

Comments for Planning Application 143413/FO/2025

Application Summary

Application Number: 143413/FO/2025

Address: Land Bound By Longford Road, Peveril Crescent, Rye Bank Road And Longford Park (commonly Referred To As Ryebank Fields) Manchester M21 9WW

Proposal: Change of use of former university playing fields to community woodland and meadow.

Case Officer: Robert Griffin

Customer Details

Name: Not Available

Address: Not Available

Comment Details

Commenter Type: Neighbour

Stance: Customer made comments in support of the Planning Application

Comment Reasons:

Comment: I want to register my SUPPORT for the application to retain our beloved Ryebank Fields as a natural habitat (community woodland and meadow) for the enjoyment of the local and wider community (both human and non-human) for generations to come.

A community woodland and meadow is what it has been for as long as I have lived in Chorlton (30 years) and it should remain as such. To do otherwise would be a great loss to the area: to the human local residents, and to the non-human residents of the fields itself - there is life here - huge biodiversity that simply MUST NOT be lost!

Can you please reply to this to confirm that my support has gone on record? Thank you.

To expand on my reasons for supporting this application:

As is well-known, the fields were given to the University by the council in the first place, under the condition that they were for recreational use. That is what has happened thus far: first when they were used as playing fields, and then after that as a rewilded natural space enjoyed for recreational use by students and residents alike for many many years; and also used by students in the university, and local schools, for fieldwork.

The fields were not donated to the University for them to later sell off, to build houses on! To do that would be a clear violation of the original agreement (which I presume you have had sight of, unless it has been conveniently lost!). It would be a travesty if you let any building plans go ahead, depriving so many people of a vital resource, depriving countless animals of their homes, and not to mention destroying a site of great ecological and historical importance.

So now, here is your opportunity, in approving this alternative planning application, to see that

Ryebank Fields is retained as the glorious green space that it is.

Our fields are SO much more than just, in planning terms, "an amenity" - Manchester Council have yourselves acknowledged (in 2020 I believe) that Ryebank Fields meet all of the criteria required for them to be designated as a 'Local Green Space,' because of their importance to our local community. Such a designation, to which they are entitled, is a 'material planning consideration' and should give them protection (from building on) equivalent to Green Belt Status in planning terms. In addition, this area of South Manchester is the only area of the city where the current provision of Local Green Space is below the minimum standard, by about 45 Hectares. So, please, stand with me, and the majority of local residents, in supporting this application to keep this green space and safeguard our fields for future generations.

Finally, a little of my personal story, so you can understand some of the many reasons I feel so strongly in my support of this planning application:

Access to wild and natural green spaces, as well as to more formal parks, is vital to residents in cities, for good mental and physical health. Ryebank Fields is a wild space that, it is no exaggeration to say, has been a lifeline to me (for both my mental and physical health) for the last 30 years, since I was in my early 20s. A lifeline in a way that a more formal park is not. In my 20s I struggled with depression - I didn't feel comfortable in Longford park, with all the people about and the defined structure of the place - Ryebank Fields gave me a sense of peace, tranquility, and of getting back to nature, connecting with something bigger than myself. There was one particular tree I used to go to and hug. I named it Bob. That tree is still there and I still, 30 years on, go and say hello to it regularly. Some people talk to God. Other people talk to trees! Many people connect with nature in this way, and not just during periods of mental health challenges. Ryebank fields are needed more than ever these days though, with a mental health epidemic in our country at the moment - wild places, easily accessible in short walking distance, are vital for the nation's mental health, and for the health of the nearby residents in Chorlton and Stretford in particular. There have been periods where the fields were one of the things that kept me sane! I need this magical meadow to remain.

ACCESSIBLE natural green spaces are important too. We need them scattered across cities for everyone to enjoy, and Ryebank Fields make an important contribution in this way. If the fields were not there, there is no other similar space I can access. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] On a good day, I can walk from my house to Ryebank Fields. For much of the time, as I don't drive, it is the only wild green space I can access. This makes it incredibly valuable to me, and to others I know in a similar position. We locals need Ryebank Fields to remain as they are, for a multitude of reasons.

My gentle walks in Ryebank Fields heal me: mind, body and soul. If you approve this planning application, words cannot express how much relief and happiness I will feel, as will so many

people, including many who for various reasons are unable to write to you personally.

Therefore, I urge you to approve this planning application, and urge you to please advise the council to put something in place to make it an approval that lasts, to prevent future building/development planning applications, so that local residents can at long last rest, safe in the knowledge that our children, and their children, will be able to enjoy this wonderful haven for many years to come.

Yours sincerely,

A solid black rectangular box used to redact the signature of the sender.