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W Tom

Thank you for your letter of 14 November to the Secretary of State on behalf of your constituent, Barrie Galpin of 15 Top Lodge, Fineshade, Corby, about Fineshade Wood. I am replying as the Minister responsible for this policy area. I am sorry for the long delay in replying which was caused by an administrative error.

I appreciate that Mr Galpin is very concerned about this issue and keen to seek reassurance not just from Forest Holidays but also from the Forestry Commission and the Government. I hope you will share my view that the letters you have received from the Secretary of State and from the CEO of Forest Holidays, while of course coming to the issue from different perspectives, both confirm unambiguously that there are no plans for a Forest Holidays development at Fineshade Wood.

I understand that Mr Galpin met Paddy Harrop, the Forest Management Director for the area including Fineshade Wood, on 11th December at Top Lodge, received further assurance on the issue and is now satisfied.

Internal review of governance arrangements for the Forestry Commission's relationship with Forest Holidays is continuing and we will consider what changes may be needed once that work is complete.

Finally, turning to the issue of the wildlife data held by Forest Holidays, this is as Mr Galpin acknowledges the property of Forest Holidays and not the Forestry Commission and it is therefore a decision for the business itself whether or not it wishes to disclose that information.

Thank you once again for taking the time to contact me about this important issue. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance with this or any other matters in the future.

With best wishes,


~~DAVID RUTLEY MP~~