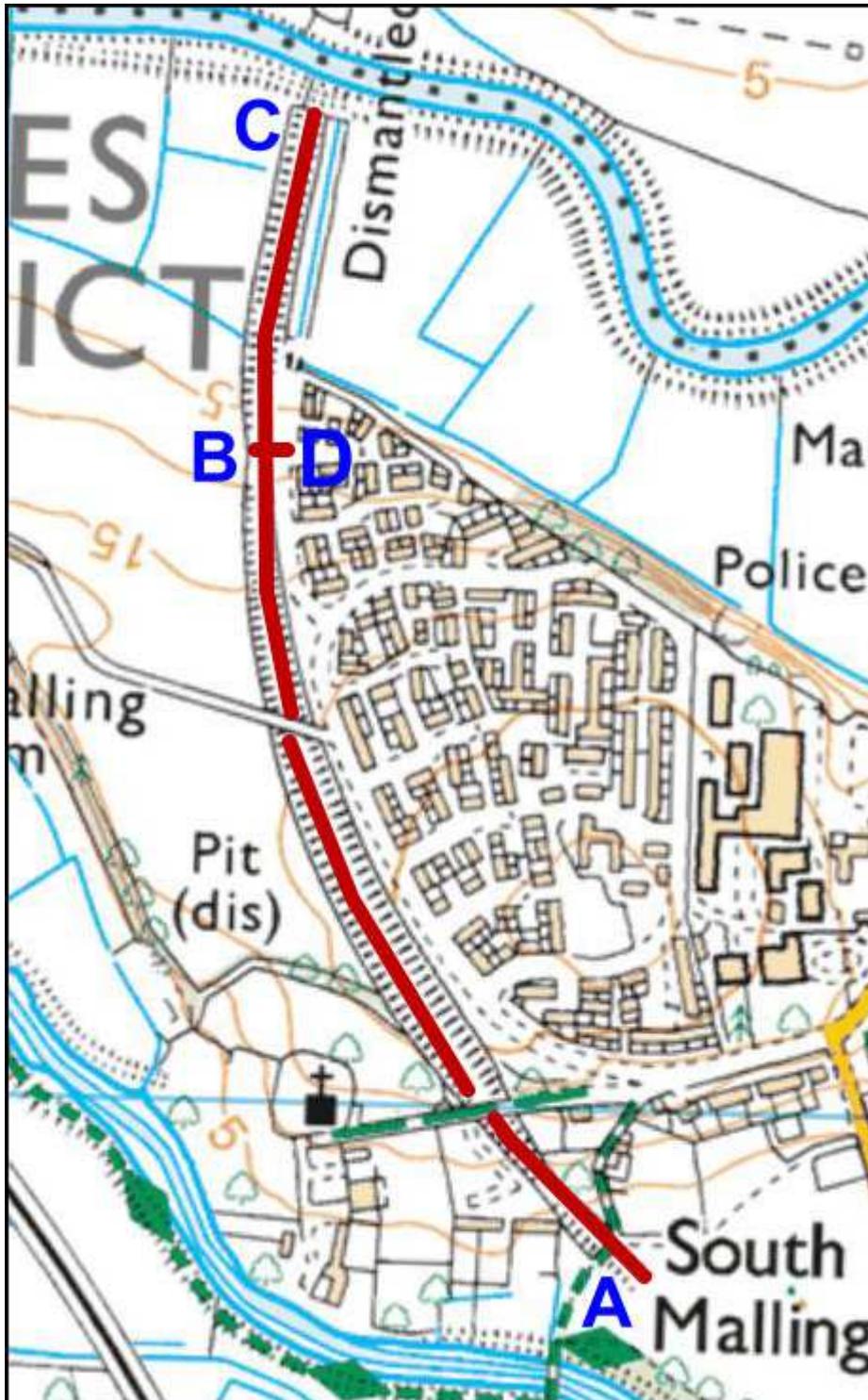


## APPLICANTS STATEMENT

Our reference- Lewes O

## THE APPLICATION ROUTES



This applicant's statement covers two connected applications, Lewes O (1) and Lewes O (2)

Lewes O (1) runs from grid reference 541537 110858 (point A on the map), to grid reference 541220 11120, a junction with Monks Way (point D) via grid reference 541206 111520 (point B)

Lewes O (2) runs from grid reference 541240 111797,(point C) to grid reference 541206 111520 (point B)

The routes are in Lewes Town.

None of it the routes are currently on the definitive map or statement.

Application is being made to add Lewes O (1) as a bridleway with a width of 5 metres.

Application is being made to add Lewes O (2) as a footpath with a width of 2.5 metres.

Application is being made on the basis of recent use by the public as of right.

## **1. THE APPLICATION ROUTES**

1.1.1 The photos in this section were taken in early March 2020 when I walked the route.

1.1.2 The route A-B-C consists of the route of the former double track railway line between Lewes and Uckfield, which was closed in 1969. At some point prior to 1995 the embankment or viaduct south of point A was demolished, probably to create or expand the Malling recreation ground, a flat space of common access. A gradual slope was left from point A was left, presumably to allow access to the old railway line.

1.1.3 In the 1970s an estate of houses was built to the east of the route A-B. A new development is now proposed to the west of point B. The possible threat to the routes from this development has prompted this application. The routes are currently owned by Lewes District Council. The current leader of the Council, Zoe Nicholson, has told me that the Council is prepared to dedicate the routes, but past experience with them not dedicating has made me think it sensible to make these applications. I have not been able to find any bylaws or other rules for the use of the route adopted by the Council.



1.1.4 In the photo above point A can be seen on the right, with the slope and remains of the railway line in the centre. To the left a bridge under the railway can be seen, Footpath Lewes 15c passes under this bridge but there is no direct access to the application route from this path. People wishing to use the application route come from all directions, from Wiley's Bridge to the south, from Tesco in the south-east, from Malling in the east and from other directions. They must cross at least part of the recreation ground.



Picture, the recreation ground from the start of the route. (There is a substantial amount of the recreation ground behind the trees on the left.

1.1.5 It might seem surprising to an outsider that this route is as popular as it is. On the day of my visit there were a large number of footprints across the whole width of the routes. This may have been because people were dodging puddles and fallen branches. The whole width of A-B appears to be in use. There were also cycle tracks and equine hoof prints between A and B, although the numbers of these were far fewer than the footprints.

1.1.6 The attraction of the route is that it is perhaps the few places within the town where you can get a sense of being in nature and away from buildings and vehicles.



Photo- footprints and cycle tracks.



Photo: hoof prints.

1.1.7 Shortly after the crossing of Lewes 15c the route enters a cutting and passes under a bridge carrying bridleway Lewes 34. Shortly before this bridge there is a narrow footpath leaving the route to the east and rising to meet this bridleway. This is clearly used, but is not part of the application route.



Photo above: the point at which a path leaves the main route.



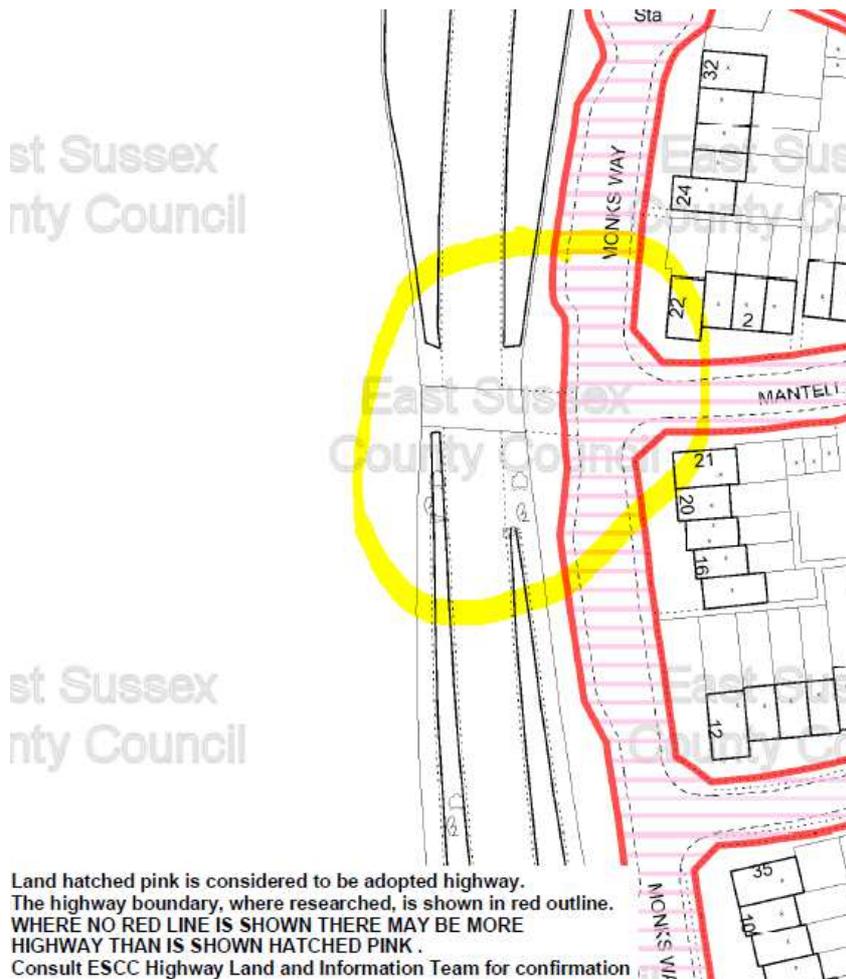
Photo above. The point at which this branch path joins Bridleway 34.

1.1.8 The way then continues in a cutting to point B where there is a gap and the remains of a stile giving access to Monks Way at point D. The stile is clearly not used and may not be identified as such. It could be identified as a seat.

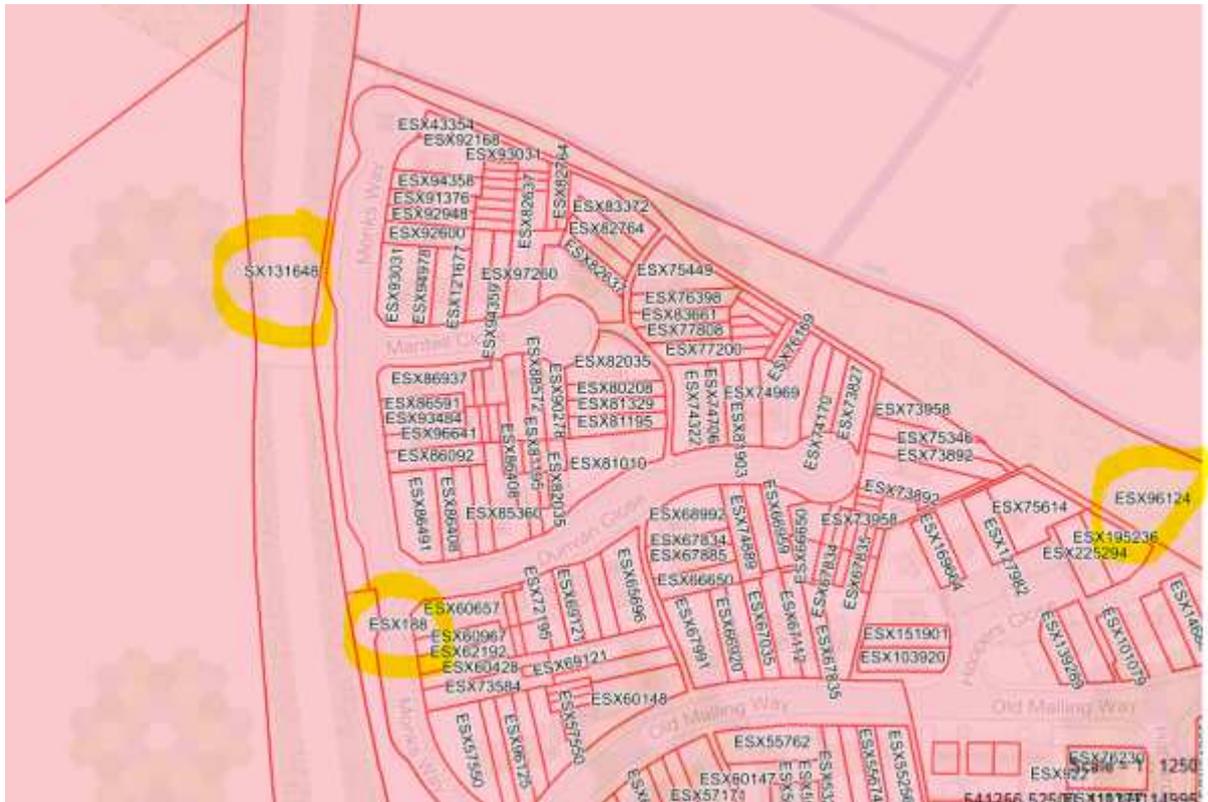


This picture is taken from point B and shows the route to point D, the junction with Monks Way.

1.1.9 A map provided to me by East Sussex Council Highways suggests that only some of the distance between the tarmac and the remains of the stile is part of the highway. See below.



The highway appears to consist of the land parcel registered at the land registry as ESX188. The owner of this land portion is given as B Green. Lewes District Council is shown as the owner of land parcels ESX96124 and SX131648



1.1.10 The picture below is taken just a little north of point B. It shows use of the route towards C by people coming from Monks Way at point B.



1.1.11 The photo below is also taken at point B, this time facing west. You can see that there is a further stile. I am not sure why this stile was put there or by whom. There are no footprints leading up to it. It gives onto private land which is the site of the proposed new development. So anyone travelling from A-B only would have to travel to point D.



1.1.12 North of point B the way narrows but there are clear signs of use on the ground. It terminates at a dead end where fencing prevents any further progress. See the picture below.



1.1.13 There are good views of Hamsey Church, the river and the Ouse Valley at point C, as the photo below shows.



Chris Smith for the Ramblers 20/3/20