

Report of: Area Coordinator

To: Executive Board

Date: 25th February 2008

Item No:

Title of Report : Peers School – County Council Consultation on Land Disposal



Summary and Recommendations



Purpose of report: To advise the Executive Board that the County Council is asking for the City Council's comments on proposals to dispose of land on the Peers School site.

Key decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Councillor John Goddard

Scrutiny Responsibility: Environment and Community



Ward(s) affected: Rose Hill and Iffley, Littlemore, Blackbird Leys, Northfield Brook



Report Approved by

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Goddard



Legal: Jeremy Thomas

Finance: Andy Collett



Strategic Director: Michael Crofton Briggs



Policy Framework: Oxford Local Plan

Recommendation(s):



Executive Board is recommended to comment on the County Council's proposal to dispose of the land on the Peers School site, particularly as it relates to education provision and community and sports club use of the site



1. BACKGROUND

The County Council is working with partners to establish a new Academy at the Peers School site in Littlemore. The proposed development will require the demolition of all the current buildings on site, and a new site layout. In order to part fund the development, the County Council propose to sell a strip of 1.2ha of land along the western boundary for residential development, as shown on the attached plan, in appendix 1.

The proposed disposal site includes buildings, hard plays areas and grassed areas, some of which are considered to be playing fields, and the consent of the Secretary of State will therefore be required. Although specified Government standards for schools do not apply to Academies, extensive consultation is still required over the disposal of former playing fields.

2. CONSULTATION

The County Council are asking for the City Council's comments on the land disposal in relation to its impact on education, community use, including sports clubs eg Littlemore Rugby Club. This consultation does not relate to the planning application process, nor does it relate to their obligation to contact the Council as an adjoining landowner. These consultations will be carried out separately.

3. Additional Information

The City Council owns adjacent land to the north and west of the proposed disposal land. If access to this land for houses comes from the north or west (the most obvious direction) the City Council should receive a capital receipt or other appropriate consideration as such access would need to cross its land.

The northern most quarter of the proposed disposal land is allocated as open air sports facilities under policy SR2 in the Adopted Oxford Local Plan. The policy seeks to protect such use from loss. Where this is unavoidable the City Council is able to negotiate to secure an appropriate improvement of its existing recreation facilities or new replacement facilities in the vicinity.

4. VIEWS OF THE SOUTH EAST AREA COMMITTEE

The consultation was considered by the SEAC on 4th February. It resolved (in draft):

- (1) That the Area Committee did not support the proposal for housing on this site, as there was already little open space within the area;

- (2) To ask the Area Co-ordinator to investigate a previous land use survey to ascertain what proportion of land in the area could be defined as “open space”;
- (3) To note that the sale of this piece of land was not in support of the Peers Academy, as stated in a letter from Mouchel, but was to support the redevelopment of Mabel Pritchard School;
- (4) That there was a right of way across the proposed housing site, and this should be preserved;
- (5) To ask the Area Co-ordinator to pass on the above views to Oxfordshire County Council.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Board is recommended to comment on the County Council’s proposal to dispose of the land on the Peers School site, particularly as it relates to education provision and community and sports club use of the site.

In particular the Executive Board is asked whether it agrees in whole or in part with the views of the SEAC.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Letter from Mouchel (including a plan)

Appendix 2 – Report submitted to Oxfordshire County Council’s Cabinet

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Background papers: None.

