

I would like to object to this scheme which will have a detrimental effect on our farming business. Our farming business is typical of a modern farm which has diversified in recent years. Currently we grow crops, have grazing pasture land and have holiday cottages and a caravan site. I will break down my serious concerns for each of the three elements of our farm and rural business.

FARMING - We farm on a belt of sandy soil that sits between Startley and Dauntsey. Our land is highly productive with stone free soil. Sandy soils are hungry for nutrients and in particular Potassium (K) and phosphorous (P). Our principal source of this fertiliser is cow muck (cattle farmyard manure - FYM). Cow muck (FYM) is known as a complete fertiliser since it also contains Nitrogen (N) and provides soil structure. This information is backed up by AHNB Nutrient Management Guide (RB209). It is possible to obtain these nutrients via manufactured fertilisers but the production and transport and particularly the cost has a very considerable impact for our business. These manufactured fertilisers do not offer the soil structure which is important. It is worth noting that nitrogen fertiliser has quadrupled in price with recent disturbances to supply from the Middle East. Having farming land that produces FYM where Lime Down is proposed means farms locally are less exposed to global supplies. It is possible to obtain the FYM from other local farms to the East of us but with the limited availability of cattle farms in the area means the supply will be reduced and this will mean increased prices due to a reduced supply. Also if the distance for the FYM increases this adds transports costs as well. There are other impacts on the farming community with less farming taking place nearby related to mutual assistance from farmers. A considerable amount of work is shared between farms via machinery, knowledge, man power etc. It is a team effort at certain times of the year and less farmers locally means less machinery, knowledge and man power.

HOLIDAY LET COTTAGES - Our customers for our cottages come to see the beauty of the South Cotswolds with its lovely historic villages, wonderful footpaths and bridleways and views. The ancient and Roman Fosseway is a draw and Lime Down propose to tarmac this road and surround it with fencing, panels, lights and other industrial infrastructure. It will have a direct impact on our holiday let business as these walks and rural views is one of the reasons people stay with us. We get people from all over the world and London and other places. If this goes ahead our customers will simply choose another location that has protected its heritage and rural beauty.

CARAVAN SITE - Our caravan customers come to our caravan site on the south side of Great Somerford looking for a nice spot to hang out for a few days or even longer. They usually come with a car which allows them to explore the local area. This includes visits to the local villages, footpaths and historic views. We often direct them to the bridle path between Rodbourne and Stanton that goes via Bincombe wood. It is very unlikely they will now want to visit an industrial landscape. Again this will have a direct and almost immediate impact on our caravan site business.

SUMMARY - It is impossible to give you a set of reliable figures in terms of extra costs to the crop farming business and the reduced income to our holiday cottages and caravan site business. All I know is it will be significant and immediate. We have so many challenges as a rural farm from lack of policing (farm thefts), poor broadband, non-existent mobile coverage, increased regulation (red tape), increased taxes etc etc. To have this proposal for Lime Down proceed it will be hugely difficult and financially painful for us.