

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE GOLDEN JUBILEE PARK FOCUS GROUP held on 29 September 2003 in the Parish Room, 2 Fiddlers Lane, Saughall

In attendance: Councillor B Kerr
Councillor RA Storrar
Councillor Mrs D Whitton
Councillor C Wynne-Eyton
Councillor Mrs J Young (in the Chair)

Co-opted Members: Mr M Bell
Mr D Bird
Mr H Dobson
Mr B Huxley representing Saughall Cricket Club

Invitees: Mr M Dickens, Chester City Council
Mr P Murray, Chester City Council
Mr M O’Kell, Chester City Council
Mr R Easby, Cheshire Playing Fields Association

Also in attendance: Councillor Mrs J Johnson
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar

47 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillor A Bailey
Councillor C Moss
Mr K Evans

48 CODE OF CONDUCT – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No Declarations of Interest were received.

49 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Focus Group held on 22 July 2003 be confirmed as a correct record.

50 APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION
- PREDESTINATION OF LAND FOR RECREATIONAL USE
- REMOVAL OF HEDGEROW

(a) Progress on the Application

Chester City Council’s Principal Planning Officer, Mr Mark Dickens, had informed that he was in the process of assessing the planning application and as a part of the statutory consultation process he had received comments from the County Highways Engineer and the Cheshire Constabulary.

The Cheshire Constabulary had raised concerns over the available/proposed off-street parking provision. They had highlighted their concerns regarding the potential for on-street car parking and the likely impact upon highway safety. To address their concerns they had requested at least 30 off-street car parking spaces.

The County Engineer had recommended that planning permission be refused because the existing means of access was adequate or readily available, it was of inadequate size to allow two-way flow and the visibility to the left was obstructed (upon exiting the site).

Mr Dickens and a representative from the County Highways Department had been invited to attend the meeting to discuss the issues raised in the hope that a way could be found to move the planning application forward. Mr Dickens required a fully detailed car-parking layout for the basket ball court/car parking area – setting out the number of spaces, including adequate manoeuvring space, to address the access/egress issue.

Unfortunately, no one had been able to attend the meeting to represent the County Highways Department but Mr Dickens provided details of what was required to satisfy the concerns relating to highways issues as follows:

- ?? A double width entrance and exit.
- ?? Provision for 30 parked cars.
- ?? A barrier around the car parking area.
- ?? Visibility to be improved by removal of part of the hedge

It was noted that the planners would want the hedge to be replanted at an angle. Mr Dickens agreed to liaise with the County Highway Engineer and advise Mr Bird on what would be deemed to be safe once the hedge was removed. It was possible that Cheshire Railings could be set back.

A revised site layout was required showing that there was room for 30 car parking spaces on the basket ball court area. The spaces did not need to be marked out. It was noted that 30 spaces had been suggested on the basis of the Council's original intention to have three football pitches. The number of spaces could now be possibly less as the Council informed the planners that the new site layout would only show two pitches. Mr Dickens informed that he would need to re-consult on the amended site layout and was hoping that the Planning Application could be determined by the Chester City Council's Planning Board at its meeting on 12 November 2003.

The Focus Group considered environmental issues including the position with regard to Great Crested Newts and informed that the Ecologist's advice had been taken and a third pond was being created to provide a new habitat to draw the Newts away from their current habitat. The Council would compensate with quality for their loss. Some new hedging had already been planted. All new features would all be shown on the new site layout.

The Council would discuss the best time to remove the hedge between its two parcels of land with its Ecologist once planning permission had been granted. It may have to wait until the Spring when the Great Crested Newts would be in the ponds breeding – April/May.

Mr Murray advised that it was important to make clear the Council's intention in respect of all of the trees on the site and inform of the tree planting scheme that had attracted £450 worth of funding. This scheme and existing trees would also be detailed on the site layout.

Mr Dickens advised the Council to submit a covering letter with the amended planning application detailing the modifications made. He was happy to check the letter in draft before the submission was made.

Mr Bird agreed to revise the site layout in the light of the discussions so that it could be resubmitted as a matter of urgency.

51 TREES

It was reported that three Ash trees had been removed from the hedgerow between the Council's two parcels of land as they had been in a dangerous condition.

52 THE TENDERING PROCESS

Messers Bird and Easby reported on the tendering evaluations that they had carried out following the receipt of 4 tenders (2 in full, 2 in part).

?? Michael Cornes Contracting	Total	£164,789.12
?? Landform (UK) Ltd	Total	£186,133.30
?? Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council (Bill of Quantities not completed)	Total	£226,262.12
?? WE Parson & Co Ltd (Tendered for football & Parking only)		£28,171.25

The Council would need to use one of the tenders as the basis on which to seek funding and the Focus Group **RECOMMENDED** that the Council use the tender submitted by Landform (UK) Ltd in the sum of £186, 133.30 for this purpose.

Using the tender price recommended for grant aid purposes did not mean that the work must be awarded in its entirety to Landform at a future date. A view could be taken when the necessary funding was in place and the Council was in a position to award certain elements of the development work to some of the four contractors who had submitted tenders either in full or in part. If The Council wanted to take this approach it could convene a pre-contractual meeting to discuss its proposals with the contractors concerned. Its ultimate aim was to obtain "Best Value".

53 GRANT AID OPPORTUNITIES

The Focus Group considered how to attract grant aid and received progress reports on options being explored as follows:

(a) Chester City Council's Goway North Area Committee

It was reported that the Council had been successful in attracting £5,000 of grant aid. This would be announced officially at the Panel meeting scheduled for 30 September 2003. The Council had also been promised a further £5,000 in Financial Year 2004/5 subject to receipt of a satisfactory report.

(b) Saughall Colts

Two grant applications had been prepared by Mr K Evans. It was noted that Superintendent D Hill would be assisting with the Colt's future funding bids.

(c) Saughall Cricket Club

Mr B Huxley reported that he had the appropriate paperwork ready but would need a copy of the tender details once the Council had made its decision.

(d) WREN

Councillor B Kerr would be asked to advise on how to proceed to secure funding from WREN.

The Focus Group **AGREED** to establish a Working Party to explore and exploit as many funding opportunities to finance the development of the Golden Jubilee Park.

The following would be invited to join the Working Party who's Terms of Reference would seek to maximise the opportunities available:

Councillor A Bailey
Councillor B Kerr
Councillor Mrs JE Storrar/RA Storrar
Mr M Bell
Mr H Dobson
Mr D Parry

The inaugural meeting was provisionally scheduled for 8:15pm on Monday, 13 October 2003. This date and time would be confirmed or otherwise at the Council meeting scheduled for 6 October 2003.

54 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

RECOMMENDED:

That the date and time of the next meeting of the Focus Group be determined by the Council at its meeting on 6 October 2003.