

Open Floor Hearing 2 – Tuesday 30th June 2pm MRH

My wife [REDACTED] and I have run Foxley Road Nurseries, growing plants here for almost [REDACTED], taking over from my parents who started the business in [REDACTED]. Many of our customers have been coming to us for decades.

Most of our customers are local, and travel by car, some cycle or walk to us, enjoying the journey up the relatively quiet Foxley Road, which forms part of the Wiltshire Cycleway. We also have many customers from much further afield, such as Reading and Bristol, as traditional nurseries such as ours are increasingly few and far between.

If Lime Down is allowed to go ahead, we anticipate that many of our customers will be deterred from using what will become an extremely busy minor road, particularly for those coming from places such as Sherston or Hullavington. Many of our customers are older and could be intimidated at the prospect of travelling down narrow country roads and meeting heavy construction traffic.

Our business is extremely seasonal. Traffic disruption, at certain times of year could have a significant impact on the viability of our business. For example high vehicles occasionally become stuck under Kingway Bridge on the A429 causing a continuous stream of traffic along Foxley Road for several hours, as this is the designated diversion route. Lime Down traffic would only exacerbate this problem. Whilst planners may stipulate certain routes to be used, we know from a nearby agricultural business development that vehicles do not always follow the designated routes once planning permission is granted.

The construction phase will have a huge impact on local roads, the effect of which will continue long after construction is complete. In 2019 Foxley Road was closed for several months for the bridge into Malmesbury to be strengthened, and a lengthy diversion was put in place. This had a major impact on our business throughout the construction phase and after the road re-opened. People had become used to using other routes and alternative suppliers which affected our trade for many months afterwards.

We grow a diverse range of plants at the nursery which attract a rich variety of wildlife including owls, bats, voles and many pollinating insects. Our customers often comment that it is a very peaceful place and some come in to wander round just to enjoy the tranquility; having improved someone's day, particularly if they are having a tough time, is a key part of our business ethos.

Please compare this with what Lime Down would do, destroying the local countryside, damaging the mental wellbeing of local people and severely impacting the viability of many local businesses, purely in pursuit of profit for their unscrupulous and uncaring shareholders, who have no interest in the local area.