



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr. Steve Evans
Director of Environment and community Services
South Gloucestershire Council
PO Box 299, Civic Centre
High Street
Kingswood
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28th July 2015

WOODLANDS FARM

Dear Steve,

I am writing this letter as part of my application to the Designated Local Green Space public consultation.

Woodlands Farm, in Coalpit Heath, provides an important rural element of the local environment, with its open and attractive terrain and beautiful mature trees set in a distinctive dry valley.

Families have moved to this area because it is a pleasant place to live which retains a village atmosphere surrounded by green open space. It forms a part of what is known as the 'horseshoe' of open land and is bounded by Frampton Cotterell, Coalpit Heath and Winterbourne.

Having green open space provides the community with a sense of place and belonging, opportunities for recreation, health and fitness, and other local events that reinforce social cohesion.

The site is of major historical importance, as it was the farm where children's author Dick King-Smith lived and worked and inspired some of his famous works and his books are still read by school children in the area. The public footpath that passes through the centre of Woodlands Farm allows walkers to enjoy the advantages of the high quality landscape and current crops and provides access to many other paths, including Dramway and the Community Forest Path.

It is a flat level path, which is an important factor for the less physically able. The peripheral paths allow many dog walkers to exercise in countryside surroundings near their homes and there have been numerous reports of a variety of wildlife that inhabit the hedges and other cover on the land and is also popular with horse riders. The land also has different varieties of flora and fauna, among other unique wildlife. Inability to secure this land would be a massive loss to the natural environment in both this and the surrounding areas.



The surrounding area is already becoming very built up and this is one of the few remaining green open spaces. Residents have emphasised time and again that further large scale development on this site would completely destroy the existing enjoyable character of the village and would create another featureless suburban sprawl.

One of the benefits of designating the land as green space is to ensure the long term health benefits to the local population.

Access to good-quality and well maintained urban green spaces is known to promote physical activity, positive mental wellbeing and healthy childhood development.

Research by the University of Exeter has found that people who move to areas with green space benefit from sustained and long term improved mental health.

It would also ensure that there is a safe green space for children to play in, whereby they become more physically active and lower their risk of developing long term health problems such as diabetes or suffering from obesity. Outdoor activity also encourages healthy brain development and promotes the idea of healthy wellbeing into adulthood.

Back in 2013, a planning application by Barratt Homes was rejected by the council on the recommendation of officers that building the 330 proposed homes would impact too heavily on the natural landscape and that Woodlands Farm is outside the settlement boundary of both Coalpit Heath and Frampton Cotterell.

The council has already once before agreed to block any development on the site because of its importance and value, so the designation of the site would secure its long term future.

The site has not been included in South Gloucestershire Council's Core Strategy, which means there should be no reason why it cannot be considered for Local Designated Green Space status.

Yours sincerely,

LUKE HALL MP