

Timeline of Broughton Woods

Broughton Woods, for many years a favourite place for people to walk, faces destruction by Q Hotels who want to increase the size of their Forest Pines golf course on the edge of the village of Broughton, near Scunthorpe. The new development would see 33 hectares (81 acres) of precious ancient woodland lost forever. The woods are home to rare small leaved lime and ancient oak coppice stools as well as flowers like bluebells, wild garlic and lily of the valley (first recorded in the wood by Abraham de la Pryme in 1697). Ancient woodland has been around for at least 400 years and cannot be recreated. If this planning appeal succeeds, North Lincolnshire will have lost a vital part of its natural heritage and be left instead with manicured lawns enjoyed only by a privileged few.

The story so far:

Mid 1990's Broughton Woods are purchased by the late R H Dixon MBE and placed in Trust in an attempt to prevent further development. This philanthropic action was prompted by the southern part of this block of woodland being purchased for a golf course. The Trustees have since taken a different direction.

July 2007 Q Hotels submit a planning application to extend and make alterations to the golf course effecting 88 hectares of woodland. A local petition more than 400 signatures against the proposal is submitted to the Council which also receives numerous letters of objection.

October 2008 North Lincolnshire Council refuses planning permission.

Late 2008 Public access to the wood is withdrawn.

April 2009 Close to the deadline, Q Hotels submit an appeal against the planning decision.

August 2009 The Planning Inspector hears evidence from North Lincolnshire Council, Woodland Trust, local conservation groups, and local people opposed to the scheme. Due to the complexity of the evidence the Hearing runs out of time and is adjourned to November but not before the Inspector tours the whole site accompanied by most of the witnesses.

Looking ahead

November 2009 At the re-opened Hearing the barristers acting for the Woodland Trust will cross examine the applicant's expert witnesses and it is anticipated that the Hearing extension will last a further five days.

Early 2010 The Inspector will give his decision on the Appeal.