

DMMO 1167

case reference :- ROW/3308400

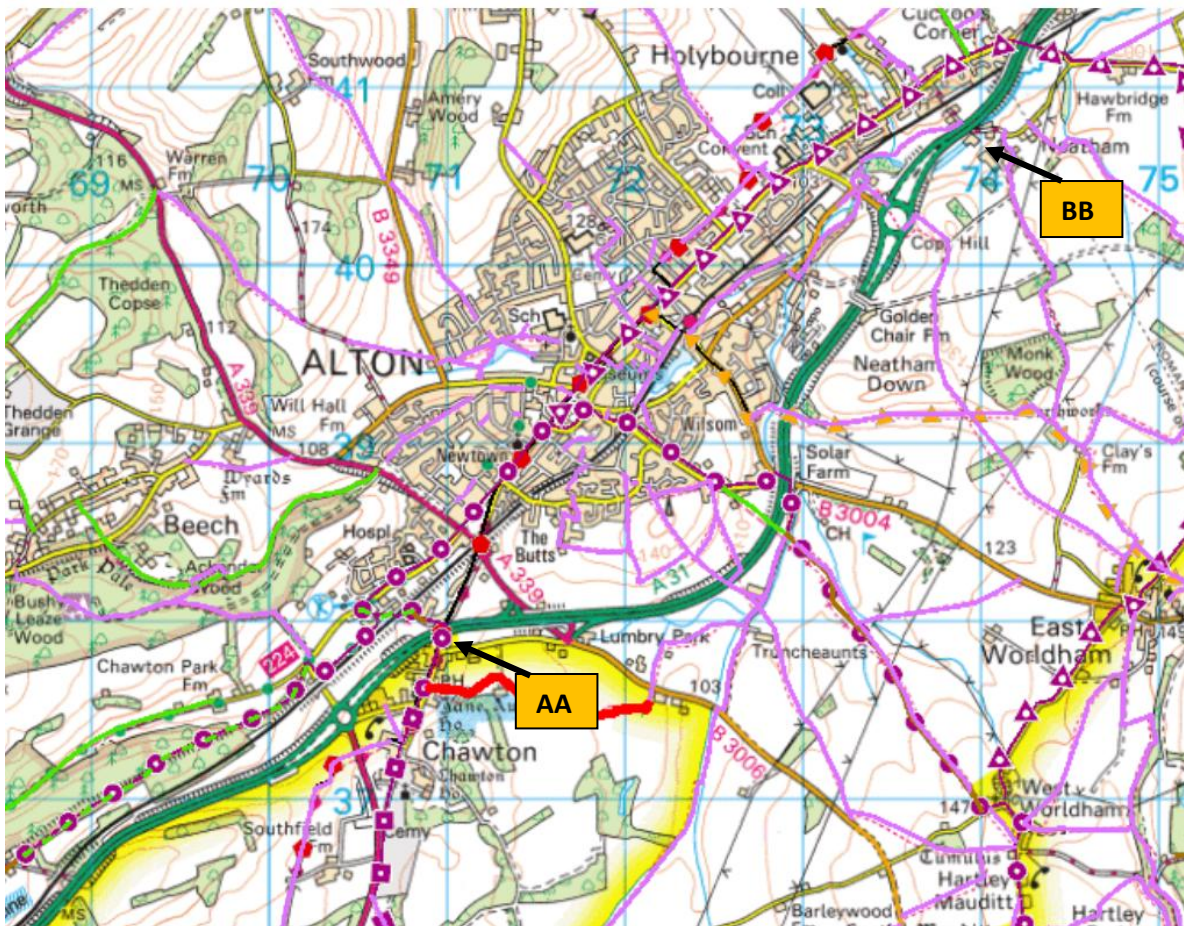
(East Hampshire District No 44Parish of Worldham DMMO 2020)

STATEMENT OF CASE

PREPARED BY :- Alton Ramblers Group, (part of Ramblers UK charity).

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Alton Ramblers' SUPPORT for the above DMMO is centred around the fact that the path adds the ONLY safe crossing close to Alton town centre, between the Chawton subway and Holybourne subway. Referring to the HCC RoW footpath map reproduced below, the Chawton subway is marked point AA, and the Holybourne subway as BB.



Google Maps lists the walking route between these two subways as approximately 3 miles. All other crossings are over the surface of the A31 trunk road, either in the Water Lane region or over the Holybourne roundabout (paths are shown in light purple colour). The smaller

bridge over the A31 near Golden Chair Farm is closed to public/private access, so cannot be used by the public. So the Path which is the subject of this DMMO links the Wilsom Road (B3004) underpass directly to the Hangers Way (shown with orange triangles on the map). The only other way to complete the Hangers Way (an EHDC featured path) is to cross over the A31 and join Wilsom Road nearer to Alton. As a trained Ramblers Group Walk Leader and in my capacity as Walking Environment Officer, I do not recommend our Alton Ramblers Members or Walk Leaders take a group of walkers over the A31 carriageways; the potential risk is far too high, with 70+ MPH traffic speeds, bends and hills, that do not give sufficient visibility into the distance to take a line of people safely over. HCC have apparently declined to improve the A31 traffic signage from the simple single warning signs which apply to all the three surface crossings near Water Lane. No road lines are used to highlight the crossing route(s) to drivers and walkers alike. As such, ALL these surface crossings are far too hazardous for group walking, and could only reasonably be used by single walkers who are prepared to almost run across each carriageway of the A31. No way could a family with children, pushchairs, bikes etc ever contemplate crossing.

The only alternative to the proposed DMMO and the current surface A31 crossings, is to use the B43004 Worldham road, continue under the A31 and south-east past the Golf Course, all the way to East Worldham (some 1.3 miles), but there is no pavement and several tight bends and narrow points. Again, fundamentally unsafe. A second alternative is to use the B43004 Worldham road, continue under the A31, turn south on the unofficial track to join Water Lane, but this does not connect to the Hangers Way.

So there is clearly a well-identified and acute need for a safe A31 crossing close to the south of Alton town centre. DMMO 1167 gives Altonians just such a valuable short, safe route to access the countryside south of Alton (including the SDNP etc). To disallow this DMMO on the strength of not denying the landowner a few metres of land adjacent to the A31, and which is already adjacent to a solar farm, is to deny many people of a valuable facility for improving physical and mental health. In the several years I have known about this DMMO and proposed path, the field has not been used for agriculture to my untrained eye.

To summarise, Alton Ramblers is fully in support of this DMMO and the path it thereby creates, since this path provides a valuable and safe means to access the Hangers Way, SDNP and areas south of Alton. No suitable alternatives exist for families or other groups to cross the A31 and gain access.