

Lucy Frazer QC MP
HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Ms. Maggie Camp
Legal Services Manager
East Cambridgeshire District Council
The Grange
Nutholt Lane
Ely, Cambridgeshire
CB7 4EE

13 January 2016

Dear Ms Camp,

Rev. Christopher Twycross, 11 The Vineyards, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 4QG

Thank you for your letter of 10 December 2015 (your ref: MAC/001248) with regard to the concerns of my constituent, Rev. Twycross, about the Council's intention to dispose of the public open space at the Vineyards in Ely close to his home.

Rev. Twycross has contacted me again about this issue as he remains very concerned about the Council's statement that the land is not currently used for recreational purposes which he maintains it is as detailed in his letter of 24 November 2015 enclosed with my previous letter. He is also very concerned because he now understands that the land in question was given to the Council in trust to be used for recreational purposes and that they are therefore unable to dispose of it as planned.

I would be grateful for an update on the Council's intentions following the Asset Development Committee meeting on 16 December 2015 referenced in your previous letter and for your comments on my constituents concerns about this issue.

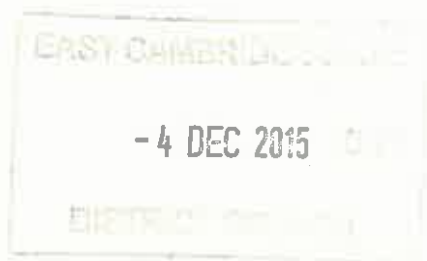
I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Lucy Frazer QC MP

Agenda Item 7 - page 5

Member of Parliament for South East Cambridgeshire



Lucy Frazer QC MP
HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr. Richard Quayle
Director (Support Services)
East Cambridgeshire District Council
The Grange
Nutholt Lane
Ely, Cambridgeshire
CB7 4EE

2 December 2015

Dear Mr Quayle,

Rev. Christopher Twycross, 11 The Vineyards, Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 4QG

I have been contacted by my constituent, Rev. Twycross, who is concerned by a proposal by the Council to sell land which they own at The Vineyards.

Rev. Twycross has a number of concerns about this proposal which he has detailed in a letter to the Council dated 26 November 2015 addressed to the Planning Committee. I would be grateful for your confirmation that this letter has been forwarded to the correct department and that his representations will be taken into account when a decision is made on this proposal. I enclose a copy of Rev. Twycross' letter for ease of reference.

I would also be grateful for your comments on Rev. Twycross' concerns that the Council did not notify him or his neighbours about this proposal which he says he discovered only by accident.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,

Lucy Frazer QC MP

24/11/15.

The Chairman of the Planning Committee

E C D C

ELY

Dear Sir, Re Public open Space, The Vineyards, Ely

Quite by accident I learned of proposed rule by the Council of the above. It seems to me there are unsatisfactory features about this move.

1) The title deeds clearly show the land was given (by Stanton) as a public open space for the residents of the Vineyards. So what is the purpose of the rule? Doubtless new building in a conservation area?

2) As a resident of the Vineyards I have a long list, from the Council about 'do & don't' etc re our bungalow in a conservation area. The Council appears to be flouting its own rules with a future change of use. So much for conservation!

3) How will the preservation order on several trees be affected? Ignored?

4) use of Space. The Council clearly are ignoring the present use of this space as a recreation area. (Probably not bothered to ascertain) It is used in the warmer months surprisingly often (yes picnics even), all year by local dog walkers. (By our grand children & family dogs.)



2/

5) The bench - essential for elderly residents, particularly from Bell Helt, as a much used resting place half way up the hill. (This is very important I know I have a heart problem) Even more important with the 'Peck's nite' becoming more sheltered housing. This road is a much used route up to the City Centre from Hisle Lane

6) Vehicular traffic. For a cat-de-sac this is surprising well used. as a narrow road it requires passing places ie resident's front drives. The open space is very valuable here both for passing and quite often to provide parking without blocking the road for other users (eg not least for Ambulances)

7) Should the Council plan go forward the above suggested road widening would be a sensible consideration

8) Most astonishing is that those most affected have be kept in the dark of this proposed development. Yes Public notification in a Cambridge News paper but strangely not an Ely one - How strange!

9) In conclusion, for me this reflects very badly on the Council's integrity. (No wonder local elections are so poorly supported - what's the point?)

Yours faithfully

L. J. Dawkins

The Rev. C. S. Twycross

Copied to - Press
Local mps

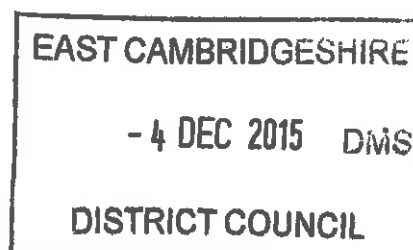
**8 The Vineyards
ELY, CB7 4QG**

Email: david.bh@btinternet.com

Telephone: 01353 665249

2015 December 3

Ms Maggie Camp
Legal Services Manager
East Cambridgeshire District Council
The Grange, Nutholt Lane
ELY
CB7 4EE



Dear Ms Camp,

Proposed sale of amenity land between 8 and 14 The Vineyards, Ely

We were dismayed, not to say appalled, to discover yesterday (only two days before the consultation deadline) that the Council proposes to sell this land.

As the nearest neighbours we are appalled that the Council has not had the courtesy to inform us – as it would surely have had to do for a planning application – that any such sale was proposed. If the rules have changed, they have changed for the worse; but this would be strange since Transparency is now the watchword.

We note that your plan attached to the official notice is more than a year out of date, since it shows a garage in the garden of 6 The Vineyards where our house, 8 The Vineyards, has stood since June 2014 – a fact well known to your Planning Department. The plan is therefore likely to mislead councillors into thinking that the land to be sold is not close to any existing houses.

When we bought our new house we checked with the Council that it was indeed the owner of this open space, and we were told (albeit informally) that, because the Council owned it, there would be no likelihood of development.

Whether or not this site is adjacent to our property we, in common with many others, would say that this area of grass with a variety of trees was of immense value to the neighbourhood, providing a pleasing variety in an area that (apart from the beginning of The Vineyards) is devoid of trees.

As we understand it, this land was gifted to the Council for this very purpose, and the Council therefore has a moral responsibility to preserve it as such.

It has been said that this area is “underused”, but this is debatable. Until Karen retires as Priest-in-Charge of the Bardolph Group of Parishes, north and west of Downham Market, our visits to the property have probably amounted to little more than a week in each month, but we have been aware of older people sitting on the bench and chatting, buggies parked by the seat while toddlers amble on the grass, and at the end of the school day young people gathering round the seat to chat. As we sit in our garden it is a pleasure to hear laughter and conversation, and know that others are enjoying this amenity.

Of course there is much pressure on councils up and down the country to realise unused assets where they can, but disposing of a piece of land that is “pleasing to the eye” and of great social value is **NOT** the right way forward. Once such land is gone it cannot be recovered.

If the issue is one of saving a few hours of labour on cutting the grass and trimming back the bushes in the autumn, we will gladly do that ourselves!

We urge the Councillors responsible for this decision to reject this unwise and unnecessary proposal.

Yours sincerely,

David Burnett-Hall

David Burnett-Hall

DGBH

PP.

(Rev.) Karen Burnett-Hall
(visiting the sick)

Maggie Camp
Legal Services Manager
ECDC
The Grange, Ely

Mr P Cobbin
41 The Vineyards
Ely

2 December 2015

Re Consultation – ECDC Land on The Vineyards, Ely.

I wish to strongly object to the proposal to sell ECDC land on The Vineyards, Ely.

The area highlighted on the map is presently public amenity area and is an integral landscaping feature of The Vineyards within Ely's historic city centre. It is also part of the conservation area where ECDC is responsible for ensuring that development maintains or enhances the landscape and setting.

- The notice states the area is no longer needed for recreational purposes. This statement is completely false. The area has never been used as a recreational area except to the extent that it is a smart green area of public amenity with trees and landscaping (requiring little maintenance) – which has not ceased. It contains public seating which is often used and provides an area of relative tranquillity 200 meters from the Market Square. In fact the area is now more important as recreational area as can be demonstrated by the point below.
- The landscape and most importantly the trees provide effective separation of a totally residential setting from the distraction of the retail setting behind (Aldi supermarket).
- The retention of this area as greenspace was used as mitigation in the Planning Officer's report for the granting of residential planning consent on the adjacent green area. Planning application 15/00652/FUL was granted extremely recently (11 Nov 2015) and I quote from the report where the officer justifies the loss of amenity area on the adjacent site .

"Due to the small area of open space and the space that remains in situ within close proximity to the site it is considered the impact does not outweigh the benefits of the proposal".

This was a planning application in the name of a Mr Seymour but in essence was ECDC granting itself planning permission as the bulk of the plot including access from the highway is owned by ECDC.

- The land specified has little commercial value except for residential development. The granting of planning permission on the adjacent site which is smaller and even more irregularly shaped was to put it mildly, surprising - given the usual close control in Conservation Areas. The ECDC Conservation Officer doubted the suitability of the site for any residential dwelling and recommended refusal to Mr Seymour's application.

As the permission was granted however, this would obviously be used as precedent for likely residential planning permission to be given on the second site thus greatly increasing its sale value to ECDC but causing even more permanent harm to the local setting.

If ECDC is attempting to use the strategy detailed above to increase the value of the land this could be highly improper use of its planning powers.

I trust you will consider the above points and I will await the outcome of your consultation with interest.

Yours sincerely

P. G. Cobbin

(via email)

26 NOV 2015

Mrs A Twycross
11 The Vineyards
Ely
CB7 4QG



23-11-2015

Maggie Camp.

Legal Services Manager,
East Cambs District Council,
The Grange,
Ely, Cambs CB7 4LL EE.

"
Re the 382 sq
metres veg land at
The Vineyards, Ely"

Dear Ms Camp.

Thank you for our brief phone
chat yesterday morning, and my primary
objections at this stage are, as follows:-

① The 'PUBLIC OPEN SPACE' is, I believe from
you on the phone, owned by the Council. It was
given to the Council, I am led to believe, by
STANDENS, to remain as 'PUBLIC OPEN SPACE', and
as such should remain so, and NOT BE SOLD OFF
presumably for property development! So, how can
you justify this? I feel the local residents
should have been consulted, (via? an information
flyer,) as it directly affects them.

(2)

② No announcement has been posted on the proposed green area for sale, by the Council, or in the local Ely paper. It was only by chance I know about it! As it directly affects the local community, surely, it is important to inform the local residents, or how else would we be aware of the proposed use of land!? to be able to object! There has been NO Consultation! A notice was posted in the Cambridge Evening News 2/52 ago, but to date, I haven't seen a Council Public Notice in the LOCAL ELY NEWS, which surely should have been posted. So again, it isn't generally known about the proposed sale.

③ To lose the present "OPEN GREEN SPACE", which is at present a pleasant green leafy area, and WELL used by local Ely Residents, would be extremely disappointing! It is important to keep them! It's not as if it is "rough waste ground" which would benefit from being built on.

(3)

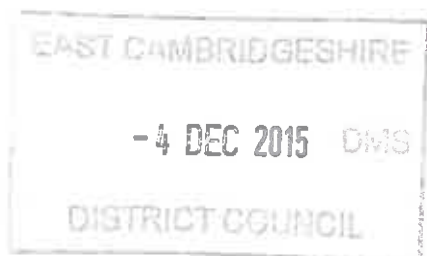
④ If the green space were to be used off for ? building purposes, the Vineyards, in my opinion, isn't a suitable road for further development, as it is a very narrow - one car wide, with only a couple of passing places i.e. in residents front gardens, - or, in this open space! Development of the green area would entail many losses, noise, etc, etc, and would make everyday life very difficult for both pedestrians and car users.

⑤ The Vineyards is in a Conservation Area, the Vineyard itself has a preservation order on them, - surely they must remain.

Thank you for your time and attention, and I would be grateful if my objections be submitted, to the proposed sale of the land.

Yours sincerely

Angela Twycross.



Jamie Scott & Katherine Storey
9 The Vineyards
Ely
CB7 4QG

East Cambridgeshire District Council
The Grange
Nutholt Lane
Ely
CB7 4EE

2nd Dec 15

For the attention of Maggie Camp, Legal Services Manager

Dear Maggie Camp,

Disposal of public land at the Vineyards, Ely by sale

We write in connection with the above proposal which has recently come to our attention, to express concern about the proposal to sell this land.

As local residents, we know the site well and we are concerned that the sale may ultimately lead to the loss of this public, green space and the construction of housing on the site.

Although relatively small, the green space contains a well used bench that many local people use whilst travelling to and from Sainsbury's from the Market Square. The area is a haven for wildlife and host to local hedgehogs in addition to having several trees which add considerably to the character of the street.

We have examined the 2015 local plan for Ely and as far as we can see this land is within the conservation area and is not earmarked as either housing led / mixed use allocation or as an opportunity site.



http://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/8_14_Ely_JL.pdf

We would welcome any further information as to the rationale for disposal of this land and whether it would be sold on the basis that planning permission for housing is likely to be granted.

As we are sure you are aware, this land is a locally valued green space and it would be a great shame to lose it.

We look forward to your response.

Yours sincerely,

 
Jamie Scott & Katherine Storey

Maggie Camp

From: Jamie Scott [jamiescott167@yahoo.co.uk]
Sent: 02 December 2015 21:16
To: Legal
Subject: FAO Maggie Camp

Jamie Scott & Katherine Storey
9 The Vineyards
Ely
CB7 4QG

East Cambridgeshire District Council
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Jamie Scott & Katherine Storey