

FARINGDON RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

Town and Country Planning (General Interim) Development  
Order, 1933.

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Appeal by Lord Berners, Faringdon Folly.

October 3rd, 1934.  
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LIST OF PERSONS PRESENT AT THE INQUIRY.

Mrs. A. T. Beavis.	D. Rixon.
J. A. Bingham.	A. H. Savage.
L. W. Knapp.	T. Dewe.
Brig. Gen. E. S. Burder.	A. H. B. Childs.
J. Goddard.	F. H. Liddiard.
Capt. C. H. Wilkins.	Revd. H. Moore Hull.
Vice-Admiral F. Clifton Brown.	D. M. Hull.
Lt. Col. G. Walton.	Geo. S. Willis.
H. W. Sanford.	Revd. J. W. H. Nankivell.
W. J. Pett.	Ed. W. Jones.
B. A. T. Stepp.	H. J. Thomas.
A. Whiting.	F. A. Cosburn.
W. F. Roberts.	J. Haddon.
S. S. Swan.	Gerald Wellesley.
A. J. Savage.	

The Faringdon Folly consist of a Grove on a high point which commands fine uninterrupted views of the Vale, the Berkshire Downs, and parts of the Counties of Oxford Gloucester and Wilts. It is visable at great distances and is a well known land mark, and played a notable part in History in the time of Charles

The Folly has public footpaths passing through and around it, maintained by the Berks County Council and the Faringdon Parish Council, and the latter have placed seats in suitable places round the Folly for the benefit of the public. The public have <sup>had free and</sup> the uninterrupted use of the Folly, including the site of the proposed Tower, for many years, and I propose to bring evidence proving over 60 years usage. The Council therefore claim that the public have acquired a right over the Folly, and that <sup>the</sup> ~~Lord-Berners~~ Tower if erected, will interfere with the rights which the public have acquired.

Under section 46 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1932, the Local Authority has power to include in their Planning scheme the power to preserve single or groups of trees, and the Council had hoped to preserve the trees at the Folly, and also the Folly ~~in its present~~ as it now exists in their scheme. The proposed Tower would not therefore comply with the Town Planning Scheme for the District when approved.

The Council are members of the North Berks Regional Planning Committee, responsible for the planning of the Faringdon Rural District, with their consent, and the application of Lord Berners to erect the Tower was first submitted to that Committee for their recommendation to the Council. A Sub-Committee of the Planning Committee met Lord Berners at the Folly, and discussed with him the proposals., ~~and acting on the advice of the Planning Committee~~ They recommended the Planning Committee to advise the refusal of the development. Between the meeting of the Sub-Committee and the Planning Committee, Lord Berners decided to reduce the height of the Tower by 25 feet, to a point 5 feet above

the Trees. This proposal was considered by the Planning Committee and they recommended the Rural District Council to refuse the erection of any Tower at the Folly. This is their letter:-

I am directed by the above Committee to inform you that at the request of your Council they have carefully considered the amended plans for the erection of a Tower at Faringdon Folly by Lord Berners and they unanimously recommend the Council to refuse the development. In their opinion, the Folly, being such a well known landmark and of historical interest, would be spoilt by the erection of the tower, even in its modified form, and they do hope that the Faringdon Folly will be retained as now existing.

The Council then considered the proposal, and by a majority of 22 votes to 4 came to the same conclusion and refused the development. Their decision was as follows:- That the Folly being such a well known landmark and of historical interest, would be spoilt by the erection of a Tower.

The wish of the Planning Committee and the Rural Council is solely to preserve the Folly in its original state, and there are fears that if the Tower is erected, it will in the long run spoil the beauty of the spot. Both Authorities have nothing whatever against the architectural design, but they are anxious that the Tower, if it is to be erected, should not be erected on the Folly.

The Council consider that the Tower will serve no useful purpose, as it is doubtful whether better views will be obtained from the top of the trees. *than those now obtainable.* They also feel that if the principle of allowing the Tower is ceded, that there is nothing to stop the original proposal of Lord Berners being carried out, viz. the tower to be 30 feet over the top of the trees. It is understood from Lord Berners that the Tower will be used for his personal use, and this will not be to a great extent as Lord Berners does not reside for long periods during a year, in Faringdon. *except while he is spending the Folly for such a small resort.* If the Tower is to be opened to the public, it will naturally

*Annael*

the public for some time, and this will detract from the present beauty of the spot. Another important point is the repair of the Tower. Looking over a period of years it is possible that the Tower may not be repaired by Lord Berners or his successors in title. The Tower will gradually become defelict, will attract people as a playground, and which will without a doubt spoil the beauty of the spot. It has been suggested that the Tower will not be seen by the public, but the lower parts of the trees being so thin, one can see through the Folly at certain points, and the tower to practically its full height will be seen.

and have enjoyed for many years

The public know/the Folly as it now is, with its natural beauty, and they wish to keep it in its natural state ~~as it became associated with interest.~~ <sup>history.</sup> There is a risk of spoiling this if the Tower is erected, without any benefit to the public, ~~and the Tower~~ We dont want our well known beauty spot, <sup>which took years to mature</sup> altered and possibly spoiled in time, by the erection of a Tower or any other building.

*Read letter from Miss Morris*