

I have been a resident of South Petherton for sixteen years.

I walk the area regularly and am a neighbour of Mr & Mrs Herrick.

I am familiar with the property as it was prior to Mr & Mrs Herrick buying it and as it is now.

The issue of the gates and wall which have been established immediately to the East of the bridge at Barcroft Lane requires comment.

This lane has a defined width which originally continued from Droveaway, North Street to the top of the hill where it joined the track from Stoodham. East of the present gates, where the track begins to rise up the hill, the track widens slightly for a short distance (this was a passing place for carts).

The bridge across North Mills Brook also defines the width of this track. It should also be noted that a neighbour has built a stone building near this bridge which compromises the original hedge line of Barcroft Lane.

The original width at the top of the hill can still be seen as it meets the Stoodham track.

Until Mr & Mrs Herrick purchased the property the track from the top of the hill down to the "passing place" was indistinct and regularly ploughed across.

The area around the "passing place" was regularly impassable due to poor drainage and irregular walking surface.

The present situation is a vast improvement and has made the track easily negotiated (with present emphasis on Disability Access this is important).

The gates and walls do not compromise or breach the width of this track in any way.

The issues raised by Somerset County and District Council regarding this property require comment.

There are well documented instances of property owners (some in immediate proximity to Barcroft Hall) contravening Planning Regulations both in regards to buildings, change of land use and illegal blocking of footpaths.

Despite representation from the Ramblers Association and Schedule I 30a

Orders being presented to the Council regarding these illegal blockings of footpaths, the response from the Councils has been less than robust.

The local Parish Paths Liaison Officer, a vociferous opponent of Barcroft Hall developments, appears to support these illegal blockings and has openly declared his friendship with the owner blocking the path.

Enforcement Orders relating to illegal change of land use, which should have been served in 2005 remain outstanding.

Considering that this property owner is also vociferous regarding Barcroft Hall issues it raises serious questions of the Councils ability to maintain parity in their dealings in these matters.

It also calls into question the capacity of individual members of the Councils to maintain consistency and integrity in their approach to their responsibilities.

Mr & Mrs Herrick would be perfectly justified in ignoring all Councils comments or demands considering the precedence set by the Councils in their dealings with others.

I am aware, however, that Mr & Mrs Herrick take their responsibilities in these matters seriously and have always displayed a propensity to work with Councils and others to ensure an equitable outcome for all concerned.

*Geoff Turnbull 2008*