

Before I say anything let me commend the council for spending such vast amounts of money on structures for the good of the community especially in the hard times we are currently encountering with cuts to this and that, it must make you sleep easy in your beds with such generous gestures.

My name is William Clark and as the named person on the town green application for Blackbird Leys I feel I must come along and defend the so called “Town Green Fourteen” and ask you my elected representatives why you feel we need this structure and couldn’t the money have been better spent?.

I have been a resident of Pegasus Road for nearly 40 years and in all that time no one has been bold enough to lavish such amenities on the estate like you appear to be doing now and as a resident of that road I and my colleagues will be directly affected by the ramifications of your development.

In the past we on Blackbird Leys have been classed as a very big problem what with cars tearing round the streets, the crime and vandalism that has plagued the estate for a good number of years and of course the drugs that appear to be everywhere and as we are one of the largest council housing estates in Europe it is no wonder they are there. But now we have a more acceptable tag and it’s called “deprived community”. Why are we deprived what makes us any different from you? We all pay our taxes the majority of us are law abiding and some of us even care about our community. So what makes Blackbird Leys deprived? The answer is very simple it’s the lack of forward planning our elected officials had when Blackbird Leys was first designed. Had they factored into budgets such things as possible amenities we would need as we grew, this problem would not exist today and all the postulating in the world will not bring those opportunities back we have to deal with what we have got today and the venture you are proposing, a new 25 metre swimming pool, is the wrong thing in the wrong place and certainly the wrong time

If you examine the proposal you will discover all those statements are from residents immediately affected by this development and there for have more of a say in what goes outside their front door than any other person sitting around here today yet you will say “it is for the good of the community” and use phrases like :-

Human Rights Act 1998

Officers have considered the Human Rights Act 1998 in reaching a recommendation to grant planning permission, subject to conditions. Officers have considered the potential interference with the rights of the owners/occupiers of surrounding properties under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Act and consider that it is proportionate.

Officers have also considered the interference with the human rights of the applicant under Article 8 and/or Article 1 of the First Protocol caused

by imposing conditions. Officers consider that the conditions are necessary to protect the rights and freedoms of others and to control the use of property in accordance with the general interest. The interference is therefore justifiable and proportionate.

But where does it say you are walking all over our neighbourhood for something we can't afford and we don't want. Also who is defending our right to human rights if not us, as I know for sure you certainly are not.

I have even been portrayed as the person who doesn't want children to have fun and play football. This I am sure is due to someone misinforming the football lobby of what could happen if town green status was allowed to happen on the section of grass. So the football community are opposing what we want to save for them a piece of grass to allow them to continue playing there. You must be thankful that you don't have to fight this too hard as we, the community, are beating ourselves up. If anyone took the time to look at the amended plan they will see we have excluded the playing surfaces from the application and if memory serves me right doesn't that mean the status quo will still exist? Which in turn means no change?

As a former public employee I was proud to work for the council and on my retirement thought, they will look after me into my dotage, but now it appears the opposite as it is your intention to blight my neighbourhood with problems, from increased flood risk, increased traffic flows, increased noise pollution, which now we have to deal with ourselves, and a monstrous building obstructing us from enjoying what everyone else has as a right - a view of green grass.

The wider community has now got involved with the issue of town green applications and I was recently contacted by another group who had seen the articles in the papers and was wondering if it was worth them defending their own spaces from development? Well let me just say this if development gets the go ahead then there will be no green space to worry about and the idea of a park will just be a distant memory where we older residents used to go to kick a ball around just for fun. And as there are no large spaces to maintain we can reduce the parks department so jobs will be lost. What wonderful progress not only do you remove the worrisome green but at the same time you also cut the council wages bill.

In summary, the Town Green Fourteen is a group of local residents in Blackbird Leys, exercising our democratic right to defend our green space, and we do not expect or deserve the way the Council is behaving towards us. I ask you on behalf of the Town Green Fourteen to halt your plans for a new pool and think again. Until you do, we will oppose what you are doing to keep our green space for the enjoyment of us and all the other residents of Blackbird Leys. This venture is the wrong thing, in the wrong place, and certainly the wrong time.

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