

# BROOMFIELD AND KINGSWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

[www.broomfieldandkingswood.org.uk](http://www.broomfieldandkingswood.org.uk)

Chairman:  
Cllr Beth Hendy

## Please reply to:

Mrs S M Wotton  
Clerk - Broomfield & Kingswood PC  
1 Ardenlee Drive  
Maidstone  
Kent ME14 5LU

Tel: 01622 842183  
E-mail: [bandkparishclerk@aol.com](mailto:bandkparishclerk@aol.com)

06 August 2009

**Ref: NATTRAN/SE/S247/80**

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs  
Casework Team  
Citygate  
Gallogate  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne  
NE1 4WH

Dear Sir or Madam,

## **RE: OBJECTIONS TO THE STOPPING UP (CLOSURE) OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY – BEARSTED, KENT.**

I write on behalf of the Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council with regard to the application made by AXA in respect of the Kent International Gateway development and wish to raise objections under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, Section 247, as follows:

- The Parish of Broomfield is mentioned in the Domesday Book and thus for centuries, residents and other members of the local community have walked, ridden, carriage driven, cycled, etc. in and around this quiet, outstandingly beautiful, unspoiled area of the Kent countryside. This Parish is a close neighbour of the Parish of Bearsted, the location of the proposed KIG development, and any associated Stopping Up of Public Rights of Way would greatly and adversely affect local residents' access and enjoyment of the Kent Countryside.
- Parishioners, when enjoying the area in these ways, are often members of walking / rambler groups, cycling / horse / carriage driving clubs and organisations, etc., and are anxious to protect and keep open Public Rights of Way for both their own enjoyment and for generations to come, by being able to freely access our local Countryside, well away from the stresses, noise, pollution and dangers associated with vehicular traffic.
- The Bridleways and Footpaths from the centre of Bearsted (including the Railway Station, Bus service and suitable car parking) provide the only local walking access route to the Kent North Downs and the North Downs Way – a National Trail. The Trail north of Bearsted, between the villages of Detling and Hollingbourne, is a designated National Area of Outstanding Beauty and should be retained as such.
- Affected Bridleways KH81 (in its entirety), KH82 and KH123A (lengths), together with Public Footpath KH131 (diversion), are regularly used by both walkers and horse riders (and have been for centuries, long before the invention of the motor vehicle), and provide direct routes between local places of importance and interest.

- During the construction of the M20 Motorway and the High Speed Railway, these Bridleways were considered important enough to be diverted and an Order for KH123A to be put in place, and an underpass was constructed under the M20 and High Speed Railway line to provide Public access and continuance of use of Footpath KH131.
- The Stopping Up (closure) of these Public Rights of Way would result in an unmoveable barrier between Bearsted and this section of the North Downs, and thus the only access to the Downs would be a detour via Water Lane or Thurnham Lane, these both being unlit, unpaved, narrow, single track country lanes, with rising earth banks and/or hedges on both sides. These lanes are already under heavy pressure from local traffic, including large agricultural vehicles accessing farmland, and any additional use would add further pressure to highway safety and potential danger for users.

For all of the aforementioned reasons, the Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council is totally opposed to the Stopping Up of these centuries old Public Rights of Way.

Yours sincerely,

Susan M Wotton  
Parish Clerk