



Place Services

Essex County Council
County Hall
Chelmsford
Essex
CM1 1QH

DATE 12th October 2018

Dear Jill

Following my recent visits to examine the condition of Back Lane, Doddinghurst, and Sandpit Lane, South Weald, my findings are set out below.

Back Lane, Doddinghurst

This lane is no longer in use as a route open to vehicular traffic. One end has been blocked by the construction of an earth bank and the insertion of concrete bollards. The other end has been closed by the installation of a locked metal field gate. I understand from my team that the reason that the lane failed the criteria for re-designation as a Protected Lane is because of this change in its status as a road, which meant that it does not meet the required criteria.

However, the historic features that contribute to the lanes heritage significance are largely in good condition. A modern ditch appears to have been dug along much of the lanes length, within its original boundaries, and damage is being caused by the disposal onto the lane of spoil from construction work being carried out on an adjoining property, but it is otherwise largely unaffected by negative impacts.

Sandpit Lane, South Weald

The condition of Sandpit Lane appears to have deteriorated significantly since its original designation as a Protected Lane. Essex Highways have put in physical traffic management measures and signed restrictions at both ends of the lane. Efforts have also been made to repair physical damage to the historic features of the lane (principally roadside banks) by phases of infilling and re-surfacing of erosion scars and pot holes, and the introduction of curbing. Despite these interventions, damage is ongoing, and the management measures that have been used to date have also affected the character of the lane.

ECC Highways

Following my site visits I discussed the above findings with Peter Massie, Head of Highways Commissioning at ECC. Peter informed me that maintenance has recently been carried out to the 'gates' on Sandpit Lane, and as with all Essex roads, Sandpit Lane is subject to regular safety inspections to ensure that it is kept safe for highway users. It does not appear that there are additional measures that can be pragmatically adopted, which would prevent further damage to the lane from occurring.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have a query about any of the above.

Kind regards,

Adrian

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A Gascoyne', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

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