

## FOOTPATHS AFFECTED BY THE HS2 CONSTRUCTION WORKS

I would like to report the satisfactory outcome of an exchange of emails between myself and Chris James on behalf of the contractors EKFB, as follows:

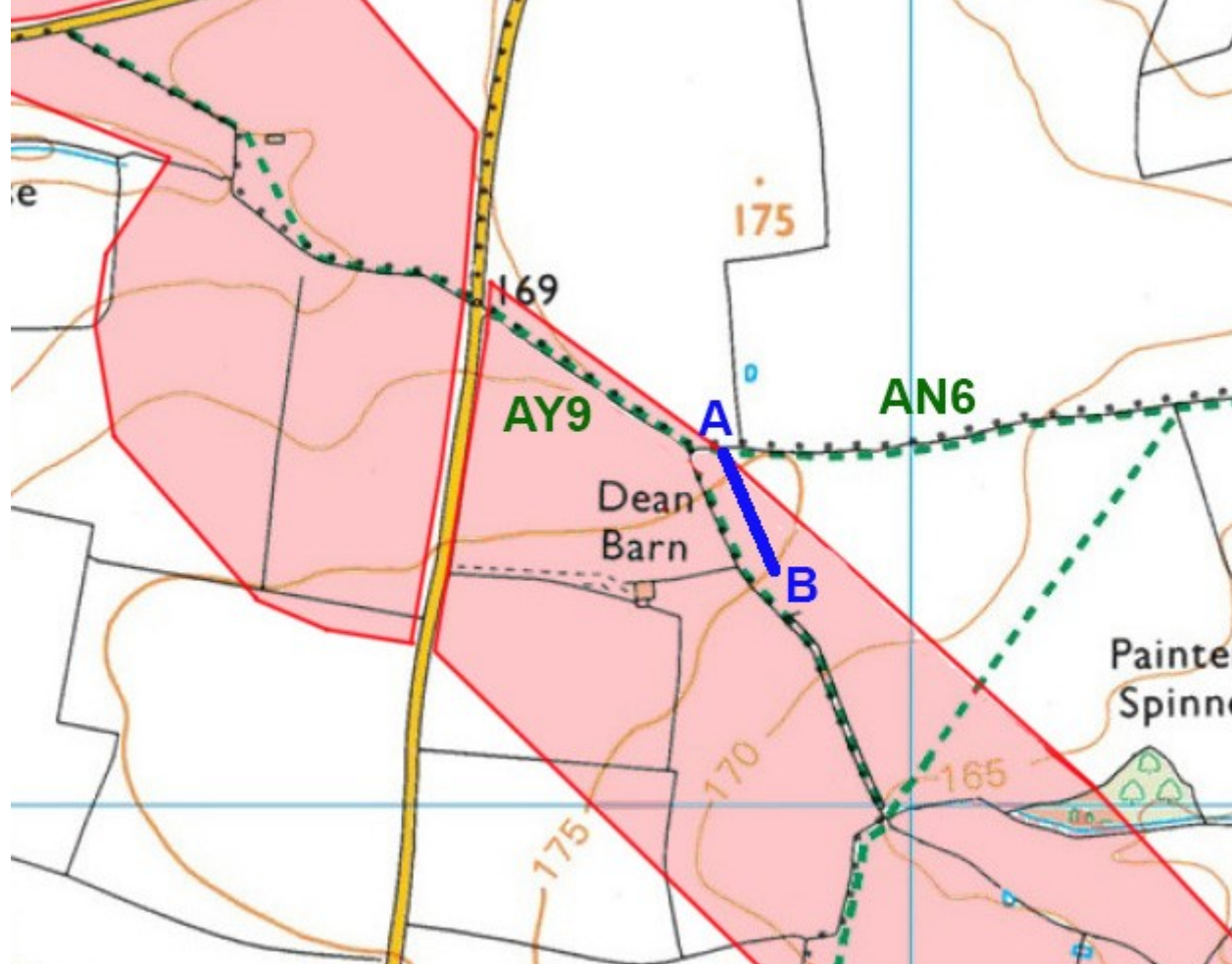
As a regular user of the footpaths which will be affected by the HS2 construction works, I sent the following email to Chris James on 26<sup>th</sup> October:

26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Hi Chris,

I repeat below an email sent to you in March to which I didn't receive a satisfactory response. The footpath which leaves the road between the Magpie and Marston crossroads at Point A on the map with that email and continues to Stuchbury Cottages on the Sulgrave to Helmdon Road is very important to those walking around the parish boundary, especially with dogs. The pandemic has caused a virtual revolution in local walking and this lovely walk along the double hedge is now a firm favourite with many villagers. Given that the construction period is ten years or more, I had hoped that co-operation between engineers, contractors and walkers would enable the path to stay open as long as possible. Indeed, the edge of the land required for the storage of earth during the construction of the cutting for the cutting for the Greatworth tunnel is so close to the footpath I am sure that a minor change in the land take could have retained the latter for the duration of the works.

I note that a fence has recently been erected between points A and B (shown in blue) on the map below:



At point A, those using Footpath AY9 pass through a pedestrian gate, relatively newly erected by the County Council and continue on Footpath AN6 towards Stuchbury. This has been sited so close to the hedge that it impedes the transfer from one footpath to the other. I ask, in a spirit of co-operation, if this was really necessary? If it is indeed essential at this early stage entirely to stop up the AY9/AN6 route, surely there should have been a formal procedure or at the very least a consultation with Parish Councils such that pedestrians reaching point A from both directions are not obliged to retrace their steps.



The pedestrian gate at Point A is hidden behind the hedge. The new fence is on the right, preventing access to Footpath AN6.

I look forward to your early response.

Colin Wootton

...and received this reply on 2<sup>nd</sup> November:

Hi Colin,

I have just returned from leave and catching up on emails. Apologies for missing the email earlier in the year.

To respond to a the point - Why are the fences being erected along footpaths? - The fencing is being put in place to delineate the area that is a public right of way and to make sure it is safe for the public.

We are working hard to minimise the impact of our works on the footpath network.

The footpath to the North (from the number 169 towards Thorpe Mandeville) will probably need closing soon as we are setting up the main compound in the field that was used for model aeroplanes. I walked this footpath last week and it does not look like it is used much. Is this one that you use?

I don't have your phone number - it would be good to talk through some of these issues..

Best regards

Chris

...followed by this on the same date:

Hi Colin,

I have had a walk along the footpaths that you mentioned this afternoon and spotted the location where the fencing restricted access to AN6 shown by your photograph by point A. There was also another fence that has recently been erected adjacent to this fence that also restricts access. I have spoken to the fencing foreman regarding these two fences and asked that he remove a section so that a 2 metre clearance is provided along footpath AN6 and he has agreed to do this first thing in the morning.

Apologies for the inconvenience.

Best regards

Chris