

Draft Letter

Ms P Mackintosh

Enforcement Officer

Strategic Development and Planning

Copy to be sent to Mr J Simmons

Chairman of Georgeham Parish Council

Dear Ms Mackintosh

CROYDE PLAYPARK BOUNDARY

I am writing to express concern about the appearance of substantial wooden fencing which has appeared inside the boundary bank to the playpark at Croyde. I am aware that individual residents have drawn concerns to your attention also.

Representations have been made at meetings of Georgeham Parish Council over the past 6 months. There has been focus on the possibility of the sale of a small piece of playpark land, but the real issue of concern to residents of Croyde is the degradation and clearing of the old banks which form the boundary to the park, by the landowner on the other side of the bank. The western boundary of the park fronts an ancient water meadow which older residents state has never been ploughed within their histories going back several generations, whilst the norther boundary fronts land at the bottom of Broad Park Close where there is at present a bungalow.

It has been said that the fence is intended to be temporary whilst the banks are restored, but at the Parish Council Meetings, it was said that there is uncertainty about who owns the banks.

The fence is very substantial and in no way looks like any temporary fencing such as one would see at a building site.

At an Open Meeting of Croyde Area Residents Association, held on 28 January 2019, a Statement was agreed regarding residents' concerns about the playpark boundary. (I attach it here.) This Statement was sent to the Parish Council.

At the last meeting of the Parish Council on 28 February, The Chairman of the Council stated that the members of the Parish Council were not concerned by the erection of the fence. At this same Council Meeting the Parish Councillors voted to support the 'Bee Project' agreeing to identify land to enable wild flower meadows and corridors to be sown throughout the Parish. We fear an inconsistency of approach, and indeed fear that the banks may be lost here.

You will see from the CARA Statement attached that Croyde residents have strong views about preserving ancient landscape values and wildlife corridors. Residents are worried that if fences are built, they are likely to become permanent and as such, even if Enforcement Notices are issued, difficult to remove. The fencing is unnecessary. There are suitable alternatives which could protect any work on the banks or any legitimate construction work on the northern side of the park.

We are asking you to give this matter your urgent consideration, and to ensure that the old banks are fully restored and not hidden behind high wooden fencing. The local school children are involved in ecological studies, are being taught about wildlife corridors and the beauty of their locality. It is not a good example to set them to surround their park by fencing. Our Statement to the Parish Council referenced The North Devon and Torridge Local Plan and we sincerely hope that this Plan will be enforced and our banks protected.

Yours sincerely

Steve Vine

Chairman Croyde Area Residents Association (CARA)