

Development Control B Committee Agenda



Date: Wednesday, 6 September 2023

Time: 6.00 pm

Venue: The Council Chamber, City Hall, College Green,
Bristol, BS1 5TR

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Councillors: Ani Stafford-Townsend (Chair), Chris Windows (Vice-Chair), Lesley Alexander, Amal Ali, Steve Pearce (substitute for Fabian Breckels), Sarah Classick, Lorraine Francis, Katja Hornchen and Guy Poultney

Copies to: Norman Cornthwaite, Allison Taylor (Democratic Services Officer), Jeremy Livitt, Rachael Dando, David Fowler (Members' Office Manager (Conservative)), Stephen Fulham, Paul Shanks, Stephen Peacock (Chief Executive), Philippa Howson, John Smith (Executive Director: Growth & Regeneration), Jonathan Dymond, Peter Westbury, Simone Wilding and Jane Woodhouse

Issued by: Jeremy Livitt, Democratic Services
City Hall, PO Box 3399, Bristol, BS1 9NE

E-mail: democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk

Date: Tuesday, 5th September 2023



Agenda

8. Public Forum

Any member of the public or councillor may participate in public forum. The detailed arrangements for so doing are set out in the Public Information Sheet at the back of this agenda. Please note that the following deadlines will apply in relation to this meeting:

(Pages 3 - 93)

Questions:

Written questions must be received three clear working days prior to the meeting. For this meeting, this means that your question(s) must be received at the latest **by 5pm on Thursday 31st August 2023.**

Petitions and statements:

Petitions and statements must be received by noon on the working day prior to the meeting. For this meeting, this means that your submission must be received at the latest **by 12 Noon on Tuesday 5th September 2023.**

The statement should be addressed to the Service Director, Legal Services, c/o The Democratic Services Team, City Hall, 3rd Floor Deanery Wing, College Green,
P O Box 3176, Bristol, BS3 9FS or email - democratic.services@bristol.gov.uk

PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU WISH TO SPEAK AT THE COMMITTEE, YOU ARE REQUESTED TO INDICATE THIS WHEN SUBMITTING YOUR STATEMENT OR PETITION. ALL REQUESTS TO SPEAK MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY A WRITTEN STATEMENT.

In accordance with previous practice adopted for people wishing to speak at Development Control Committees, please note that you may only be allowed 1 minute subject to the number of requests received for the meeting.

11. Amendment Sheet

(Pages 94 - 98)



Public Forum

D C Committee B

Wednesday 6th September 2023



Members of the Development Control Committee B

Councillors: Ani Stafford-Townsend (Chair), Chris Windows (Vice-Chair), Lesley Alexander, Steve Pearce (substitute for Fabian Breckels), Sarah Classick, Amal Ali, Lorraine Francis, Katja Hornchen, Guy Poultney

		Questions/Statements/Petitions	
Number	Request To Speak Made Where Indicated S = Speaker	Name	Application
QA1	S	Mark Ashdown	22/05714/FB – South Bristol Crematorium and Cemetery
QA2	S	Danica Priest	
QA3	S	Amanda Barrett	
QA4	S	Maddy Longhurst	
QA5	S	Steph Wetherell	
QA6	S	Catherine Withers	
A1	S	Mark Ashdown	
A2	S	Amanda Barrett	
A3	S	John Tarlton	
A4		Janet Limberg	
A5	S	Tony Coll	
A6		Helen Phillips	
A7		Julie Brannan	
A8	S	Danica Priest	
A9		Nick Gates	
A10		Sid Ryan	
A11		Bonnie Welch	
A12		George Cook	
A13		Anna Archer	
A14		Sou Hayward	
A15	S	Catherine Withers	
A16		Jasmine Beard	
A17		Debbie Sharp	
A18		Selena Gray	
A19		Michael Norman	
A20		Paul Becker	

A21		N D Edwards	
A22		Helen Russell	
A23		Neill Talbot	
A24		Mary-Jane Wilshire	
A25	S	Councillor Tony Dyer/Councillor Christine Townsend	
A26		Alan Payne	
A27		Alex Jennings	
A28		Alison Garbet	
A29		Andrea Waites	
A30		Anthony Burrell	
A31		Ashlyn Higham	
A32		Caroline and Adam Phillips	
A33		Charlotte Riest- Ellis	
A34		Damon Guy	
A35		Diane Jenkins	
A36		Diemante Krisiuleviciute	
A37		Duncan Porter	
A38		Fiona Hollyman	
A39		Gary Hunt	
A40		Hilary Rydon	
A41		Ian Meyrick	
A42		Jackie Hughes	
A43		Jamie Rutherford	
A44		Jean Harkess	
A45		Jenny Padfield	
A46		Jeremy Halpenny	
A47		Joanne Finkel	
A48		Jordana Davorian-Cross	
A49		Julia Halpenny	

A50		Kate Jarvis	
A51		Kate Laver	
A52		Kate Whittle	
A53		Linda Gorton	
A54		Lizzy Horn	
A55		Mark Hayward Jenks	
A56		Michelle Ruse	
A57		Myles Mayne	
A58		Nick Cowley	
A59		Nigel Steggel	
A60		P Tshering	
A61		Pauline Smith	
A62		Phil Addison	
A63		Richard Oliver	
A64		S Houldcroft	
A65		S A Harvey	
A66		Sara Coles	
A67		Sara Loverock	
A68		Sarah Macdonald	
A69		Sue Cowley	
A70		Teresa Tremlett and Georgie Tremlett	
A71		Tessa Garton	

**List of People Requesting to Speak – Public Participation – DC B Committee –
Wednesday 6th September 2023: Deadlines - 5pm on Thursday 31st August
2023 for Questions, 12pm on Tuesday 5th September 2023 for Statements**

A – 22/05714/FB – South Bristol Crematorium and Cemetery

Questions (1 Supplementary Question Permitted Per Question Asked)

QA1 – Mark Ashdown

QA2 – Danica Priest

QA3 – Amanda Barrett

QA4 – Maddy Longhurst

QA5 – Steph Wetherell

QA6 – Catherine Withers

Statements

A1 – Mark Ashdown

A2 – Amanda Barrett

A3 – John Tarlton

A5 – Tony Coll

A8 – Danica Priest

A15 – Catherine Withers

A25 – Councillor Tony Dyer or Councillor Christine Townsend

Development Control Committee 'B'

Wednesday 6th September 2023

Answers to Written Questions QA1 to QA6

QA1 – Mark Ashdown

The proposed cemetery extension into Areas 3 & 4 and the proposed linking drainage associated with these proposals are within the Colliter's Brook Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) and so is protected by [Site Allocations and Development Management Policies](#) DM19, which states:

DM19: 'Development which would have a harmful impact on the nature conservation value of a Site of Nature Conservation Interest will not be permitted.'

The passages from DM19, which the officer quotes in their report at paragraphs 10.15 to 10.18 ignore this express prohibition relating to SNCIs.

Why?'

Any harm to the nature conservation value of the SNCI, will be mitigated by the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) – Condition 2.

QA2 – Danica Priest

1. In the planning statement, the council essentially admits it has only looked at potential expansion of existing crematoria/burial sites. It hasn't looked at sites for opening a new crematorium because of the costs and the time it will take. The need for additional burial sites has been known for some time and they should have started identifying a site and earmarking reserves years ago. Why hasn't the council explored all avenues available to provide both burial sites AND protect nature?

The applicants have indicated that they have considered alternative sites and have determined that this is the only available option.

2. The NPPF states that before green belt boundaries are redrawn, an authority must demonstrate that it has "examined all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development." Considering this site is in the greenbelt and the council has not exhausted all reasonable alternatives do you think this application is NPPF compliant?

This application does not involve the redrawing of the green belt. Burial accommodation is considered an appropriate use in the green belt.

3. Bristol Council passed a motion in September which promised to protect our SNCIs from development including Yew Tree Farm specifically. Seeing as this is council owned land and therefore completely in the control of the council to develop, Why has the council not prioritised nature and honoured the will of the people who want to see this site protected? Why is the green spaces motion not being honoured here?

The Local Planning Authority has been asked to assess an application submitted by the Council for additional burial accommodation. It is the recommendation of officers that the impact on the site and surrounding area can be adequately mitigated by the ongoing management of the site, that the applicant has committed to.

QA3 – Amanda Barrett

1. Is this potential development a short-term fix to a long-term problem?

It is predicted that the proposal would provide accommodation for 25 to 35 years. It has been recognised at a national level by Government that there are a range of challenges associated with providing ongoing burial provision, and it is understood that the Law Commission is undertaking a review of these regulations, which will inform the strategy beyond this.

2. The adverse effects of climate change and biodiversity loss are accelerating so how can such an outstanding area of land that offers so much to the residents of both the City of Bristol and North Somerset be swept aside despite being designated within the Colliter's Brook Site of Special Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) and a Prominent Green Hillside (Urban Landscape)?

It is the assessment of Officers of the Local Planning Authority that this additional burial site will not “sweep aside” the SNCI.

QA4 – Maddy Longhurst

Please explain whether, if, and in what way you are satisfied that:

This application will not undermine the SNCI status of the land during and beyond the proposed changes.

Any harm to the nature conservation value of the SNCI, will be mitigated by the Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) – Condition 2.

The applicant has exhausted all other possibilities for suitable new burial sites within reach of Bristol that may be accessible with the assigned budget and existing site allocations and policy allowances, and that this site is the best possible one and not chosen based on perceived convenience.

The applicants have indicated that they have considered alternative sites and have determined that this is the only available option. In determining the planning application there is no requirement to ‘sequentially test’ whether there are other sites that are sequentially preferable to this site.

Thorough, in depth and joined-up discussions and explorations of the relevant city strategies, their tensions, intersections and opportunities for complementarity, and new and existing local plan policies have been carried out in advance of this application and this is clearly reflected in the application itself.

The application has been assessed against the relevant planning policies.

That all key stakeholders have been adequately included and consulted in the decision-making process

The application has been subject to the consultations as required by The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

This will not have an adverse effect on the regenerative land management, biodiversity and viability of Yew Tree Farm

Overall, the proposal would result in a net reduction of grazing land at Yew Tree Farm by 14% (4% in phase 1 and an addition 10% in phase 2). As such, it is estimated that there would be no impact on grazing herd size in phase 1 and less than 5% in phase 2. The proposal is also accompanied by detailed mitigation and management plans which would result in the area of the application being managed or at least 30 years (secured through condition 2).

QA5 – Steph Wetherell

1. Why is this decision happening before the Communities Scrutiny meeting on the 14th September that will be considering both the Crematorium and Cemeteries strategy, and the Allotment and Food Growing Strategy and Parks and Green Spaces Strategy. All these strategies hold key information that should inform this planning decision.

The Local Planning Authority has been asked to assess an application submitted by the Council for additional burial accommodation, and are required to determine it in accordance with the relevant planning policies at the time the decision is made. Any decisions regarding the executive functions of the Council are separate, and will need to be considered separately.

2. Can it be evidenced that other sites have been adequately explored, especially considering the cost of the drainage required on the site and high impact on the SNCI and important regenerative farm land.

The applicants have indicated that they have considered alternative sites and have determined that this is the only available option. In determining the planning application there is no require to 'sequentially test' whether there are other sites that are sequentially preferable to this site.

QA6 – Catherine Withers

Why have officers not engaged with me regarding any future management or tenancy of the land we have been farming for 56 years, I am not listed as a stakeholder despite the creation of the SNCI protections under my family's custodianship. I read in the plans that I am being relied upon for the future management with no consultation legal or financial framework in place or discussed, how is this justifiable for my business or for protecting the SNCI?

The Local Planning Authority has been asked to assess an application submitted by the Council for additional burial accommodation, and are required to determine it in accordance with the relevant planning policies at the time the decision is made. The affected party has provided comments on the application, as listed in section 6 of the report, and must be given weight in the decision on the application. However, any negotiations regarding the tenancy is separate from the decision on the planning application.



STATEMENT NUMBER A1 - DCC A - 06
September 2023

22/05714/FB | South Bristol Crematorium And Cemetery Bridgwater Road Bristol BS13 7AS

The proposed cemetery extension into Areas 3 & 4 and the proposed linking drainage associated with these proposals are in an **Urban Landscape - Prominent Green Hillside** - and within the **Colliter's Brook Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI)**. These two Local Plan designations are protected by [Site Allocations and Development Management Policies](#) DM17 and DM19, which state:

DM17: *'Proposals which would harm important features such as green hillsides, promontories, ridges, valleys, gorges, areas of substantial tree cover and distinctive manmade landscapes will not be permitted.'* - pages 36/37.

DM19: *'Development which would have a harmful impact on the nature conservation value of a Site of Nature Conservation Interest will not be permitted.'* - page 40.

The passages from DM19, which the officer quotes in his report - at 10.15 to 10.17 - ignore the express prohibition relating to SNCIs quoted above. This overrides the more generic policy quoted. The prohibitions in both DM17 and DM19 are absolute - 'will not be permitted'. They are not conditional, nor is a minimum level of harm permitted, nor the degree of post-harm mitigation relevant.

The evidence produced by the applicant, including its ecological evidence, shows that the proposed development of these two areas will be harmful: fencing will be erected, drains will be installed, an attenuation pond will be excavated, and, in due course, graves will be excavated and those buried there will be visited and, perhaps, memorialised.

We accept that burials may not start in Area 3 for some years and that there are proposals to mitigate this harm. However, harm will still be caused both to the Urban Landscape and to the SNCI, both immediately and in the long term. This is not permitted.

The [NPPF](#) at paragraph 179 b) requires that plans should *'identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.'* This is echoed by BCS9, which states: *'...Loss of green infrastructure will only be acceptable where it is allowed for as part of an adopted Development Plan Document or is necessary, on balance, to achieve the policy aims of the Core Strategy ...'*

The applicant's plans will also result in a net loss of **6.75%** of area habitat units. To compensate for this loss, it is proposed to provide offsite BNG in other parts of the SNCI outside the development area. The Council's ecologist has, in a [recent planning appeal](#) (paragraph 7.5, p. 19), advised against seeking to offset lost onsite biodiversity by using an offsite SNCI: *'Due to its existing level of interest this land [the SNCI] is unsuitable for biodiversity enhancement.'* This loss of BNG also amounts to 'a harmful impact' which DM19, as it relates to SNCIs, does not permit.

Accordingly, this committee is obliged to refuse this application under the NPPF, BCS9, DM17 & DM19. We urge the committee to read our detailed objections to this application:

1. [First comments](#)
2. [Second comments](#)
3. [Third comments](#)
4. [Fourth comments](#) (with proposed Conditions if application approved - Annex 4).

As a member of the local community, I have come to know Catherine's land very well and have over the years seen the wildlife flourish. Catherine farms some 60 acres or so and here she has created a rare mosaic habitat that includes veteran trees, billowing hedgerows and species-rich grasslands. Within the grasslands are islands of hawthorn, wild rose and bramble that create unique and very special wildlife corridors - something that many nascent nature recovery projects aspire to. Reminiscent of Neolithic landscapes, mature wood pasture like this was once traditional in Somerset yet today can only be seen - and valued - in various nature reserves on the Mendips.

Having looked at the council's BNG 3.1 Baseline Habitat Survey of the Development Site, I see that heathland & scrub are given a medium 'Distinctiveness' Score that reveals they are regarded as ecologically important. Having seen and heard the finches, tits and warblers feeding, singing and breeding within the scrub, it's obviously prime habitat as shown by similar hedge lines in the well-known Knepp Estate in West Sussex. Butterfly surveys reveal high numbers of various species, many of which also thrive in the different habitats contained within the farm. Compared to other, more intensively farmed land in the neighbourhood, this is a prime example of a farm working well on so many levels. With otters in the brook, kestrels hovering over the hay meadow and barn owls hunting voles beside the hedges it is, in fact, a mini-Knepp inside Bristol City. Who knows nightingales could return here like they've done in Knepp? It's something that should give everyone pause for thought.

I understand that many councils across Britain face a similar problem as Bristol with burial grounds filling up and little land available to buy but since the Council first bought this land for the South Bristol burial ground to expand so much has changed. Climate change and biodiversity loss are now rightly viewed as twin problems that cannot be tackled separately and Yewtree Farm provides exceptional carbon storage, helps cool air temperatures in South Bristol and reduces pollution not forgetting it also offers many people the chance to enjoy an infinite variety of a wilder kind of nature right on their doorstep.

Despite suffering from fly-tipping, arson attacks on her fences and trees and dogs attacking her sheep, Catherine still welcomes people onto her land. Unlike the rather hostile signs generated by the National Farmer's Union and found on the stiles and gateways of some farms nearby, Catherine's hand-made signs warn people that dogs should be kept under control in a friendly way. Her cafe is now a happy pit-stop for many and gestures like these go a long way to make people feel welcome. Surely, councils such as yours should value something as rare as this in an increasingly uncomfortable world?

The loss of such a wonderful resource for so many is surely a short-term fix to a long-term problem. What will happen when the cemetery fills up again? And so much priceless habitat has been lost?

It is hard but surely the council's answer would be to find a more long-term solution to a problem that will be on-going.

This application is in clear contravention of DM19, BCS9 and the NPPF

With regard to Sites of Nature Conservation Interest, planning policy is clear and unequivocal.

DM19 simply and unambiguously states that:

“Development which would have a harmful impact on the nature conservation value of a SNCI will not be permitted”.

There are no qualifications or conditions to this policy statement, no interpretation is required, and there is no suggestion this should be weighed against other issues. No ifs and no buts. As it stands, there WILL be harmful effect on the nature conservation of this SNCI, and as such, to allow this development is absolutely contrary to planning policy.

Based upon the current information, the Nature Conservation Officer agrees that “a harmful impact on the SNCI would occur which is not supportable by DM19”.

The current NPPF also mandates rejection, directing that:

Planning decisions should enhance the natural environment by protecting sites of biodiversity (P174)

Safeguard locally designated sites of importance to biodiversity (P179)

Promote conservation of priority habitats (P179)

If significant harm to biodiversity cannot be avoided, then planning permission should be refused (P180)

Development resulting in the deterioration of irreplaceable habitats should be refused (P180)

The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (P182).

Therefore, at this stage, the committee has no choice other than to refuse the application.

Professor John Tarlton
Treasurer, Bristol Tree Forum

Application number 22/05714/FB

Hi,

I am writing to object to the expansion of the crematorium by taking away land that has been used by Yew Tree Farm, Bristol's last working farm. Yew Tree Farm operates traditional farming practices and as such is vitally important for nature, which has such a positive impact on biodiversity and therefore contributes to reducing climate change.

I therefore strongly object to the expansion of the crematorium on the grounds that SSCI protections will not be honoured so great harm will be done to nature as well as the impact on the farm being able to continue to practice. We are in the grips of a nature of climate change crisis, so find it quite extraordinary that the council could even consider taking out farmland which is being farmed traditionally. Please do not let this happen. When the impact of climate change is felt even more over the next few decades – you will need to ask yourselves – what did I do? Hopefully you will have made the right choice.

A very concerned citizen, Janet Limberg.

I wish to submit a written statement to the meeting on 06/09/2023 about application 22/05714/FB, proposed extension of South Bristol Cemetery.

I object to the proposal in its present form for the following reasons.

1-FAILURE TO QUANTIFY THE NEED

The Applicants (1.4) note that all the cemeteries in Bristol are close to capacity and so there is a need to identify extra space to meet demand.

They state that South Bristol, Canford, Avonview and Greenbank cemeteries are providing new graves, but capacity at Canford, Avonview and Greenbank is almost exhausted. They do NOT state that capacity at South Bristol is almost exhausted.

So before they take action that could destroy the viability of Bristol's last working farm, I think it's reasonable to ask officers to provide figures showing how many graves South Bristol cemetery currently contains, how many more it could realistically take, and how long it is likely to be before that figure is reached.

2-FAILURE TO CONSIDER OTHER OPTIONS

The need for more burial land in Bristol is not disputed. But Bristol City Council doesn't appear to have even considered the alternatives to extending South Bristol Cemetery. For example, it might be possible to re-use some very old burial plots in some of the 20 former Church of England cemeteries which it manages. This is legally complex and highly sensitive, but it's an idea worth exploring. It is done regularly in London and in Scotland.

3-INADEQUATE STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Withers family of Yew Tree Farm were not invited to take part in the consultation process leading to this statement. They weren't even on the list of consulted neighbours. The idea that they are not part of the local community is absurd. It invalidates the whole exercise.

4-FAILURE TO INCLUDE CATHERINE WITHERS OF YEW TREE FARM AS A STAKEHOLDER

The Withers family of Yew Tree Farm have been working this land since 1967. To assert that they have no legal status here – which is the Council's position - is debatable. It's legalistic and inflexible. But they are certainly stakeholders. And the laws of natural justice DO apply here. Whenever a decision is made which adversely affects someone's rights, they have to be treated fairly and given the chance to put their point of view.

5-MANAGEMENT OF SNCI, DRAINAGE ETC

It seems there are matters outstanding about the drainage of the site and the 30-year management of the SNCI.

The sensible way forward would be to invite Ms Catherine Withers of Yew Tree Farm to play a key role in the development of the drainage and also the ecological management of the site, a 30-year obligation contractual obligation.

In conclusion, the application as it stands should be rejected and a new application developed involving Ms Withers as a key participant.

END

Kind regards

Tony Coll

TONY COLL

Writer, Film-maker, Presenter, Coach, Teacher

Dear Committee

I have not heard anything further and note you this is up for review in September

Please note my stance remains I am absolutely devastated that I have to write this email. How can you be looking to disrupt an SNCI site and a local family business, which provides good quality local food to the community and beyond.

Although I appreciate the need to expand burial Sites, there must be other options to resolve this problem.

I therefore object to this application for a number of reasons:

- 1, As a local resident, I am very aware that the Site is within a greenbelt area.
- 2, The site is an SNCI (site of nature conservation interest) and therefore should not be touched according to policy DM19.
- 3, Bristol city council passed a motion in sept 2021 that said our greenbelt and nature rich green sites should be protected. Passing this would violate the green spaces motion.
- 4, This is a beloved site of recreation for local residents like myself.
- 5, Yew Tree Farm is a valued local business and if this goes ahead, their future would be at risk. This will have a knock on effect to the local community and beyond.
- 6, This is against our climate and ecological emergency.

I look forward to hearing that an alternative solution has been sort.

Regards

Helen

Dear sirs

I am writing to object to the extension of the crematorium which will make Yew Tree Farm unviable. The farm is the last working farm In Bristol. Once gone, it is in practice lost forever.

Yours

Julie Brannan

The proposed expansion of the crematorium must be strongly opposed on several grounds. Firstly, the site's location within the greenbelt presents a fundamental conflict with its preservation and protection. Secondly, the absence of exploration into alternative burial land options suggests a lack of due diligence and consideration for less ecologically sensitive sites.

Furthermore, the designation of the site as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) invokes policy DM19, demanding its safeguarding from any form of disturbance or development. Peter Westbury is wrong to say, '... I am confident that it cannot be a policy (DM19) that utterly restricts all development and that it is entirely appropriate to consider the nature of the development proposed. With adequate management of the SNCI, it seems entirely appropriate to recommend approval for additional burial accommodation next to an existing cemetery.' This is wrong. DM19 was meant to protect SNCIs and it was wrong of him to recommend an application that harms an SNCI for approval.

Approving this site will put all other SNCIs in danger as this will be the first thing developers question when the local plan goes before the planning inspector. They have already commented on the council's inconsistencies when it comes to protecting green spaces, SNCIs and nature so this would give even more legitimacy to their claims. Approving this would be a huge mistake as far as the local plan is concerned.

Additionally, it's crucial to highlight that Bristol City Council's motion passed on September 2021, explicitly advocated for the protection of greenbelt areas and nature-rich sites, contradicts the approval of this expansion, thus disregarding the essence of the motion itself. These officers should not be recommending approval based on this alone. Approving this application will send the message to the Bristol people that democracy means nothing and the motions passed at full council are meaningless.

The presence of veteran trees that face irreparable harm stands as an irreplaceable loss to our local ecosystem and the environment at large. Moreover, the site's significance as a beloved recreational area for residents emphasizes its importance beyond mere infrastructure. Equally important is the economic impact; allowing this expansion could jeopardize the existence of Yew Tree Farm, casting aside the livelihoods of those dependent on it. Lastly, the project's disregard for our current climate and ecological emergency contradicts responsible planning principles and perpetuates the degradation of our planet's fragile balance.

The maps shown in the officer's report are not accurate and fail to show the loss of nature on the site. I'm pleased a site visit is being done and I would expect any members of the committee who did not attend the site visit to listen to those that have.

I'm also concerned with the comments from some officers to the nature conservation officer. In an email dated July 27, 2023 the Nature Conservation Officer says:

'I've re-read Oliver's explanation of the pre and post-development areas not matching up in the BNG assessment... I think we're ok but I will read it again tomorrow.

And as the development includes works on the river, the BNG regs say that these works have to be assessed under the BNG metric so an uplift in riverine habitats is achieved. I can see what Ollie is saying about the qualitative assessment of the works on this river, and the time pressure, however BCC will probably be challenged on not following the regs.'

It's very concerning to me that it appears Oliver, who is not an ecologist, was pressuring the Nature Conservation Officer to go against BNG regulations.

Equally it concerns me that her comments were left out of the report given to the committee members.

On 23 February 2023, the NCO objected saying:

‘Currently this application is not supportable from a Nature Conservation perspective. Headlines below.

Part of the development is within the Collitors Brook Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) which means that DM19 applies: “Development which would have a harmful impact on the nature conservation value of a Site of Nature Conservation Interest will not be permitted”. Without any additional information, I would have to object to this proposal citing DM19.

In order to consider it further, it would have to be demonstrated that post-development the land which would be developed within the SNCI would still meet the SNCI designation criteria set out in the attached guidance document (page 8 and 9). If, post-development, the land would still meet the criteria and the SNCI designation on the land would still apply, then it could be considered that no significant harmful impact has occurred to the SNCI*. However, if the land would no longer meet the SNCI criteria post-development, then the SNCI status has been lost/a harmful impact on the SNCI would occur which is not supportable by DM19. An assessment undertaken by a suitably qualified ecologist needs to be carried out to consider the above, which I will then need to review.

*A bespoke land management plan would be required to maintain the lands status as an SNCI long-term if it is going to be multi-use, and (looking at the BNG assessment now) if biodiversity net gains are proposed to be achieved off-site (in other areas on the SNCI) then any land management practices would have to be agreed pre-determination with BCC and any land tenants - there was mention of off-site land that is currently grazed, or would be preferable to continue being grazed in the future and this would not be acceptable ‘in principle’ because tenants would have to be consulted.’

The tenant (Catherine Withers) was never consulted and does not agree to the LEMP so this objection has never been overcome and it is dishonest for the officers to claim it has.

On a personal note I discovered this site during lockdown when I was living in a one bed flat and had no access to nature other than public footpaths and parks. Running through the farm helped me deal with the immense grief I had from losing a friend to suicide. I don’t think I would have survived that without the nature sites in South Bristol which are being plucked off one by one by developers. Approving this puts ALL SNCIs at risk. You are setting a dangerous precedent.

I don’t think officers and cabinet members realise exactly what they are taking away from the community when they recommend sites like this for development. The officers see numbers on a page but they don’t see the human impact that their actions have. They treat us campaigners like some situation that needs to be handled. This is a job to them but to us this is our livelihoods, our mental health, our sanctuaries. We don’t fight with them to be difficult we fight because we have too. They don’t realise the toll this takes on us.

For these reasons, I firmly object to the proposed expansion, urging the planning committee to prioritize preservation, sustainable development, and the well-being of the community and environment alike. We should not be taking nature away from the living to appease the dead.

Thank you,

Danica Priest

Dear Team,

I am very disappointed to hear that plans and discussions are continuing to take back 20 acres of land from a small-tenanted family farm, who have been careful guardians of this land for decades.

Whilst it is important that people have space for a crematorium, in a time of climate and nature emergency, it is imperative that farms who look after nature, carbon, local education and local mental health are fully supported. Regenerative farmers are our single best solution for slowing the pace of climate breakdown and global boiling, as regenerative farming methods lock up carbon back into soil. Taking this much land from this farm will push it over the brink into collapse, destroying an important local business and having severe long term impacts for local nature and the people of Bristol.

The mental health toll this action is having on the farmers is huge, and the lack of engagement is depressing.

I strongly urge you to reconsider the approach to both engaging with the tenants on this land, and the approach to choosing the site for the new crematorium. This is very clearly an unsuitable site and the full range of factors for what this land is currently providing must be demonstrably accounted for. These include:

1. The land of Yew Tree Farm is a designated SNCI
2. Local walkers and runners frequently use Yew Tree Farm as an accessible space. The mental health benefits of nature are clinically proven and extremely important to local communities.
3. The farm is a sustainable local business, showcasing how farming alongside nature and climate can help regenerate the soil and fight climate breakdown.
4. Small farms like this one have historically been treated very poorly by authority, gradually being squeezed from existence. This appears yet another case of this happening.
5. The nature value of this farm is *immense*. I have personally walked it, and as a professional naturalist can confirm it holds species of national importance, particularly it's rare wildflower meadows of which we have now lost 97% nationally. It contains dozens of red-listed bird and insect species. This is thanks to the excellent quality of nature-friendly farming undertaken by Catherine.
6. The NPPF directs that permissions must "Enhance the natural environment by protecting sites of biodiversity". This crematorium plan does the exact opposite of this, and the knock on impact on biodiversity will be far greater than just the land planned for the crematorium by also damaging the viable future of the whole nature-friendly farm.
- 7) Bristol City Council rightly declared an Ecological Emergency in February 2020 after declaring a Climate Emergency in 2019. There is now abundant evidence that the right farming is one of the major solutions to the ecological and climate crisis. These farms MUST be supported and championed, as they are at the vanguard of solving the crisis we are in. I covered this in the 23' film Hungry for Change by the RSPB, WWF and National Trust (link in my footer), and it's well supported by the science, e.g. this paper from Stanford looking at how farm diversity supports nature diversity: <https://phys.org/news/2023-09-farms-habitat-key-food-biodiversity.html>

I strongly OBJECT to the current plans. Please update me with what plans are underway to engage in meaningful dialogue with the current tenants, and what plans are underway to properly assess more suitable sites for this crematorium?

Regards,

Nicholas Gates Director and Producer Wild Isles

Director and Producer Hungry for Change

Author 'Orchard' (Collins)

Professional Naturalist

Dear Committee & members,

I'm writing to you about the Bristol City Council Cemetery expansion planning application (22/05714/FB) which is being heard in Development Control Committee B on the 6th September.

Living north of the river, I have no particular interest in this case except that I was struck by the key stakeholder in this application Catherine Withers and Yew Tree farm seeming to be cut out of the process. BCC has had many opportunities to put its case across but I am concerned that the Committee will not get the full picture unless her voice is given its proper weight.

I am a former investigative journalist and current researcher at a think-tank, but planning is unfamiliar to me. As I understand it there are no more formal routes to lodge an objection through public consultation, but as my concerns are about how BCC has presented the matter to the committee in its Report to Committee of the 31st July (after public consultation has closed) then I thought I had best contact the committee directly.

I hope the Committee has been able to consider this issue properly in background papers and discussions with officers, but the key issue which appears to me to be missing from the report to committee is the current good-management of the site by Yew Tree Farm.

From what I can see, Catherine has been an excellent steward of this land, which her family have farmed for three generations. Not only has she looked after the ecology of the fields, hedgerows and scrubland but she clearly loves telling people about not just her animals but all the other wildlife too. Showcasing off Bristol's last farm as a piece of cultural heritage is a public service and BCC have heretofore recognised that with implied, if not actual, tenants rights to graze this land.

Nowhere in BCC's report does it suggest that Yew Tree Farm is mis-managing the land. It would not be true to say so. So Yew Tree farm, and the current ecological management of the site is not mentioned. There are a few scattered comments and objections relating to Yew Tree farm, but the main thrust of BCC's description of it is to imply it has no role in this process. The claim 'land has since been fully within the Council's control' stretches credulity.

The fact the site is currently well-managed and (a large) part of that is due to Yew Tree Farm is an inconvenient truth because, if I understand National Planning Policy Framework correctly then this planning proposal should only be granted if it 'enhances' ecological management and provides 'net gains'. About the same is not good enough.

BCC's assertion that it will at some point develop a biodiversity and ecology plan does not suggest a significant advancement in biodiversity. Current management of the site as part of a living farm, means there is a high bar set for the proposed biodiversity of a manicured site for the dead. I don't think BCC has a credible plan for 'improving' the ecology of the site, so it has elected not to talk about it.

How the site is currently managed is the perspective that the Committee is missing. It has to understand the land that the cemetery is expanding into before it can determine how Bristol's environment could be improved by this application. For the current ecological management of the site you should be listening to what Catherine has to say.

This is especially important considering that the ecological reports which are the crux of this matter were not made available to the public, or indeed to the main stakeholder to which they related. The public had to learn of these additional reports when a Cabinet member wrote to other stakeholders,

misrepresenting Yew Tree farm as mis-managing the site for allowing scrubland, when this is precisely what the SCNI demands be protected.

So I hope that when the issue is considered in Committee that members will do so with an inquisitive mind, and a recognition that the applicant in this case has had an unusual degree of latitude in presenting its message, so other stakeholders' views are especially important to consider.

Otherwise, thank you for taking the time to read this and I hope you're well.

Sincerely, and all the best,

Sid Ryan

Researcher at the Centre for Health and the Public Interest

Dear Bristol City Council,

I am writing to you as a representative of The Sustainable Food Trust in support of the safeguarding of Yew Tree Farm, as I have been made aware that it is currently under threat from the possible expansion of the cemetery and crematorium land.

We have been working closely with Catherine Withers at Yew Tree Farm for the past two years, delivering a green social prescribing project at the farm – the first of its kind. In partnership with the College of Medicine and the University of Bristol, we have worked with Primary Care Networks across Bristol, enabling a wide range of patients (including those suffering bereavement as well as mental and physical health challenges), to visit Yew Tree Farm for on-farm activities that aim to improve health and wellbeing. Our evaluation, which I'd be happy to share with you, proves the incredibly positive impact that the farm has on individuals from across Bristol.

I know that the farm has enormous support from the local community as well as many wildlife, food and farming organisations who understand the value of Bristol's last working farm – not just in terms of its production of high-quality, nutritious food, but the numerous benefits it provides in terms of climate, nature and the health of the local community. Many of these positive externalities are yet un-costed, however should be considered 'public goods' and a vital part of the solution to our climate, nature, and public health crises.

I am sure you are aware that the farm now forms part of Bristol's newest SNCI – Site of Nature Conservation Interest – and last year an insect (as yet unknown to science) was discovered in the meadow. The farm is organic, nature rich and wildlife friendly, and produces nutritious, health-promoting food for the local community. Much of the landscape has been rewilded, and the farm is home to over 40 species of bird and 20 species of mammal. The site includes a natural hay meadow with over 90 plant and grass species, as well as permanent pasture for the cattle. There are several hundred mature trees, copses, woodland and hedgerows – all within Bristol's city boundary which makes Yew Tree unique.

As a Bristol resident, I am also aware of the commitments Bristol City Council has made to improving its local food infrastructure, as set out in Bristol Good Food 2030: A One City Framework for Action, which aims to transform the city's food system within this decade, supporting its ambitions on health, climate, biodiversity and social justice. There are also 86 references to food in the Local Plan Review, which states: "Since the last local plan was agreed in 2014, we now include new policies on biodiversity and proposes changes of approach at sites such as the Western Slopes, Brislington Meadows and Yew Tree Farm that aim to give priority to nature conservation and food growing. Ecology and sustainability are key to a climate resilient city."

As BCC has publicly acknowledged, Yew Tree Farm offers immense benefits to the Bristol community – enhancing and restoring biodiversity, mitigating flood risk, sequestering carbon, offering climate resilience, providing nutrient-dense and healthy food, and green space for public footpath users and community groups, such as our green social prescribing participants. Considering these benefits, and as Bristol's last working farm, I believe the community would be outraged if it were to be lost. I therefore hope you will ensure that the entire farm is protected.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

With kind regards,

Bonnie Welch - Sustainable Food Trust

Dear whom it may concern,

I am writing to object to the development and threats to Yew Tree Farm in Bristol.

Bristol was the first city to declare an ecological emergency and I felt proud to live in a city that was prioritising the biggest threats we face. However, since the announcement three years ago I am not sure what has been done to address this emergency that the council itself has declared.

Green space across the city is still threatened and we continue to fragment the very few remaining wildlife sites. Yew Tree Farm was a lifeline for me during lockdown, being able to get into nature on my daily walks. We are lucky as Bristolians to have a working farm in the city. To be able to buy local grown food from a nature friendly farm within the city limits. To lose this place would be a shame on the city and the council.

We need space for nature, wildlife, locally grown food and places for citizens to enjoy to get the benefits of nature for our physical and mental health. I hope the council understands this.

Thank you

George Cook

To the committee,

Please read my statement asking you to reject the expansion of South Bristol Crematorium;

I understand this land is protected and forms part of Bristol's Last Working Farm. I love walking here and enjoying the wonderful variety of wildlife, birds and and magnificent views on offer. It is truly incredible the positive impact it has on my mental health and well-being.

I read there were otters that use the stream too, which with so much pollution and disruption to our waterways is testament to those who care for the land.

To dig up land that is protected for nature is wrong. We need these fields for the wellbeing of the living which is surely a priority?

Thank you for your consideration of my statement.

Anna Archer

To whom it may concern

I am writing to protest against the planned expansion of the crematorium at the cost of Yew tree farm. As you know this is the last working farm in the area and it would be great loss to the community, to traditional farming practices and to biodiversity.

Please reconsider your decision and save this valuable piece of Bristol life. Bristol has a reputation of being a very green city so please do not jeopardise this too.

Kind regards

Sou Hayward

Statement for application number 22/05714/FB South Bristol Crematorium expansion

Please can committee read this as my objection to the scheme.

Since 1967 my family have farmed the fields that are proposed for the new burial sites, drainage and attenuation pond.

In 2021 I was told by council officials that historic permitted development would be used to enable this expansion. This was challenged by a more educated person than me as SNCI status should prevent or 'trump' the PD. It is the hard work of individuals this application is even being heard at a planning committee with elected representatives.

The SNCI status granted c1985 under our careful stewardship and love for this land is a reflection of our nature friendly farming practises; SNCI status has since expanded to the whole farm; which is Bristol's last working farm.

The Council's own policy DM19 states clearly that 'development that would cause harmful impact on the nature conservation interest will not be permitted' they are not conditional. On this basis alone this proposal should be refused.

I met with Jonathan James back in 2021 when I was aware of the tenant we sublet from being paid to finish his tenancy. I told him we had farmed this land continuously since 1967, Councillor Eddy was also aware we had been farming this land as if we were tenants. I was very disappointed to not be included as a stakeholder in the submitted plans. Or even consulted as a neighbour. You can decide if this was deliberate or an accidental omission.

You will hear from the officers proposing this application that I will be offered the opportunity to lease the land back to graze my herd of cattle, however we last had contact with officers when we requested a meeting in April 2022. Interestingly we are getting emails from officers only subsequent to recent press coverage of the planning application.

As you may know the farm has been let down by the careless behaviour of the planning authority in recent months at considerable financial and wellbeing cost to myself; I am incredibly wary of any flimsy assurances that have no legal weight for my future tenure if the plans are passed by committee. As the Nature conservation officer highlighted in her previously undisclosed comments – there has to be questions about conditioning future stewardship of the land when there are no legal frameworks in place for the SNCI.

You may be aware that we have been evicted from the ancient hay meadow that provides grazing and winter fodder that the owners are hoping to build 220 houses on; this is creating a huge stress on our resources, if you remove more land that may very well put us out of business.

This development will almost definitely cause the death of a veteran oak and field maple and crab apple tree. Ecology reports will say close supervision of excavation works but experts I have spoken to say these will not survive beyond a couple of years after the works are completed.

The works will involve deep excavation and hundreds of heavy machinery movements over all three fields we currently rent – I am talking huge building site massive subsoil excavations- the land will probably take decades to heal- the quality of forage will be hugely affected for a long period and the biodiversity wrecked.

Yew Tree Farm as is possibly the last home to bullfinches in Bristol and these are completely dependant on scrub along with other red listed birds; I beg BCC not to go about these reductions in scrub without fully checking what lives there.

The cost and huge excavations for drainage are indications this site is the wrong site for burials- it is an important and prominent hillside with protected views from Ashton court and the suspension bridge for a reason, it is steep and water flows towards the flood plain of Ashton Vale.

I am very concerned that the pond will not be made secure from my cattle and may well be polluted groundwater from the solvents and embalming chemicals used for burials- wooden fences do not mean secure fences in my patch! A previous attenuation pond close to the farm became a hub of antisocial behaviour; as a woman farmer who tends to the stock mostly on my own I am greatly worried. The pond runs right beside a public footpath.

Having witnessed flooding on the farm that affects Ashton vale – 3 x main water pipes run from the reservoir at Barrow and that Colliters Brook is the most volatile water course in North Somerset and the greater Bristol area; I am surprised by the drainage from one burial site will not be slowed or filtered via the attenuation pond and discharged directly into Colliters brook from which my cattle drink, is this safe and lawful?

If you are minded to pass this application (ignoring what that may mean for Bristol's food security and biodiversity) can I plead for the application to be postponed until I have a written and legally binding framework which indicates future rental charges (recently Redcatch community garden and Bristol's boat dwellers have been hit with exponential rental agreements from this administration) the state the land will be returned to us, how I can retain our herd of 55 cattle around the works etc.?

As it stands we will have to cull 50% of the herd if this land is fully restricted from our use for any length of time. This will put the farm out of business and leave 2 fulltime and 5 part time workers out of a job.

There is no way this land would be considered in anyway suitable as a burial site if the council did not own it, the protections should not be conditioned and alternative sites should be explored in more detail. Precedents will be sent by the actions of this committee on all SSCI's within Bristol; if development is allowed on a protected site then it is a horrifying future for our wildlife rich hotspots.

Thank you for reading my statement.

Catherine Withers- Farmer at Yew Tree Farm, Bristol

Planning reference number: 22/05714/FB

Dear team,

I strongly OBJECT to the proposed expansion of the crematorium site into the fields currently used by Yew Tree Farm. This is an SNCI and is an essential part of Bristol's biodiversity. Furthermore:

Expansion of the site into the fields that Yew Tree farm currently use will threaten an essential provider for Bristol food. Over the last few years Yew Tree Farm has transformed into a local producer of sustainable and local food. It serves the local area with food and invaluable green space in one of Bristols most deprived postcodes.

Expansion of a crematorium will be an irreversible threat to wildlife: the biodiversity provided by the hedges and grassland of the proposed site has been well documented, including on BBCs country file and Radio 4. Bristol has declared an ecological emergency and protection of this land is essential.

The space is hugely important for the physical and mental well-being of local people. It provides access to green spaces via footpaths for local people. Local people treasure this space and treat it beautifully.

The continued threats of development on this SNCI are seriously disturbing. Sustainable farming is the future of food production and this has been well documented. We should be treasuring and supporting farms like this instead of trying to destroy them with a war of attrition.

I am aware of the need for burial sites and I am sure that other, more suitable areas within Bristol can be explored with time and creativity. We absolutely can balance the protection of our green spaces and SNCIs with the growing demand on our services. It just requires open discussion with ALL stakeholders.

Many Thanks,

Jasmine Beard

Dear Bristol City Council,

I am writing to you to ask that Yew Tree Farm is safeguarded from development and that alternative solutions are found for the expansion of the crematorium. I write from the perspective of someone who, as a member of the University of Bristol and the College of Medicine, has recently had the privilege of delivering a Green Social Prescribing project at Yew Tree Farm for patients registered with Bristol general practices. As a GP for many years in the city, I have been able to see at first hand just how much benefit patients get from their visits. Much more than I was often able to provide from pills or long hospital waiting lists.

We have been working closely with Catherine Withers at Yew Tree Farm for the past two years, delivering a green social prescribing project at the farm – the first of its kind. In partnership with the Sustainable Food Trust, we have worked with Primary Care Networks across Bristol, enabling a wide range of patients (including those suffering bereavement as well as mental and physical health challenges), to visit Yew Tree Farm for on-farm activities that aim to improve health and wellbeing. Our evaluation, which I'd be happy to share with you, proves the incredibly positive impact that the farm has on individuals from across Bristol.

I know that the farm has enormous support from the local community as well as many wildlife, food and farming organisations who understand the value of Bristol's last working farm – not just in terms of its production of high-quality, nutritious food, but the numerous benefits it provides in terms of climate, nature and the health of the local community. Many of these positive externalities are yet un-costed, however should be considered 'public goods' and a vital part of the solution to our climate, nature, and public health crises.

I am sure you are aware that the farm now forms part of Bristol's newest SSSI – Site of Nature Conservation Interest – and last year an insect (as yet unknown to science) was discovered in the meadow. The farm is organic, nature rich and wildlife friendly, and produces nutritious, health-promoting food for the local community. Much of the landscape has been rewilded, and the farm is home to over 40 species of bird and 20 species of mammal. The site includes a natural hay meadow with over 90 plant and grass species, as well as permanent pasture for the cattle. There are several hundred mature trees, copses, woodland and hedgerows – all within Bristol's city boundary which makes Yew Tree Farm unique.

I am also aware of the commitments Bristol City Council has made to improving its local food infrastructure, as set out in Bristol Good Food 2030: A One City Framework for Action, which aims to transform the city's food system within this decade, supporting its ambitions on health, climate, biodiversity and social justice. There are also 86 references to food in the Local Plan Review, which states: "Since the last local plan was agreed in 2014, we now include new policies on biodiversity and proposed changes of approach at sites such as the Western Slopes, Brislington Meadows and Yew Tree Farm that aim to give priority to nature conservation and food growing. Ecology and sustainability are key to a climate resilient city."

As BCC has publicly acknowledged, Yew Tree Farm offers immense benefits to the Bristol community – enhancing and restoring biodiversity, mitigating flood risk, sequestering carbon, offering climate resilience, providing nutrient-dense and healthy food, and green space for public footpath users and community groups, such as our green social prescribing participants. Considering these benefits, and as Bristol's last working farm, I believe the community would be outraged if it were to be lost. I therefore hope you will ensure that the entire farm is protected.

I'd be happy to engage further on this matter,

Yours sincerely

Deborah J Sharp BA MA BM BCh PhD FRCGP OBE

Professor of Primary Health Care

University of Bristol

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing to you to ask that Yew Tree Farm is safeguarded protected from development and that alternative solutions are found for the expansion of the crematorium.

I know that the farm has enormous support from the local community as well as many wildlife, food and farming organisations who understand the value of Bristol's last working farm – not just in terms of its production of high-quality, nutritious food, but the numerous benefits it provides in terms of climate, nature and the health of the local community. Many of these positive externalities are yet un-costed, however should be considered 'public goods' and a vital part of the solution to our climate, nature, and public health crises.

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Yours sincerely

Selena Gray Professor Emerita UWE

BS14 0BU

To Bristol City Council,

I am writing to you to ask that Yew Tree Farm be safeguarded from development and that alternative solutions are found for the expansion of the crematorium.

Catherine Withers at Yew Tree Farm has enormous support from the local community as well as many wildlife, food and farming organisations who understand the value of Bristol's last working farm – not just in terms of its production of high-quality, nutritious food, but the numerous benefits it provides in terms of climate, nature and the health of the local community. Many of these positive externalities are yet un-costed, but should be considered 'public goods' and a vital part of the solution to our climate, nature, and public health crises.

I am sure you are aware that the farm now forms part of Bristol's newest Site of Nature Conservation Interest. The farm is organic, nature rich and wildlife friendly, and produces nutritious, health-promoting food for the local community. Much of the landscape has been rewilded, and the farm is home to over 40 species of bird and 20 species of mammal. The site includes a natural hay meadow with over 90 plant and grass species, as well as permanent pasture for the cattle. There are several hundred mature trees, copses, woodland and hedgerows – all within Bristol's city boundary which makes Yew Tree Farm unique. I am also aware of the commitments Bristol City Council has made to improving its local food infrastructure, as set out in Bristol Good Food 2030: A One City Framework for Action, which aims to transform the city's food system within this decade, supporting its ambitions on health, climate, biodiversity and social justice. There are also 86 references to food in the Local Plan Review, which states: "Since the last local plan was agreed in 2014, we now include new policies on biodiversity and proposed changes of approach at sites such as the Western Slopes, Brislington Meadows and Yew Tree Farm that aim to give priority to nature conservation and food growing. Ecology and sustainability are key to a climate resilient city."

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Yours Sincerely

Dr Michael Norman

Lodge Farm

Lower Langford

I object to this application. SNCIs and local food production should be prioritised in a climate crisis.

Paul Becker

Objection

I object on The grounds that a SNRI will be destroyed with this development. The farm will struggle to be a working farm and the green belt is being used used up making this a rich biodiverse site for wildlife.

I hope you can find another path forwards and not destroy more land that is so important.

Yours sincerely,

Natalie Edwards BS7 8LJ

Dear Council,

I strongly urge you to refuse this application for expanding into Yew Tree Farm. The site is protected for nature and wildlife.

As a customer of Yew Tree Farm, I know how passionate Catherine is about looking after the farm in the best possible way for nature. We cannot lose the farm to yet more development.

It is a joy to see the cows grazing on the hillside, and see and hear the birds.

You wouldn't consider knocking down a listed building, so why is it acceptable to ruin protected fields ? We stand to lose a very valuable asset to Bristol if you approve this application.

Planning application ref: 22/05714/FB - South Bristol Crematorium And Cemetery Bridgwater Road Bristol BS13 7AS

The proposed cemetery extension into Areas 3 & 4 and the proposed linking drainage associated with these proposals are within the Colliter's Brook Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI). This Local Plan designation is protected by Site Allocations and Development Management Policy DM19: 'Development which would have a harmful impact on the nature conservation value of a Site of Nature Conservation Interest will not be permitted.' – page 40.

The passages from DM19, which the officer quotes in his report – at 10.15 to 10.17 – ignore the express prohibition relating to SNCIs quoted above. This overrides the more generic policy quoted. The evidence produced by the applicant, including its ecological evidence, shows that the proposed development of these two areas will be harmful: fencing will be erected, drains will be installed, an attenuation pond will be excavated, and, in due course, graves will be excavated and those buried there will be visited and, perhaps, memorialised. I accept that burials may not start in Area 3 for some years and that there are proposals to mitigate this harm. However, harm will still be caused both to the Urban Landscape and to the SNCI, both immediately and in the long term. This is not permitted.

The applicant's plans will also result in a net loss of 6.75% of area habitat units. To compensate for this loss, it is proposed to provide offsite BNG in other parts of the SNCI outside the development area. The Council's ecologist has, in a recent planning appeal (paragraph 7.5, p. 19), advised against seeking to offset lost onsite biodiversity by using an offsite SNCI: 'Due to its existing level of interest this land [the SNCI] is unsuitable for biodiversity enhancement.' This loss of BNG also amounts to 'a harmful impact' which DM19, as it relates to SNCIs, does not permit.

The areas of species-rich grassland on the site are of high nature conservation value in a local context and include species such as strawberry clover and a diversity of limestone grassland species, such as lady's bedstraw, mouse-ear hawkweed and common bird's-foot trefoil. Other habitats and species on site are of high importance for wildlife locally.

SNCI's are a vital part of the network of protected wildlife sites in Bristol and underpin all local, national and international conservation objectives. As Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's), nature reserves and country parks only cover a small percentage of land, SNCI's provide important wildlife refuges, reducing fragmentation, linking different habitats and helping to maintain biodiversity. SNCI's are also valuable in enhancing the health and wellbeing of local communities. SNCI's are a key tool for planners to ensure the sensitive development of Local Plans. ALL SNCI's in Bristol need to be fully protected and effectively managed for wildlife to ensure that there is an ecologically coherent network of sites.

I therefore object to this planning application and recommend that this committee refuses this application.

Neill Talbot

Ecologist, Avellana Ecology

5th September 2023

Dear Sir / madam

I'm writing in support of the safeguarding, in perpetuity, of Yew Tree Farm and to give you a few reasons why it is not advisable to remove productive, socially connected, nature-friendly farmland and replace it with crematorium land.

1. Recreational value: the site currently serves as a beloved recreational area for residents. removing this facility from the local and wider community for a crematorium expansion would deprive the community of a valuable space for leisure and enjoyment. For example, at CPRE we are aware that the Sustainable Food Trust is working with Catherine Wither at Yew Tree Farm, running a highly successful and innovative Social prescribing project delivering measurable benefits to vulnerable groups experiencing mental health issues.
2. Impact on Yew tree farm: expanding the crematorium could have devastating consequences for Yew Tree Farm , potentially forcing it out of business. This would harm not only the farms livelihood but also the local food economy and a source of local food supply to Bristol markets. The farm has enormous support from the local community as well as food and farming charities who understand the value of Bristol last working farm.
3. Climate and ecological concern, in the face of the climate and ecological emergency , it is imperative that we protect and enhance our green spaces. Expanding a crematorium at this location runs counter to our commitment to combatting these urgent issues. I am sure you are aware that the farm now forms part of Bristol's newest SNCI- Site of Nature Conservation Interest. The farm is nature rich and wildlife friendly, working with nature and farming traditionally to produce delicious local food. Much of the landscape has been rewilded and farmed regeneratively, and its home to over 40 species of bird and 20 species of mammal. The site includes a natural hay meadow with over 90 plant and grass species, as well as permanent pasture for the cattle. There are several hundred mature trees, copse, woodland and hedgerows – all within Bristol's city boundary which makes Yew Tree unique in contributing towards Net Zero targets and nature recovery commitments.
4. The proposal opposes BCC policy: As the Director of CPRE Avon and Bristol, I am very aware of the commitments Bristol City Council has made to improving its local food infrastructure, as set out in the Bristol Good Food 2030: A One City Framework for Action, which aims to transform the city's food system within this decade, supporting its ambitions on health, climate, biodiversity and social justice. There are also 86 references to food in the Local Plan Review (Food Sustainability: Para. 7.3, and policies FS1, 2 and 3 of the Local Plan Review).

In summary, Yew Tree Farm offers immense benefits to the Bristol community – enhancing and restoring biodiversity, mitigating flood risk, carbon sequestration, climate resilience, providing nutrient-dense and healthy food, and offering a green space for public footpath users and community groups Considering these benefits, and as Bristol's last working farm, I believe the community would be outraged if it were to be lost. In light of these concerns, I urge the relevant authorities to reconsider the proposal and seek alternative solutions that do not compromise our greenbelt, nature conservation efforts, recreational spaces, local business and our commitment to addressing the climate and ecological emergency.

Yours Faithfully,

Mary-Jane Wilshire

Objection to expansion of Bristol Crematorium into SNCI.

As councillors for Southville ward, a ward for which the Colliters Brook SNCI and YewTree Farm is a major starting point for biodiversity pathways that bring nature into our urban area, we wish to express our concern regarding plans to expand South Bristol Crematorium into land that is a registered SNCI.

This is undeveloped Green Belt land that also provides a key element of grazing land that is vital to the continued sustainability of Bristol's last working farm, Yewtree Farm. In fact we recently joined councillors from all parties as well as dozens of local residents, including many from our ward, at an event to register the high level of support for protecting Yewtree Farm and its SNCI status.

It would seem perverse, if not hypocritical, for elected councilors to raise objections to attempts by a private landowner and developer to cut through a species rich hedgerow in a SNCI and then ignoring the council as a landowner planning to cut through four hedgerows also in a SNCI!

As councillors, we should be expecting our council to work to higher standards than private landowners and developers – otherwise we are in danger of losing our credibility when we seek to hold others to account in areas such as Brislington Meadows or the Western Slopes.

We recognise that the council has identified a need for additional burial spaces and that of the eight existing crematoria/burial sites, they say this is the only option. However the council has, by its own admission restricted the search parameters for additional, new, sites on the basis of time and cost.

Regardless of the above, the lack of alternative sites is not a material planning consideration. The Planning Committee need to reach their determination purely on this site alone. And what IS a material planning consideration is that the land being proposed for development is a registered Site of Nature Conservation Interest in the Green Belt – this land provides vital grazing to a now unique farm within Bristol that is making a major contribution to nature, food sustainability and health and wellbeing not just for this part of South Bristol but far beyond.

We ask that the planning committee reject this application, and request the council to explore the full range of options to provide additional burial sites on land that is not a site of nature conservation interest.

Cllr Christine Townsend

Cllr Tony Dyer

I would like to raise my concern regarding the development plans for the above. The plan for such a large development would congest an extremely busy area causing traffic chaos, adding additional dangers to local school and other facilities. It would do considerable damage to the carbon footprint in this location with so many cars and services needed to facilitate such a large development. Trees of historic and environmental benefits would be discarded making it a less pleasant place for the children attending Westbury Park School. Taking care of the elderly is a vital part of the community as a whole, but if you look around the area it is clear there are a lot of home's catering for them (I am one). The scale of this development is detrimental to the well being of so many.

Hello,

Please can you halt any plans that will threaten the future of Yew Tree Farm.

I know the need for more burial space is important but this reason is being used as the perfect weapon against the preservation of the farm.
Because it can't be criticised.

The council and mayor have pledged support for the farm, but the allowance of a succession of increasing threats paints a different picture of long term intentions.

Please consider that this wonderful farm, the wildlife, the ancient trees and hedgerows, and the land it occupies is a very good thing for the people of Bristol and well worth preserving.

And it will also make you look good.

Yours sincerely.
Alec Jennings

Good evening,

Please place on record that I object to any development of Yew Tree Farm in Bristol.

Under the right to information act, I would like feedback of any communication regarding this matter.

Regards,

Alison Garbet

WITH REFERENCE TO THE PROPOSED BURIAL SITE AT YEW TREE FARM BRISTOL

To the Planning Department Bristol City Council

Dear Head of Planning BCC

I am writing to strongly object to the BCC planning proposal to use the 20 acres of Council Land at Yew Tree Farm Bristol as a new burial site.

I understand this land is a SNCI and should be protected for its environmental value. We cannot afford as a world and as a country to give up these sites to ANY form of development.

They should be protected at all costs and other sites should be examined.

I understand that BCC is not supporting the fact that this land is a SNCCI and that the decision to put this proposal to BCC for planning consent has not been given the proper scrutiny that is incumbent on a civic Council.

I would be grateful if my objection to this planning proposal is acknowledged at the planning meeting to discuss this proposal and all outcomes are communicated to me at this email address.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Yours Faithfully

Andrea Waites

You as individual council employees and councillors are all being asked to cease and desist in the wilful destruction of the environment, the impact and irreparable damage you intend doing. You have not carried out any meaningful environmental and health assessments on the proposed destruction of the farm and its wildlife setting including horseshoe bats.

Your attempt to ride roughshod over democratic and environmental and human protection puts you in direct opposition to your remit in democratic process stepping outside that which you as public servants are required to adhere to.

Cease and desist or you all will be held accountable and face the righteous justice of we the people.

Anthony Burrell.

To whom this may concern,

I am very troubled by a video I have seen regarding a land order being rushed through and ignoring the SNCI that is in place.

The decision to wreck ancient trees and grasslands should never be rushed through without proper debate and the opportunity for local people to have their say.

I request that this is paused until the proper measures for debate can be taken.

Thank you

Absolutely disgusted that you are planning, without due consent or notification, to destroy significant part of this farm with valuable grassland for development.

Appreciate im not a resident but what a bad reflection on your Council if they proceed despite assurances to the contrary.

Just smacks of untoward influence by wealthy developers.

Shameful and very very disappointing.

Regards

Caroline and Adam Phillips

Good morning, to whom ever this may concern.

I have woken up to find some distressing news that there are expansion plans to build across Bristow's last working farm in order to expand the crematorium.

As you may know, cremating releases, extremely harmful gases and is not good for the environment in itself. Why not focus on pushing through human composting - the greenest option for our damaged and hurt planet <https://terramation.uk/>.

Expanding the crematorium will only cause further destruction to our important Greenbelt.

Please don't do this!

Objection from 5 Bristol people here:

Charlotte Roest-Ellis
Chris Williams
Yvonne Ellis
Sascha Holland
Sebastian Roest-Ellis

Sirs,

In light of the political debacle in Plymouth and Sheffield last year I have considered your planning processes. I am informed that you are currently looking at Yew Tree Farm with a view to taking out a vast swath of ancient trees. Your actions will be far worse than those taken by Plymouth and Sheffield Councils. Most of the trees they took out were stand-alone trees or young trees that had not matured to integrate to a wider ecology. However, you are apparently considering the destruction of a beautiful area with an established and mature mixed ecology.

This is both bizarre thinking and completely contrary to modern economic and ecological thinking. To wantonly destroy such wooded and effective ecological areas is nothing short of criminal.

Considering the backlash from the actions in Plymouth and Sheffield, I would think that it would be of concern to officers and to politicians. For in both those cases noted above, and in other places, actions such as you are considering have led to sackings and council resignations. Given the weight of public opinion that is building around this particular development, I suggest that it would be worth thinking again. In these times of considerable public anger over brash environmental destruction Councils cannot afford to ruin their stability by having extra elections over the moves perpetrated by bad planning actions.

I hope that you will reconsider this scheme. I for one will join in public admonishment and protest alongside thousands of others to ensure this is identified as yet another environmental scandal. There are serious ecological and climate crisis implications of this sort of scheme. It must not go ahead.

Yours,
Mr. D. Guy

This site is in the greenbelt

- other burial land options have not been explored

- The site is an SNCI (site of nature conservation interest) and therefore should be subject to policy DM19 and left untouched.

- Bristol city council passed a motion in sept 2021 that said our greenbelt and nature rich green sites should be protected. Passing this would contravene this motion.

- There are beautiful veteran trees, 'king of limbs' that would be damaged and quite possibly critically .

- This is a site of recreation for residents and is cherished by them.

- Yew Tree Farm would be put out of business

- we are in a climate and ecological emergency. Act commensurately with the crisis we are all in and leave beloved site as it is.

- It would be a symbolic desecration of something that should be preserved and celebrated. If destroyed it is irreplaceable .

I object any building on Yew Tree Farm

I am writing to strongly object to the proposed extension of South Bristol Crematorium. Whilst it is important that families have somewhere to remember their loved ones who have died, it is not appropriate to provide this at a location with SNCI status impacting the operation of the last paddock farm in Bristol, which is run with strong ecological stewardship.

As Bristol Council is both the owner and the planning decision maker, it seems that not only is the council able to rule it's own interest, but also it is not putting it's ecological responsibilities high enough and as a council that has declared a climate and ecological emergency, it is operating contrary to its publicly stated goals.

A better course of action would be to assign an independent committee to make this decision or a local referendum. We have many concerns about the ability of Bristol Council Planning to make this decisions fairly and taking into account the needs of all stakeholders.

Ultimately, we should not be removing ecologically important land for many obvious reasons, particularly when looking to the future and the possible need for the UK to be able to sustain itself independently.

I object to this application and the way in which it is being managed.

Duncan Porter

Dear Planning Committee,

I object to the Yew Tree Farm application to expand the South Bristol Crematorium site.

Surely there is brownfield land elsewhere that can be used for this purpose, that can be made into a peaceful and beautiful burial ground?

There is already a drainage point belonging to Network Rail- please explore that use that instead of building a new attenuation pond which in the past has attracted antisocial behaviour.

Could you clarify why you will be putting embalmed bodies next to a protected nature stream?

The site is a SNCI which protects the site and prevents development. I am also concerned that the planning committee chair seems to think this development is a predetermined decision.

Please don't further erode the integrity and the decision making process at Bristol City Council and refuse your own application.

Sincerely

Fiona Evans

Ref Expansion of Bristol crematorium into lane currently forming part of Yew tree farm

To whom it may concern

I urge you to consider the negative impact on people and nature of the local area as a result of proposals that may lead to the closure of yew tree farm. Key considerations must include:

- impact on physical and mental health of the local community. The land of yew tree farm is an area commonly used by walkers and runners for exercise that contributes to improved health in both aspects
- impact on nature. The land of yew tree farm is a designated SSSI
- impact on education, history and sustainability . The operation of yew tree farm is important to the preservation of historic and future farming, providing education opportunities to all visitors of a key UK industry and leading the way in environmentally appropriate and sustainable food production and supply
- impact on business. Yew tree farm contributes to the local economy through its farming, farm shop and attendance at local markets. Catherine also supports local business networks individually

Sincerely
Gary Hunt

Dear Sir/Madam

I object to this planning application on the grounds that it is an SNCI & therefore development should not be permitted.

This is Bristol's last working farm & as well as producing top quality produce is a valuable site for nature and wildlife and it should remain so for the future.

Regards

Hilary Rydon

Dear Sir or Madam

I understand the council operates eight burial sites around the city but only four have space to accommodate new graves and other four are full. I understand Council decided in March 2020 to expand the crematorium area in a £1.4m plan.

I wish to object to this proposal due to it's impact on Yew Tree Farm which I understand has been farming on the proposed site for 500 years .

My objection is based on ...

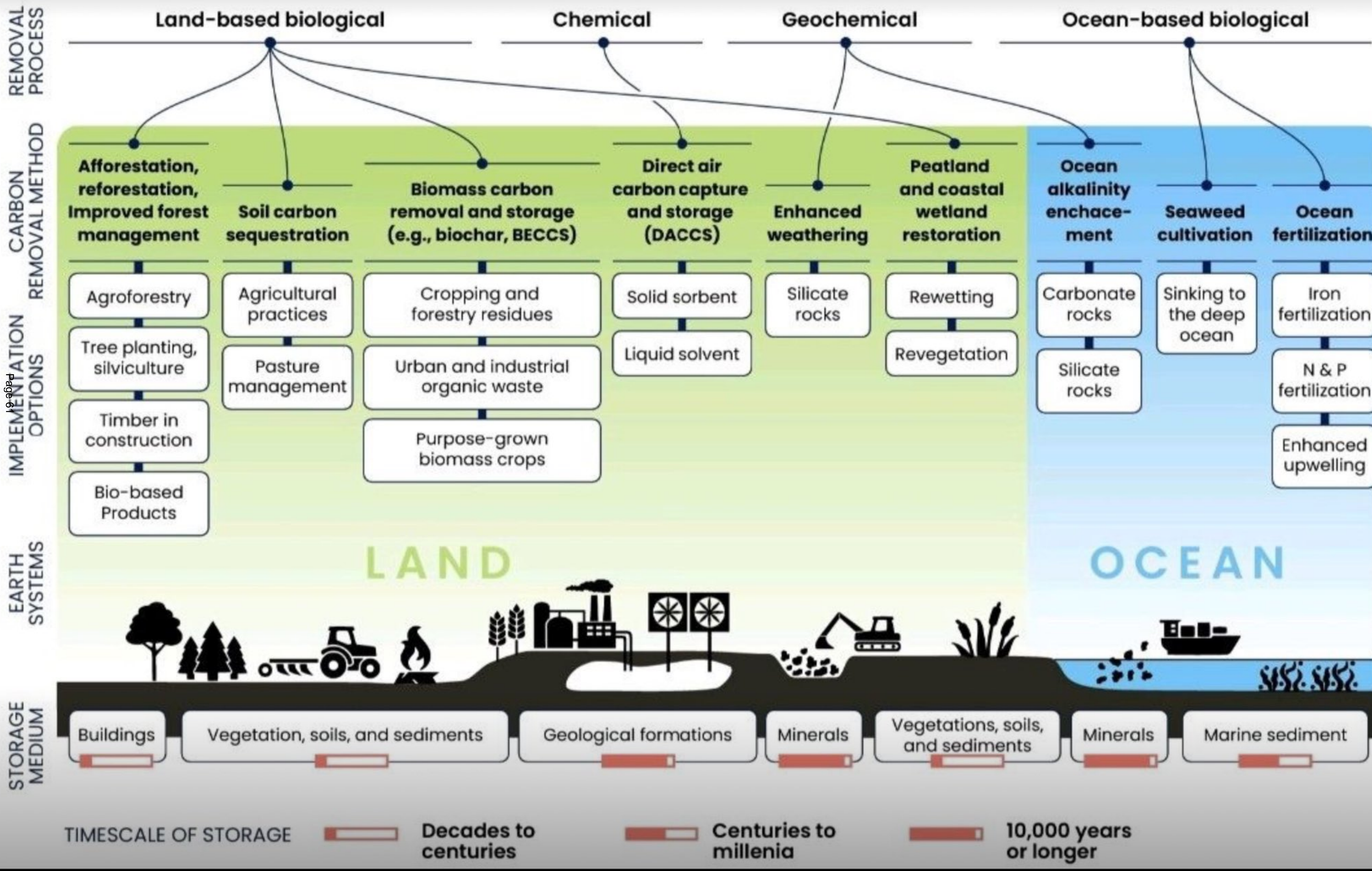
- Yew Tree Farm being a protected view
- Part of an SNCI (no development allowed)
- No legal guarantees from your representatives to date regarding ongoing access
- Yew Tree Farm has lost 50 acres to date

Working in the climate management space it is also informed by twenty processes required to deliver climate management to cost (\$120-160 trillion dollars globally),time(2050) and quality(1.5 degrees centigrade) . I attach a copy of these processes by way of advice . I am assuming this has already been captured in your assessment of the environmental impact of the crematorium proposal . Agriculture as you can see plays a significant role in the task at hand . I would therefore ask you to reconsider your proposal .

Regards

Iain Meyrick

Sherwood Project Management



Hello

I wanted to email to let you know myself and my family use this land for walking and for therapeutic purposes. Yew tree farm provides us with peace and calm in an ever increasing frantic world.

As a therapist I recommend this to my clients who suffer with anxiety and panic attacks and mental health disorders to visit this place to allow themselves to reconnect with nature and themselves

You are removing a much needed space of land. I would like to be invited to the consultation before this goes ahead and I am against this land being used as a burial ground

Thank you

Jackie

Dear Committee,

I object to this application for the following reasons:

- [] Site is in the greenbelt
- [] No other burial land options have been explored
- [] The site is an SSSI (site of nature conservation interest) and therefore should not be touched according to policy DM19
- [] Bristol city council passed a motion in sept 2021 that said our greenbelt and nature rich green sites should be protected. Passing this would violate the green spaces motion
- [] There are veteran trees that would be damaged to the point of death
- [] This is a beloved site of recreation for residents
- [] This would put Yew Tree Farm out of business
- [] This is against our climate and ecological emergency.

May I suggest strongly that the council investigates alternative options for a new burial area with high priority.

Looking forward to a favourable response.

Kind regards,

Jamie Rutherford

Dear planning committee

The thought that you are even considering expanding the crematorium into Yew Tree farm land is madness.

This is the very last farm within the Bristol boundary and gives so many people the opportunity to experience all nature can offer. With so many plants birds and insects close to extinction in this area. Where else can people access these wonderful acts of nature without having to drive miles.

Why not expand the other side of the crematorium into Bristol City Council land, which is currently only used for dog walkers and scramble bikes who tear up the ground. This land is never used for any other reason and is becoming very overgrown with brambles also the wooded area below leading to the rail line is never used as it is so overgrown.

I understand that there are cottages on the downs but the expansion would be behind these.

Please I implore you do not do this. We are losing too much of nature as it is without this thoughtless act which can never be rectified or compensated.

Jean Harkess

Dear Sirs

I am dismayed to see that Yew Tree Farm is under threat from the above application. I visit the farm regularly and love to see all the birds, wildlife and insects enjoying the fabulous natural habitat. I go home with a profound sense of wellbeing after each visit.

I buy produce from the farm, too, and would miss this greatly if production ceased. It is organic and local, we cannot ask for more.

I cannot believe that Bristol City Council, who enjoyed recognition as a Green City some years ago, would allow such a natural scientific gem to be destroyed for the benefit of the dead when the living are struggling to accommodate a planet under threat.

Please consider the benefit to everyone's mental health, having access to such a wonderful site and do not allow this application to be approved.

Jennifer Padfield

Re the proposed extension of South Bristol Cemetery by taking land from Yew Tree Farm
As a regular walker and customer of the last farm in Bristol i am very concerned that the council propose to repurpose prime farming land which is SNCI to bury dead bodies on.
Please do not make this decision as once the usage of the land is changed it will be gone forever.
I attended a recent rally at the farm which was also supported by many local councillors so i think it is hypocritical of them to then turn round and vote this change of use through.

Jeremy Halpenny

To whom it may concern

Please refuse the expansion of South Bristol Cemetery on to land currently occupied by Yew Tree Farm.

I realise that green spaces allowing people to relax, be in touch with nature and enjoy walking, enabling them to remain physically and mentally fit and healthy is bad for business for South Bristol Crematorium, however surely the livelihoods of the living rather than the dead should take precedence?

All best

Joanne

Joanne Finkel

To whom it may concerns,

It is utterly disgraceful that you feel entitled to rush the expansion of the Bristol crematorium to the planning committee. How can the cremation of the dead be considered more important than the production of food, preservation of the green belt and protection of wildlife.

This is historic land and considered a SNCI. Please reconsider your plans and save the Yew Tree Farm.

regards,

Jordana Davarian-Cross

I am extremely concerned by this potential threat to the existence of Yew Tree Farm. This is a wonderful place ,the last working farm within Bristol's boundary, an SNCI on our doorstep rich in all sorts of interesting wildlife: plants, birds, butterflies etc. It is a joy to visit, to walk across the fields to relax and enjoy the surroundings. There is also the opportunity to buy delicious organic produce e.g meat, eggs, vegetables and to enjoy a tasty organic bacon or sausage bap with a cup of tea or coffee on a Saturday morning. Catherine also delivers produce to the surrounding area, and sells directly to customers on a weekly market, allowing local people access to good, fresh local food at reasonable prices. I cannot even think about the potential loss of this farm. It would be detrimental to the whole area and goes against everything we are being told about food security, loss of biodiversity, climate change etc.etc. Please do not allow this to happen

Julia Halpenny



Objection to planning application 22/05714/FB

Dear Mr Westbury,

I write regarding the planning application to Bristol City Council reference 22/05714/FB regarding *Expansion of existing cemetery and crematorium to provide new burial and memorial plots with associated roads, footpaths, parking, drainage infrastructure, fencing, landscaping and furniture.*

NFU member Mrs Withers of Yew Tree Farm, BS13 8AJ, currently sublets land from the South Bristol Crematorium (hereafter referred to as “the crematorium”) to graze cattle. As representatives of this farming business, the NFU objects to the content and process of this application.

With regards the expansion of the crematorium and additional development required, this will require Mrs Withers to significantly reduce her cattle herd as a result of reduced land on which to graze. Mrs Withers provides beef for the Bristol community, selling directly into food outlets in the city rather than trading on the open market and exporting the product elsewhere. This is a valuable source of local, traceable, high-quality food for the people of Bristol. The UK government has made commitments on both the environment and food security, for which beef production like that at Yew Tree Farm plays an essential role. Without this local farming business, more of Bristol’s residents would be eating beef which has been sourced from further away, with the associated carbon footprint of transport this entails.

Furthermore, the development of the site would include laying new drainage channels. This drainage infrastructure would have a detrimental effect on several veteran trees which would be unable to survive the disruption to their root system. These trees provide both habitat, landscape, heritage and carbon offset, which is essential given the Net Zero targets of both the government and the NFU, to which farmers are committed. The site is also on or a Site of Nature Conservation Interest, which demands that no development should be permitted which impacts the nature of the site. Ref: DM19

In addition to these environmental and business issues, I understand that Mrs Withers has not had any contact from Bristol City Council since May 2022, when she met with an engineer and officer. A meeting was requested in May 2023 but got no response. She has now been served with the planning application for expansion without being granted an appropriate length of time to scrutinise and discuss the application. We understand some documentation has been submitted outside of the appropriate time frame. Crucially, there has been no assurance forthcoming to Mrs Withers that she will be allowed access to the land at a future stage, nor have any legal agreements or contracts been discussed. We request that much more engagement be made to



ensure the future security of the farm with senior officers/legal team who have the authority and accountability to confirm the terms of future tenure.

I hope this letter makes it quite clear that the proposed expansion of the crematorium as it stands would have a detrimental impact on local food production, rural business and the environment.

Yours sincerely

Katie Jarvis
NFU County Advisor Gloucestershire

Good afternoon

I am writing to provide a statement in support of Yew Tree Farm. It is a very popular and necessary environment for walking, wildlife watching and supporting local producers from the working farm and surrounding network.

A burial site should not be permitted. It would be a terrible step backward for us locals.

It is an SNCI and should not be developed.

Kind regards
Kate

I object to the proposed cemetery extension and linking drainage on the following grounds:

1. Drainage

There is potential for the drainage from the burial site to be directed to already existing drainage installed by Network Rail in the second field. It's not clear to me why the Council has not approached Network Rail to explore this potential solution, thus obviating the need to dig a huge attenuation pond with all the associated works and potential for antisocial issues in this field.

2. Existing Protections

These proposals are in an Urban Landscape - Prominent Green Hillside and within Colliter's Brook SNCI. As such they are protected by Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DM17 and DM19. These prohibitions are absolute "will not be permitted".

Your sincerely,

Kate Whittle, Local Resident

Good morning,

I am writing to strongly object to this application to extend the crematorium.

The impact on Yew Tree Farm will be considerable and in times of world insecurity we need to support our food growers to be able to feed our living population. I regularly buy produce from the farm and if we lose this local producer it takes away our option to shop local and support a local independent business, making us even more dependent on the supermarkets.

This area is an SNCI and a wildlife haven and should be protected from development. Bristol City Council maintains it supports the protection of the environment but this development is completely contradictory to that.

There are new initiatives around how we treat our dead, such as water cremation and the Council should be supporting the crematorium to explore those rather than take the land grab option. We are an aging population and we can't just keep expanding out to support outdated practices.

Kind regards

Linda Gorton

Dear whom this may concern

I object to the application proposed for Yew Tree farm in Bristol. This is a Site of National Conservation Interest (SCNI) and is incredibly important to not only the local area's biodiversity and communities, but also to the whole UK.

97% of wildflower meadows in the UK have been lost, we HAVE to protect the last 3%, not to mention the incredibly established trees, who have been around longer than us, our parents, and their parents, and should be around for our children, and their children.

We cannot solely focus on planting new trees, without protecting and preserving the wild spaces we already have!

Please preserve this farm, it's so important to Bristol and those of us who live here.

Lizzy Horn

This site is in the greenbelt

- No other burial land options have been explored
- The site is an SSSI (site of nature conservation interest) and therefore should not be touched according to policy DM19
- Bristol city council passed a motion in sept 2021 that said our greenbelt and nature rich green sites should be protected. Passing this would violate the green spaces motion
- There are veteran trees that would be damaged to the point of death
- This is a beloved site of recreation for residents
- This would put Yew Tree Farm out of business
- This is against our climate and ecological emergency.

The world is on fire. You should be making every effort to save the farm and precious spaces like it , not destroying them.

Dear Democratic Services,

I am a local resident in Bedminster and previously of Bedminster Down. Yew Tree Farm is such an important resource for locals and particularly children and also represents 500 years of farming and is the only farm left in Bristol.

I am deeply concerned that the Farm is under threat due to the expansion of the Crematorium. This Farm has been beleaguered by threats of closure and this needs to stop.

It is also an SNCI and for that reason alone it should be preserved.

I urge you to make sure that this site is preserved and that there will be no more attempts at closing it down and developing the site

kind regards

Michelle Ruse

Subject: Concerns Regarding Expansion of Crematorium onto Council Owned Farm Land with High Natural Capital Value and Scientific Interest

Dear Councillors,

I am writing as a concerned member of the community to express my deep distress over the proposed expansion of the crematorium onto the council-owned farm land situated at Yew Tree Farm. This land holds immense natural capital value and has recently been identified as of significant scientific interest due to the discovery of new insect species within its boundaries.

As you are undoubtedly aware, the preservation of our natural environment and the protection of unique ecosystems are vital responsibilities we bear for future generations. The council-owned farm land in question serves as an essential habitat for various flora and fauna, including the newly discovered insect species, which may have crucial ecological roles that are yet to be fully understood. Encroaching upon this sensitive area with a facility like a crematorium could lead to irreversible damage and irreparable loss to our local biodiversity.

The scientific community has shown keen interest in studying the newly discovered insect species, which may hold immense potential for enhancing our understanding of ecology, genetics, and their potential applications in various fields. The council-owned farm land, now recognised as a site of scientific interest, offers a unique opportunity for researchers and scientists to further their studies in entomology, biodiversity, and ecological conservation. We have a responsibility to support these endeavours and foster a spirit of scientific exploration for the benefit of our community and the broader world.

The value of the last council owned farm, as part of the green belt corridor, providing the 'lungs of Bristol', essential wildlife corridors and a farm managed in an environmentally sustainable and ecological friendly manner, should also not be underestimated. Reducing the total available acreage to the farmer will jeopardise what is already a precarious business.

This development needs therefore to be viewed at an holistic level where the biodiversity, economic, environmental and ecological long term losses need to be set against the apparent convenience of this short term solution to crematorium expansion. This, at a time when the council should also be considering the whole question of the impact of cremations on energy consumption and air quality, a decision that should pay more than lip service to Bristol Council's declaration of a climate and ecological crisis.

In light of these concerns, I urge the council to reconsider the decision to expand the crematorium onto this ecologically sensitive and scientifically valuable farm land. Instead, I implore you to explore alternative sites that do not carry the same ecological significance and scientific potential. This approach will allow us to strike a balance between the necessity for crematorium facilities and our duty to preserve and protect our environment.

I kindly request an opportunity to discuss this matter further with you and other council members. I believe that open dialogue and collaboration between concerned citizens and the council can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the issue at hand and help identify sustainable solutions that benefit everyone involved.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I trust that you will carefully consider the implications of this expansion and make a decision that upholds the values of environmental stewardship and scientific curiosity that are so essential to our community's well-being.

Sincerely,

Kind regards

Myles Mayne - Trustee
LANCE Trust (Charity registration no. 1203357)

I object to your proposed plan.

My family and I use the fields for walking and getting out in the fresh air, we also take an interest in wildlife that inhabit the fields, and also the birds that rely on the habitation available to them.

Please see sense and reject these plans.

Look for new premises out of the area.

Kind regards,

Nick...

Please save our last farm, this will look so bad on you if it is destroyed

Do something good and not for greed

Nigel Steggel

Dear Councillors and Planning Officers,

I write to express my complete dismay at the notion that you may approve the planning application to expand a burial site at the expense of the preservation of an SNCI.

It is a fact that the UK is suffering a huge loss of biodiversity. Climate change is upon us much faster than even the worst forecasts. The planet and so this nation will fast become unliveable. Any and all green spaces, let alone an SNCI, should and must be preserved and cherished.

It would show a frankly criminal lack of foresight and planning if it is indeed true that some councillors are minded to approve the application. Why destroy the living for the dead? Whilst understanding the requirements for a burial site why must it be there? Convenience? Cost?

Balance that against the convenience of loss of crops which must surely come with loss of biodiversity. With the cost of floods or heatwaves which are increased by the loss of our green spaces. Its not just 20 acres - the 20 acres lost here are mirrored all across the UK and add up to thousands. Trees, hedgerows, meadows and green spaces all obliterated to serve our short term convenience.

Please consider your options very carefully. We will have no need to bury and memorialise the dead. Unless we start taking decisive action now, we'll all be dead.

Yours Faithfully

P Tshering

Dear Democratic Services

Yew Tree Farm is a designated nature site and should be protected, not destroyed.

At a time when the UK is one of Europe's most biodiversity depleted countries, you have a responsibility to preserve this green space for nature and the mental health of the living community. I object to your ill thought out and wildlife destroying plans to develop or turn this site into a graveyard. This site belongs to nature and you have no right to steal it. In our fight against the climate crisis we need every mature tree, meadow and hedgerow and your plans to obliterate them is short sighted and unethical.

Regards

Pauline Smith

This lovely green farm (the very last one) right on the edge of south Bristol really deserves a guaranteed stay in our green belt. It is a beautiful spot for walking and has lots of wildlife - ideal for photographing nature. Please do not allow anything that reduces our enjoyment of this last remaining working farm on Bristol's boundary.

Phil Addison

Hi

I'm contacting you in regards to your plans to extent Bristol south crematorium!

I think we can agree we should be looking after the future of the local small businesses as well as the remains of peoples lives one!!

You planned expansion will be more than deter mental to such a small business

Ivy farm is a thriving local business that has a community atmosphere Katheryn and her family are warm and welcoming and make you feel at home.

Taking 20 acres from this family farm will be more damaging to the community that providing grounds for cremated loved once's ,especially as no compromise has been offered on allowing them to farm any land not used!!

Please consider the implications of your actions on a lot of people and especially Kathryn and her family that enjoy farming that land and providing a service to the local community you as a council should be protecting and preserving

Please consider your plans and help maintain this farm's credibility to continue what they love doing

Kind regards

Dear sirs,

I'm writing to object against the planning permission given to build on Yew Tree Farm.

I'm a resident 10 mins walk from here and often take my family for enjoyable walks around here.

The fact that you had protected this site originally and now are going against this is morally wrong.

Please do the right thing and protect Yew Tree Farm for future generations.

Yet another SNCI is under threat due to the council running roughshod over Catherine Withers and those who operates Bristol's last working farm. I would have thought the council would be very much in favour of saving this iconic place that it brings so much reward to the area. Not only the fresh produce but it's also a natural haven for plants and wildlife.

This farm **must** be allowed to continue its contribution to the local area for another 500 years!

Regards

S A Harvey

Please , please do not allow Yew Tree Farm to lose this land. It's a wonderful area for local people to walk ,enjoy nature & the significant wildlife - an area designated SNCI that should be left to thrive.

Catherine Withers & her family have looked after this farm for so many years & are a vital part of the local community. The local produce they supply is top quality & loved by many people, both local & further afield. They have a thriving business that will be devastated by losing any more land.

As a council, why not lead the way & show how you can support such initiatives?

We need Yew Tree Farm.

.

Regards

Sara Coles

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing to object to the plans to ruin this ancient land on which Yew Tree Farm, the last working farm in Bristol, is located.

The wildlife and national heritage, ancient woodland it is proposed to destroy can never be replaced.

I strongly object to this application.

For the attention of the committee

22/05714/FB

I am a Bedminster Down resident and strongly object to the application above.

Yew Tree Farm is the last remaining farm in Bristol. Not only that, it is an absolute treasure trove of pollinators, birds and other wildlife. I have spent many a happy afternoon on the farm photographing the butterflies and birds, as it beats Ashton Court and many AWT sites for its flourishing wildlife. This year alone, 15 swallows have fledged from the farm, and they are an absolute joy to watch. It's also the only place in Bristol that I can guarantee seeing Painted Lady and Skipper butterflies. The farm also has regular visits from a Greater Spotted Woodpecker family, and is home to Goldfinches and Blue and Great Tits, and many other birds.

As I am sure you are aware, the land is an SNCI, so I am appalled that you will even consider this application. My understanding is that the land cannot be redeveloped under policy DM19. Why hasn't this application already been declined?

Why are you proposing development of greenbelt land? In 2021 the Council passed a motion to protect greenbelt sites.

Are you aware that many of the old trees on the site will not survive your plans?

Do you even know there's a climate emergency?!

Suffice to say that I am disgusted that these plans and the application has made it this far and I'd like to know what other options have been explored?

To reiterate: I object in the strongest possible terms to this application.

Kind regards

Sarah MacDonald

I object to the plan as green spaces needed for mental health of locals. Area used for walking, also precious space for wildlife, birds rely on area for food and shelter. Also cannot afford to lose these areas for plants and meadowland. How about Climate Change!!!

To the committee-

Myself and my daughter currently work part time at Yew Tree farm. We work very hard with Catherine to prepare and cook the produce from the farm.

The land you are going to take back will close the farm and probably finish our jobs, this is really unfair and has happened so suddenly; Catherine says she has had not heard from the council offering her any of the land. I can't believe you can treat this farm as if it doesn't matter.

We live in Headley park and are local. People really care about the farm and we have so many people who come to the shop on Saturdays and buy their fresh food here.

Please do not close the farm by approving the plans.

Yours sincerely,

Teresa Tremlett and Georgia Tremlett

To whom it may concern, I would like to state my objection to the above planning application. As it is an SNCI, don't know how it can even be considered. The area is important in terms of special open space, biodiversity, green lung, wildlife habitat and conservation value. There is no point talking about Bristol being a green city and having lower mission zones et cetera if you're prepared to destroy such a valuable and valued precious area.

Please take into account importance of these areas for current and future generations. Open spaces, small farms, and such green lungs should be supported and conserved, not destroyed.

Tessa Garton

Amendment Sheet 6 September 2023

Item 1: - South Bristol Crematorium And Cemetery Bridgwater Road Bristol BS13 7AS

Paragraph no.	Amendment/additional information
6.1	<p>To clarify, a total of 51 representations were received at the time of the report, which included 30 supporting comments and 21 objections. The reasons for the objections are listed in the report.</p> <p>Since the report was drafted an additional six further objections have been received, which raise the same issues as previously reported.</p> <p>In addition, a further comment has been received from the Bristol Tree Forum, in response to the drainage officer comments and further correspondence with the Council's ecologist, being published which is summarised as follows:</p> <p>These two documents, finally disclosed to us around 14 August 2023, should have been made public months ago.</p> <p>The Drainage Officer report reveals serious flooding concerns and confirms that the Environment Agency needs to be consulted further. The Nature Conservation Officer (who was given just two days to comment) objected to the proposal, stating (as have we) that local planning policy DM19 makes it clear that 'Development which would have a harmful impact on the nature conservation value of a Site of Nature Conservation Interest will not be permitted.' The failure to publish these important documents in a timely fashion has prevented a proper consultation on this planning application and could have resulted in Development Control Committee A (DCC A) making a decision based on incomplete, material evidence had its meeting scheduled for 09 August 2023 not been postponed.</p> <p>The Planning Portal does not provide the true publication date of the Drainage Officer's Report and gives the impression that it was available on 28 December 2022, which is not correct.</p> <p>Officer Response:</p> <p>For clarity, the Environment Agency were consulted on the application and offered no objection to the application.</p> <p>The Drainage Officer and Ecologist have also provided updated comments (see report and below).</p>
10.28	<p>Further comments received from the Nature Conservation Officer:</p> <p>"The BNG calculation is +2.93% area habitats, +107% hedgerow units, +0.19% river units. Compliant with the NPPF.</p> <p>The LEMP condition will secure the management of the habitats contributing to BNG to their target condition, and the management of the SNCI."</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION</p>

Paragraph no.	Amendment/additional information
	<p>In addition to the conditions listed in the original report it is recommended that the wording of one of the conditions is tweaked and an addition condition and advice noted added. For clarity, the following represents a full listed of proposed conditions and advice:</p> <p>Time limit for commencement of development</p> <p>1. Full Planning Permission</p> <p>The development hereby permitted shall begin before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.</p> <p>Reason: As required by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.</p> <p>Pre commencement condition(s)</p> <p>2. Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP)</p> <p>Prior to commencement of the development hereby approved, the applicant shall submit a 30-year Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) for all habitats contributing to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). This should address retained features of ecological interest, together with mitigation and enhancements to be provided. The LEMP should set out management compartments, objectives, and prescriptions for all retained, enhanced and created habitats to demonstrate how they will be managed to their target condition (as specified in the BNG metric) using the latest version of the 'Biodiversity Net Gain condition assessment sheets and methodology' (Natural England, 2023) and the proposals outlined in the updated* Ecological Mitigation Proposals report (Wessex Ecological Consultancy).</p> <p>A supplementary plan for the proposed line of trees shall be included which extends beyond 30 years.</p> <p>The LEMP should set out how the development area will be managed to maintain its status as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) as per the updated Ecological Mitigation Proposals report (Wessex Ecological Consultancy) using (as much as is practical) pages 8 and 9 of the Designated Sites Protocol & Criteria adopted by B&NES, Bristol City, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset Council (2011). This must demonstrate how no harmful impact on the nature conservation value of the site will take place as a result of the development, therefore demonstrating how the development complies with Policy DM19 of the local plan.</p> <p>The LEMP should also show how management of the site will be resourced and monitored by the BCC Natural and Marine Environment Service unless another party is enlisted to carry out the management of the site and this is agreed in writing by Local Planning Authority.</p> <p>Reason: Ecological enhancement is needed to meet the requirements of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021). The NPPF states in paragraph 174 (d) on page 50 that "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by... minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity...". The Environment Act (2021) requires habitats</p>

Paragraph no.	Amendment/additional information
	<p>to be maintained for 30 years after development is completed (schedule 7A, Part 1, paragraph 9) to secure net gains for biodiversity. Policy DM19 of the Bristol City Council Local Plan states: "Development which would have a harmful impact on the nature conservation value of a Site of Nature Conservation Interest will not be permitted".</p> <p>3. Landscape Plan</p> <p>Alongside the requirement to submit a Landscape and Ecological Management Plan and notwithstanding the details shown on the approved plans, a landscaped plan shall be submitted to and approved prior to the commencement of development of the site.</p> <p>The approved scheme shall be implemented so that planting is carried out in accordance with a programme submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All planted materials shall be maintained for five years and any trees or plants removed, dying, being damaged or becoming diseased within that period shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species to those originally required to be planted unless the council gives written consent to any variation.</p> <p>Reason: To ensure that the site is landscaped.</p> <p>4. Arboricultural Supervision</p> <p>Prior to the commencement of any work within the root protection area of the oak tree (ref. T951 in the submitted Arboricultural Impact Assessment) a pre-commencement site meeting shall be held and attended by the developer's arboricultural consultant and the designated site foreman to discuss details of the working procedures. A schedule of visits shall be drawn up to ensure the project arboricultural consultant is present during key stages of works adjacent to the tree.</p> <p>Site visits must be carried out during the key stages identified above. Copies of written site notes and/or reports detailing the results of site supervision and any necessary remedial works undertaken or required shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, prior to occupancy. Any approved remedial works shall subsequently be carried out under strict supervision by the arboricultural consultant immediately following that approval.</p> <p>Reason: In order that the Local Planning Authority may be satisfied that the trees to be retained on-site will not be damaged during the construction works and to ensure that as far as possible the work is carried out in accordance with current best practice.</p> <p>List of approved plans</p> <p>5. List of approved plans and drawings</p> <p>The development shall conform in all aspects with the plans and details shown in the application as listed below, unless variations are agreed by the Local Planning Authority in order to discharge other conditions attached to this decision.</p> <p>D200012-CDS-EN -ZZ-DR-L-100 Overall site layout, received 29 November 2022 D200012-CDS-EN -ZZ-DR-L-005CD2 Area 1A and 1B construction details,</p>

Paragraph no.	Amendment/additional information
	<p>received 29 November 2022 D200012-CDS-EN -ZZ-DR-L-005DL Detailed soft landscaping plan, received 29 November 2022 D200012-CDS-EN -ZZ-DR-L-005L(10) Area 1 and 1B landscaping plan, received 29 November 2022 D200012-CDS-EN -ZZ-DR-L-005LE Area 1A and 1B levels, received 29 November 2022 D200012-CDS-EN -ZZ-DR-L-009L Area 3 - Landscape plan, received 29 November 2022 D200012-CDS-EN -ZZ-DR-L-009LE Area 3 - Levels, received 29 November 2022 D200012-CDS-EN -ZZ-DR-L-011L Site 4 Landscape plan, received 29 November 2022 D200012-CDS-EN -ZZ-DR-L- Location plan, received 29 November 2022 Arboricultural Assessment, received 29 November 2022 Flood risk and sustainable drainage, received 29 November 2022 Ground water risk assessment, received 29 November 2022 Heritage statement, received 29 November 2022 Planning obligations, received 29 November 2022 Planning statement, received 29 November 2022 Statement of community involvement, received 29 November 2022 Design and Access statement, received 29 November 2022</p> <p>Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.</p> <p>Advices</p> <p>1 Site Safety</p> <p>Any works on this land will need to be undertaken following engagement with Asset Protection to determine the interface with Network Rail assets, buried or otherwise and by entering into a Basis Asset Protection Agreement, if required, with a minimum of 3months notice before works start. Initially the outside party should contact assetprotectionwestern@networkrail.co.uk.</p> <p>2 Ground Levels</p> <p>The developers should be made aware that Network Rail needs to be consulted on any alterations to ground levels. No excavations should be carried out near railway embankments, retaining walls or bridges.</p> <p>3 Ground Disturbance</p> <p>If works involve disturbing the ground on or adjacent to Network Rail's land it is likely/possible that the Network Rail and the utility companies have buried services in the area in which there is a need to excavate. Network Rail's ground disturbance regulations applies. The developer should seek specific advice from Network Rail on any significant raising or lowering of the levels of the site.</p> <p>4 Site Layout</p> <p>It is recommended that all development be situated at least 2 metres from the boundary fence, to allow construction and any future maintenance work to be carried</p>

Paragraph no.	Amendment/additional information
	<p>out without involving entry onto Network Rail's infrastructure. Where trees exist on Network Rail land the design of foundations close to the boundary must take into account the effects of root penetration in accordance with the Building Research Establishment's guidelines.</p> <p>5 Public Right of Way</p> <p>The property boundary of the development hereby approved abuts a Public Right of Way PROW (No. BCC/427). You are advised that before undertaking any work you must contact the Highway Authority's Public Rights of Way Team at rightsofway@bristol.gov.uk Whilst it may be unlikely that the Public Right of Way will be affected by the proposed development (PROW) (No. BCC/427):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Should remain open, unobstructed, and safe for public use at all times; o No materials are to be stored or spilled on the surface of the PROW; o There must be no encroachment onto the width of the PROW; o No vehicles are to use the PROW without lawful authority of the landowner(s), unless a private right of way is shown on property deeds. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the appropriate private right exists or has been acquired from the landowner. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Any scaffolding and/or skips placed over or adjacent to the PROW must not obstruct public access or inconvenience the public in their use of the way and must be properly licensed. Licences are available at www.bristol.gov.uk/highwaylicences o Any interference of the PROW either whilst demolition/construction is in progress or on completion, may well constitute a criminal offence. <p>If construction works are likely to temporarily affect the right of way, a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) may be required to close or divert the PROW for the duration of the works on the grounds of safety of the public. To discuss and/or apply for a TTRO contact the Highway Authority's Network Management Team at traffic@bristol.gov.uk TTRO application forms are available at www.bristol.gov.uk/highwaylicences If you do require a TTRO you must give at least eight weeks' notice prior to the date when you wish to divert/close the PROW to enable the TTRO to be processed.</p> <p>N.B. Any damage caused to the surface of the PROW during development works must be made good to the satisfaction of the Local Highway Authority.</p>