APPENDIX C

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The Planning Department
BMBC
Barnsley
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Dear Sir

My name is Rebecca Cottey and I am the daughter of Mr and Dr Eldred of Strafford House, Gilroyd Lane, Stainborough.

I have lived at the house from 1976 when I was 2 years old and have enjoyed and exploited its location, facilities and aspect considerably since then.

I have always considered the land adjoining Strafford House (as outlined in red on the attached sketch maps) as being part of its gardens. On this piece of land I have taken part in many activities and learned a considerable amount in a safe, secure and protected space.

Activities included learning to ride my bike, test driving our home-made go-carts, playing on the swing and climbing frame, making 'dens' in the hedges, tree houses in the larger boundary trees and hiding in the grass when it was long, and amongst the bales when it was just cut. I've had birthday party treasure hunts round the garden, and my parents have celebrated with live bands playing and dancing. Year after year throughout the long school holiday I would camp out with friends, have bonfires and firework displays (There may even be a police report somewhere to testify to our torch-lit trip to the outside toilet in the middle of the night, on one occasion!)

In the winter we had a great place for playing in the snow, building snowmen, and having snowball fights; and in more recent years I have even skied down it's slope. It has been a fantastic, enclosed and private space to throw sticks and allow our dog to run around and burn off her endless energy; and it's been an incredible source of adrenalin with the zip wire we erected down its length.

To learn and understand about the land and our responsibility to our 'garden' I spent years watching and helping my parents grow their own fruit and vegetables, along with other family friends who used some of the space for their own vegetable plots. I now understand a lot of the history of the place, of why the house was built, the significance of the 17th century ridge and furrow patterns at the bottom of the garden, the multitude of wild flowers that grow there. Whilst digging and playing in the earth I discovered its soil strata and used its detail as part of a school geography project.

In addition I have spent time with my fellow scouts clearing the hedgerows of undergrowth to help the boundary grow and thicken, and planted willow in places to strengthen the perimeter. We erected a wire fence around the vegetable patch to prevent the rabbits and pheasants from decimating our fruit and vegetables, but which allowed them to continue to use the shelter of our garden to roam; allowing us to remain close to nature.

Now that I am 37 years old, and have a place of my own; and the most enjoyable thing about my parents garden is being able to return, sit out in the evening sun with the whole family,

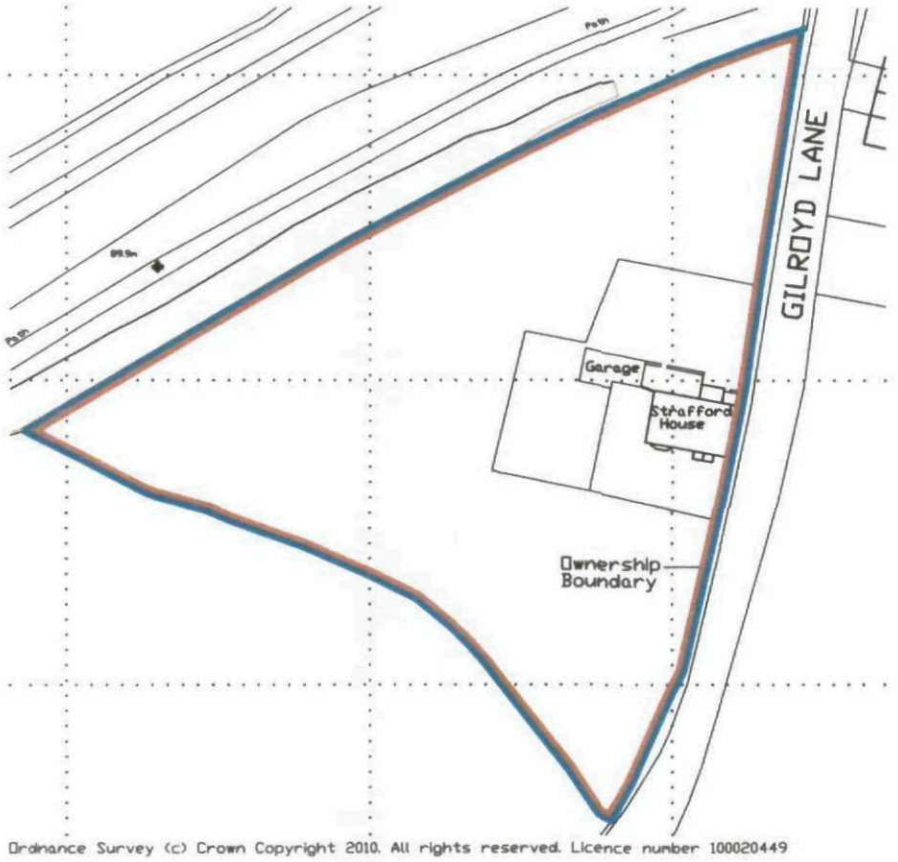
enjoy a drink and be able to reminisce about all the incredible adventures we had as children in our back garden and really appreciate how lucky we were to have so much space.

As children my brother and I were incredibly lucky to have such a huge garden - but that is exactly what it is - a safe place to play, explore and have fun within the confines of our home boundary. We did all the same things on this land as other children did in their gardens and as adults we continue to use it as such.

Yours,

[redacted]

Rebecca Cottey MSc, PGCE, BSc



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