



LONGFORD ESTATES

Estate Office, Longford Castle, Salisbury, SP5 4ED

Tel: 01722 411616

Email: office@longford.org.uk

www.longfordestates.co.uk

Downton Parish Council
c/o Clerk to Downton Parish Council
West View
Slab Lane
Downton
Salisbury
SP5 3PS

Direct Dial: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Ref: DC/DPC

Sent by email: dmace.dpc@outlook.com, cornellbecky@hotmail.com,
janebren555@gmail.com, cbwhall@outlook.com,
clerk@downtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

23 February 2021

Dear Sirs

Proposed Footbridge Across the River Avon at Downton

Lord Radnor has passed me Councillor Brentor's letter dated 19 February 2021 which was in response to my very clear letter dated 22 January 2021 and asked me to respond.

The Estate accept that some of the Parish Council and some of the village will be disappointed by the Estate's decision to retract its agreement in principle but similarly there will be those who will be pleased.

The 'agreement in principle' was provided by the previous agent in a letter dated 16 May 2016. A considerable amount of time has passed, a new agent with a different perspective is in place and having discussed the information that has been made available on the Estate's request a balanced view has been taken. This decision has not been taken lightly and has taken into consideration the farming operation that takes place on the land that would be affected and the impact on the natural environment.

We do not feel our concerns raised in the letter dated 22 January 2021 have been answered satisfactorily by Councillor Brentor's response.

- The cost of maintenance to the bridge, the proposed footpath and fences (that would be required either side of the footpath) in perpetuity is an issue. Councillor Brentor notes that permissive paths remain in the control of the landowner, this is correct but on the basis that the Parish Council will have spent a significant amount of tax payers money on the bridge we envisage the Parish Council would want it open most of the year
- Councillor Brentor's letter makes the point that potential environmental impact on the flora and fauna of the main river and the water meadows is a matter for Natural England, it absolutely is not, it is incumbent on the farmer or land manager of the land in question
- Litter and dog mess are a particular problem where livestock graze or where fodder is produced for winter feed

- The water meadow is home to water voles, an endangered species, this habitat would likely be destroyed by the proposed project. Mitigating measures may be possible which would likely be costly and may not be successful for an infrastructure project which is not essential
- There is a lack of understanding of farming practices and how putting a footpath through the field would impact the management of both livestock and mechanical operations making both unpractical

The Estate is proud of the long and good working relationship it has had with Downton Parish Council. The Estate has provided, enabled and facilitated various functions over the years which include:

- The use of The Boroughs for the annual Cuckoo Fair
- Units for storage at a below market rent
- Land for allotments
- Land for the leisure centre
- Permissive paths
- Kerbing of the most westerly Borough in partnership with the Parish Council

Therefore the Estate reiterate that having reviewed the documentation made available and having consulted with our tenant farmer coupled with the concerns previously listed, the Estate confirms its decision to withdraw its agreement in principle set out in a letter dated 16 May 2016. The Estate will not facilitate a footpath to be created across the water meadows or a bridge structure to be sited on its land.

The Estate trust that the above is now absolutely clear and consider the matter closed.

Yours sincerely



David Canty
Resident Agent

Cc: Will Dickson (by email)