

Ecological and Climate Emergency

by: Frank Kenny
to be made at: the BANES Cabinet meeting
on: 8.10.2020 at 18.30pm

Hello, my name is Frank Kenny a resident of Englishcombe Lane, Bath

I have asked to talk on the ecological and climate emergencies.

We are in ecological and climate crises now and they are on our doorsteps.

The catalogue of declining populations of species is well known and accelerating at a frightening pace.

We are under threat of losing our wildlife in the UK. It's that serious.

Thankfully, BANES council has made a commitment towards reversing these crises.

Not to make them worse.

That means leaving green spaces alone, in order to provide refuge for extremely beleaguered wildlife and ecology that is being decimated in our country.

That is why when you go to these green spaces often there is a very large variety of wildlife. It is because they have nowhere else to go.

We must not rush decisions through that produce grave errors of misjudgement and bad mistakes

I refer to the planning application for the project to build 37 residencies on the field behind 89 to 123 Englishcombe Lane.

This field is just what I have described, a green space, an oasis and refuge for many species for wildlife, ordinary and the not so ordinary.

The rush and push to get on with it has caused the developers, Aequus, a council owned company, to potentially break the law and caused the field to become a crime scene.

This proposal should never have been made in the first place.

Historically other proposals have been made and withdrawn for many of the very same reasons that we the residents have been objecting about.

Objections about almost everything in this proposal to build quite frankly lack lustre and underwhelming properties on the Field behind Englishcombe Lane

The objections made have been about:

- i) the traffic issues on and off Englishcombe Lane,
- ii) the single and woefully inadequate entrance to the site,
- iii) the drainage,
- iv) the very significant water and flooding issues,
- v) the unstable ground,
- vi) the visual impact on not only the Bath Skyline but its impact on the city's World Heritage site status,
- vii) materials of construction and the list goes on.

are recorded elsewhere and includes objections about the destruction of the ecology on the field and the adverse effect on the surrounding environment.

Building on the field will result in the loss of the Tufa flush, the destruction of a natural oasis for a wide variety of species and a place with exceptional qualities will be lost forever and add to the crises.

The poor quality of the proposed development and the destruction of the ecology is a reflection on:

- i) who owns the land,
- ii) who has applied for planning permission,
- iii) who has accepted to allow it to gain planning permission, and also
- iv) who has been the developer throughout this process.

The effect on the ecology of this proposal makes this proposal totally unacceptable.

The residents have been despairing, dismayed and are now angry with BANES council. The BANES council's own ecology adviser objected to and condemned this proposal not once but twice.

Still the council with its developer company decided to push the proposal through the planning application process even with the condemnation of its own ecological reports and commitments to reverse both the climate and ecological emergencies.

I started by saying that thankfully, BANES has made a commitment towards making a difference to the climate and ecological emergencies.

This should focus your minds and make you think twice about making ill thought out decisions as this one on the field behind Englishcombe Lane.

The decision made to grant planning permission for the building of houses on the Englishcombe Lane Field has left us dumfounded, saddened and angry.

The residents take your commitment on our behalf very seriously and will not let derogation of your duty in relation to especially the ecology and climate pass unchallenged.

I would like to cite an example where I believe planning permission had been granted for a Park and Ride scheme at The Meadows and shortly afterwards the then leader of the council changed that decision and so stopped the Park and Ride scheme from going forward. I am sure that took courage cutting across all the previous arguments and decisions to originally grant planning permission.

I implore you now to reconsider the current intended direction of the proposal to build on the Englishcombe Lane Field.

Look at your commitment to making a difference in reversing the ecological and climate crises.

Think again.

Take courage and stop this sorry mess in its tracks and reverse the decision to grant planning permission for the building of 37 house in the field behind 89 to 123 Englishcombe Lane.