

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY REGENERATION CABINET BOARD

JOINT REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PROPERTY AND REGENERATION, S. BRENNAN AND THE HEAD OF LEGAL SERVICES, D. MICHAEL

31st July 2015

SECTION A – MATTER FOR DECISION

WARD AFFECTED: BAGLAN

SALE OF THE FORMER STABLE BLOCK, FORMERLY LOCATED AT BAGLAN PARK, BAGLAN

Purpose of Report

To inform Members of objections received in relation to a Public Open Space notice. The notice concerned the proposed disposal of the former Stable Block, Baglan and Members are asked to consider any appropriate objections that relate to the loss of open space.

Members are advised that one of the primary reasons why it was considered necessary to publish a public open space notice was the intention to include part of the park's existing access in the proposed sale to Coastal. Whilst a new access into the park would have been created through the proposed development, Members are advised that the latest design does not require the existing access and this will now be retained by the Council for use by the public.

Background

At its meeting on 14th January 2015, the Board resolved to approve an offer from Coastal Housing Limited for the disposal of the former Stable Block, Baglan.

Although the former stable block does not provide open access to the public, the proposed replacement of an existing entrance into the park meant that it was considered prudent to subsequently place two notices within a local newspaper as required under Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Notice of the proposed sale was placed in the Western Mail on Monday 2nd March and Monday 9th March. The Notice stated that the closing date for objections was Friday 13th March.

After a suitable notice period has passed, the Council is required to consider any appropriate objections that relate to the loss of open space as part of the proposed disposal.

Sixteen objections have been received. Whilst some objections were received after the notice period had ended, a copy of each objection is appended to this report.

Response from Head of Property & Regeneration

It is considered that a number of objections do not relate to the loss of public open space. They refer to infrastructure, drainage and housing. These are matters which will be considered as part of the usual public consultation process of a Planning application.

Whilst this report deals with objections relating to the loss of public open space, Members are advised that any proposed sale will be on the basis of a conditional contract that will require Coastal to have in place an appropriate planning permission. This will provide local residents with the opportunity to express their concerns on planning matters as part of the planning process.

A few but not all of the objections refer to the loss of open space on the basis that the former stable block is an open area available to the public. Whilst the stable block site can historically be considered to be within the grounds of what has now become known as Baglan Park, access to the buildings and surrounding land has not been possible for a number of years. Furthermore, when the site was operational, it was predominantly used as either a Local Authority stores or privately let with access to the public restricted.

Some objections relate to the disposal of all of Baglan Park for development land. However, the disposal of the stable block should be considered separately to the operational land located within Baglan Park, which will continue in its existing use as a public park. The reasons for this proposed sale are particular to the stable block site, which has not been considered to be operationally part of Baglan Park since 1999. The buildings at the site are derelict and have been subject to arson and anti-social behaviour and the disposal would enable an area of land to be brought back into a positive use whilst providing the Authority with a capital receipt.

A few objections refer to historical reasons for the site to be retained. The former stable buildings are derelict and have been subject to arson and anti-social behaviour. They are now considered to be beyond reasonable repair.

There were some concerns raised about removal of the existing access into the park. The Council intends to retain this access. Therefore, there will be no disruption to the access into the park as a result of the proposed development.

Some objections questioned whether the Council had the legal right to dispose of the land for development as the land was a gift to the Council and subject to restrictions. The land that is commonly known as Baglan Park was not a gift to the Council and was purchase at market value for development land. The park was created by the Council as part of the larger development of the Baglan area. It was part of a substantial land purchase in 1936 that led to the development of hundreds of houses within the Baglan area. The conveyance was not subject to any restrictions against development.

Further Information

At the request of the local Ward Councillors, the Council and Coastal Housing Group held an information day at the Baglan Community Centre on the 2nd July 2015.

At the event, representatives from Coastal Housing and the Baglan Ward Councillors were on hand to explain more about the proposed development and to answer any questions from local residents.

The event explained that the development would construct six high quality bungalows for residents aged over 55 and how the development would be for the benefit of the local community. The feedback that the Council has received is that local residents were generally favourable to the proposed development.

Appendices

Copies of the objections received are appended.

Recommendations

Members are requested to consider any appropriate objections that relate to the loss of open space as part of the disposal of the former stable block, formerly located at Baglan Park.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

To comply with the Council's obligation under Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 and to give full consideration to all the objections received to the proposal.

List of Background Papers

The e-mails and letters received from objectors.

Officer Contact

For further information on this report please contact Dean Nicholas - Property and Regeneration on extension 6665 email: d.nicholas@npt.gov.uk; or Aled Roderick - Legal Services on extension 3746 email: a.roderick@npt.gov.uk)

COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

TITLE OF REPORT

(a) Implementation of Decision

The decision is proposed for implementation after the 3 day call-in period

(b) Sustainability Appraisal

Community Plan Impacts

Economic Prosperity	..	positive
Education & Lifelong Learning	..	no impact
Better Health & Wellbeing	..	positive
Environment & Transport	..	positive
Crime & Disorder	..	positive

Other Impacts

Welsh Language	..	no impact
Sustainable Development	..	positive
Equalities	..	no impact
Social Inclusion	..	positive

(c) Consultation

This item has been subject to external consultation