

REQUEST FOR PURCHASE OF LAND – BULLWOOD ROAD

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report seeks Members consideration of a request to purchase land currently in the ownership of Rochford District Council, to the rear of 10-32 Bullwood Road.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The land in question is shown on the attached plan as Appendix A.
- 2.2 Requests have been made by most of the residents in 10-32 Bullwood Road to purchase the strip of land to the rear of their properties, which was formerly an access strip from Bullwood Road, but no request has been received from No.18 Bullwood Road.
- 2.3 Following the granting of a lease in 2000 to the Hockley Public Hall Charity of the access strip surrounding the hall to allow them to improve security, this access is no longer used by the Council. The land is not actively managed by the Council but has been left to develop naturally as a buffer strip between the properties and the playspace, but has been subject to dumping of garden waste.

3 ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED

- 3.1 This former access strip abuts Hockley Woods playspace and is currently acting as a buffer between the properties and the playspace.
- 3.2 Land to the side of No.36 at the end of the strip and up to the boundary of the playspace is part of the SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) of Hockley Woods.
- 3.3 Two properties have already now encroached on to this strip of land, using it as an extension of their gardens, without the Council's knowledge or permission. Following the outcome of this report, action will need to be taken to ensure that these two owners either purchase the land or return it to its previous condition.
- 3.4 The Council's Woodlands and Environmental Specialist is opposed to the disposal of this land, as he considers that it provides a buffer between the playground and the properties. Any expansion of the gardens could have a knock on effect, by way of requests to cut back trees on adjacent Council land or result in further encroachment into the area over time.

4 OPTIONS FOR THE LAND

- 4.1 The land could be disposed of to the adjacent properties, as the access is no longer used, which is why part was leased to the Public Hall. Conditions would need to be included, to ensure that the owners do not seek to have trees on Council land in Hockley Woods cut back and that the gardens are effectively fenced from the Playspace.
- 4.2 The land could be incorporated into the playspace and thus remove the original use of the strip to improve the management of the land. However, the favoured option is to retain this strip as a buffer between the playspace and the gardens.

5 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This land is adjacent to the Playspace in Hockley Woods and sale of the land could lead to complaints about noise within the playspace.

6 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Parts of this land has been subject to dumping of garden waste. Sale of the land would remove the potential for this problem.

7 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no resource implications as a result of this report. If members agree to the sale of the land, the cost of fencing and legal costs should be apportioned to the purchasers.

8 RECOMMENDATION

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

To retain the land to the rear of 10-32 Bullwood Road, as a buffer strip between the properties and the play area and to take the necessary action against those who have encroached on to the area. (CD(F&ES))

Roger Crofts

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Background Papers:-

None

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APPENDIX A

