



**David Smith and the land between Harkness Drive and the University of Kent on which the university wants to build student accommodation**

Picture: Chris Davey PD1975325

## Residents step up campus fight

EVIDENCE is growing to support the application to have the Chaucer Fields near the University of Kent campus designated as a village green.

Residents are fighting a scheme by the university to build student accommodation blocks and a hotel.

The Save Chaucer Fields campaign has sought the expertise of a barrister and he advised getting more witness statements.

They now have 240 statements from people who say they have enjoyed the recreational

use of the fields for decades.

Campaign chairman David Smith said: "Our barrister advised us we need to strengthen our evidence and Kent County Council has allowed us time to revise our application.

"We don't know if our campaign will be successful, but if we get the fields designated as a village green then they will be protected from development."

The campaign, which has 300 followers on Facebook, also has the support of the Woodland Trust, which is objecting to the

number of mature trees which would be felled.

The University withdrew its original planning application last year and has been in discussions with planning officers about submitting a revised one.

Mr Smith said: "That could happen any time soon and the scheme could go before the city council's development control committee in March.

"But I think that if it was approved, it would be on condition that village green status was not granted."

Courtesy Kent Messenger