



# MID COTSWOLD TRACKS & TRAILS GROUP

*Helping to improve our tracks and trails ... from this generation to the next ...*

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Standish House Draft Planning Concept Statement

26.04.2015

Mid Cotswold Tracks and Trails Group endorses the need to preserve the particular character of this site and especially welcomes the aspiration to maximise public access to the site through the creation of a network of public routes. The final scheme should seek to create more opportunities for walkers, mobility scooter users, cyclists and horseriders to enjoy the parkland setting in this lovely landscape. The sensitivity to the special nature of the site's flora and fauna is a strong feature of the planning concept statement and should not be underplayed.

Local MCTTG members have walked and ridden through the site over the years and are keen to see such access secured and improved where feasible. The route through the site, now formalised as a bridleway, has long been a boon to local riders and cyclists, affording the opportunity to access the quiet lane to the north and Standish Woods. This provides a good circuit, linking with both the formal bridleways and the permissive tracks in the woods.

MCTTG has been in discussions with local riders and Parish Councils about improvements to the community circuits in this whole area, and has been considering ways to add some links to make more and various lengths and styles of circuits for the benefit of Stonehouse residents and the adjoining villages. The retention of the rights of way at Standish House is an integral part of these circuits, and the addition of any other small links or alternative routes would be of great value.

On a more practical level, MCTTG would point out:

- The gate at the north end of the site does currently require a rider to dismount in order to untie it. This needs attention.
- There is a horse stile there which obviously would need reconsideration, should that entrance be considered for emergency vehicular access, and to facilitate the growing band of Disabled Ramblers, who are effectively obstructed from this route, being unable to negotiate the existing boards with their all-terrain scooters.
- The designation of Horsemarling Lane as the main means of vehicular access is sensible, as the lane to the north of the site is most unsuitable.
- Should the site's redevelopment have to include substantial new housing, measures would need to be taken to shut off unauthorised vehicular access beyond Moreton Hill Care Home, to avoid inappropriate use of the byway, a rough lane leading to Sandpits Lane, which might become a "ratrun" for motorists wishing to avoid Stonehouse traffic on their way to Stroud. The narrow, rutted lane is crossed by both a bridleway and the Cotswold Way and is regularly used by farm vehicles so would be hazardous. Concerns have already been raised by local residents about the vehicular use of this track, possibly by care home staff or those based at the health facility already on the Standish site.

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