

This document shows Leigh Parish Council communication in regard to the Forstall, demonstrating its objection to the land being sold. SDC have replied to Cllr Silander emails but not Leigh PC or WKHA emails. Leigh PC relied on the representation of their District Councillor to present their view.

Email 1: Council notification to Leigh PC the land is recommended for sale.

-----Original Message-----

From: "Alison Peet" <Alison.Peet@sevenoaks.gov.uk>

Sent: Friday, 4 August, 2023 10:33

To: "Parish.Council, Leigh" <clerk@leighkent.org.uk>

Subject: Committee report on land disposals - land at the Forstall, Leigh

Dear Louise

Just to let you know that there is a report going before the FIAC committee on 5th September recommending disposal of the land outlined below at the Forstall, Leigh in your parish.



Email 2: PC email to SDC, sent as a reply to the notification of the land sale, rather than as the PC stance if being consulted on how to utilize the land.

Dear Alison

Many thanks for your email and for bringing this to our attention.

Leigh Parish Council feel that whilst this is an important green space in the village, and there will undoubtedly be concern expressed by adjacent residents about this plot of land being developed, if done sensitively to surrounding dwellings, the Parish Council in principle has no objection to the land being developed. It is also very important to bear in mind that the site is right on the edge of the Leigh Conservation Area. The Parish Council appreciates that SDC is under increasing pressure to build new houses. This plot is not Green Belt land.

However, the Parish Council would really like this plot to be sold to a housing association for the provision of low cost local needs housing. Our partner housing association is English Rural Housing Association. We would like there to be a local lettings plan or similar in place, to allow the units to be available to people with a strong local connection. Would this be possible? I haven't discussed this yet with ERHA.

I have copied this to Liz, who may have some thoughts.

Would it be at all possible to defer the decision to sell on a commercial basis until the Parish Council has had an opportunity of investigating options with ERHA?

Many thanks, kind regards

Louise.

Louise Kleinschmidt
Clerk, Leigh Parish Council

Email 3: PC email to Cllr Silander, confirming the verbal conversations that the PC does have an objection to the land being 1) sold at all and 2) auctioned to the highest bidder. Also note the offer to cover maintenance costs, as raised by Cllr Silander at Cabinet.

Hi Malcolm

The Parish Council would be delighted if SDC is able to gift the land to the Parish Council, and I confirm that we would be happy to maintain it going forward. The residents as you know are very concerned about children who have established a right to play on the grassy area, and have done for many many years.

As a second option if the first option is a non-starter is for the land to be sold to English Rural Housing Association for local needs low cost housing, preferably for older people, but definitely under a local lettings plan for people with a strong local connection. I have spoken to ERHA and they are definitely interested and would be happy to discuss further.

However, we are keen for you to exhaust option 1 before mentioning option 2!

If you need anything else, please let me know.

Many thanks

Louise.

Email 4: Leigh PC email to Cllr Silander, following the draft Cabinet minutes, stating their objection to the land being sold.

Leigh Parish Council's preference is that the land at The Forstall remains a green space. However, Leigh has an established need for low cost local needs affordable housing and Leigh Parish Council recognises that the land at The Forstall is an opportunity to provide two or more dwellings that will help satisfy this need. The Parish Council has been in touch with English Rural Housing Association who are interested in considering this site, but are clearly not able to make a [REDACTED] The Parish Council would support only the development of low cost local needs housing on this site. The site is adjacent to the Leigh Conservation Area and any development must be sympathetic to and in keeping with this important designation.

Kind regards

Louise Kleinschmidt

Clerk, Leigh Parish Council