

Appendix 3

Report of Responses to the consultation on the proposed sale of Haywood Road Community Centre and bowling green

This document contains the following sections:

Introduction

- Section A:** Comments concerning both the Bowling Green and Community Centre in terms of their being developed for housing
- Section B:** Comments concerning the loss of the Community Centre Facility
- Section C:** Comments concerning the loss of the bowling green and/or the loss of green space
- Section D:** Comments concerning the legality of a sale of the community centre and Bowling Green and the consultation in general
- Section E:** Proposals for future use of the Community Centre and Bowling Green
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Introduction

This appendix summarises the key issues arising from the comments received as a result of the consultation on the proposed sale of Haywood Road Community Centre (Centre) and bowling green (Green).

Consultation on the proposed sale of the Centre and Green was held between 31 October and 16 December 2016.

In total there were 1456 respondents who made comments on the consultation, the majority of which were from members of the public, who expressed their opinions through email, letter or petition. Each respondent may have made a number of comments relating to different issues. To establish the general sentiments these comments have been broken down into general themes within each section of this appendix. The number of individual comments is consequently greater than the amount of respondents to the consultation.

Three groups or organisations made comments. A summary of their feedback is shown in the table below. The remainder of this appendix discusses the opinions in more detail and provides the Council's response to the issues raised. Where questions raised relate to planning matters the Planning Department have not been able to respond at this stage. Should a planning application be submitted for residential development, the issues listed below would be addressed. Before any planning permission was granted a case for the development that satisfies or addresses planning policy requirements would have to be made. Such considerations would also cover the design and layout of the site and the number and type of housing to be provided. In addition, the requirement for open space in the area as well as community facilities would also be considered.

Total Respondents	1456		
Method of response	Letter, email, petition		
In favour of sale	1		
Against sale	1455		
Stated to be Current users	67	<u>Respondent's Reasons for current use</u>	
		Art Club	1
		Dance group	38
		Scrabble Club	3
		Preschool	13
		Reason not stated	12
Stated as past users	88	<u>Respondent's Reasons for past use</u>	
		Rainbows/brownies and guides	6
		Preschool	35
		Yoga	1
		Parties	14
		Playgroup	14
		Meetings	1

		Classes	1
		Jumble sale to raise funds for Red Cross	1
		Reason not stated	18
Not stated as past or present users	1301		
Interested in volunteering help	5		
Submitted proposals/business cases	1	1 Proposal from Green Scene - See Background paper 1.	
Making statements on behalf of groups or organisations	3	1. Circle Dance Group – See table 2 of the report. 2. Haywood Road Preschool – See table 2 of the report. 3. Save Haywood Road Community Centre Steering Group – See Appendix 4 4. Green Scene (not previously involved with the community centre and bowling green) – See Background paper 1.	

Section A: Comments concerning both the Bowling Green and Community Centre in terms of their being developed for housing.

Respondents who were against the Green and Centre being developed for housing made comments which have been categorised into 6 general areas as follows:

A1 Highway safety

A2 Housing density

A3 Public space, green space and play provision

A4 Detrimental to local school provision

A5 Overlooking and loss of views**A6 Pollution****A7 Comments in favour of the proposal**

Highway Safety in General:

Comments	Number of respondents who made this comment
There have already been traffic incidents around the KFC site on the junction of Woodborough Rd & Robinson Rd	3
Traffic speeds on Haywood Road between 7-9am and 4-6pm are dangerous as people use this road as a cut through diverting from an over congested Woodborough Rd and Porchester Rd.	1
There would be an increase in highway safety issues in general and at the construction phase	1
Reversing from driveways on Haywood Road is hazardous	1
Safety of the families in relation to traffic in our community is paramount.	1

Council's Response to comments above:

Highways issues relating to development would be considered as part of any application for development in discussion with the Highways department at the County Council.

Highway safety during the construction phase:

- The impact of works traffic on this narrow residential street where there is a lot of on street parking could make it more difficult for larger traffic to get through. (1 respondent)

Response:

Highways issues relating to development would be considered as part of any application for development in discussion with the Highways department at the County Council.

Congestion:

- The volume of traffic has increased dramatically from the impact of the recently developed KFC site on the junction of Woodborough Rd & Robinson Rd. This is in close proximity to the Community Centre and will further add to the congestion. (7 respondents)
- Haywood Road is narrow, tree lined and already over parked. (16 respondents)
- Haywood road is used as access to shops and amenities by lorries (e.g. CO-OP juggernauts and refuse collection). (2 respondents)
- To build houses on this last remaining area of public space would undoubtedly add further to the already congested parking and traffic issues faced by local residents. (821 respondents)

Response:

Highways issues relating to development would be considered as part of any application for development in discussion with the Highways department at the County Council.

Damage to the road surface:

- Additional traffic from the newly built houses would increase damage to the road surface. (1 respondent)

Response:

Highways issues relating to development would be considered as part of any application for development in discussion with the Highways department at the County Council.

Lack of parking:

- There is already limited residential parking and if the proposal were to happen this would further add to it. Parking permits should be considered a priority if the scheme is to go ahead. (3 respondents)
- People also use this road as 'park and ride' for the city and surrounding businesses and for shopping and working at the Duncan MacMillan Hospital on Porchester Road. (1 respondent)

Response:

Highways issues relating to development would be considered as part of any

application for development in discussion with the Highways department at the County Council.

Any new housing development on the site would need to provide parking provision in accordance with the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Parking Provision for Residential Developments'
<http://www.gedling.gov.uk/media/documents/planningbuildingcontrol/Parking%20Provision%20for%20Residential%20Dev%20SPD%2024.05.2012.pdf>

A2 Housing Density:

- Porchester Gardens is the most densely populated area in the whole borough of Gedling. (851 respondents)
- What other possibilities for residential development in the area have been investigated? Brownfield, wasteland, empty homes? (1 respondent)

Response:

It is noted that there are other areas within Gedling Borough which are at a higher density (in terms of dwellings per hectare) than Porchester, in particular in areas characterised by Victorian terraces.

Density and the impact on the character of the area would be considered as part of any planning application.

The emerging Local Planning Document will allocate housing sites to meeting the housing requirement set by the Aligned Core Strategy. The Aligned Core Strategy looks to direct new housing development first to within or adjacent to the urban areas of Arnold and Carlton, then to adjoining the urban area of Hucknall, followed by the three key settlements of Bestwood Village, Calverton and Ravenshead. Growth will also take place at other villages to meet local need only. The urban areas of Arnold and Carlton are considered to be the most sustainable location for new homes and the Local Planning Document therefore looks to provide as many as possible within or adjacent to the urban area, although consideration must be given to the need to retain land for other purposes (such as for open space, employment, community use and retail). The emerging Local Planning Document currently looks to provide 4,330 homes in or adjoining the main urban area on a range of large and small sites, including brownfield and unused sites. The proportion of empty homes in Gedling Borough (3.5%) is average for Nottinghamshire and has decreased over recent years.

A3 Public space, green space and play provision

Public space:

- The Community Centre and Bowling Green are the only publically owned building and green space left in the Porchester gardens area. (869 respondents)

Response:

Other public open space such as Breck Hill Park is located approximately within 400 metres of the Community Centre and Bowling Green

There would be a requirement for open space provision if the area of land being developed exceeded the threshold of 0.4 ha. Desktop measurements estimate the Bowling Green site and Community Centre site taken together to measure just under 0.4 Ha but this would have to be verified by a more accurate measurement if planning permission was applied for. Planning policy allows for provision to be either on or off site.

The above would also be considered as part of a planning application and cannot be responded to by the Planning Department at this stage.

Lack of green space:

- The area has been highlighted as lacking in green space. (15 respondents)
- Providing green space is a significant part of Gedling's green space strategy. (1 respondent)
- To build houses on this last remaining area of open space would be an irreversible loss. (821 respondents)

Response:

The Council's Green Space Strategy 2012-17 does indicate a lack of accessible parks and open amenity space in the Porchester Ward. Whilst a recommendation within the strategy points to protecting existing recreational facilities from re-development, the Council seeks to strike a difficult balance between the desire to retain community facilities, respond positively to the views of local residents and meet the challenge of reducing expenditure and/or generating income equivalent to £3.5 million by 2020.

The Council's playing pitch strategy, adopted by Cabinet on 3 November 2016, identifies that bowls provision can be adequately catered for at Arnot Hill Park and at the Conway Road site.

The impact of the loss of the green space would be considered as part of any planning application.

Lack of play provision:

- Breck Hill Park is not suitable for younger children. (3 respondents)
- The area has been highlighted as lacking in play provision. (5 respondents)

Response:

Breck Hill Park was recently refurbished with play equipment and is suitable for age ranges 3 to 12.

There is no play provision on the site at present so the potential development of the site would not result in a loss of any existing play provision.

The Mapperley Top ridge was highlighted as lacking in children's play provision. However, this assessment was carried out before 3 new play areas were developed at Bailey Drive, Gedling Country Park and the new development on Spring Lane had been identified.

A4 Detrimental to local school provision:

- Local school places are already oversubscribed. As the proposed redevelopment does not consist of the typical threshold of fifteen dwellings no section 106 agreements will be triggered and no provision for a contribution to increasing school places from the developer will be received. Therefore we'll have another eleven homes parachuting into an area which does not have enough school places in catchment for those people that already live there. There have been many of these small plot developments already in the local area yet there has been no increase in school places. (1 respondent)

Response:

This would be considered through the determination of a planning application in consultation with Nottinghamshire County Council as the Education Authority.

A5 Overlooking and loss of views:

- those properties which will be overlooked by this housing redevelopment we will lose the privacy in their gardens. (2 respondents)
- Those living opposite the bowling green will lose their superb view from all floors. (2 respondents)

Response:

The impact of the proposal on the residential amenity currently enjoyed by the occupiers of exiting properties would be considered as part of any planning application

A6 Pollution:

- Development would bring further fumes, dirt, litter and noise. We need to protect our environment and keep our carbon footprints as low as possible. (3 respondents)

Response:

The impact would be considered as part of any planning application in consultation with the Council's Environmental and Public Protection Service.

A7 Comments in favour of the proposal:

Decrease in the popularity of bowling:

- Bowling is a sport which is not as popular as it once was. (1 respondent)

Lack of use of the site:

- The greens and community centre seem to be seldom in use. (1 respondent)

Saving the green belt:

- The land could be put to a better use especially if it stops an amount of green belt being developed. (1 respondent)

Response:

These matters would be considered as part of any planning application.

Section B: Comments concerning the potential loss of the Community Centre Facility

Respondents who were concerned about the potential loss of the community centre facility made comments which have been categorised into 6 general areas as follows:

- B1 Implications for the Preschool**
 - B2 Implications for the Circle Dance Group**
 - B3 Implications for Mapperley Scrabble club**
 - B4 Implications for the Art Club**
 - B5 General comments in relation to the potential loss of the community centre facility**
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B1 Implications for the Preschool:

- Local residents will have to travel further to access a preschool. (5 respondents)
- Preschools are beneficial for children's wellbeing. (4 respondents)
- This is the only preschool in this part of Mapperley. (834 respondents) The community centre has become home to a vibrant preschool group for many years, the only preschool facility in Porchester Gardens.
- If the preschool moves to Gedling there will be little opportunity for families in the area, a local shortage of spaces would be created as Mapperley Plains and Westdale Lane are already full, this will be made worse by the Government's plan to increase from 15 hours to 30 funded hours. (837 respondents) If the Community Centre closes, the preschool group will be forced to move two and a half miles away to a site in Gedling, leaving our community without this vital provision.
- The nearness of the preschool to local residents is invaluable. (11 respondents)

Response:

The Council is willing to work with the pre-school to assist in finding an alternative venue if a solution can not be found at Haywood Road.

B2 Implications for the Circle Dance Group:

- Most members live within walking distance and several don't have cars. (4 respondents)
- The group provides a lifeline for users in terms of good mental and physical health and wellbeing. (10 respondents)
- There is no alternative venue available at the same time as the current dance class. (33 respondents)

Response:

The Council is willing to work with the Circle Dance Group to assist in finding an alternative venue if this is required.

B3 Implications for Mapperley Scrabble club:

- Members are devastated about losing this facility after 36 years. (1 respondent)
- Scrabble has provided many opportunities for socialising for quite vulnerable adults whether through physical disabilities and disorders such as autism and Asperger's as well as everyone else. (1 respondents)

Response:

The Council is willing to work with the Scrabble Club to assist in finding an alternative venue if this is required.

B4 Implications for the Art Club:

- The Centre provides an opportunity to meet other artists. (1 respondent)

Response:

The Council is willing to work with the Art Club to assist in finding an alternative venue if this is required.

B5 General comments in relation to the potential loss of the community centre facility

- All ages use the centre. (841 respondents)
- If the centre is taken away there will be nowhere to meet and socialise. (874 respondents) (The community centre provides an important space for many different groups to meet).
- We have already lost Wollaton Avenue community Centre, and Haywood Road is one of the few places left where we can hire a room for meetings on the Baha'i Faith Group (promoting peace, unity, friendship, etc.) (1 respondent)
- Government bodies are forever saying that there is a problem with mobility. Although there maybe alternatives this could pose a problem for people who are elderly or have limited mobile due to the hilly nature of the area. (4 respondents)
- The centre allows older members of the community who have mobility issues can participate in the democratic process as the centre is used as a polling station. (834 respondents)

- Recent developments mean there are now three pubs, three bars and a Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant on Mapperley Top. It would be beneficial to the health and well-being of local residents to provide a focus for our community not based around alcohol and junk food. (834 respondents)
- Community centres build community cohesion and meet the needs of the young, old and disadvantaged. (30 respondents)
- A few houses would benefit only a few but would totally destroy essential community hub. (1 respondents)
- At a time of increasing disconnection within society, particularly post 'Brexit', the need for a community centre is even more essential. (1 respondents)
- Once the Centre is gone what will the Council do to plug its budget? (1 respondent)
- More houses means more litter and more dog mess (1 respondent)

Response:

The Council is willing to work with existing users to assist in finding alternative venues if this is required.

None of the existing users, who responded to the consultation, said that they had mobility issues. In addition it is noted that the community centre does not have facilities for users with mobility issues. For example, there is no fully compliant accessible toilet facility at present.

It is noted that there are cafes on Mapperley Top which have what might be considered 'healthier options' available on their menus.

The impact on the community would be considered as part of any planning application.

Section C: Comments concerning the potential?? loss of the bowling green and/or the loss of green space

Respondents who were concerned about the potential loss of the bowling green and/or the loss of green space made comments which have been categorised into 1 general area as follows:

C1 Implications for the bowling green and/or green space

- building on the green will reduce wildlife including birdlife (15 respondents)
- building on the bowling green will increase pollution (1 respondent)

- the bowling green provides a green lung for people and wildlife (838 respondents)
- accessing other green spaces involves crossing busy roads (3 respondents)

Response:

The impact on wildlife and loss of green space would be considered as part of any planning application.

Section D: Comments concerning the legality of a sale of the community centre and Bowling Green and the general way that the consultation was carried out

Respondents who were concerned about the legality of a sale of the community centre and Bowling Green and the general way in which the consultation was carried out made comments which have been categorised into 6 general areas as follows:

- D1 Was the land gifted to the community?**
 - D2 Was the consultation wide enough?**
 - D3 Has the current management of the centre contributed to its non viability?**
 - D4 Did the Council deliberately decide to make the centre and bowling green unviable by encouraging individual groups to seek alternative locations?**
 - D5 Costs**
 - D6 Has the decision to grant planning permission for housing already been taken?**
-

D1 Was the land gifted to the community?

- The land was gifted to the community and should be allowed to continue to be used for the benefit of the whole community. There may be a clause preventing the Council selling the property in view of the fact that Mr. Doubleday left it for the use of the community. (29 respondents)

Response:

The Council has researched into how it came into ownership of the Centre and Green and can confirm that they were not gifted to the Council. The Centre site being part of former allotment land and site of a bungalow known as 46 Haywood Road was conveyed to Carlton Urban District Council (now Gedling Borough Council) on 24.2.1958 was purchased at market value of £2,750. The Green was purchased by Carlton UDC on 25.5.1955 at market value for £1,573. There are no covenants which require the land to continue to be used for the benefit of the whole community.

D2 Was the consultation wide enough?

- Not enough people were consulted. (8 respondents)
- A broader distribution of letters would have informed the wider community about potential loss of jobs, facilities for pre school children and elderly etc. It would also enable community members to put forward their names to run the facility. (1 respondent)

Response

In addition to the 80 letters that were sent to residents inviting comments, letters were also sent (and made available in the Centre) to the organisers of all the Groups who use the centre. Information notices were posted outside of the Community Centre so that anyone travelling past who was interested would be able to stop and view the notice. This same information notice was placed in the Nottingham Post and published on the Council's website at <http://www.gedling.gov.uk/community/haveyoursay/>. There were 1460 respondents who made comments on the consultation.

D3 Has the current management of the centre contributed to its non viability?

- The management of the centre has led to low usage. This is why it is not self sustainable (9 respondents)

Response

The Council has not managed the centre. It has been managed by the Haywood Road Community Association since 1975. Consequently, it is not known if the centre would have been used more under Council management or any other management arrangement.

D4 Did the Council deliberately decide to make the centre and bowling green unviable by encouraging individual groups to seek alternative locations?

- Local residents were not informed about any of the actions behind the scenes designed to quietly "pick off" the individual groups and users of the Centre and Bowling Green, which aimed deliberately to undermine the viability of the Centre trying to make its closure a fait accompli. The fact that this covert activity was taking place behind the community's backs is really disappointing and runs contrary to the Council's stated Values in the Gedling Plan. (7 respondents)

Response

Following the decision to reduce costs on community centres in 2014/15, the users of the Centre were advised of this in January 2016 and it was explained to them about the potential significance of the budget decision. As the process continued the wider community was consulted.

D5 Costs

- A building surveyor has estimated that £100,000 needs to be spent on the centre. This is absolutely not true. The figure is probably closer to £5000, although as the centre is busy nearly every day and in profit it could easily carry on being used without any money being spent on it. (3 respondents)
- Are the council really going to put £500K (11 homes) plus extra costs above the welfare of the whole community, when £100k is a small investment for a bigger long term benefits all round? (2 respondents)

Response

The Council's surveyor assessed the site in terms of works which would be required to create a multi-use community centre that was accessible and of a similar standard to the other community centres in its ownership.

A number of options will be presented to Cabinet for their consideration on 2 February 2017.

D6 Has the decision to grant planning permission for housing already been taken?

- By considering sale of land and building for development for housing before a planning application has been submitted would amount to predetermination by the council if an application is submitted. This is on the basis that the planning application would have to comply with policies relating to protection of open space and community facilities as set out in LPD, adopted local plan and NPPF. By announcing that the land would be sold for housing without any reference to how these planning policies would

be complied with, appear to show that a decision on the future of the site has already been taken. (2 respondents)

Response

It is not uncommon for a local authority which is a landowner to review its portfolio of available sites to sell to generate money to invest in local services, prior to making a planning application. The decision to sell the land will be made by the Council's Cabinet.

Haywood Road Community Centre is one of those sites, being potentially suitable for a small housing development. If the Cabinet approve in principle to the sale of the land, redevelopment of the site will be subject to statutory process, planning permission and any application would need to demonstrate that housing complies with the Local Plan, emerging Local Planning Document and the NPPF.

The planning application would be advertised and interested parties would be given the opportunity to comment on the proposals before a decision on the acceptability of residential development is ultimately made by the Council's Planning Committee.

Section E: Proposals for future use of the Community Centre and Bowling Green

Respondents' suggestions and proposals for the future use of the Community Centre and Bowling Green have been categorised as follows:

- E1 Proposals concerning the Community Centre and Bowling Green**
- E2 Proposals concerning the Bowling Green only**
- E3 Proposals concerning the Community Centre only**

E1 Proposals concerning the Community Centre and Bowling Green

- Great work is already being done. Much more is possible. The potential is huge. The committee and supporters of Haywood Road Community Centre are committed to doing all in their power to develop both the Centre and the Green next to it into a vibrant resource to be used, improved and managed by our community, for our community (866 respondents)
- sell the green to fund the refurbishment of the community centre (1 respondent)

- sell the green and let the community keep the centre (3 respondents)
- explore the resource becoming an Asset of Community Value (1 respondent)
- offer 1 year to come up with proposals for new approach (2 residents)
- already, a number of us are looking at the business case as we explore the following elements: A refreshed ambition for the Centre and the Green Space together; A community audit and reviews, exploring facts and figures together to support what new and additional services and uses may be identified (2 Respondents – see also Background paper 1)

E2 Proposals concerning the Bowling Green only

- The bowling green could be developed into a park or community garden, enjoyed by the whole community, which recognises the history of the area. (829 respondents)
- convert the green into a community garden/park (12 respondents)
- convert the green into a playground (14 Respondents)
- develop the Green as a learning resource part allotment, part veg, (1 respondent)
- work with community groups to save the green (1 respondent)
- designate bowling green as local green space (2 respondents)
- green scene - the green could become a green space for the community either as a heritage garden or growing space (see background papers for more information) (1 respondent)
- an additional use for the green could be for community picnics, barbeques, community orchard (1 respondent)
- show awareness of the heritage of the site, which is 100 years old and was apparently left for public use due to the owner losing his son in Flanders in 1916 – without an heir to inherit the land it subsequently has a fascinating 100 year history, which should be celebrated as we mourn and reflect upon the sacrifice of the First World War. If redeveloped as a community space, whether as a garden or play area or allotments alongside the Community Centre, the green space of the site could be renamed in honour of the fallen as well as reminder of the site's heritage: Porchester Gardens is a community that has developed on a site that apparently started out in 1886

as over 800 allotments, of which the Bowling Green is the only green space left. (9 respondents)

E3 Proposals concerning the Community Centre only

- hire out with community cent as wedding venue (1 respondent)
- easy to raise cash for repairs through HLF etc. don't need to raise cash anyway because the preschool can make it viable as it is and it doesn't need to be upgraded (1 respondent)
- an additional use for the centre could be as a café (4 respondents)
- an additional use for the centre could be for language classes, luncheon clubs, farmers market, craft/dressmaking, after school club, (2 respondents)
- an additional use for the centre could be for luncheon groups (2 respondents)
- the Community Centre is financially viable and does not cost the Council money (certainly not a six figure sum) and that if managed in an expansive and forward-thinking manner as an asset it would return even more money. If the pre-school were expanded and further plans put through and supported, drawing upon charitable funds (such as the lottery and government schemes intended to focus upon community sites) this would enable the Community Centre and green space to be redeveloped to support the pre-school as a necessity for families and as a local business whilst also expanding, over time, the facilities and number of clubs and societies that make use of the site. Allowing people to hire the site for events on Sundays as well as Saturdays would potentially enable further revenue to be gained through its use for clubs, societies, parties and other events. (4 respondents)
- keep the centre and refurbish it a the Council's expense (2 respondents)

Response

The consultation proposals within this section will be considered by Cabinet.