

PROPOSED CLOSURE OF TWO SECTIONS OF PUBLIC FOOTPATH AT
SILKSTONE ROAD AND WICKFIELD GROVE IN THE FRECHEVILLE AREA OF
SHEFFIELD

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To seek authority to process the Highway Closure Order required to close two sections of public footpath at Silkstone Road/Wickfield Grove in the Frecheville area of Sheffield, as shown thick black-edged on the plan at Appendix A.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council's Highway Maintenance Division has received an application from the Home Group housing association for permanent closure of two sections of public footpath at Silkstone Road and Wickfield Grove in the Frecheville area of Sheffield, as shown thick black-edged on the plan at Appendix A. (A wider location plan is included at Appendix B).
- 2.2 This site, known as 'Scowerdons Phase C2', is part of the Scowerdons, Weaklands and Newstead Housing Regeneration project ('SWaN'), which is a partnership between the Council, Home Group, and the Homes & Communities Agency.
- 2.3 The site is currently owned by Sheffield City Council, but Home Group Developments Limited (HGDL) have entered into a Development Agreement with the Council to develop the site, and once all the pre-conditions have been satisfied HGDL will enter a lease agreement for the development of the site.
- 2.4 The Council housing previously on this site was all demolished some time ago. The applicant therefore asserts that the subject paths are no longer necessary for public use, and has applied to the Council for them to be permanently closed using the powers in Section 118 of the Highways Act 1980.
- 2.5 Since making this application, Home Group have obtained Planning Consent for the proposed redevelopment of the site (12/02920/FUL). This opens up the alternative possibility of using the powers in Section 257 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 to close the paths. Therefore, whilst Home Group have asked the Council to continue with the process using Highways Act powers (because it is hoped that this will prove to be quicker in this particular

case), this report seeks authority to use either power to conclude the closure process depending on which is ultimately most appropriate.

3.0 CONSULTATIONS

- 3.1 Consultations have been carried out with Statutory Undertakers (utility companies, etc.), the Emergency Services and other relevant bodies.
- 3.2 National Grid Gas objected, on the grounds that their underground equipment would be affected, but Home Group have since agreed to pay for the disconnection of this equipment and National Grid have withdrawn their objection.
- 3.3 Although not actually objecting, Northern Powergrid (formerly Yorkshire Electric) also have affected equipment but, again, Home Group have accepted their quotation for its disconnection and diversion.
- 3.4 No other respondents have reported any problems at the time of writing this report, but if any negative comments are received before the Committee meeting, they will be reported verbally at the meeting.
- 3.5 The submission of further objections, if not withdrawn, would remove the power to confirm the Order itself. To obtain confirmation the Order must be submitted to the Secretary of State.

4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Director of Legal Services has been consulted and has advised that:
 - (a) assuming the sections of footpath shown thick black-edged are no longer necessary for public use, it would be appropriate to process the closure using the powers contained within Section 118 of the Highways Act 1980;

however
 - (b) in view of the Planning Consent, it would also be appropriate to use Section 257 of the Town & Country Planning Act, the decision on which powers to use being dependent on the applicant's timescale requirements.

5.0 HIGHWAY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The subject footpaths are adopted public highways and were originally built to serve the Council housing that occupied the site, but which has all now been demolished.
- 5.2 Silkstone Road itself is unaffected by these closure proposals, and adopted public footpaths linking it with both Wickfield Grove and Alport Place are to remain. Consequently, closure of the subject sections of footpath should not adversely affect the public's enjoyment of the area and will have no

detrimental effect on the surrounding highway network and its users.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IMPLICATIONS

6.1 No equal opportunities implications arise from the highway closures proposed in this report.

7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 No environmental implications arise from the highway closures proposed in this report.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no financial implications arising from this proposed closure.

8.2 All costs associated with, and arising from, the application for the permanent highway closure and consequent works on site (including any costs which would normally accrue to Highways) will be met by the applicant.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 Based on the above information, I have no objection to the proposed permanent closure of the sections of footpath shown thick black-edged on the plan included as Appendix A.

10.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Raise no objections to the proposed permanent closure of the sections of footpath at Silkstone Road and Wickfield Grove in the Frecheville area of Sheffield, as shown thick black-edged on the plan at Appendix A, subject to satisfactory arrangements being made with Statutory Undertakers in connection with any of their mains and services that may be affected.

10.2 Authorise the Director of Legal Services, to

- a) take all necessary action to close the sections of footpath under the powers contained within Section 118 of the Highways Act 1980 or Section 257 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990.
- b) confirm the Order as an Unopposed Order, in the event of no objections being received, or any objections received being resolved.

Steve Robinson
Head of Highway Maintenance

17th December 2012

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