

Danny Groves statement – Cabinet 8th October 2020

I would like to start by asking a couple of questions.

The first of which is when you need expert advice on matters concerning your health, do you consult a doctor or a planning officer? Equally, when you need expert advice on matters of ecology - Do you consult your own ecology expert or a planning officer? The reason I ask is that the development on the field at the rear of English Combe lane has been passed despite the council's own ecology experts objecting to the development. The field contains rare, or repeat rare calcium deposits into for flushes and associated fauna and flora, which cannot be replaced or replicated elsewhere. This is one of the reasons the council cleverly declared this land as a site of nature conservation interest. Your captions to this development from your own ecology experts are very clear, and I quote, The proposal remains likely to result in substantial harm to site the scientific nature conservation interest, and will include permanent loss of habitats. Residents nearly 80 of whom and just over the last 24 hours have signed an open letter to the council leader are extremely confused and angered by the way the council has overruled his expert advice, planning permission was granted with a significant number of offsetting requirements around creating new habitats at a larger site, but your own expert ecologists latest objection is damning, and clear as regards this offsetting. There is no guarantee that these plans on paper will have any chance of working in reality. Therefore, she states, I would not support this site, being a trial case for such measures. I'm not quite sure what parts of this objection. We're not really understanding or getting through. So I repeat my earlier question. If you want to get expert advice on the damage and development or cause to ecology on the site, do ask your expert ecologist or your planning officer? The timeline on this episode is that council buys land with ecologically important rare features on it. Council declares the area, as of scientific importance council then brilliantly unanimously declares an ecological emergency for farms in the summer. Unfortunately, council planning then decides to override its own expert and destroy the ecology on this site. Only eight units of which have a social housing. This is not a good look. And the council's credibility reference ecology is crumbling. What residents want is for a council leader to call a halt to proceedings, and the council to reflect and consult on this bizarre situation. be a standout force for good here. Don't commit an ecological crime destruction of ecology, important features and areas is just destroy ourselves. If a satisfactory outcome through dialogue with residence is not achieved and residents will be employed to examine other options. please please pause, think about this review.

Thank you very much for your time.