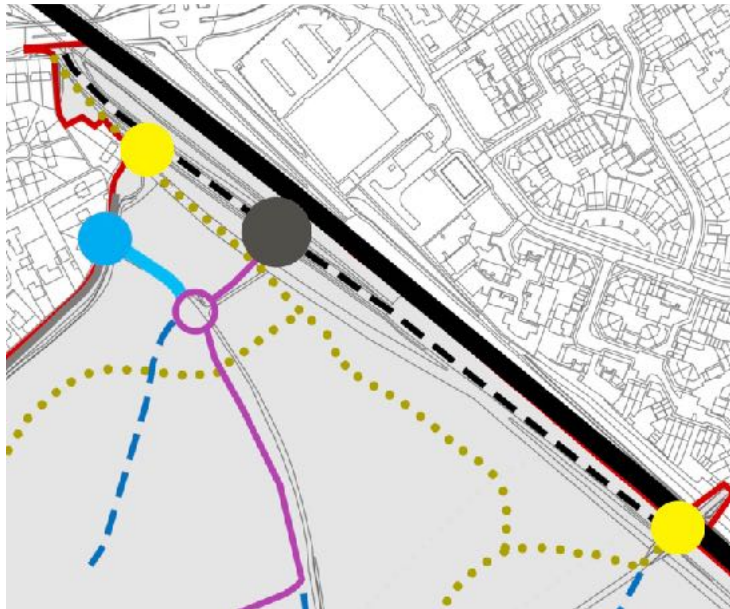


Proposed access points to Thanington Park:

3. Pedestrian and cycle only access

This illustration is a detail copied from BDB Design's access diagram in Pentland Properties Ltd's (PPL) Access and Design Statement October 2015.



The yellow circles indicate pedestrian and cycle only access.

PPL's red lines include areas that will be affected by work on the development, but which are owned by third parties. The site outline on CCC's Consent Notice does not include the red line leading from the blue circle to the yellow circle on the left, or the red line continuing above that yellow circle, or the arrow-shaped red line above the yellow circle on the right.

The Wincheap Society supports enhanced pedestrian and cycling access in Wincheap and Thanington. The two proposed access points to the development site adjacent to the A2 currently exist and improvements to them will benefit the local community.

The development site contains steep gradients. Leaving it down hill by cycle or on foot may be easy; returning up hill will not be so easy.

However, we have concerns about the impact on both of proposed alterations to the A2 northbound off-slip road:

1. The footpath leading from the A28 to the eastern end of Cockerling Road, see our comments in section 1 of this Report on the inadequate width of the bell junction where a third contra lane is planned. If Highways England rejects PPL's amended plans provided in accordance with Annex A as unsafe and/or physically impossible, the east side of the bell junction cannot be widened: there is a 90 degree drop to the A2.



Top left: path entrance from A28

Top right: seen from A28, note house close by.

Left: south towards Cocking Road. The turning at right is towards Ingoldsby Road

Right: arriving at Cockering Road end

If PPL then proposes to widen the bell junction on its west side, this will impinge on the pedestrian path (and may even require demolition of adjacent houses. We believe that the footpath and the grassed area it crosses are owned or controlled by CCC. The grassed area also provides access to pedestrian paths to back various gardens, and to Ingoldsby Road and thence to St Nicholas Road.

2. If Highways England rejects PPL's amended plan for the light-controlled T-junction half way down the slip road or, even if the plan is approved but PPL cannot complete construction of this access point in time to commence development, PPL will look to use other access points for construction traffic.

If St Nicholas Road is rejected for this purpose as a residential estate road, PPL may request that the farmers' underpass come into service - or simply start to use it..

Our concern has been increased by PPL's being enabled to use the farmers' underpass for vehicle access during the first half of 2017. See below for more details. We do not know who enabled this access, which we believe to be an infringement of the provisions of CCC's Decision Notice and Annex A, which set out detailed requirements as to when PPL will allowed to commence work on the development.

Unless prevented people take the most convenient route to get from A to B - particularly if they have used it already. The farmers' underpass can accommodate lorries, and already has done so.



Left: underpass approached from the east, the unpaved section of Birch Road.



Right: approached from the west.

At the date of this Report it appears that neither PPL nor CCC has been minded to identify the third parties who own the land directly under the A2 or the short section of Birch Road east of the underpass before Birch Road becomes paved.



This is the extract of a plan produced by Ward Homes Ltd (now part of Ward Homes Barratt Homes Kent) when developing the St Jacobs Estate 2005/6. The land on Birch Road approaching the farmers underpass approach is shown as being comprised within that estate. The shaded area with trees on the right side is now a public park, ownership of which was passed to CCC when the estate was completed. The heavily shaded strip zigzagging on and off Birch Road is a services easement area.

The parts of the estate that remained after the freehold plots were sold and the pavements and roadways passed to KCC or CCC, as appropriate, are now managed and maintained by Nationspaces Developments Ltd of Giffnock, Glasgow. When spoken to in July 2017, they were interested to learn of PPL's Application, and apparent use by PPL's contractor's vehicles of the underpass by vans, cars and a lorry moving metal huts on to the development site. This exercise including removal of one of two bollards set up at the end of of paved section of Birch Road and of a large stone or concrete block laid across the centre of the underpass to prevent such access. Their spokesman thought that Ward Homes or its holding company might be the current freeholder of the undisposed land.

At the time of writing this Report the ownership of the land directly under the A2 is not know to us. A KCC Highways' executive denies any entitlement to control it. The bollards on Birch Road are fastened in place by padlocks. We are also trying to find out who issued the keys to the padlocks to PPL.



Left: one bollard removed, 6 July 2017 **Right:** vehicles and cabins on site, 6 July 2017.



Left: heavy block from the underpass dumped within the public park boundary.

Right: view back from underpass to the paved, narrow residential Birch Road.

With these barriers to the underpass removed, it can be used by anyone who notices that entry by lorries, cars and motorcycles is no longer impeded. Currently local people walk with their children and dogs along the Birch Road track west of the underpass. Since the heavy block has been removed it is possible, for example, for motorcycle scramblers to access the rough farmland to the west.

Our confidence in PPL is further undermined by certain statements PPL's documents put forward in its Application, which show on-the-ground ignorance of the Thanington site and its surroundings. For example:

Design and Access Statement, BDB Design for PPL October 2015, page 29

The site is connected to Canterbury town centre via the A28 Ashford Road. The National Cycle Route 18 (NCR18) runs along Cockerling Lane linking Tunbridge Wells to Canterbury City Centre, via Ashford and Tenterden. Locally, this route links the proposed site to Canterbury East rail station, the City Centre (via the city wall) and Canterbury West rail station.

No, Route 18 doesn't run along Cockerling Road or anywhere near it. It runs along the north bank the River Stour, and nowhere near Canterbury East Station or the city wall, and is not very easily accessed from the Thanington estate.

The existing highway network provides a good pedestrian and cycle network around the site. The Northern boundary links directly onto Cockerling Road which links into Stranger's Lane and St Nicholas Road, leading in turn to the A28.

The "existing highway network" i.e. the A28, is a cyclists' death trap. See the Wincheap Society's Report on this website, under "Cycle Paths".

Pedestrians leaving the Thanington estate and walking east via the A28 must cross the A2 bridge. Whether on the north or south side of the A28, this involves negotiating a complex and inconvenient cats' cradle of traffic and pedestrian light systems. The proposed contra system down the A2 northbound exit slip road can only render this route more dangerous.

During the public consultation exercise for PPL's Application, it seems that their representatives spoke to a couple of cyclists.

**Addendum to Transport Assessment Peter Brett Associates (PBA) for PPL
November 2015**

6.3 Pedestrian and cycle links between the site and the city centre

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6.3.3 It was clear from the public consultation that a significant number of people use the existing walking and cycling routes into the city and hence these routes are well used. Indeed, two members of the local cycle lobby group confirmed the existing routes are well used, and suggested options for improvement that are referred to in the Transport Assessment. These were especially related to the delivery of interconnections between the existing identified routes.

This hardly comprises a proper survey, but seems to have seeped into KCC Highways thinking, without further substantiation, as the following extract from KCC Highways letter to CCC dated 4th December 2015, re the Application demonstrates:

There are good walking and cycling connections between the proposed development and the City Centre which are well used and thus will be further secured by increased activity. Developers are contributing £100k towards the upgrade and improvement of these connections to encourage sustainable trips from their site, which is welcomed and encouraged.

However, we note with approval that the farmers' underpass is to be improved. We look forward to CCC's enhancement of Public Right of Way CC55 terminating at Hollow Lane close to Birch Road and the farmers' underpass, as stated on CCC's web page showing their plans for future cycle paths in Canterbury.

We consider that providing clear access to the western side of this underpass from Cockering Road would be a positive advantage that PPL's development would provide to the existing residents of the Thanington estate.

To the east of the site, a pedestrian and cycle link comprises the existing A2 farmers underpass forming a connection between the development and the Homersham / Hollow Lane corridors.

The primary school planned for "Thanington Park" is not scheduled for building until after Commencement, as this is defined in the s.106 Agreement. At this date, Commencement seems a long way off. In the meantime, children and accompanying adults walking to and from the Wincheap Foundation Primary school via the underpass would no longer need to run the gauntlet of the A28 bridge over the A2.



All the more reason to prevent anyone on or in a motorised vehicle from forming a habit of using it, starting now.

Public Right of Way CC59

An existing PRow (CC59/ CB490) crosses through the centre of the site, linking New House Lane with Cockering Road. This will be retained and enhanced. An existing bridleway to the west of the site runs through Larkey Valley Wood, accessed from Cockering Road.

PPL intend to upgrade CC59 within the site to a cycle path, and to enhance a bridle path. The fairly flat Cockering Road entrance to CC59 lies to the left of the house fence shown in the photograph below. The path rises and falls between 10 - 15 metres before arriving New House Lane. The track CB490 terminates at its junction with the track CB491, CB491 runs south-west to north-east parallel with New House Lane.

