

16 Polebarn Road

Trowbridge

BA14 7EG

26 July 2018

Mike Wilmott, Head of Development and Matthew Perks, Case Officer

Development Services

Wiltshire Council

Developmentmanagement@wiltshire.gov.uk

Dear Mr Wilmott and Mr Perks

Comments on application 18/04656/FUL and 18/05278/LBC

I live in Polebarn Road. My house adjoins the proposed development site. I am writing in response to propose an alternative to the current planning application which would destroy this beautiful space for ever.

Courtfield House is set with a conservation area. I am aware Courtfield House is in a serious state of disrepair. This is the result of inadequate maintenance since the current owners have bought the site. The person previously responsible for caring for the orchard is no longer employed to do so. Rather than appropriate husbandry the orchard is simply mown. The trees need to be nurtured and as there are now TPOs in place, I hope that the council will enforce this. There is also new legislation regarding the care of trees which should also inform the council's decision-making.

Destruction of the orchard at Courtfield House would be detrimental to the listed building and permanent loss of a valuable local amenity adjoining Trowbridge Park that could and should be preserved for the benefit of the community. I am part of a group of local residents who are now working with The Big Community Grow to develop a viable plan for conserving the orchard and enabling it to continue to have a role in the community. In the past plays have been performed there. Recently community events – such as the Apple Days -have taken place there. The orchard is still used regularly by the children at the nursery at 17 Polebarn road – they have picnics there and undertake nature-based activities. These are the kind of uses that we would like to develop and expand, working with local organisations such as the Council, Friends of Biss Meadow, Trowbridge in Bloom, local schools, Trowbridge Museum and other community groups.

The orchard has never been previously built upon. It is a greenfield site. It contains mixed fruit trees over 100 years old and provides a rich natural habitat for birds, insects and various mammals including bats, badgers and foxes. The value of the Courtfield House site relies in part on its proximity to Trowbridge Park. The loss of the orchard along the edge of the park would have a detrimental impact on the park – instead it could become part of the great community spaces within the town centre and add a new dimension to the community and cultural events within the town.

Please inform me when the Western Area Planning Board meets to discuss this proposal,

Yours sincerely,

Jackie Harding