

A3 Hindhead Public Inquiry Waverley Cycling Forum Proof of Evidence

Alec McCalden 9 September 2004

1 Introduction

Personal Details

- 1.1 My name is Alec McCalden and I represent the Waverley Cycling Forum. I am a Chartered Engineer with an interest in communications of all types and I am currently researching the manner in which people interact with the technology around them. My interest in cycles comes from a personal commitment to try always to use the most appropriate transport for my needs, which I define as that with the lowest environmental impact. Very frequently the natural choice is a cycle. I consider the health and social advantages of a cycle to outweigh significantly the risks of this area's poor quality roads. I see a cycle primarily as everyday utility transport, a theme this proof will return to again.

Abbreviations Used

HA - Highways Agency

NT - National Trust

BOAT - Byway Open to All Traffic

SPA - Special Protection Area

AST - Appraisal Summary Table

Scope and Arrangement

- 1.2 This proof of evidence starts with a brief introduction to the Waverley Cycling Forum. It then puts an historical perspective on the road through Hindhead, reports on discussions with the HA, NT, and other non-motorised road users, and makes some general comments. It then deals with specific details of the road scheme, first with the area south of the Hindhead crossroads and then with the area to the north. It finishes by drawing conclusions and providing references for the information presented.

Waverley Cycling Forum

- 1.3 The Waverley Cycling Forum is one of eleven forums in Surrey set up to provide a means of communication between local government, cycle users and Surrey County Council road engineers. Local councillors, the Surrey County Council transport director for Waverley, the Surrey cycling officer and representatives from cycle groups attend on a quarterly basis. It specifically has a role to pass comment about cycle access on local road schemes of all types before engineering details are finalised. That opportunity has only been offered in a limited manner in this Hindhead scheme. The forums are also part of the government consultation process for the National Cycling Forum.

Historical Perspective

- 1.4 Routes have existed over Hindhead for centuries as part of the natural route from London to Portsmouth. In 1829 the road along the current line of the A3 was finished, in order to give a road for horse-drawn coaches with a slope that was appropriate. This was widened in parts in 1969. The original tunnel proposals up to August 2003 showed the existing A3 retained with a limited width as a cycle route. This appeared highly imaginative and met many of our wishes at the time. In October revised plans were published showing the existing A3 removed completely, and cycle access routed over a shared path nearly over the top of Gibbet Hill. The change was apparently made under pressure from the NT.

Liaison with HA and NT

- 1.5 There have been several meetings between ourselves and both the HA and the NT, with those volunteers involved giving up their free time to do so. With various representatives we have walked the route, talked engineering detail, proposed alternatives and generally tried to understand the problems faced by all the parties.

Liaison with other Non-motorised Users

- 1.6 We have taken particular care to work with non-motorised user groups such as the Ramblers Association, the Open Spaces Society, the British Horse Society, and also Friends of the Earth. We have liaised with cycle groups such as the East Hampshire Cyclists Forum, the CTC, Godalming Cycle Campaign and Sustrans. All our interests are in practice very similar and influenced heavily by the problems of being treated as second class to the motorised vehicle. We feel we understand the problems for example of a cycle passing close to a horse, or of coming up from behind at speed upon a group of walkers on a path. We welcome the concept of removing motorised traffic from Hindhead Common.

2 Overall Comments

General

- 2.1 We must emphasise that we strongly support the overall plan for Hindhead. The scheme will do no less than totally transform the area. It will become a jewel in the crown of the entire south east of Britain. The removal of the danger and noise of road traffic, the linking up of the Punch Bowl with Gibbet Hill, the opening out of the hillside to give distant views, the restoration of Hindhead as an attractive village: all these will bring back a sparkle and a touch of open space to an area which is otherwise heavy with building development and traffic. There is a real sense of injustice that the A3 has been allowed to develop to the point where it is too hazardous for most cyclists (or horseriders, carriage drivers or pedestrians) to use, whilst the motor vehicle is fully catered for. The construction of the tunnel together with the Thursley access link potentially redresses this balance somewhat, but only if a good quality route is available.

2.2 The downside of this is that we see no evidence that the HA understand the concept of utility cycling - that of using a cycle just to travel moderate distances for work, for visiting friends, for shopping, to the pub, or for one of many reasons. The lack of understanding would be risible if it were not so crucial to the whole case. This is part of para 3.1.8 of the Proof on Recreation, ref 1:

"There are three distinct types of cyclist: mountain bikers, family or leisure cyclists and racing cyclists who also sometimes commute to work."

2.3 We dare to suggest this definition omits many who use or would use a cycle.

2.4 We find it desperately disappointing that this country's agency for roads has so little understanding of cycling as a mode of transport, of how it has been a major mode of transport in the past, and how the continental experience shows that given appropriate facilities it could easily be so again with major environmental and social benefits.

2.5 Further evidence for the lack of understanding is that cycling is grouped under "Recreation" in all Hindhead HA references. We suggest that this is the heart of the problem. Instead of regarding use of a cycle as a realistic form of everyday transport and planning for it appropriately, the HA has taken it as primarily a leisure activity where the user's purpose is riding a cycle in an attractive area for a certain period of time. A utility cyclist has a rather different purpose of wanting to travel from one point to another in a safe, direct and convenient manner, and in the shortest possible time.

2.6 The illustration on the covers of all the scheme documents, and the animated website logo, emphasise further the lack of understanding. The purpose of a cover is to set the scene for the contents inside. The scene that is set is one of a superbly engineered road and tunnel portal, with fast moving car and freight traffic, surrounded by a hint of an attractive landscape. The utility cycle traffic is nowhere to be seen, and we suggest that this is indicative of the HA planning mindset. If cycle traffic is not planned in from the outset, then there is no way that appropriate resources will be allocated.

2.7 Sustrans, who are implementing 10,000km of cycle networks in the UK, are planning to take a national cycle route over Hindhead, linking Petersfield with Godalming and beyond. We ask you to look at their Proof of Evidence for predictions of cycle traffic through the area, which are likely to be substantial.

Surrey County Council

- 2.8 Whilst the formal position of Surrey County Council is to support the HA, we point out that this is very much an overall viewpoint with little room to explore the detail. In particular, the Waverley Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee has relevant local knowledge and recorded support for cycle access in its minutes of 18 November 2003:

"Following a detailed discussion regarding the closure of the old A3, (...) the Committee considered closely the continuing needs of cyclists and other recreational users. The Committee was in favour of the closure of the old A3 to vehicular traffic and raised no formal objection to the Order. However, the Committee requested that consideration be given to the possibility of part of the width of the A3 remaining open as a suitable surface for non-vehicular traffic, if no other satisfactory alternative proposals for such users are put forward."

The following section deals with the detailed implementation of the Hindhead scheme, starting at the southern end.

3 Bramshott to Hindhead Crossroads

Bramshott Common

- 3.1 A crossing at Bramshott Common about 1km (0.6 mile) south-west of the Spaniard Inn for cyclists, walkers and horse riders would be a welcome addition to the scheme. Any access paths alongside the A3 for this facility and at other places need at least visual screening to prevent dazzle of riders and motorists at night. It is also very disconcerting to be closer than about 1m to a fast road lane and at least 3m would be preferable. Where the A3 runs alongside another road, such as in the area of the Greensand Way crossing, a fence and shrubbery between the two roads is provided as protection from vehicles losing control and crossing towards the other road. This is not currently provided for in the scheme where a cycle track runs adjacent to the A3 and we ask that it is. There is no possible reason why cycles should be afforded less protection than other vehicles, and there are recorded cases of accidents where a car driver has been confused by bright cycle lights at night. We have been told by the HA that a barrier could cause injury to the occupants of a vehicle; we were ridiculed for pointing out that without the barrier cyclists could be injured.

Spaniard Inn Crossing

- 3.2 There is an existing at-grade crossing of the A3 at the Spaniard Inn, joining Knockhundred Lane with bridleway 71. This bridleway is a very useful route into Bramshott and hence through a network of quiet lanes towards Bordon. Easy to cross some years ago, it is now very difficult and the extra traffic generated by this scheme will make crossing impossible. The HA propose to close the crossing on the grounds that the Hammer Lane underpass will provide an acceptable substitute on the northern side, and a possible new crossing at Bramshott Common will help on the south-west side. The Hammer Lane underpass is closer at 675m away, a total diversion of 1,350m (1476 yards, 0.8 mile). As an established crossing that will be adversely affected by this scheme, we suggest that an underpass or bridge be provided here for pedestrians, equestrians and cycles. 1350m will take about 15 mins to walk at a fast pace; the average motorist would be writing to his or her MP if this were a mandatory wait on the A3. The Evidence on Traffic (Ref 15) para 3.1.4 describes how a delay of up to 16 mins is strong contributory justification for spending £200m on this whole A3 scheme; why is a similar delay to pedestrian, cycle and horse traffic not adequate justification for building a rather cheaper crossing at the Spaniard?
- 3.3 We strongly resent the bargaining approach that has been suggested by the HA that either this Spaniard Inn crossing or a Bramshott Common crossing could be provided, but not both. The A3 traffic is the problem; the HA should actively be seeking ways of mitigating it.
- 3.4 The proposed short one way system in Knockhundred Lane poses a risk for non motorised users as motorists may not expect on-coming traffic. We suggest that either 1.5m margins be marked each side of the road for two-way non-motorised traffic, or that the idea of a false one-way street with an entrance plug be explored as described in the work on a cycle friendly infrastructure (Ref 12, p48 - 49, para 11.4.3).

Hammer Lane Underpass

- 3.5 A cycleway is proposed on the south side of this underpass, and a bridleway on the north side. Full details are missing from the evidence, but as the cycleway is two way it needs to be at least 3m wide.

High Pitfold Underpass

- 3.6 As this underpass will be used by pedestrians, equestrians and cycles, we ask that the HA ensure that the surface is suitable for all users.

Hazel Grove Junction

- 3.7 We recognize that this junction will carry high volumes of traffic and accept that a double roundabout may be the only solution despite being inherently unforgiving to cycles. We have problems with the cycle access, which is planned as a cycleway on the south side of the junction. The junction is the main road crossing point between Grayshott and Nutcombe. The HA Environmental Statement (Ref 13) Vol 1A fig 15(1) - 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13 show that five schools have the Hazel Grove junction within their 2km walking zone. This is in addition to other journeys in this residential area. There is clearly a need to provide for safe crossing of the Hazel Grove junction by pedestrians and cyclists. The large roundabouts planned will easily support traffic speeds of 30mph and more, and currently there is no explicit provision to cross the junction. A means is needed to cross the five slip roads on the south side of the junction, four of which take the fast traffic off the roundabout and one takes the northbound feed from the A3. The latter has good sight lines for traffic to see possible lights for a toucan crossing. The other four have a problem with traffic light control as motor traffic will back up on the roundabout causing a safety hazard. We don't know the answer for this; the HA needs to engineer this junction much more thoroughly. Underpasses may be an option for the sliproads. If explicit provision is not made, we can see cycles attempting the roundabouts and becoming casualties, and pedestrians being hurt crossing the sliproads. Surrey County Council's Safe Routes to Schools scheme may be interested in this junction and able to help.

Cycle Provision on the existing A3

- 3.8 Cycle facilities on the route of the existing A3 immediately south of the Hindhead crossroads are planned as a shared use path with pedestrians, on the northern side of the road only. This path will have to cross 5 roads and numerous private entrances just between the crossroads and Hazel Grove junction. The only way this is remotely safe is if motor traffic has to give way to cycle traffic at these points, expects to do so, and has enough room to pull off the main carriageway. Drivers in this country are not taught to expect this type of road construction, and there is insufficient room along most of the road to accommodate a car length. Hedge growth and other line of sight obstructions have also continually to be kept under control. The existing road appears wide enough for an advisory on-carriageway cycle lane each side and we suggest this approach. A moderate road cyclist will easily achieve 25mph downhill from the crossroads and this speed would be irresponsible on a shared path.

Hindhead Crossroads

- 3.9 The proposed double mini roundabout at the Hindhead crossroads is very hazardous to cycles. The proposed shared footpath route will not attract all cyclists, leaving some on the roundabout. Double mini roundabouts are known to be a source of confusion to users, which leads to accidents. The cycleway proposed deals (in our opinion unsatisfactorily) with the old A3 traffic, but does nothing to help cycle traffic crossing the junction on the A287.

4 North of Hindhead Crossroads to Thursley

- 4.1 Prior to October 2003, the Hindhead scheme included keeping a restricted width of the existing A3 nominally for cycle use. This is detailed further in the February 2002 report "A3 Hindhead: Report on Pedestrian, Equestrian and Cyclist Facilities" (ref 2). Significant collaborative effort from various parties went into this. The Grayshott exhibition in Summer 2003 showed this route, and included a 3D scale model of the scheme showing the existing A3 as a cycle facility. The summary change in October 2003 showing elimination of this route without consultation came as something of a shock. We were told that the NT had insisted the A3 were removed completely otherwise the whole Hindhead scheme would not go ahead. This sounds a lot like the old proverb of "cutting off your nose to spite your face", as the NT have as much to lose with the Hindhead Common otherwise continuing to be plagued by road traffic.

Comparison of the two options

(1) BOAT 500

- 4.2 We have the most difficulties with the section over Hindhead Common labelled from A to C in Ref 3, "Recreational Access across Hindhead Common" p9, fig REC-9. It is proposed that all traffic will be routed over the path of the pre - 1829 Portsmouth Road, currently known as BOAT 500. By means of a 'Side Road Order', this would be downgraded to a split bridleway and cyclepath. The majority of this would be a 3m (9' 10") wide bridleway with a firm surface primarily for horses, alongside a 2m (6' 7") wide cyclepath with a hard surface nominally for cycles. The outer edges of this combination would be earth banks rising up to perhaps a metre (3' 3"). There would be a margin between the bridleway and the cyclepath of between zero and half a metre (1' 8"), with a similar margin of between zero and half a metre from the path outer edges to the banks. The width overall is limited by the wish not to exceed the original width of the old Portsmouth Road, defined by the earth banking to be about 5m (16' 5") and less in parts. Other traffic on this route might be pedestrians, wheelchairs, carriage drivers, push chairs, tricycles, runners, and young children with their families.
- 4.3 The gradient of this route is shown in the Plan and Profile of the Cycle Route, Ref 4. It has a maximum gradient of 9%, has 175m (191 yards) where the gradient is greater than 7.1%, and 1025m (0.64 mile, 1121 yards) where it is greater than 5%. (A gradient of 7.1% is the steepest on the existing A3 for a very short length, and 5% represents a slightly arbitrary definition of a significant slope.) These figures take into account proposed infill near the BOAT 501 junction. Further work on the route is unlikely to reduce the maximum gradient to below 8%.
- 4.4 The body of the cyclepath is planned to be a total of 160mm (6") thick.

(2) Existing A3

- 4.5 The existing A3 between the same points is wider than 5m at its narrowest, and currently opens out much wider around the sharpest curve. It is generally cut into the edge of the hillside with the current northbound lane occasionally extended out over the slope. It has a maximum gradient of 7.1% for a maximum of 25m (27 yards - this is the surveying interval) and 350m (383 yards) with greater than a 5% gradient (Ref. 4).
- 4.6 The body of the A3 is built to trunk road standards which give a very much more substantial thickness than proposed for the cyclepath.

Comments

- 4.7 The width of the BOAT 500 route, the gradient, the earth banks, the small side and centre margins, and the construction quality all give us cause for concern. Any transport route must be engineered for the maximum expected load, not an average or a snapshot in time, and we suggest the maximum load when the Hindhead scheme is finished will be much greater than the present maximum usage. The present load can be estimated from the Proof on Recreation (Ref 3, p22, para 4.3.27) where over a two day period recorded movements gave 100 pedestrians, 17 cyclists, 2 equestrians, 6 trail riders and 2 vehicles. A survey quoted by Paul Arnold (Ref 5) showed 14 cyclists, 5 trail bikes, and 78 walkers on one day. Both surveys were on BOAT 500. We suggest there is a large suppressed demand at present due to the traffic on the A3. When the scheme is finished, not only will this suppressed demand be realised, but additional users will be attracted due to the positive publicity generated about the area. Moreover, surely the plans should not be laid just for the completion date, but for 20 - 40 years time when many feel that non-motorised transport may have become more important still. The area is very close to the new South Down National Park and one would expect an influx of tourists as a result.
- 4.8 The gradients on both routes are steep enough in parts on ascent for some cyclists on ordinary road bikes to be forced to dismount and push. On a 2m path this immediately takes up the full width of the path and blocks it to other users. A 5% gradient is reasonable for a cyclist to climb over a distance; the A3 has 350m greater than this whilst the BOAT 500 has 1025m, almost three times as much. On descent a freewheeling cycle is likely to reach 25mph, with fit cyclists easily managing 35mph. This is clearly hazardous to other users when passing closely and some cyclists will not slow down adequately to pass. The A3 route potentially offers margins each side to allow extra passing room, whilst the earth banks of the BOAT 500 give an extra danger of forcing users together. Whatever route is used, it is very important that hard objects such as trees are removed from the edge of the route as a collision at speed is likely to result in serious injury.

- 4.9 An estimate from the Surrey Cycle Facility Design Guide for the width one should allow for a cyclist is 1.4m (Ref 6, p8, fig 1). Clearly a two way path needs to be a minimum of 2.8m wide to allow passing if there is no room to overhang the edge of the path. Department for Transport guidelines (Ref 14 paras 6.2.2 and 6.2.3) recommend the width of a cycle track as 3.0m, with a statement that "Practitioners should not regard minimum widths as design targets. Where cyclists are moving slowly (...) they require additional width to maintain balance". Anything narrower presents a safety issue with the risk of collision.
- 4.10 The lack of a reasonable and guaranteed centre margin between cycle and equestrian routes also poses a problem. Horses on a soft path will churn up the surface and throw it around, particularly in wet conditions. This will give a slippery surface to the cycle path and create a safety hazard. One solution to this on shared routes is to establish a guaranteed reasonable margin of say 1m between the two halves and plant shrubs to act as a dirt barrier. There appears to be insufficient room on BOAT 500 to do this. Horses are easily spooked by cycles suddenly and silently appearing from behind. One needs to pass with a good clearance and the width of the BOAT 500 route is marginal for this. Conversely, the current A3 route has plenty of width, and we suggest that if it is reduced it should be no narrower than 3m, and that a width of 4m or more is considered. A reasonable margin at the edges of say 1m from any earth banking is easy to achieve. The Atkins report (Ref 2) suggested separate corridors for walkers, cyclists and pedestrians which would add up to a greater required width, due to the potential speed of cyclists and the differentials with other users.
- 4.11 The proposed surface of the cycle route has been referred to several times in the HA proof of evidence, but always in terms of its drainage properties. The issue that concerns us is very simple - it is the robustness of the construction. The 160mm thickness proposed seems unlikely to last well under the assault of horses, carriages drawn by horses, and possibly the odd NT utility vehicle such as a Landrover. The path is well exposed to the weather and seems likely to be susceptible to damage caused by water freezing, expanding and thawing. Tree root growth may also cause surface break up. The Surrey Guide (Ref 6, p24, para 5.7.2) also points out that "Irregularities in the surface over short distances cause discomfort to cyclists and will greatly deter use. Therefore when new paths are being put down a machine-laid surface should be specified". In our experience this is observed in the breach by many cycle paths. One has to cycle the path to observe the problem as it is very difficult to detect by eye. We suspect that there may be practical problems in accessing the BOAT 500 path with a machine capable of laying a smooth surface. The route would be likely to need substantial maintenance in a few years, and we see no evidence that a maintenance budget has been prepared for this. All too often cycle routes are simply not maintained until the damage is severe.
- 4.12 By contrast the existing A3 has a robust, machine laid surface proven by trunk road traffic over many years. It is unlikely to need more than superficial maintenance for decades.

General Points about Keeping the Route of the Existing A3

- 4.13 In many of the HA Proofs of Evidence reference is made to the environmental benefits of joining Gibbet Hill with the area of the Punch Bowl by removing the existing A3. We suggest that this desire of joining the areas is still met if the motorised traffic is removed from the A3 and the road itself retained, possibly at a reduced width. The Appraisal Summary Table (AST) in Paul Arnold's evidence (Ref 7, Appendix OVE-E) is still valid for all five criteria of Environment, Economy, Safety, Accessibility, and Integration. There is research that cycle paths cause minimal impact on wildlife. Sustrans' note "Ways for Wildlife" (Ref 8) refers to a Dutch study in an area of significant birdlife showing that cycling was the least disturbing of all activities in the area, including walking. It also refers to a RSPB report stating "...the swift passage of a cycle through a wood is probably the least disturbing human activity possible". In this case, if one says that walking is the default or reference mode for mankind to travel with an overall neutral environmental impact, then a car has a negative impact. Moreover, in this context a bicycle actually has a positive impact environmentally, and this point should have been used in the HA's assessment of the scheme and in the AST. Research for this proof has not found evidence that the mere presence of a road surface has a significant adverse effect on local wildlife - it is the incessant movement and noise of large fast vehicles that is the problem.
- 4.14 Continuing this argument, the only reason left for removing the A3 and reprofiling the hillside is one of aesthetics. If this is true, it would be good if those concerned would have admitted it earlier, so at least we know what the discussion is about. What we are talking about is human opinion, one person's preferences over another person's. This is not inconsequential - after all, if the Punch Bowl were a roughly hewn slate quarry rather than the attractive green bowl that it is, few would put its picture in an exhibition. But paths do not necessarily look offensive; the Punch Bowl has many paths criss-crossing it in a very visible fashion, as does the hill itself. And the point is made very well by the HA's own evidence, as the very attractive picture (Ref 9) nominally of the Old Portsmouth Road (BOAT 500) is actually of the A3 route before 1889, when the Sailor's Stone was moved further up the hill. The area was found attractive by artists and writers at that time even with the A3 route; there's no reason why it shouldn't be again.
- 4.15 As can be seen from this picture, because of the way the A3 follows around the curve of the hillside, it is not visible for much of its length from any one point, and this is for a road that is probably about 5m wide plus margins on a largely tree-less landscape. A reduced width of 3 or 4m with a light coloured surface as shown in the picture would hardly be a problem, and current speculation is that there will be significant tree growth allowed on the hillside which will make it unnoticeable. From the hillside above, the convex slope of the hill will make it difficult to see the road in its small cutting, and even today the road is barely visible - audible, yes, but not visible from BOAT 500 for most of its length. The road runs through the SPA but is not a new road and therefore does not require special permission. If the SPA were used as a reason for removal, then does it mean that all other tracks and footpaths in the SPA are to be removed also?

- 4.16 Near the junction of the A3 with the BOAT 501 access to the Youth Hostel there is a plan to infill land to reduce the gradient on BOAT 500. Whilst this is imaginative, it also achieves the HA aim of restoring the larger of two land spurs. We suggest that with the existing A3 used for cycle access, there is no need for a reduced gradient on BOAT 500 and the existing route is satisfactory, with no need to infill. If the infill method is chosen, we suggest that the A3 cycle route use the two short parts of BOAT 501 to avoid a steep gradient over the infill. This would imply bringing the condition of BOAT 501 up to a similar state to that of the A3 in respect of width, surface quality and foundations. We also suggest that the second and smaller land spur slightly further to the south not be infilled as there is no obvious route around it for cycles. The environmental gain by allowing cycles will more than offset the environmental loss of not completing the spur.
- 4.17 The environmental penalty of the proposed infill work along the existing A3 does not seem to have been costed in the AST. There will be a one-off cost of the fuel and other resources required to transport many tonnes of soil from its source to the infill point. There will be a real project cost too of the time and effort required to do all this extra work. We suspect that the finance needed here would pay for all the cycle facilities requested many times over.
- 4.18 The Cuckoo Trail in East Sussex is used by the HA as an example of how a narrower path than BOAT 500 does not cause conflict between different modes of transport. If one looks at the trail, it is laid on the path of an old railway line between Polegate and Heathfield. The grade of train intended for that line meant that it was built with a gradient of no more than about 2%. There are also plenty of minor and B-class roads with reasonable gradients running roughly parallel for fast cyclists to use, as can be seen from the local map (Ref 10). Horse traffic is also restricted on part of the route. We therefore turn the HA's evidence on its head and say that the small gradients, alternative parallel route and resolution of potential horse conflict give legitimacy to what we are proposing should exist at Hindhead. The Hindhead route is also much more of a long distance strategic route than is the Cuckoo Trail and should therefore have even better provision; it is the A3 for cyclists.
- 4.19 If there is concern in the HA or NT about unauthorised motor vehicle access then the gating system proposed in the Atkins Report (Ref 2) or the Sustrans leaflet (Ref 11) answers that. Willful destruction of gates to give access is classified as criminal damage and is a matter for enforcement and prosecution. Sustrans leaflet on access controls (Ref 11) also details how Durham County Council have completely dealt with the problem of unauthorised motor cycle access on paths and clearly states that "...the removal of (access) controls has greatly reduced vandalism of adjacent fencing and therefore saved repair costs". To restrict cycle access in the Hindhead scheme on the basis of what criminals might do is hardly a recipe for an environmentally aware transport policy.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 We are startled at the complete lack of HA appreciation of the needs of utility cyclists. This omission goes against government policy. It colours the whole HA approach to cycle access in this A3 scheme where, instead of needing to comment on just a few minor details, we find we are forced to challenge major principles at every turn. We suspect that the existing A3 route over Hindhead Common would still be planned as part of this scheme if proper consideration for cycles had been made at the outset. The centre reservation of the new road has more room than any cycle access in the plan.
- 5.2 Loss of the existing A3 over the common would be a catastrophe for cyclists, no matter how much the BOAT 500 route is improved. Cyclists and other non-motorised users contribute to a landscape - it is the speed, noise and pollution of motor vehicles on a road that is the problem. not the road itself. Mankind has always roamed and made his or her mark over Hindhead, and to try to roll the clock back to some arbitrary point in time seems pointless. Artists and writers flocked here after the coach road - the current A3 - was built, and found it inspired, not suppressed, their talent.
- 5.3 The HA needs also to look at the provision for cycle traffic at the south side of the scheme, including the Hindhead crossroads. In concept and in detail it fails to meet the needs of most cyclists. At Hazel Grove there appears to be no provision for non-motorised users to actually cross the slip roads, and this is on a route associated with five schools.
- 5.4 We look forward to the day when the tunnel removes the traffic over Hindhead Common and restores a sense of humanity to Hindhead village. There is a once in a lifetime opportunity here to create a coherent cycle route from Liphook right through to Thursley, and we suggest that cycles should not be regarded as part of the problem, but should be seen as a major part of the solution.

6 References

- Ref 1: Summary Proof of Evidence on Recreation. JP-REC-S-160704-Final
- Ref 2: A3 Hindhead: Report on Pedestrian, Equestrian and Cyclist Facilities. Atkins February 2002
- Ref 3: Proof of Evidence on Recreation, HA.
- Ref 4: Plan and Profile of Proposed Cycle Route Across Hindhead Common, Drawing A3 - 020106 - MM - SK - 245
- Ref 5: Paul Arnold, personal letter ref HA/A3/PI/422, 22 July 2004
- Ref 6: Cycle Facility Design Guide, Surrey County Council.
- Ref 7: Statement of Case and Overview Proof of Evidence, HA, Paul Arnold
- Ref 8: Sustrans Information Sheet FF02, "Ways for Wildlife".
- Ref 9: Environmental Statement Vol 2, Ch 13 Landscapes, 13-1 Appendices Plate 5.
- Ref 10: Ordnance Survey 1:50 000 map, sheet 199.
- Ref 11: Sustrans Information Sheet FF22, "Access Controls"
- Ref 12: Cycle-Friendly Infrastructure, DoT, Bicycle Association, CTC, The Institute of Highways and Transportation, 1996
- Ref 13: A3 Hindhead Scheme, Environmental Statement, Vol 1, 1A & 2, HA, May 2004
- Ref 14: Adjacent and Shared Use Facilities for Pedestrians and Cyclists, Department for Transport
- Ref 15: Summary of Proof of Evidence on Traffic, Economics and Safety, HA, HA/TRA/S