

PROPOSED ST. JOHN AMBULANCE HEADQUARTERS – HOCKLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of issues encountered in relation to the project, which may result in it not being able to come to fruition.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At a meeting of this Committee held on 8 January 2004, Members considered a report requesting permission for St. John Ambulance to site their new headquarters on land currently leased to the Hockley Community Centre Association.
- 2.2 At that time officers reported that the Hockley Community Association had given consent to their lease being amended in order to accommodate the new HQ.
- 2.3 The Committee resolved:-

“That, subject to the grant of planning permission and the release of the land by Hockley Community Centre Association, a lease for a term of 21 years be granted to St. John Ambulance for the use of the land on the south western side of the community centre to construct a headquarters, the lease to be at market value and such other terms as the Head of Legal Services considers appropriate.” (Minute 7/04 refers)

3 PROGRESS TO DATE

- 3.1 The Head of Legal Services has been pro-active in negotiating with the original developer for the removal of a restrictive covenant in order for the scheme to progress.
- 3.2 As the design of the project has emerged, the Trustees of the Hockley Community Centre Association are of the view that the scheme is significantly different from that envisaged when they gave their consent in principle. As a result of these changes, the Trustees have indicated to the Council that they now wish to withdraw their consent.
- 3.3 The Head of Legal Services has attempted to arrange a meeting between the Hockley Community Centre Association Trustees and St. John Ambulance, with himself as facilitator, to resolve the impasse.

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- 3.4 The object of the meeting was to see if any common ground could be established in order to reach a mutually acceptable solution. Unfortunately, the Trustees have declined the invitation.

4 LEGAL POSITION

- 4.1 The Council is the freeholder, but cannot derogate from its lease to the Association. The matter is therefore entirely in the hands of the Trustees.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 As may be seen from the above, without the consent of the Hockley Community Centre Association Trustees, the scheme cannot go ahead.

6 PARISH IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The site is located in Hockley Parish.

7 RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

That if an agreement cannot be achieved between the Hockley Community Centre Association Trustees and St. John Ambulance, no further action be taken on this project.

Roger Crofts

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Background Papers:-

None

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