

ACK 5TH FEB 18

01 FEB 2018

Mr and Mrs Evans-Randall
2 Bayfield Wood Close
Chepstow
NP16 6FB
30th January 2018

Jim Keech
Monmouthshire County Council
PO Box 106,
Caldicot
NP26 9AN

**Tree preservation order number MCC273 (2017) – Woolpitch Wood, Bayfield, Chepstow.
Monmouthshire County Council.**

We wish to confirm our objections to the above referenced tree preservation order (TPO) and our reasons for this objection are set out below.

- 1 The specific trees or overgrown shrubs and branches are of no particular value (such that their removal would have a significant impact upon the local environment and its enjoyment by the public), and it is questionable the health or safety of the growth that is found on this plot of land. If there were specific healthy trees with sufficient area and maintenance in which they could flourish as afforded to other areas within this location with partnership between Council and landowners there would be justification for the Council to make a TPO Order to protect them, but this is not the case.
- 2 We fail to see how this overgrown land with unspecific trees can be considered as bringing significant amenity value to the area, particularly as the area around the growth does not have public access
- 3 This TPO will not address the issue but cause further lack of maintenance being afforded to this disputed area as residents will strive to contact both council and landowner for Health and Safety issues to be addressed and both are never forthcoming in wishing to engage or action maintenance work.
- 4 Inappropriate favourable influence and opportunity given to selected residents outside the affected boundaries to have access to the initial assessment panel prior to the decision being made to place a TPO on the plot.

- 5 As you will be aware from your internal emails a subsequent lack of engagement from council when clarity was sought on TPO when initial contact was made in early December 2017 as offered in notification letter.
- 6 Lack of continuity or authority made by council to resolve longstanding issues surrounding this land particularly addressing Health and Safety and maintenance issues with residents for a period exceeding 7 years. Including the presence to adopt the land. Only once in this period has the council made the site safe following our complaints when we personally went on the un kept land to remove 5 bin bags of dumped rubbish which included used hypodermic needles and other very unpleasant products. There was an inference at this stage that the Council were adopting the land.
- 7 Resident from opposite side of this piece of land and Council Ground workers using this site as a dumping ground for garden waste. Interesting that although the Council are unwilling to maintain the plot they are happy to dump their rubbish from clearing other residents public areas. I am sure there is not an entitlement to dump garden waste on land that has not been adopted.
- 8 That there is a general lack of ground maintenance to the Bayfield Wood Close side of Woolpitch Wood that is afforded to other residents in the area and which includes allowing the landowner of this TPO to impinge over the footpath which the Council ignores and therefore causes some residents particularly those with child push chairs to have to cross the road to pass the stinging nettles. When the Council has been contacted no action is taken.

As a previous principle manager in the public sector I have always looked for solutions rather than challenges and always hope for positive outcomes and in that pursuance I would add the following recommendations:

- a) As with other areas of land in the area the Council either adopt the land or make good partnership arrangements with landowners and hold them to task rather than the residents trying to maintain the site. This type of contract should have been included on any planning permission given to building developers to prevent residents for landowner and council disputes.
- b) The whole plot should be independently inspected by a qualified tree surgeon to assess what is salvageable from the dead or diseased overgrown shrubs or trees that have the opportunity to survive and flourish and have a positive impact upon the local environment and its enjoyment by both the public and residents.

- c) Once we have a well managed plot of land which encourages good, healthy and safe woodland growth we would be in a good position to secure a meaningful and permanent TPO which could be supported by all residents

Due to the lack of transparency in the process, and following the outcome of this issue, after consultation with other residents I will be considering submitting an Freedom of Information application on the full procedure undertaken. Although you have advised me that this can take a long time, and I could send a query directly, unfortunately my past experience has shown a lack of engagement and at least the Act does set out time parameters to be adhered to.

I hope that this won't be necessary and the information I have given supports an appropriate outcome. I am sure the council will give due diligence and respect to residents submissions and resume an equitable provision to all who live in the area rather than the inference that you live on the wrong side of the street.



Cliff Randall
2 Bayfield Wood Close

