

**Sponsorship, Landscape and Recreation Division**

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**Website** [www.defra.gov.uk](http://www.defra.gov.uk)



Our ref:

16 March 2007

Dear

**PROPOSED SOUTH DOWNS NATIONAL PARK**

I am writing to follow up the letter from John Kilner dated 8 February 2006, advising that the designation process for the proposed South Downs National Park had to be halted. I apologise for the long delay in writing to you again but it has taken the full year for Defra's appeal against the so-called 'Meyrick' Judgment to be completed.

Defra's appeal was not heard by the Court of Appeal until 1 November 2006 and the Court's ruling was handed down on 1 February 2007. The appeal was dismissed and after due consideration, the Minister has decided not to pursue it further. The Court of Appeal Judgment is on Defra's website at <http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/issues/landscap/natparks/index.htm#impact>.

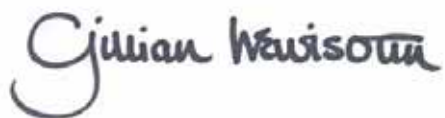
We are now taking action to resume the designation process for the proposed South Downs National Park. As a first step we must establish if Natural England has any observations to make on any implications for their Designation Order from (a) the revisions to National Parks legislation made by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 and/or (b) the Meyrick Judgments. At the same time, Defra is reviewing the Inquiry Inspector's Report in the light of the Meyrick Judgments.

Once we have Natural England's statement on this we shall invite further representations on outstanding matters that were not able to be fully addressed by the inquiry, including any implications arising from the NERC Act revisions and/or Meyrick Judgments. We anticipate doing this in May/June. In the light of responses received, Ministers will consider whether it is appropriate for the inquiry to be reopened.



This letter has been sent to all those who provided representations to the inquiry, local Members of Parliament, and other interested parties. I apologise if you no longer wish to be informed about this issue; please contact the number below to be taken off the contact list.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Gillian Lewisohn". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Gillian Lewisohn

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