to the local RoW network and especially if it followed the approximate line of the Roman Road, which marks the southern edge of Lacock Parish.

LACO23 and LACO26

LACO23 runs down the hillslope in front of Bowden Park and between Long Copse and Briary Wood.



As per previous reports, the line of the RoW was ploughed last autumn and so were the adjacent headlands. Many local walkers had become used to using the headlands rather than the line of LACO23.

I've exchanged emails with Ben Myerscough of Carter Jonas (the land agent) who agrees that the RoW lines (LACO23 and LACO26) should be restored. A check 20th March shows that LACO26 has been sprayed, so that the line is obvious. LACO23 remains harrowed and unsprayed & - while this is so - many walkers will still divert around the former headlands. In addition, the lower part of LACO23 from the wooden bridge beyond the drainage brook and on to Bewley Lane is ploughed and not obvious, so most walkers divert around another wide headland.

Ben commented that footfall on RoWs seems greater than in previous years and there have been recent accounts of walkers straying from RoWs and wandering close to Bowden Park. This is possible from the upper part of LACO23, although given exemplary way-marking on that section (picture below) it would be difficult to claim as accidental.

All Lacock's rights of way are marked on Wiltshire's Rights of Way map (<https://wiltscouncil.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=43d5a86a545046b2b59fd7dd49d89d22>)

and on map-apps such as the Ordnance Survey. So long as paths are clear, any stiles are accessible and way-marking is in place, there is no legal excuse for trespass.

This will be my penultimate report as Lacock's councillor for RoWs – but I remain very happy to help the council and my successor with any work regarding our footpaths and rights of way – including engaging with walkers and land-owners to maintain and enhance the network.



Exemplary way-marking – upper LACO23

red arrow shows direction LACO23 RoW, field between Long Copse and Briary Wood





LACO23 actual line, from same viewpoint



LACO26 marked by crop spraying, looking north

page 3 follows

Grit Bins – nothing to report – Naish Hill’s were checked 4th April, lower bin half-full, upper one-third full, plus a rare lucky-shovel.

Responsible Finance Officer

Two outstanding items to note:

- Minutes of March meeting mention an overdue account linked to rental of playing field facilities
- Work to establish LPC clerk’s contract is in hand.

Flood Warden – nothing to report – except like many parishioners, I received a letter from our MP, dated 23rd February and referring to an undated meeting to consider flooding in the parish. I have no further details!

Mike Chislett
4th April 2021