



Mrs. A. Persson,  
Partnership Project Manager,  
Howard of Effingham School,  
Lower Rd,  
Effingham,  
Leatherhead  
KT24 5JR

1<sup>st</sup> February 2018

Dear Mrs. Persson,

**Re. Proposal to apply for a Traffic Regulation Order for the limited closure of Public Footpath 75 during school hours**

Thank you for sharing the school's proposals, dated 30th January, with EFFRA regarding Public Footpath 75 and inviting us to participate in an informal consultation on them.

EFFRA has in its turn consulted with residents who have confirmed this public footpath is both well-used and necessary and is actually most used during the hours the school is proposing its closure.

This public footpath is an essential part of a network of public footpaths that link different parts of the village, as illustrated in the attached map. In particular, it is part of a walking route between the south and north of the village, which goes across the KGV Playing Fields using Public Footpath 119 and then Public Footpath 75 to reach the Lower Road and The Vineries or on via Public Footpath 119A to Effingham and Bookham Commons. This public footpath is used by residents of all ages – including elderly residents without cars walking to The Vineries from the south of the village, young mothers taking their babies to the baby and toddler group at All Saints Church, Little Bookham, other residents using the church and residents walking to the Commons or the KGV for recreation or dog walking. We have been contacted by representatives of all these groups objecting to the proposals. We believe that even a limited closure of this public footpath would represent a serious safety issue to residents and a major inconvenience to them.

The only safe alternative route to public footpath 75 involves a 0.75 mile detour via Public Footpath 118 to Church Street and then along Lower Road. The other shorter alternatives are

either unsafe or impractical. The alternative via Manor House Lane involves walking on a road with no pavements or verges, which at this point is in places too narrow for two vehicles to safely pass each other, and is in consequence very unsafe. An alternative via a permissive footway west of the school has been publically suggested on EFFRA's website <http://www.effinghamresidents.org.uk>. This is a permissive route that could be closed by its owners at any time and the only way of reaching Lower Road from it is via a private road. It is also an uneven surface, is restricted in width and is very secluded making users vulnerable.

We understand that this proposal is part of a wider initiative to increase security at the school. The school's grounds have long been mainly unfenced, but we appreciate that times and policies change. We obviously understand the school's wish to increase its security, but this should not be at the expense of the safety of the general public and its right to use public footpaths in going about its legitimate business. The closure of this important footpath during all school hours also seems to us a disproportionate solution to the school's problem with playing fields that are not in continuous use, especially together, as confirmed in the school's response to the questions from Effingham Parish Council.

We suggest that the school considers further a solution of fencing in the footpath on both sides, with a lockable double gate on each side through for school and vehicular access. Whilst this may cause some minor inconvenience to the school's use of the playing fields it would be a compromise that safeguards the safety of both students and residents. We believe that if the public footpath was fenced in by wire fencing across the school field it would be acceptable to residents as there would be clear sight lines through it. Fencing in by solid fencing would be unacceptable for safety reasons.

We trust that this is helpful to you. EFFRA is happy to work with the school to find an acceptable solution that takes into consideration the security of both the school and residents and continues the lawful use of the public footpath.

Yours sincerely

Vivien White  
EFFRA Chairman

Extract from Surrey County Council's Surrey Interactive Map Showing Public Footpaths in Effingham Village

