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2nd February 2012.

Dear Carys,

Water Industry Act 1991, Section 156
Disposal at Dowdeswell Wood, London Road, Cheltenham, GL54 4HG

Dowdeswell Wood lies within the Cotswolds AONB, and is therefore of strategic significance in plans and policies. The area of proposed land disposal is crossed by the Cotswold Way National Trail, also of strategic significance.

The wood is situated in an embayment of the Cotswold scarp and is highly visible in the landscape including from two major roads – A40 and A436. Consequently the area is highly sensitive to change. Drawn from the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment, the Cotswolds Conservation Board has adopted a set of Landscape Strategies and Guidelines. Dowdeswell Wood lies within the Escarpment Landscape Character Type and the Landscape Strategy and Guidelines for this landscape type are attached. Based on the Cotswolds AONB Landscape Character Assessment and the Landscape Strategy and Guidelines the Board has also published a Guide to Woodland Planting and Management in the Cotswolds AONB, available on the Board's website:

www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/userfiles/file/Publications/Woodland-text.pdf

The Cotswold Way, one of 15 National Trails in England and Wales, is managed to a strict set of quality standards relating to path quality, accessibility and information and is governed by a three-year development framework. Both documents are available on the Cotswold Way website.

www.nationaltrail.co.uk/uploads/nationaltrails%20QS.pdf

www.nationaltrail.co.uk/Cotswold/uploads/Framework%20FINAL%20prf6.20110808.pdf

There are no known archaeological sites within Dowdeswell Wood. However, the Historic Landscape Character Assessment classifies this woodland as 'Surviving Early Woodland' possibly originating in the Medieval period or earlier. Therefore the whole woodland is a historic landmark and consequently an important element of the historic landscape.

The Board considers that a restrictive covenant to manage Dowdeswell Wood in line with the Landscape Strategy and Guidelines and the Guide to Woodland Planting and Management in the Cotswolds AONB would be appropriate. The Board would also advise the inclusion of

Conserving, enhancing, understanding and enjoying the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Cotswolds Conservation Board Fosse Way Northleach Gloucestershire GL54 3JH

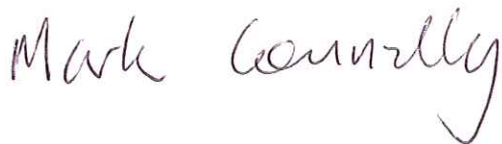
Tel: 01451 862000 Fax: 01451 862001 Email: info@cotswoldsaonb.org.uk Website: www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk

a restrictive covenant to cover the National Trail Quality Standards and the Cotswold Way development framework.

The Board, and other organisations, are concerned about the potential for the Dowdeswell wood to be bought and re-sold in small lots. The woodland is an ancient woodland/Planted Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS), important in the landscape and managed as a nature reserve. It is essential the whole woodland is managed in a consistent way and the Board recommends a restrictive covenant to ensure the woodland is retained and managed as a single 'lot'.

If you would like to discuss any of the above comments, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Connelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping 'C' at the end.

Mark Connelly

Land Management Officer