

# General Licensing Panel

Report of Head of Corporate Services

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To: Licensing Acts Panel

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## Street naming at Ford Lane, East Hendred

### Recommendation(s)

The Panel is asked to consider the following options:

- (a) Changing part of Ford Lane street name, to Fordy Lane (See Appendix 1). This would affect the addresses of the four properties accessed from the northern section. The four addresses would then match the Fordy Lane street name plate currently installed at the most northern extent of Ford Lane and the street name annotation on Ordnance Survey and Google mapping. However, a change of street name would also involve the change of addresses on personal documents for the four households affected.
- (b) Change the current Fordy Lane street name plate back to Ford Lane and add Access ONLY to Mulberry Cottage, Fordybrook, Brook House and Furlong House (See example Appendix 2).

### Purpose of Report

1. To set out the timeline of events that have led to the confused situation for visitors and delivery drivers accessing properties in Ford Lane East Hendred since the 1996 road closure. The report explains the consequences of changing the street name for part of the street as suggested by Oxfordshire County Council (“OCC”) and how information on the ground such as a street name plate incorrectly informs Ordnance Survey and other location data collectors such as Google Maps. Finally, options to address the confusion through signage is proposed.

### Strategic Objectives

2. This report supports the council’s strategic objective of ‘working in an open and inclusive way’.

## Background

3. In July 1969 Berkshire County Council as the highway authority having recognised the poor alignment of Ford Lane (also known as Fordy Lane) made a Prohibition of Vehicles Order 1969 ("the 1969 Order"), closing Ford Lane (also known as Fordy Lane) to vehicular traffic except for access to frontage properties (Appendix 3). Subsequently, local complaints alleged the 1969 Order was being ignored causing problems for those legally able to use the Ford Lane including children and parents going to and from the Hendreds school.
4. In December 1994 Berkley Homes submitted a planning application EHE/13811/1 (P95/V7631) to the Vale of White Horse District Council ("VWHDC") for the erection of 2 new dwellings in the grounds of a property known as Riduna with access off Ford Lane. OCCC was consulted on the application as a statutory consultee and objected to the application on the grounds of highway safety but stated in their response that if the road was physically closed at a particular point to vehicular traffic with the addition of turning areas the objection would be overcome (See Appendix 4).
5. In February 1995, OCC wrote in response to East Hendred Parish Council regarding the planning proposal indicating their objection to the Ford Lane access and support for the Church Street access. They also confirmed that if "VWHDC" were to install a street name plate bearing the name "Fordy Lane", then this would not affect the existing "1969 Order but that the 1969 Order may require further revision if the alignment of the road was changed (See Appendix 5). This was the first mention of a Fordy Lane street name plate.
6. In March 1995 planning permission was granted for application EHE/13811/1 (P95/V7631) with conditions requiring the provision of a turning bay in Ford Lane and a physical means of preventing vehicular access along Ford Lane in accordance with an approved scheme (See Appendix 6)
7. In seeking to comply with the conditions of the planning permission Berkeley Homes made an application to OCC under Section 117 of the Highways Act 1980 requesting OCC as highway authority to make an application to the Magistrates for an order under 116 of the Highways Act 1980 which would extinguish vehicular rights permanently across a short section of Ford Lane, but without affecting pedestrians, cyclist or horse riders. A report by the OCC County Engineer to the OCC Traffic and Works Sub committee recommended refusal of the application under Section 117 due to the potential for it being refused but in considering the history of the road proposed the promotion of a further traffic prohibition order to reflect the changes to the Lane since the 1969 Order (See Appendix 5).
8. In June 1996 OCC made the (Ford Lane, East Hendred) (Prohibition of Driving) Order 1996 under Sections 1 and 2 of, and Part IV of Schedule 9 to, the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984) closing Ford Lane to through traffic (other than pedal cycles) at a point 150 metres south of the junction with Cat Street. The closure extends southwards from that point for 22 metres and is enforced by the installation of locked bollards (see Appendix 8 and Appendix 9)
9. At some point during the intervening years a street name plate bearing the name Fordy Lane was installed at the northern extent of Ford Lane However a street name plate bearing a different name to the established street name should only be

installed where the street naming and numbering authority has carried out the change under the relevant Act and this has not happened. As the name on a street name plate is relied upon as accurate and evidential and to be relied upon by authorities such as Ordnance Survey and other mapping and navigation companies such as Google Maps its legal basis should be established

10. On 27 March 2023, OCC approached VWHDC querying the extent of Ford Lane and Fordy Lane, of which the street naming and numbering service had no knowledge. After further email exchanges with OCC (See Appendix 10) it became clear that they were seeking the change of street name from Ford Lane to Fordy Lane for the section of street north of the road closure.
11. Under Section 13 of the Oxfordshire Act 1985 the district council may alter a street name for a whole street or part of the street but must first consult via public notices and the serving of those notices on the owners or occupiers of the properties affected by the name change. The consultation was carried out between 12 May and 10 June 2023 (See Appendix 11) and one objection was received (see Appendix 12).
12. On 26 June a further letter was sent to the four properties affected to ensure that the householders understood that a change of street name in their addresses may also mean a change of post code although the four properties at the northern end already have a different post code, so the address change would only affect the street name.

## **Climate and ecological impact implications**

13. There are no climate or ecological impacts arising from this report.

## **Financial Implications**

14. Any council decision that has financial implications must be made with the knowledge of the council's overarching financial position. For Vale, the position reflected in the council's medium-term financial plan (MTFP) as reported to Full Council in February 2022 showed that the council was able to set a balanced budget for 2022/23, but that there is expected to be a budget gap in future years.
1. The cost of a replacement street name plate is £414.07, and this can be met from within the existing service budget.

## **Legal Implications**

2. The power to alter a street name is contained within the Oxfordshire Act 1985. There are no other legal implications arising from this report.

## **Risks**

3. No risks have been identified.

## **Other Implications**

4. There are no other implications arising from this report.

## **Conclusion**

5. The physical division of Ford Lane occurred in 1996 and as far as the district council is aware, since 2012 there have been no complaints by residents regarding confusion between the two ends of Ford Lane - apart from the request earlier in the year from one of the residents in the northern section to correct the street name plate.
6. The least disruptive solution would be to change the Fordy Lane street name plate back to Ford Lane (recommendation b) and add the house names to the sign as in Appendix 2 to make it clearer which properties are accessed from the northern end

## **Background Papers**

- Photo of current street nameplate for Fordy Lane which has been installed without the district council carrying out the change legally under Section 13 of the Oxfordshire Act 1985.
- Extract of current Ordnance Survey Master Map showing the annotation for Fordy Lane which was assumed to be correct due to the existence of the Fordy Lane street name plate.
- Extract of Google Maps showing the annotation for Fordy Lane.