

In an inquiry relating to:

**Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
Section 53**

**City Council of Bristol Definitive Map and Statement
Modification Order No.7 2024**

Planning inspectorate reference:	ROW/3363939
Applicant:	Mr Alan William Preece
Order Making Authority:	Bristol City Council
Date of Inquiry:	6 October 2026

PROOF OF EVIDENCE

OF

ANDREW ACKLAND

Dated **5** September 2026

Proof of Evidence

I, **ANDREW ACKLAND**, of [REDACTED] Woodward Close, Claygate, Surrey KT10 0EG write this proof of evidence in support of Professor Alan Preece's application that The City Council of Bristol Definitive Map and Statement Modification Order (No. 7) 2024 should be confirmed.

1. My family lived at [REDACTED] Cheyne Road from 1960 onwards when I would have been one year old. My mother (Valentine Ackland, who provided evidence of her use of the routes from Cheyne Road to Shirehampton Road (the Green route), and Cheyne Road to Druid Hill (the Blue route) from 1960) used to take me with her as a young child. I started using the routes independently as a young boy approximately 7-10 years old (1966 onwards) with my friends.

Use of the Green Route

2. I will first talk about my use of the Green route (Cheyne Road to Shirehampton Road, F-G-E-D-C on the Order Plan).
3. I would describe the orientation of the Green Route as the most convenient direct line between the entrance to Stoke Lodge at the top of Cheyne Road (G) and the exit gate onto Shirehampton Road (C). I recall the fields could be quite muddy, especially during winter and the wetter seasons and if so it was generally the easiest direct route to cross to point E and get onto the path surrounding Stoke Lodge House, which I believe was initially gravel and subsequently tarmac.
4. One of my great friends was [REDACTED] the son of [REDACTED] the local GP whose Surgery was at [REDACTED] Shirehampton Road. I met up with [REDACTED] regularly, using the Green Route to cross to his house 4-7 times a week between roughly 1971 and 1978, whilst we attended Bristol Grammar School together and Stoke Bishop Scout Group. We also played a lot of tennis at local courts and generally mixed with the same group of local friends. I also used this route from time to time to go to the bus stop situated on Shirehampton Road, which although not the closest, meant I could meet [REDACTED] there and travel together as the stop was nearest to his house. I used this route to go to and from school (Bristol Grammar School) and generally just taking the bus into central Bristol.

5. As teenagers during the Spring and Summer, [REDACTED] and I played a lot of tennis together, both at the Smelting ground courts on Shirehampton Road (now the Queens Gate housing development) using the Green route, and at the Clifton High School courts at the top of Druid Hill using the Blue route (F-G-B-A on the Order Plan). This would have been during roughly 1973 to 1978 and during Spring/Summer I would have used either the Blue or Green Route to get to the tennis courts roughly 2-4 times per week.
6. During the 1960's and 70's I used the entrance to Stoke Lodge on Shirehampton Road a great deal for the reasons above, day and night. I don't recall ever encountering any obstruction blocking my way at the entrance.
7. As a young boy and teenager (approx 1966 - 1978), I walked everywhere in and around Stoke Bishop and regularly used Stoke Lodge as part of my route. I went to University in 1978 but continued to use the routes during University holidays (1978 - 1981) and post-University when visiting my parents at [REDACTED] Cheyne Road, mainly for walking the family dogs or just walking with my mother. Our most regular route when walking during this period was the Green route. We then either walked up around the top of the field past point A and back around the edge of the field to point I and finally, back home on the yellow route via I-G-F. Or we walked part of the red and yellow routes from E-B and I-G-F. From 1978-1981 I walked these routes approximately 2-4 times a week during University holidays. Post 1981, I would return to visit my parents roughly every two months, so around 6 times a year and walk these routes.

Use of other routes

8. I also used the route from Cheyne Road to Druid Hill (the Blue route, F-G-B-A on the Order Plan) when going from my home at [REDACTED] Cheyne Road to visit friends in Stoke Bishop, to visit my grandparents who lived in Sunnyside cottage on Druid Hill, and to go to Scouts on a Thursday evening in Kewstoke Road and church functions at St Mary's. I visited my grandparents at least once or twice a week, more so from around 1973-1978 when I cut their lawns and did gardening to earn pocket money. As written above, as a teenager I regularly played tennis on the old Clifton High School tennis courts at the top of Druid Hill and would use the Blue route to get there.

9. Although my user evidence form focused on use of the Green and Blue routes, I also made use of the other routes applied for (the Yellow and Red routes).
10. I used the route from Cheyne Road to West Dene (the Yellow route, F-G-I-H on the Order Plan) to walk from my home at [REDACTED] Cheyne Road to visit friends who lived in that direction (eg. [REDACTED]). As a teenager, as well as at the Smelting ground courts and the Clifton High School courts I also played tennis at the University sports ground at the end of West Dene on Coombe Lane and used the Yellow route to get there. My use of the University tennis courts was less frequent as they were often busy, perhaps 2-3 times a month during Summer and Spring.
11. I also sometimes used the route from Shirehampton Road to West Dene (the Red route, C-D-E-B-I-H on the Order Plan) – mainly when walking the dogs or crossing Stoke Lodge with friends, but also visiting friends, going to Stoke Lane shops, attending my dentist in Parry's Lane or just that general area.

General

12. I used one or more of these routes almost every day between 1966-1978. As a young boy with access to 'The Playing Fields' from the top of Cheyne Road, I was up there all the time from approximately 1966/67 to when I left Bristol to go to University in 1978 and more than once a day on some days if for example I walked the dogs, went to my grandparents and then went to Scouts or visit friends in the evening. My father and mother continued to live in the family home until their deaths in 2013 and 2023 respectively so my use continued up to August 2023 whenever I visited them which would have been roughly 6 times per year up until 2013 when my father died and more than double that from 2013-2023 when my mother lived on her own and became more needy of our assistance.
13. I remember seeing football teams having a match on the lower half (North West) of Stoke Lodge towards Cheyne Road on Saturday mornings. I also saw teams playing cricket in the summer in the upper half (South East) of Stoke Lodge near to the changing rooms. If teams were playing a match of cricket during the summer, perhaps once a week, or football on a Saturday morning, we would obviously make a diversion around the pitch, especially if we were walking a dog (to avoid the dog running onto the

pitch). Diverting around the football pitches whilst teams were playing mainly affected the Green route from points G-E.

14. During 1966 -1978 I not aware of any notices saying private or that I could not use Stoke Lodge, nor did I become aware of any in later years. We were never challenged by groundsmen or anyone else asking us not to be there. I also never witnessed a groundsman or anyone else telling other people they could not use Stoke Lodge.
15. None of the entrances on Shirehampton Road, Parry's Lane or West Dene were blocked or obstructed in any other way and any gates were always left open.
16. I regularly saw many other people using all four routes on the Order Plan including dog walkers. I never sought or received permission from anyone to use the routes.

SUMMARY

17. In summary, if I exclude the period of use with my mother when I was a young child (see paragraph 1), I have independently used the following Routes over the following periods:
 - Blue route: 1966/67 to 2023
 - Red route: 1966/67 to 2023
 - Green route: 1966/67 to 2023
 - Yellow route: 1966/67 to 2023

Statement of Truth

I believe that the facts stated in this proof of evidence are true. I understand that proceedings for contempt of court may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth

Signed: 

ANDREW ACKLAND

Dated: 5 Sept 2026