

**Statement by Paul Evans, Ramblers - Braintree District Footpath Secretary to the BDC
(virtual) Planning Committee meeting on 26 May 2020: PROW & pedestrian matters**

National Planning Policies paragraphs 91, 102 and 110 advocate the provision of layouts that enable, encourage and prioritise walking and cycling *"both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas"*. Braintree policies RLP 49 pedestrian networks and the Local Plan policy LPP 44 Sustainable Transport also seek the provision of safe, accessible, secure and direct pedestrian routes both within new developments and within the wider network.

A. Pedestrian connection through the site is missing

The approved site wide strategy (SWS) plans include a pedestrian footpath connection through the site from Feering public footpath 18, past the two areas of public open space (POS), through the development to the site boundary with Ridgeons / the police houses and potentially on to London Road and the bus stops.

This footpath link is missing in this REM application - except for a short stretch leading to a dead-end at the site boundary between plots 138 and 137/136. **It is requested that the plans are revised to include this link which will encourage walking rather than car usage for short local journeys.**

B. Improved connection with the wider network: re-alignment of footpath 13

The link to Feering public footpath 18 enables pedestrian access to Inworth Road. Feering public footpath 13 continues from Inworth Road to Feering Hill and so to Kelvedon railway station and the facilities in Kelvedon. At present, these footpaths are offset at Inworth Road with no walkable verge along the narrow & busy Inworth Road at this point.

It is requested that public footpath 13 is re-aligned slightly to provide a direct connection across Inworth Road. The re-alignment would be on land owned by Crown Estates who applied for the original outline planning permission for this site. Improving the surface of footpath 13 would also make it a more all-weather route.

C. Lack of safe pedestrian routes through the site & cycle storage

The "Lanes" area of the site, which includes about 75 homes, is not pedestrian friendly. It consists of shared surface roads with no continuous pavements and **NO** street lighting. The area only has 4 visitor parking spaces, so on-street parking is likely to further decrease visibility and hence pedestrian safety.

The refuse and cycle plan has no key but the presumption is that cycles will be stored in back gardens in the majority of cases, as most properties have parking spaces but no garages.