

**Policies, Sites and Places Plan Main Modifications**  
**Consultation (June 2017) Elm Park Playing Fields Map**  
**70**

Dear [REDACTED]

I refer to the above Consultation.

I am the Chair of Filton Community Garden which is located on land which you are considering taking out of the Green Space Designation. To make it clear I represent the Community Garden Committee and the 235 signatories to the attached petition.

**Consultation**

Firstly I would like to make some comments on the manner in which this consultation has been conducted. A member of my committee found this consultation quite by chance when looking through the South Gloucestershire Council website. Even after finding the consultation it took a considerable amount of effort to find that it affected Elm Park.

When advised of the consultation I contacted the land owners Filton Town Council who advised that they had not been approached by South Gloucestershire Council and therefore had no idea this consultation was out for responses.

On contacting our three South Gloucestershire Councillors again I was told that they had not been advised of the consultation.

In my view the manner of which South Gloucestershire Council manages its' consultations is flawed. How do you expect responses to consultations if you do not make people aware of their existence, do you not have a duty morally or legally to advise landowners that you conducting consultations regarding their assets. One of the ways of advising residents of such consultations is through our Ward Councillors however if your systems mean that they are not part of the process and therefore are not on the to be advised list then how are residents to know.

All this leads me to conclusion that South Gloucestershire are burying these consultations and other matters in the depths of their website because they do not want responses they just want to tick a box, move on, do what they want and treat residents with contempt.

South Gloucestershire need to ensure residents are advised about consultations and indeed any matter which involves and concerns them. There are many ways of doing this, through ward Councillors, advertising in public buildings, on notice boards, or direct contact. South Gloucestershire Council should represent all residents not the convenient and selected few.

Furthermore the manner in which conduct these consultations through online submissions exclude a large section of the electorate mainly but not exclusively the elderly many of whom have no access to the Internet. I believe this is a major flaw in your system which needs addressing all residents should be able to input into consultations. South Gloucestershire Council use online consultations because it is easier to administrate, this is unacceptable, all residents pay their Council Tax and should be treated equally, I do,not believe the method you are using would satisfy a legal challenge.

## **Potential Road Widening**

It is clear from the correspondence I have had with your department and further information from Councillor Roger Hutchinson that the reason for this proposed reclassification is for the potential widening of the A4174.

It is only a few years ago that South Gloucestershire Council widened this road which has had little effect on the traffic flow. The problem with this stretch of road is obvious to anyone who uses it and that is that at both ends there are roundabouts which do not assist the free flow of traffic which is also impeded by the liberal use of traffic lights. South Gloucestershire had a very good opportunity to ease the flow of traffic following a recent study to allow two way traffic across Filton Avenue at the King George junction. This was dismissed by South Gloucestershire Council for the weakest of reasons because it did not suit there flawed strategy. The trouble with the roads around Filton are man made they are the product of inefficient and amateurish traffic management by South Gloucestershire Council.

## **Impact of Road Widening Scheme**

I would be really interested to know if South Gloucestershire Council Council have actually surveyed this site and assessed the devastating affect to this area should this strip of land be taken out of the ownership of Filton Town Council and used for another flawed highway scheme. Listed below are the assets and amenities which will be lost.

## **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. The area has many mature trees and in particular a copse of silver birch trees planted by Filton Girl Guides Group some 35 years ago, this part of the history of Filton which would be lost forever. The Garden Committee recently commissioned a wood carving using an old cherry tree. 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. We have a war memorial in the garden where an annual remembrance service is held, once again irreplaceable and lost forever. You may be aware that Elm trees have suffered badly in recent years from disease, scientists and Horticulturists are working to produce a disease free strain. The Community Garden are part of the experiment and planted a new potentially disease free elm tree in 2013 which we regularly monitor and feed information back, this tree would be lost forever and valuable information lost. We have three Rose Beds in the garden planted in remembrance of South Gloucestershire Councillor Doug Daniels, 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 now destined to be tarmaced over. We would also lose about 20 mature trees and 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. The above are things we would definitely lose if a road widening scheme went ahead, as I said the garden would not be sustainable without this area so Filton and South Gloucestershire would lose a fantastic garden containing school gardens, herbaceous borders, rockery, bee conservation area, rose gardens, seating, bug hotel, fernery, in my view tarmacking over such a beautiful site would be an act of vandalism.

### **Boules Court**

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**

Filton has as far as I am aware the only Cycle Speedway track in the Former Avon County Council area. This now also includes an outdoor fitness facility. The cost of this facility when built was in excess of ██████████ once again this will be lost, a unitary authority which actively encourages health and well being will rob residents of facility and failed by South Gloucestershire.

## **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 my 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.

To close, any widening of the A4174 is totally unacceptable to the residents of Filton who have signed the attached petition, we are proud of the area we live and will not tolerate South Gloucestershire Council unnecessary meddling just to satisfy the motoring lobby.

Filton

South Gloucestershire Council		Map Ref:	LGSD092
Modifications		Ward:	Filton Ward
		Site Name:	Elm Park
Description:		LGSD092	
Horizontal Lines	Area Removed		
Cross Hatch	Area Added		



NOT TO SCALE

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NORTH



We have received a Petition containing 235 signatures which relates to the following:

Petition against South Gloucestershire Council's Proposal to change the current Designation of the whole of Elm Park Playing Field as a Green Space by removing a strip of land from the Designation adjacent to the A4174 containing part of the Community Garden, Boules Court, Cycle Speedway and Skateboard Park the purpose of which is to prepare for the widening of the A4174 at a future date.

**As a response from Mr Mikkelson South Gloucestershire Council also received two petitions outlined below. These petitions relate to LGSD092 and Main Modification MM30:**

**Petition One: This was a hard copy petition**

Petition against South Gloucestershire Council's proposal to change the current designation of the whole of Elm Park Playing Field as a green space by removing a strip of land from the designation adjacent to the A4174 containing part of the Community Garden, Boules Court, Cycle Speedway and Skateboard Park the purpose of which is to prepare for the widening of the A4174 at a future date.

**The petition received 235 signatures on 15/07/2017**

**Petition Two: This was an online petition and can be found at:**

<https://www.change.org/p/south-gloucestershire-council-save-elm-park-filton>

Petitioning - Consultations: Policies, Sites and Places Plan - Main Modifications consultation (June 2017) South Gloucestershire Council.

Save Elm Park Filton

Are you a user of Elm Park, Filton and do you value the green space in our community and do you want this to continue in its entirety into the future? There is a danger that a strip of land, crucial to the recreational services provided by Filton Town Council may lose its 'green space designation' as a result of a current South Gloucestershire Council consultation, we are told this is in anticipation of future widening of the A4174.

The areas affected are 1/3 of the Community Garden, the Boules Piste, part of the cycle speedway and the whole of the skateboard park. Many mature trees would be lost and in the Community Garden, the recently planted orchard, some of the rose garden, the owl sculpture and the elm tree which is part of a national study.

[See the affected area on a map](#) and scroll to page 70.

The consultation on [changing the designation of green spaces](#) is buried in South Gloucestershire's website and does not explain very well how you respond.

The land grab, by way of compulsory purchase, may not happen in the short term but we need to act now and let South Gloucestershire Council know that we don't want them to take part of our park away. It is our duty to protect green space for future generations. If you agree please sign this petition.

Filton Community Garden will respond to the consultation by the closing date 24 July. We urge you to also make your feelings known about this issue by email to: [PlanningPolicy@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:PlanningPolicy@southglos.gov.uk) with the title Policies, Sites and Places Plan Main Modifications Consultation (June 2017) Elm Park Playing Fields, Map 70.

**This petition will be delivered to:**

- **Consultations: Policies, Sites and Places Plan - Main Modifications consultation (June 2017)**  
South Gloucestershire Council

**The petition received 817 signatures between 17/07/2017 – 24/07/2017**