

Deputation Submitted by Mrs Bell

Re. Planning Application APP/20/00990 Havant Thicket, adjacent to Sir George Staunton Country Park, Reservoir and Pipe Line, Middle Park Way, Havant

I am writing to try to save The Avenue, which is included in the Grade II listing by Historic England and the other areas of semi-natural ancient woodland that will be removed to create the reservoir. There are also areas of ancient wood pasture.

The public consultation was held online because of the Covid situation which may have prevented a lot of people from being able to participate. I did not find out until afterwards so could not take part.

This beautiful landscape should be the jewel in the crown of the park which received money from the Heritage Fund to improve facilities and already has a new paying car park, a café, children's play area and a gift shop and a lot of work has been done to improve the area around the lake. With careful management and renovation of the wilder areas the whole park could be restored.

The wilder areas are where interesting flora and fauna are found and evidence of coppicing work that has taken place in the past.

Some of the new trees that have been planted have already died showing the difficulty of trying to replace this ancient landscape and a flight of steps can in no way compensate for this lovely woodland walk.

Six people went to jail in 1969 to gain greater access and the park became free for the people in the area. In such a built up area it is a great local resource for relaxation; exercise, walking, running and cycling and now it will be changed completely.

No recreational facilities such as water sports or angling will be added to the site and these areas of ancient woodland and ancient wood pasture will be lost forever and cannot be replaced.

As a secure site it will need to be protected by security cameras which does not make it feel relaxing. There will also be disruption for local people during construction.

The Avenue is a wildlife corridor between areas of woodland and supports a variety of species that will need to relocate. I often see deer on my walks. Unfortunately it also sits on a large bed of clay which will be used to create the reservoir.

I understand the need for water but there must be an alternative site that will not destroy this unique landscaped park.