

From: Planning LDF
Sent: 24 July 2017 18:21
To: Planning Policy
Subject: FW: Policies,Sites and Places Plan Main Modifications Consultation (June 2017) Elm Park Playing Fields Map 70

From: Helen Johnson
Sent: Monday, July 24, 2017 6:20:44 PM (UTC+00:00) Dublin, Edinburgh, Lisbon, London
To: Planning LDF
Subject: Policies,Sites and Places Plan Main Modifications Consultation (June 2017) Elm Park Playing Fields Map 70

I refer to the above Consultation and strongly pose a number of considerations that indicate the green space designation should not be taken from the area of Elm Park shown on the map.

Potential Road Widening

It is clear correspondence between my colleague [REDACTED] Chair of Filton Community Garden and your department and further information from Councillor Roger Hutchinson that the reason for this proposed reclassification is for the potential widening of the A4174.

South Gloucestershire Council widened this road only a few years ago and as a result there has been little effect on the traffic flow. Widening the road further at this point will not change the fact that there are bottlenecks by the roundabout and their exits at the top end and by the railway bridge road narrowing at the bottom end. An opportunity to ease traffic flow in my mind was lost following a recent study to allow two way traffic across Filton Avenue at the King George junction. This was dismissed by South Gloucestershire Council with little explanation why.

I imagine at this stage no survey or deeper thought has been made other than earmarking the space for the future. A survey would through up a multitude of reasons why the green space designation should not be lifted from this portion of the park. Not least would be the loss of valuable and cherished amenities that benefit the people of Filton's health and well being as well as contribute to the cohesion of the community.

Filton Community Garden

The land grab area includes a third of the Community Garden. The Garden was created in 2013 and is maintained and managed by a group of dedicated volunteers who in the last 12 months spent 3,500 unpaid hours working tirelessly on the garden for the benefit of the community. The garden is regularly assessed by the RHS and has been awarded its highest mark of outstanding in each of the last three years and has been described as one of the best of its type. To lose a third of the garden would be devastating and question whether it would be viable to continue as the area lost contains many irreplaceable features.

- 20 mature trees including a copse of silver birch trees planted by Filton Girl Guides Group 35 years ago, this part of the history of Filton which would be lost forever.
- A wood carving commissioned by the Garden Committee from renowned artist [REDACTED] which used a cherry tree stump. The carving has an owl at the top, and hedgehog below and such is its magnificence we have visitors from far and wide come to see it. Incorporated in the tree is a fairy experience which the children adore, this would be lost forever.
- A war memorial where an annual remembrance service is held.
- A particular elm tree planted in 2013 as part of The Great British Elm Experiment which is surveyed annually and data sent to researchers who are monitoring the 'disease free' genus.
- Three rose beds in the garden planted in remembrance of South Gloucestershire Councillor [REDACTED] one of these beds would go as would a newly planted orchard of 9 fruit tree planted by our three local schools, they were going to be part of the future history of Filton.
- A shrub border adjacent to the A4174 which was planted as part of an environmental initiative by Wessex Water to take away some of the pollution produced by traffic using the road.

These above would all be lost but the portion land left would not be sustainable as a garden so you could say this whole 'award winning garden is in jeopardy. It includes school gardens beds, herbaceous borders, a rockery, a bee conservation area, rose gardens, seating, a bug hotel, a fernery and a wildflower meadow.

Boules Piste

Filton has a well established Boules Piste, one of only a few in South Gloucestershire, the club are part of a league and play many matches on the Piste and also arrange open days. The Piste will be lost the club will fold and Filton and South Gloucestershire will lose another recreational facility.

Cycle Speedway Track and Outdoor Fitness Centre

The Cycle Speedway track is known by cyclists as one of the best constructed in the country. This now also includes an outdoor fitness facility. The cost of this facility when built was in excess of [REDACTED]

Skateboard Park

Filton Skateboard park is one of the best designed parks in South Gloucestershire and beyond. It is an absolutely hive of activity from dawn to dusk. Youths and young children so often bear the brunt of criticism for sitting indoors on computers or hanging around on street corners. This facility combats all those things to lose it would be a travesty and a retrograde step, the children of today are the adults of tomorrow, they will have long memories of when South Gloucestershire Council robbed them of a facility through its own failings to manage its' highway network.

Elm Park

Apart from the above Elm Park will lose in excess of 200 mature trees as well as hedgerow which grows the length of the proposed undesignated area. These trees and hedges support all forms of wildlife, birds, bees, other insects, squirrels and many more, the whole ecology of the area will be upset. Trees and hedges are the lungs of the world eating up pollution especially next to a major highway, they are irreplaceable. And of course any widening of the road would put it dangerously close to the large children's play area endangering the health and well being of our children.

The South Glos Consultation process

I receive consultations by email because I showed an interest in certain areas of planning etc. I opened this one and being faced with a whole page of links and documents, and in a language which is practically double dutch, I opted to look at the map and on searching for 'Filton' came across the slice of land cutting through all the amenities we have in Elm Park.

Our councillors both at Town Council and Local Authority level were unaware of it. How on earth do you expect to have a fair response when it is so deeply hidden in the documents (that is if you even receive them to have a look).

Being online, excludes many of our community as you know we have many retired here who are not internet savvy. Though you would say they could go up to Patchway one-stop shop to look for consultations, do you really think this is accessible and an easy thing for people to do.

I implore you to examine your methods for at the moment you are NOT being transparent and NOT being democratic.

Helen Johnson

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]