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BUZZ

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The bid to rescue Highmoor Farm

An appeal might be on the way, but residents of Talbot Village rejoiced at BCP Council’s decision to reject planning permission to build a private hospital on Highmoor Farm.

Jo Keeling, is the Chairman of the Talbot Village Residents’ Association. At October’s meeting about the development, she was one of five attendees given fifteen minutes to state their reasons for opposing Nuffield Hospital’s decision to migrate over to property next to heathland.

Though she praises the efforts of the previous committee, her resumption of the Chairperson position comes with an urge to unify the Talbot area. She plans to make it “a nicer place to live”. As an example, her team has arranged both a Christmas children’s party on the University campus and a Christmas carol event this festive season. They also plan to introduce two community event billboards at the community’s heart.

With littering and discarded drug needles being prevalent issues tackled currently within the area, a private hospital would only add to their woes. Even if a planning consultant from BCP’s Highway Department believed people would use bikes and buses to reach the hospital, approximately an extra 1,153 traffic flows would arrive each day in already congested Wallisdown roads. Noise pollution, also, would be an issue that would affect 37 families. For seven of these, the issue would be so severe that they could seek compensation. Unsurprisingly, Jo was “absolutely elated” when news of the rejection came through, but there is still time for an appeal. To combat what she brands an “urban sprawl”, Jo made the suggestion that if the farmers were to leave, the area should be dedicated to those with learning disabilities and a love of wildlife, like the Fortune Centre of Riding in New Milton.

Nick Dobbs, 58, a horticulturist with strong ties to the Residents Association, is particularly concerned of the impact the plans might have on wildlife. He comments: “It is essential that as a society we protect habitats and the species that live within them for future generations. “Reasons for refusal cited₁ by the Planning committee remains very compelling,” he adds, “though an appeal is likely.”