
From: Bob Donaldson [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 December 2020 23:20
To: Bob Donaldson [REDACTED]
Subject: SODC LP2035 - Appeal

Dear SODC Councillor,

John Milton, while staying at the manor house at Forest Hill (which overlooks the field known as Bayswater Farm Field (BFF) in SODC LP2035) was inspired to write the following verse:

Forest Hill

To hear the lark begin his flight,
And, singing, startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good morrow,
Through the sweet-brier or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine!
While the cock, with lively din,
Scatters the rear of darkness thin;
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerily rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Some time walking not unseen,
By hedge-row elms on hillocks green,
Right against the eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state,
Robed in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
W'histles o'er the furrowed land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landskip round it measures;
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast

The labouring clouds do often rest!
Meadows trim with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide:
Towers and battlements it sees
Bosomed high in tufted trees,
Where perhaps some beauty lies,
The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.

John Milton, 1643

Thankfully, due to the foresight and wisdom of our forefathers and a long line of councillors and landowners over the best part of four centuries, that view may still be enjoyed to this day.

The site was rejected for development on three previous occasions, each cited below:

- 14/12/1961 Oxon County Council Planning Refusal of Permission to Build: "It would be detrimental to the amenities of the locality and this rural landscape and amenities of the locality."
- 12/2/1973 Oxon County Planning Refusal of permission to build. The proposed site of the field east of the Bayswater farmhouse is in an area of great landscape value and within an area under the National Parks & Access to the Country Side Act 1949, it is designated as one of outstanding natural beauty and the development would be detrimental to the amenities of the locality and the rural landscape."
- 12/2/1973 Oxon County Planning Refusal of permission to build: "The site has a pleasant undulating appearance with views extending beyond the appeal boundary. The number of people who regularly use the attractive bridle path and benefit from this view is unknown, but there is an unquantifiable loss of amenity."
- 26/9/1989 SODC Refusal of Planning Permission "This site is not allocated for housing and would undesirably extend the limits of Sandhills into the attractive open countryside adjacent to Bayswater Brook in an area of great landscape value - we will seek to conserve and enhance the quality of the landscape and protect it from development of this site for residential purposes that would have a serious effect on the character and appearance. This large scale development would be contrary to green belt policy and there is no justification for an extension of residential development beyond the clearly defined limits of Sandhills into the attractive open countryside beyond."

As I wrote in my hearing statement: "I frequently walk along the bridleway [that would be dissected by an access road to the site and, if permission is granted, by a northern relief road], and marvel at the beauty of the BFF meadow and the coppice of trees that screens the gentle waters of the Bayswater Brook. Only yesterday I watched in awe as the farmers gathered another seasons hay from the meadow – as they have done so for the past 30-years since I moved to Sandhills and which they have done for generations. The loss of this amenity, would be contrary to para 98 of the NPPF, which asserts that "*Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access*". I would not be doing my duty as a resident to seek to protect this amenity for future generations."

This week, as councillors did in 1961, 1973 and 1989, it is your turn to vote whether to build over this idyllic English landscape - or to save it. What will you choose?

They say a picture is worth more than a thousand words. I leave you with two photographs of the meadow in question facing towards Forest Hill.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Donaldson



Pictures attached to this email:

