

Email received by the SRA - 29 January 2018

DR.dcc.KF 4877

Dear Mr Fisher,

Thank you for your email of 23rd January and for raising this important issue. I can assure you that the Council has been and remains united on behalf of residents in opposing any development outside the Borough's boundaries that would affect or impinge upon our much-loved Lydiard Park and House.

For example, in September 2016 Council passed a resolution authorising the Cabinet Member responsible for Lydiard to write to Wiltshire Council opposing a planning application to develop an area in view of St Mary's Church and Lydiard House. We will continue make representation to Wiltshire Council's Planning Committee to oppose such developments.

Within Swindon, I am working with Councillor Toby Elliott, the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Sustainability, and Councillor Kevin Parry, Chair of the Planning Committee, to ensure that the Borough has robust planning policies that defend all our historic parks and open spaces. I have asked Toby and Kevin to ensure that they and the Planning Committee make sure these policies are up to date.

While I cannot speak about any particular area, the Council cannot be seen to have "pre-determined" any application or that would make us vulnerable to legal challenge, it is my aim to ensure that the Planning process is accessible so that all residents may make their views known and that their opinions will count.

I hope that the new West Swindon Parish Council, along with other parishes in Swindon that have not already done so, will give thought to producing a Neighbourhood Plan that will add further weight in planning law.

I appreciate that you were seeking a definitive answer, but I hope you will be able to view my response within the bounds of what the Council is permitted to say in general terms.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor David Renard
Leader of the Council

cc Councillor Toby Elliott, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Sustainability.
Councillor Kevin Parry, Chair of the Planning Committee.

Reply sent via email from the SRA - 31 January

Dear Mr Renard

Thank you for your email of 29 January (attached) in response to my letter of 22 January (attached).

I appreciate your comments with reference to ensuring "*these [planning] policies are up to date*". I also agree with your comment about the West Swindon Parish Council developing a neighbourhood plan; I have previously made some informal approaches to Parish Councillors with just that suggestion.

However, you seem to have ignored the bulk of my letter. I positioned the 'joint statement' as a catalyst for some action. I did not request that a planning authority endorsed the statement, as I am very much aware of the legalities of 'pre-determination'.

Indeed my letter states: "*In light of the above, I believe it is now time for new initiatives designed to protect the existing rural character of Lydiard Park for future generations. I therefore request the following actions be taken*".

I do not believe any of the five points I make in my letter would in any way compromised a local planning authority's lack of prejudice when it comes to determining a planning application.

May I ask that you look at the points again (I include them at the bottom of this email for your convenience) and let me know your administrations views on each of them.

Lastly, in the response I received from Wiltshire Council, I was advised to make a formal representation via the 'joint spatial framework' consultation portal, which I have attempted to do. However, I have found that the consultation closed last December. If you are also of the belief that I must use that mechanism for my 'formal representations' could you advise on the process I should use please?

Yours Sincerely

Kevin Fisher
Shaw Residents' Association Chair

Extract from my 22nd January letter

1. As part of the current Swindon and Wiltshire local plan reviews ensure the 'essential setting' boundary is used as the designated 'historic parks and gardens' area
2. Build the protection of Lydiard Parks essential setting and wider context into the vision, priorities and pledges of both Councils
3. Since the 'essential setting' identifies the minimum area required to protect the registered landscape, set up a committee comprising representatives from the endorsers of the joint statement (and others as appropriate) to agree a wider area of

protection. Any recommendations should then form part of both Councils local plan reviews and the 'joint spatial framework'

4. Have the essential setting and in particular the extensions to the essential setting designated as 'local green space' per the NPPF
5. Develop a 'Conservation Management Plan for Lydiard Park' which will require any speculative future development applications be submitted in accordance with its guidance

Letter received from David Renard / John Gilbert via Royal Mail - 2 February 2018

Letter posted to SRA website as a pdf file

Email response to above letter from SRA - 2 February 2018

Dear Mr Renard and Mr Gilbert

Many thanks for your constructive letter of the 1 February which I received today via Royal Mail.

I note you plan to request officers to contact me in order to discuss the issues further and I look forward to hearing from them.

In the meantime I will ask for representatives from the other 'joint statement' endorsing organisations to join me in the meeting(s) with officers.

Best Regards
Kevin Fisher