

History of consultations on proposed boundary changes

1.1 Green Ridge was included within the proposed South Downs National Park in 2001 (Public Consultation) but proposed for deletion together with Coney Hill in 2002 (Local Authority Consultation) when the proposed boundary was redrawn to run along the northern boundary of the A27 at this point. When the pre Inquiry report, *'The boundary and the reasoning for it'* was published in January 2003 – for consideration at the Public Inquiry, Green Ridge was included in the proposed South Downs National Park (pSDNP) but part of the embankments between it and the rest of the proposed South Downs National Park were excluded from the windmill to the Dyke Road junction.

1.2 Following the Public Inquiry in 2003, in the Inspector's first report, he stated that:

'For reasons that I do not fully appreciate, the Agency has decided to include a narrow strip of land at Green Ridge south of the A27 but not the intervening road/embankment area. This seems to me to be contrary to the usual approach to the inclusion or otherwise of the A27's associated embankments. In practice it means that the Highway and associated land west of the footbridge over the A27 at Windmill Road is excluded from the pSDNP, whereas the length to the east is included as part of the sweep of landscape leading to the summit of Coney Hill. I find this arrangement difficult to understand and it creates an awkward and convoluted boundary.'

The situation could be avoided by adopting the boundary promoted by the South Downs Campaign, in effect by including all of the land north of Green Ridge in the pSDNP. Another option would be to exclude the narrow strip of land north of Green Ridge as well as the adjoining A27 and its embankments. Either option is to my mind preferable to the Designation Order boundary.'

1.3 In the event the Inspector chose to include all of the embankments and land at Green Ridge within the pSDNP boundary and included them with Toads' Hole Valley as 'addition 23'. He added a caveat that :

'..if Toads' Hole Valley is left out of the pSDNP, it would seem to me that the boundary should run along the northern edge of the A27 and thus exclude all of the land north of Green Ridge.'

In doing this the inspector may have unwittingly set up a link between Toad's Hole Valley and Green Ridge whereas he had intended to set up a logical connection between including Green Ridge together with the narrow area of land between it and Mill Road and the A27 embankments, so that the whole area of land was either in or out of the Park to form a logical boundary.

1.4 The reopened Inquiry reconsidered the inclusion of Toads' Hole Valley following an objection from its owners and it has now been removed from the intended SDNP. However the proposed Toads' Hole 'addition 23' was included the

unrelated Mill Road and eastern embankments adjacent to Green Ridge - although these formed no part of any objection and presumably it was just cartographically convenient to add them in to addition 23.

- 1.5 Following the exclusion of Toads' Hole Valley, the exclusion of the embankments that formed part of the addition 23, returned the land at Green Ridge to the situation where it was a finger surrounded on three sides by non SDNP land – which as can be seen from his first report, above, the Inspector regarded as an unsatisfactory situation. Rather than redraw the map to include the embankments alongside the western end of Mill Road as well as those at the eastern end which are in the intended SDNP, Green Ridge was excluded although no clear reason was given for its exclusion. There is no logical reason for treating the embankments differently from those lower down Mill Road.