

Date: 18<sup>th</sup> December 2025

**FAO: Helen Sparks, Planning Inspectorate**

**Re Ref: ROW/3350303 and ROW/3350304**

Dear Ms Sparks,

I am writing in support of Dorset Council's proposed change to connect the currently unused bridleway and footpath via the established permissive path at Chantry Farm. I have used the permissive route regularly over the last 18 months and wish to express why I believe this proposal clearly meets the legal tests of convenience, public enjoyment, and likelihood of use.

Firstly, I would not choose to walk or ride the old bridleway even if it were reopened. Its surface is unstable, narrow, and often carries fast-flowing water, making it hazardous for both walkers and horse riders. The high-sided, sunken nature of the route provides no visibility or passing space, and the access point at C is directly onto a steep blind bend used by farm vehicles and livestock, which is inherently unsafe.

By contrast, the permissive path offers a significantly more pleasant and safer alternative. It is wider, flatter, drier, and far more accessible for a broader range of users, including families, older walkers, and those with reduced mobility. The route through the wildflower field, along the woodland stream, and upwards to rejoin the existing footpath provides beautiful views and a peaceful experience. The surface remains firm year-round and accommodates mixed use comfortably; I have never experienced any difficulty sharing it with horses or other walkers.

The existing footpath through the farmyard is also far from ideal. It is often wet or boggy and passes through a busy working environment with animals, machinery, noise, and activity. Most people seeking a countryside walk want quiet enjoyment and a sense of privacy, which the permissive path successfully provides while sensibly routing the public away from sensitive farm operations.

I have attempted to use sections of the old bridleway and footpath in the past and found both either impassable or unsafe. I would not be likely to use the bridleway even if reopened, as it is essentially a narrow water gully and would remain far less preferable to the permissive alternative.

In every respect, the permissive path is more convenient, more enjoyable, and far more likely to be used by the public. It represents a safe, well-loved, and environmentally considerate solution that benefits walkers, riders, and the land itself. For these reasons, I strongly support this proposal.

Your sincerely,

Alice Wilson