

Prof. M. and Mrs. V. Stevens

16th Dec. 2015

The AONB Development Plan Manager,
Lancaster City Council,
Dalton Square,
Lancaster.

Dear Sir/Madam

Land Identified as Suitable for Housing in Silverdale

I am the owner of the property [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I noticed that a section of land at the rear of the council properties at Lindeth Close, part of which I purchased from Lancaster City Council three years ago, has been zoned for possible new housing. Apart from the fact that the very popular footpath from Silverdale village to Woodwell and Wolfhouse passes through this land, I would like to reinforce several other features of this site which makes it quite unsuitable for housing.

The land is a limestone outcrop which has been colonised naturally by trees over the past 100 years or so. The trees now densely clothe the limestone pavements and represent an ideal habitat for a wide variety of woodland species. Concerning birds, which is a particular interest of mine, the mature trees are used as breeding sites for many of our most loved woodland species: five species of tits (including the nationally uncommon marsh tit), great spotted and green woodpecker, nuthatch, treecreeper, jay, magpie, song and mistle thrush, tawny owl,

pheasant, four species of finch (including bullfinch) and other iconic species such as wren and robin. The woodland edge is regularly hunted by kestrels, sparrowhawks and common buzzards, and 'roding' woodcock can be observed in springtime in their display flights. At migration time in spring the woodland buzzes with the songs of blackcap, chiffchaff and willow warbler, some of which may stay to breed.

The woodland is also a haunt of many mammal species: red fox, rabbit, weasel, stoat, hedgehog, mice, shrews and voles; and bats (probably three species) have their roosts in the ivy-clad trees. Doubtless countless species of insect make their homes in dead and decaying timber and the litter below.

This antique woodland is a precious amenity within the AONB and should be left, *undisturbed*, for wildlife and humans to enjoy in perpetuity.

Yours sincerely,



Emeritus Professor MFG Stevens, OBE, FRS