# Appendix F - Objections received to Open Space Notice (inc Officer comments)

From:

Sent: 15 May 2022 22:40

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk >

Subject: Objection to disposal of land at Braywick Park

Good Evening,

I am writing this email in objection to your plans for the disposal of land at Braywick Park.

Maidenhead's green space is very quickly being eradicated and built on which worries me.

Braywick park, in my opinion is not the right place for a football stadium. The parking at Braywick Park at the moment gets very full over a weekend and another sports facility where matches will he held requiring more parking spaces is ludicrous! Not to mention the infrastructure around the area. Braywick Road itself is a busy road. On a Saturday there will be both rugby and football matches going on which will be absolute carnage!!! I can think if better places for a new stadium to be like the ascot Road just off the j8/9 and a308 roundabout.

What about the outdoor gym area, running track and the rugby pitches that will be gone if this plan goes ahead? Lots of young rugby players will not be able to train on a weekend as their pitch space will be gone! Have you seen how busy it gets on a Sunday?

How are the general public going to access these free facilities if they are simply not there anymore? Not everyone can afford to pay for a gym membership.

What about the people that live on Braywick Road or in Greenfields? I certainly wouldn't want to overlook a stadium with its bright floodlights and noise!!!!

I really don't think this has been thought through. Maidenhead football club is the oldest club in the country. Rather than move it, why not make good what is already there?

Our greenspace is sacred and is there to be enjoyed by the people of Maidenhead. Not sold off for profit by our greedy council!!



- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site, with only the area alongside Braywick Road to be utilised for the stadium development.
- Gym facilities to be provided within the plans.
- Maidenhead Athletic Club requirements to be accommodated within plans.

- MUFC's view is that any fans travelling by car will be directed to utilise the new multi-storey car park at Vicus Way this will reduce traffic in the town centre on match days/evenings with easy access from the M4.
- The club's view is that the current football ground is considered to be no longer fit for purpose.

From:

Sent: 18 May 2022 21:16

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk>

Subject: Land at Braywick Park

To the Property Services Team

I strongly object to the disposal of land at Braywick Park for several reasons:

- 1. This constitutes even more loss of public open space in Maidenhead which has already been greatly reduced by the Borough Local Plan.
- 2. The lease of this land does not constitute a good deal for the people of Maidenhead. Firstly this land is more valuable to us as open space to protect our health and wellbeing and secondly the majority of the people of Maidenhead will not benefit from this lease of land.
- 3. The current location of the football club is under covenant as a place for sport and gifting it to developers is against the wishes and conditions of this covenant.
- 4. It is my understanding that the developer plans to build even more flats where the current football stadium in our small town which is already over run with flats.
- 5. This council has declared a climate emergency and has developed and adopted an environment and climate strategy. The destruction of greenbelt goes against both of these things and just shows that the council does not even believe in the policies that it sets out.
- 6. The key targets of the environment and climate strategy are nowhere near to being achieved unless radical work is done immediately to stop the destruction of greenbelt and to enhance the greenbelt and create more green spaces.

Kindest regards





- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site
- The club will form an agreement in terms of the existing ground and provision of new facility with their own appointed developers.
- Income from sale of the land will support other Council services / mitigate budget pressures.
- Redevelopment of the existing football ground site is subject to statutory planning application.

From:

**Sent:** 19 May 2022 08:25

To: Property < Property @RBWM.gov.uk>

Subject: Land at Braywick Park

To the Property Services Team

We object to the disposal of Land at Braywick Park because this represents further loss of valuable green belt land and open space in our town, over 48% of Maidenhead's green open space is already scheduled for development in the Borough Local Plan.

This proposal to further develop Maidenhead's green belt, in addition to all the development of hundreds of acres planned in the BLP, is damaging to the physical and economic health of our community and to wildlife.

It also goes against our council's continued assurance that it will protect green space.

This football ground development can only be tolerated in our view if the land currently leased to Maidenhead Golf Club is not developed.

**Kindest Regards** 



## **Officer Comments:**

- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site The new stadium development is subject to statutory planning application.
- Redevelopment of Maidenhead Golf Club site is identified in the BLP and is subject to statutory planning application, which is a separate concern to the disposal of land.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 11:03

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk>

Subject: Objection to Disposal of open space at Braywick Park

Hello,

The proposed reduction of green space in Braywick park is a concern given the broader context of development in Maidenhead.

- Recent approval to develop the Golf Course, thus removing 40% of green space in Maidenhead which will have a huge impact on air quality, animal diversity, stress on local infrastructure.
- Almost all of the recent, in progress and planned building in Maidenhead are apartments and flats with little/no private outdoor spaces.
- People need outdoor spaces, especially residents living in apartments and flats.
- This piece of land in Braywick Park is currently used by the community there is a running track available to all, and a playground which is enjoyed by many local children, again available to all.
- The detail of the proposed plan for usage of the space is limited and difficult to have an opinion on whether it would be overall of benefit or not to the community.
- Taken in isolation, the reduction of this green space for the purposes of sports/wellbeing/community facilities does not appear to be too much of a concern for the environment. But of course, the issue is that the existing football ground will now be developed for further housing. This means there will be a net detrimental environmental impact.
- It would be helpful to understand what further potential plans the council has to reduce green space in Braywick Park or elsewhere in Maidenhead.
- It would also be helpful to understand what is the reason for the substantial gap between plans being drawn up (Dec 1<sup>st</sup> 2021) and publication of the notice (April 28<sup>th</sup> 2022).

Yours sincerely,



# **Officer Comments:**

- Redevelopment of Maidenhead Golf Club site is identified in the BLP and is subject to statutory planning application.
- Recent developments in the town centre such as Watermark at York Road benefit from private outdoor space through a balcony or terrace, in addition to podium gardens.
- Plan originally prepared for Cabinet report and utilised for the purposes of the notice.
- The more detailed plans for new stadium complex will form MUFC's public consultation and associated planning application.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 11:17

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk >

Subject: Green space Braywick

I object strongly to the use of the green space in Braywick for Maidenhead Football stadium. The noise, traffic and car parking will adversely affect all the residents close by and users of the Leisure Centre. This area is used by local residents for recreation and dog walkers. Once again our council are ignoring the strong feelings of residents in order remove more green space and build more ugly flats in the town centre gradually ruining it.

Have the residents who back on to the area been informed as there seems to be very little information out there providing any detail?

Regards

Martin Lillis

## Officer Comments:

Whilst transport impacts would need to be considered as part of the planning process, it is
understood that traffic flow will be no worse from the south of the town centre than currently
on match days/evenings, whilst it is recognised that the club's ambition is to grow and evolve
at the new site that will increase match goers.

- Noise will be contained to match days/evenings.
- MUFC's view is that any fans travelling by car will be directed to utilise the new multi-storey car park at Vicus Way – this will reduce traffic in the town centre on match days/evenings with easy access from the M4.
- Public consultation through MUFC's planning application.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 11:38

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Braywick Park

To the Property Services Team,

I am writing to express concern and objection to the disposal of land at Braywick Park for the following reasons:

- The fast ebbing loss of public open space in Maidenhead for the benefit of its residents as already adversely impacted by the Borough Local Plan.
- The lease of this land will not benefit the majority of the residents of Maidenhead. The land would be more valuable as an open green space to protect the health, wellbeing of Maidonians and the overall environment.
- The current location of the Maidenhead Football Club is under covenant as a place for sport/recreation. Gifting this land to property developers contravenes the conditions of the covenant.
- Allowing the developer to build additional flats at the current football stadium will adversely
  impact the infrastructure, accessibility and overall aesthetics of Maidenhead High street
  which is struggling to accommodate shoppers.
- RBWM council has declared a climate emergency and has developed and adopted an
  environment and climate strategy, the continual obliteration of our greenbelt is hypocritical
  of its own policies and the betterment of the town.
- Lastly and sadly, the key targets of the environment and climate strategy are nowhere near to being achieved unless our council representatives step up and protect our greenbelt and create more green spaces.

Yours sincerely,

### Officer Comments:

- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site
- The club will form an agreement in terms of the existing ground and provision of new facility with their own appointed developers.
- Income from sale of the land will support other Council services/mitigate budget pressures
- Maidenhead town centre shopping to benefit from redevelopment of Nicholson's Walk shopping centre.
- Redevelopment of the existing football ground site is subject to statutory planning application.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 11:53

To: Property < Property @RBWM.gov.uk>

Subject: Maidenhead football Stadium Braywick

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the council. Do not click any links or open attachments in this email unless you recognise the sender and are sure that the content is safe.

### Dear sir/ Madam

I wish to object to the building of a new stadium for Maidenhead football club in Braywick Park.

You up held this land as community use for all when you rushed through your LDP and now you plan on using a huge area for a stadium which will not be available for all.

Where is the extra parking going? (using the public car park for the leisure Centre?) Also demolishing history. Maidenhead United is the longest continuously played on, league ground in England. I understand they need better facilities but perhaps you could give them the land next door instead of selling it off to a developer. Maidenhead will be one massive high rise concrete jungle.

Yours



# Officer Comments:

- Proposals for community uses to be re-provided on new stadium site.
- MUFC's view is that any fans travelling by car will be directed to utilise the new multi-storey car park at Vicus Way - this will reduce traffic in the town centre on match days/evenings with easy access from the M4.
- Transport impacts would need to be considered as part of the planning process
- Land adjoining current ground is owned by Shanly Homes.
- Redevelopment of the existing football ground site is subject to statutory planning application.

From: Sent: 19 May 2022 12:03

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk > Subject: Disposal of land at Braywick Park

Dear Property Services Team,

I am writing to object to the disposal of land at Braywick Park.

The open space of Braywick Park is well used by the local community and with the loss of and intended development of Maidenhead golf course and all the new flats planned for development in Maidenhead town centre, the remaining local green space which is easily walkable from the town should be protected. The value of local public open spaces was highlighted during the pandemic lockdowns when Braywick park was heavily used by local residents. With the proposed development of high rise flats in Maidenhead town centre and a booming population, this open green space will be even more essential for residents' health and wellbeing. The proposed land for sale is currently accessible and used by the public for recreation and this will be a big loss to the community.

The current Maidenhead football ground is one of the oldest football grounds in the world and that heritage should not be destroyed.

There is no current requirement for the existing site for housing as more than enough housing has been allocated in the BLP for housing until 2033.

Kind regards,

# **Officer Comments:**

- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site
- The club feels that the current football ground is considered no longer fit for purpose.
- Redevelopment of the existing football ground site is subject to statutory planning application.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 12:21

To: Property < <a href="mailto:Property@RBWM.gov.uk">Property@RBWM.gov.uk</a> Subject: Land at Braywick Football Stadium

Dear Sir or Madam,

I would like to lodge my objection to your proposal to allow land at Braywick Park to be developed as a football stadium.

the current Maidenhead ground is a site of historical interest as it is the longest continuously played on ground in English football.

Your actions will also reduce the amount of green belt available for public use in Braywick Park.



## **Officer Comments:**

- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site.
- The club feel that the current football ground no longer fit for purpose.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 12:43

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk >

Subject: Braywick Park

The proposed reduction of green space in Braywick park is a huge concern given the broader context of development in Maidenhead.

- Recent approval to develop the Golf Course, thus removing 40% of green space in Maidenhead which will have a huge impact on air quality, animal diversity, stress on local infrastructure.
- Almost all of the recent, in progress and planned building in Maidenhead are apartments and flats with little/no private outdoor spaces.
- People need outdoor spaces, especially residents living in apartments and flats.
- This piece of land in Braywick Park is currently used by the community there is a running track available to all, and a playground which is enjoyed by many local children, again available to all.
- The detail of the proposed plan for usage of the space is limited and difficult to have an opinion on whether it would be overall of benefit or not to the community.

- Taken in isolation, the reduction of this green space for the purposes of sports/wellbeing/community facilities does not appear to be too much of a concern for the environment. But of course, the issue is that the existing football ground will now be developed for further housing. This means there will be a net detrimental environmental impact.
- It would be helpful to understand what further potential plans the council has to reduce green space in BraywickPark or elsewhere in Maidenhead.
- It would also be helpful to understand what is the reason for the substantial gap between plans being drawn up (Dec 1st 2021) and publication of the notice (April 28th 2022).

Hope you will take this into consideration.

Kind regards

# **Officer Comments:**

- Redevelopment of Maidenhead Golf Club site is identified in the BLP and is subject to statutory
  planning application.
- Recent developments in the town centre such as Watermark at York Road benefit from private outdoor space through a balcony or terrace, in addition to podium gardens.
- Redevelopment of the existing football ground site is subject to statutory planning application.
- Maidenhead Athletic Club requirements to be accommodated within plans.
- Plan originally prepared for Cabinet report and utilised for the purposes of the notice.
- Plans for new stadium complex to form MUFC's public consultation.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 14:16

To: Property < Property @RBWM.gov.uk>

Subject: Land at Braywick Park

Dear Property Services Team,

I want to register my strong objection to the disposal of land at Braywick Park for several reasons:

- 1. It constitutes even more loss of public open space in Maidenhead which has already been greatly reduced by the Borough Local Plan.
- 2. The lease of this land does not constitute a good deal for the people of Maidenhead. Firstly this land is more valuable to us as open space to protect our health and wellbeing and secondly the majority of the people of Maidenhead will not benefit from this lease of land.

- 3. The current location of the football club is under covenant as a place for sport and gifting it to developers is against the wishes and conditions of this covenant.
- 4. It is my understanding that the developer plans to build even more flats where the current football stadium in our small town which is already over run with flats.
- 5. This council has declared a climate emergency and has developed and adopted an environment and climate strategy. The destruction of greenbelt goes against both of these things and just shows that the council does not even believe in the policies that it sets out.
- 6. The key targets of the environment and climate strategy are nowhere near to being achieved unless radical work is done immediately to stop the destruction of greenbelt and to enhance the greenbelt and create more green spaces.

Yours sincerely



# **Officer Comments:**

- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site
- The club feels that the current football ground is not being gifted to developers.
- Income from sale of the land will support other Council services/mitigate budget pressures.
- Redevelopment of the existing football ground site is subject to statutory planning application.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 14:31

To: Property < <a href="mailto:Property@RBWM.gov.uk">Property@RBWM.gov.uk</a> Subject: Disposal of land at Braywick Park

Dear Property Services Team,

I am writing to object to the disposal of land at Braywick Park.

I live opposite the proposed site. This is a very poor decision which already seems like a underhanded done deal to me. Surely there is another site which could be used for this without using a greenfield site? I'm not looking forward to extra congestion, cars, litter being dropped by the general public going to/from football games. Extra noise is also a concern, more and more traffic too, and it will also

make the main road and grass verges being used on the cheap as a free cark park instead of using the leisure centre cark park. Its all very well people making these decisions. these people don't have to live opposite this. Where are the thoughts about local residents wellbeing living opposite this ?....NONE.

Kind regards,

### Officer Comments:

- Traffic flow will be no worse than currently on match days/evenings. However the club's ambition is to grow at the new site and therefore attract more match goers.
- Transport and travel impacts of the proposals would be fully considered as part of the planning process
- Noise will be contained to match days/evenings.
- MUFC's view is that any fans travelling by car will be directed to utilise the new multi-storey car park at Vicus Way – this will reduce traffic in the town centre on match days/evenings with easy access from the M4.
- New stadium subject to statutory planning application.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 17:00

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk>

Subject: Objection to disposal of open space at Braywick Park

I am writing to object to the disposal of "Land at Braywick Park" at this stage. https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/home/business-and-economy/commercial-land-and-property/public-open-spaces-notifications

- Any such application of this sort is premature. There are no outline plans, for example, so it
  is not possible to make any informed judgement on the merits of this irreversible action. The
  scale of the football terraces, for example, is unknown. More information is needed in order
  to assess the merits.
- 2. If you are walking from the town centre then this is the first land at Braywick that you come to. At the moment it is easily accessible open space with running track, but the proposal appears to be to enclose the land such that is would be controlled by the Football Club. More information is needed on public access.

- 3. The Environment Agency previously objected to the building of Forest Bridge School in the flood plain. There is no evidence yet as to the impact of a Football club and buildings on the School, or the flood plain in general. More information is needed on flooding impact.
- 4. There is a "sequentially preferable" flood site namely their current ground at York Road. There is no evidence to explain why the world's oldest football ground could not itself by redeveloped? The York Road site seems ideal to deliver a town centre based sports facility, and this is especially important given the move of the leisure centre to the out of town site in Braywick.
- 5. MUFC has been in the <u>National League</u> for some years I believe. There is no evidence presented in this consultation to explain a need for a new ground. Without a detailed business case presented under this public consultation it is premature to consider the loss of this large are of open space. There may be good reasons, but they are not available to me.
- 6. The RBWM auditors criticised the lack of a detailed business case for the leisure centre. In particular residents were promised a free shuttle bus to offset the loss of the town. This shuttle service was apparently trialled for a very short period at the height of lockdown, and then shelved. The existing leisure centre car park is well-used and there is no evidence presented to consider the impact on match days of substantial numbers of cars.
- 7. Related to this York Road encourages use of sustainable transport because it is nearer the train station. If relocated to Braywick this would tend to encourage the greater use of cars on match days given the convenience of the car park. This tends against the sustainability goals and climate change goals RBWM has set. More information is needed.
- 8. The BLP evidence base noted that football pitches are not considered to enhance biodiversity. There is currently no evidence to suggest that this will be anything other than a net loss of biodiversity.
- 9. Moreover this site remains greenbelt under the adopted BLP a greenbelt, so further development should be avoided unless there are exceptional circumstances. At this stage there is no evidence in regard to exceptional circumstances, so more information is needed.
- 10. The BLP SV in 2017 allocated York Road football ground in the area marked red. It was proposed to retain the football ground. This area was removed on "soundness" grounds under the BLP SV PC and main modification process. If the intent was to develop housing on this site, and there were active negotiations to that effect, then I fail to understand why this area was not retained within the BLP proforma.
- 11. Given that the Secretary of State has called-in the RayMill Road East development on the grounds that the approval by RBWM LPA for 80 houses prima facie undermines and contradicts the BLP approach to open space (which sets that area aside for green infrastructure), then it would be sensible to wait for the outcome of that public inquiry before deciding on the loss of further open space.

I therefore object at this stage to any further disposal of open space at this stage.



## **Officer Comments:**

- New stadium is subject to statutory planning application and public consultation through MUFC.
- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site
- Flood impact assessment as part of planning application.
- The club feels that the current football ground is considered no longer fit for purpose.
- Redevelopment of the existing football ground site is subject to statutory planning application.
- Reduced traffic in town centre on match days with easy access from M4 and railway station.
- MUFC's view is that any fans travelling by car will be directed to utilise the new multi-storey
  car park at Vicus Way this will reduce traffic in the town centre on match days/evenings with
  easy access from the M4.
- Easy access from railway station.
- Ray Mill Road East planning application withdrawn and scheme no longer proceeding.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 17:00

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk>

Subject: Objection to the lose of green space at Braywick

ΗĬ,

As residents of the estates on Bray Road we have the following concerns re the proposed development of a football stadium at Braywick

To add to the below collective list, I wish to also state that personally I find the decision odd to wish to build a sports stadium in this location given the general trend around the country is to move Football stadia to the outskirts of Cities & Towns rather than build in the centre.

### Our collective concerns:

The proposed reduction of green space in Braywick park is a concern given the broader context of development in Maidenhead.

- Recent approval to develop the Golf Course, thus removing 40% of green space in Maidenhead which will have a huge impact on air quality, animal diversity, stress on local infrastructure.
- Almost all of the recent, in progress and planned building in Maidenhead are apartments and flats with little/no private outdoor spaces.
- People need outdoor spaces, especially residents living in apartments and flats.
- This piece of land in Braywick Park is currently used by the community there is a running track available to all, and a playground which is enjoyed by many local children, again available to all.
- The detail of the proposed plan for usage of the space is limited and difficult to have an opinion on whether it would be overall of benefit or not to the community.
- Taken in isolation, the reduction of this green space for the purposes of sports/wellbeing/community facilities does not appear to be too much of a concern for the environment. But of course, the issue is that the existing football ground will now be developed for further housing. This means there will be a net detrimental environmental impact.
- It would be helpful to understand what further potential plans the council has to reduce green space in BraywickPark or elsewhere in Maidenhead.
- It would also be helpful to understand what is the reason for the substantial gap between plans being drawn up (Dec 1st 2021) and publication of the notice (April 28th 2022).

Thanks,



- Redevelopment of Maidenhead Golf Club site is identified in the BLP and is subject to statutory planning application.
- Recent developments in the town centre such as Watermark at York Road benefit from private outdoor space through a balcony or terrace, in addition to podium gardens.

- Redevelopment of the existing football ground site is subject to statutory planning application.
- Maidenhead Athletic Club requirements to be accommodated within plans.
- Plan originally prepared for Cabinet report and utilised for the purposes of the notice.
- Plans for new stadium complex to form MUFC's public consultation.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 17:03

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk >

Subject: NOTICE OF INTENDED DISPOSAL OF OPEN SPACE LAND - Braywick Park

Dear Madam or Sir,

I read from an advertisement in the Maidenhead Advertiser that RBWM intends to dispose, by way of lease, of a section of land at Braywick Park for the purposes of building a new football stadium for Maidenhead United FC, together with other potential sports infrastructure.

As a resident of Maidenhead in my childhood and young adulthood, and having returned to live in the town a dozen years ago, I have long had the opportunity to observe and use the town's recreational facilities and amenities. For the past 10 years, I have been a volunteer, coach and referee with Maidenhead Rugby Football Club, and I am deeply concerned about how relocating the football club to the same site may impinge on the space available for the coaching and enjoyment of rugby.

Participation numbers have grown in the Maids RFC Minis & Juniors age groups (from Under-6s to Under-16s and Colts) and I know that it can already be difficult to find serviceable rugby pitches throughout the season, with degrees of flexibility regularly required to accommodate all who wish to train on a weekly basis, none of which is conducive to gaining commitment from busy youngsters and their supportive families.

I have also been an enthusiastic visitor to York Road to support the Magpies and, in their 150th anniversary year, I understand the standing of the club in the town, and the imperative to establish a new home facility.

However, wedging a long-established football club, with all its attendant requirements, will very likely compromise the reach and community engagement which either sports club is able to provide. Any degradation to the space and service available to the RFC can surely not be acceptable as a focus on active sport is so important, for current and future generations.

Indeed, the plan to increase Maidenhead's population by ~40% in the next decade must demand more recreational facilities and amenities to be grown in and around the town, rather than cramming them into an already overused and under-maintained space.

Having witnessed Maidenhead's 'development' over five decades, I have often been struck by how the character and heritage of the town has been routinely diminished and demolished by successive generations of town planning. In MUFC, Maidenhead has a unique artefact of the longest continuously used football ground in the country. If York Road is to be razed and replaced, then let its legacy be one in keeping with the Magpies' heritage, rather than as a cuckoo in another's nest.

I look forward to your acknowledgement and reply, and to reviewing the community comments on this compromised proposal.

Yours faithfully,



## **Officer Comments:**

- New stadium is subject to statutory planning application and public consultation through MUFC.
- The club feels that the current football ground is considered to be no longer fit for purpose.
- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 18:55

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk >

Subject: Land at Braywick

I am writing to express my explicit disagreement with the plans for the disposal of land at Braywick Park, not that I am under the illusion for one minute that RBWM councillors or officers will take into account public opinion.

In the recently approved, and highly controversial Borough Local Plan, the site in question is allocated for Green Infrastructure. According to government guidance, Green Infrastructure is "...a natural capital asset that provides multiple benefits, at a range of scales. For communities, these benefits can include enhanced wellbeing, outdoor recreation and access, enhanced biodiversity and landscapes, food and energy production, urban cooling, and the management of flood risk". It goes on to state "Green infrastructure can embrace a range of spaces and assets that provide environmental and wider benefits. It can, for example, include parks, playing fields, other areas of open space, woodland, allotments, private gardens, sustainable drainage features, green roofs and walls, street trees and 'blue infrastructure' such as streams, ponds, canals and other water bodies". These are features that are supported by the Town and Country Planning Association, who give a definition of "a network of multi-functional green space and other green features, urban and rural, which can deliver quality of life and environmental benefits for communities". From the information available, the disposal of this land makes no contribution to the above criteria, but can easily be seen to detract from these same criteria.

Furthermore, the inspectors report on the BLP clearly stated "All three sites are in the Green Belt, with AL13 and AL14 to be removed and AL15 to remain therein" and to dispose of the site for development is entirely at odds with this. On the above information alone it is wholly inappropriate to remove the land at Braywick Park from public access.

Nonetheless, other reasons for objection to the disposal of this land are:

- The site is allocated for Green Infrastructure in the BLP and highlighted as a site to be upgraded (not degraded!). It is my opinion that when assessing the BLP, the inspector was misled into believing that this site would be retained for green infrastructure when, in reality, RBWM were in negotiations relating to the site's possible disposal for at least 2 years. Should the inspector have been properly informed, a different conclusion may have been reached regarding the release of other sites from Maidenhead's greenbelt such as Harvest Hill, the golf course or Spencers Farm.
- The plan contravenes the requirement of the inspector's evaluation of the BLP, which stated the site was to remain in the Green Belt.
- The public (including myself) have been misled with the BLP, believing that the site would be retained for public use, in line with the above definitions of Green Infrastructure. If the public had been properly informed, the acceptability of the BLP would have been reduced on the grounds of flood risk management, and the degradation of biodiversity and outdoor access.
- It will be damaging to the environment and public health. As a result of the approved BLP, an estimated 48% of Maidenhead's green space has been lost, this plan to remove more of the greenbelt will be damaging to the local and wider environment, and reduce the physical wellbeing on the town's population. Additionally, with the development of the golf course site, this land at Braywick Park will become an important asset in terms of flood management, serving as a sink for water run-off from the golf course site. This will be reduced if the site is to be covered in buildings and astro-turf.
- The plan will result in the loss of "a natural capital asset that provides multiple benefits, at
  a range of scales": A variety of facilities will be lost, many of which are free to use, which is an
  important consideration given the current cost of living crisis. These free to use facilities
  include the open play area, basketball facilities, running track, outdoor gym area, safe dog
  walking space, etc. In addition, there is no other suitable facility for the multi-pitch sporting

tournaments that take place each year. Disposal of the land means it will effectively enter into private management with access to members and ticket holders only.

- Reduced easy access to open space. With the excessive development with the town centre (19- and 23-storey blocks of dwellings), there will be very little open space available for the residents of these homes to use (contrary to BLP Section 14.10.2 "It is important that local residents have access to open spaces, including outdoor sports and leisure facilities, near to their homes"). The importance of easy access to quality open space is clearly evidenced by the actions of individuals during the Covid-19 pandemic. Furthermore, disposal of the land will contravene Policy IF4 which clearly states existing open space is to be "protected, maintained, and where possible, enhanced to increase capacity and make open space more usable, attractive and accessible", and "The protection and enhancement of physical access, including Public Rights of Way, to open space is supported".
- The disposal is in contravention of the NPPF. The NPPF states "Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on" unless certain criteria are met. The only criterion that could apply is "c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use". However, as the land will be disposed into private ownership there will be no benefit to the people of Maidenhead.

The only way in which this disposal of land could begin to be acceptable is if a like-for-like site is provided within a similar distance ( $\pm$  10%) of the town centre (for example the land currently occupied by Maidenhead Golf Course). To not dispose of this land is the perfect opportunity for RBWM to begin to heal its rapidly declining public opinion and demonstrably show its commitment its vision "to be a borough where the community collectively works together to achieve a sustainable future; by protecting and enhancing our natural environment and achieving rapid decarbonisation to net zero carbon emissions by 2050".



- New stadium is subject to statutory planning application and public consultation through MUFC.
- The club feels that the current football ground no longer fit for purpose.
- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site
- Redevelopment of Maidenhead Golf Club site is identified in the BLP and is subject to statutory planning application.

From: Sent: 19 May 2022 18:57 To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk> Subject: Disposal of open space at Braywick Park Hello, I am writing with regard to the plans to move the football ground to public open space in Braywick Park. Maidenhead is already very much the poorer relation of the Borough when it comes to good quality public open spaces. There was a chance to put this right with the golf course, but that ship seems to have set sail. In that context I don't think any further degradation of green space available to the public can be countenanced. I get that the Borough have balls up their finances, but this is not a reason too sell of the family jewels. Their will inevitably be further periods of financial difficulty in the future, you can't just sell off community assets each and every time it happens. The Borough is the custodian of community assets and should be seeking to improve the lives of their citizens, not selling them down the river. Anyway, thanks for your consideration. Yours sincerely,

## **Officer Comments:**

 New stadium is subject to statutory planning application and public consultation through MUFC.

- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site
- Redevelopment of Maidenhead Golf Club site is identified in the BLP and is subject to statutory planning application.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 19:29

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk>

Subject: Objection to Disposal of open space at Braywick Park

Hello,

The proposed reduction of green space in Braywick park and at the current football club site is yet another large loss of green space in Maidenhead following approval to build on the golf course. Not only is it a concern environmentally, but it also drives the loss of regularly used and much loved local facilities.

I am part of Maidenhead Running sisters, and as a group we regularly use the running track in Braywick to warm up. There is no other public facility like it in Maidenhead. I gather there are no plans to retain a track. I also use the track on my own and with my family. It is a fun and safe space for my 8 year old son and I to both run together yet independently going at our own speeds being there we can remain in eyesight and earshot of each other and there's little risk of him running in the wrong direction or drifting further away. He frequently times himself over the 400m distance, and monitors his progress. He loves going out to exercise here - something I'd hope the council would recognise as something to encourage as an important part of a healthy upbringing. I've also used it to help recover from injury, as it's an even surface, and very easy to tell distance covered. Each time I'm there it is well used by people of all ages, from all over the Borough. I can't think of another such local facility that is open to all, non stop. It would be a huge loss to our community.

We will also be losing the children's play park and 2012 Olympic Legacy outdoor gym. Again we've used and loved both over the years. There are other such facilities in Maidenhead, however not in easy walking distance.

It's impossible to overstate the importance of green open spaces and public sports facilities for residents mental health. This area was a huge part in my family maintaining a degree of sanity during the recent covid lockdowns. It's also key open space for local residents many of whom may not live in flats without access to gardens of their own, to let children run and play, to exercise dogs, to share a picnic with friends and family and to simply stop and connect with nature. A large chunk of the area being given up is grass, shrubs or trees, on top of the existing loss of 40% of the Boroughs green space at the golf course.

Other than the attached image I've been unable to locate copies of the proposed plans for the site. I've been invited to the Maidenhead Athletics club next week to hear about them, but that will be too late for this consultation.

It's unclear from the plan how current pedestrian access to Braywick Park and Nature Reserve would be effected when approaching on the dual carriageway from town. If people had to walk even further to get it that would not be considered acceptable.



Yours sincerely,



## **Officer Comments:**

- New stadium is subject to statutory planning application and public consultation through MUFC.
- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site
- Redevelopment of Maidenhead Golf Club site is identified in the BLP and is subject to statutory
  planning application.
- Gym facilities to be provided within the plans.
- Maidenhead Athletic Club requirements to be accommodated within plans.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 22:17

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk>

Subject: Objection to the green space at braywick

### Hello

I live in the bray area and I strongly have an objection to use up green space where I live. I could list a long list of why I have an objection but you have probably heard them all.

Please leave the green space for not only people like me but for all the natural habitant who give me such pleasure for my well being and my mental state.

Thank you

Mrs Patel

# **Officer Comments:**

- New stadium is subject to statutory planning application and public consultation through MUFC.
- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site

From: Sent: 19 May 2022 23:01

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk > Subject: Braywick development proposal

Dear Sir/Madam, I am writing to object to the planned reduction of green space at Braywick Park.

There has been significant reduction of green space in Maidenhead already, with the building of so many flats and the proposal to build on the golf course. In building so many flats with little outdoor space this puts pressure on the parks and green spaces available, as well as the services within the town.

This part of Braywick Park is used by the community, and is beneficial to those wishing to exercise outdoors on the running track and for children to play in the playground.

It is concerning to see so many flats being built in Maidenhead, and the reduction of our green spaces for the community to use, it doesn't seem like much sensible long term planning has been considered.

Regards,



Sent from my iPhone

## **Officer Comments:**

- New stadium is subject to statutory planning application and public consultation through MUFC.
- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site
- Gym facilities to be provided within the plans.
- Maidenhead Athletic Club requirements to be accommodated within plans.
- Recent developments in the town centre such as Watermark at York Road benefit from private outdoor space through a balcony or terrace, in addition to podium gardens.

From:

Sent: 19 May 2022 23:33

To: Property < Property@RBWM.gov.uk>

Subject: Objection to Disposal of Open Space at Braywick Park

- 1. The running track and playground are community facilities offering much needed open space within walking distance of the many new building projects in the Town Centre which are almost exclusively flats with no open space of their own. This has implications for the health (both physical and mental) of the occupants.
- 2. Many people use the running track in preference to busy pavements and traffic laden polluted streets.
- 3. It is important, particularly in the face of significant cost of living issues endured by less wealthy residents, to have open space facilities open to all at no cost.
- 4. We have a perfectly acceptable football ground. What is the rationale for moving it, with the consequence of removal of open space? One can surmise that yet again this is being driven by financial pressures to release town centre land for housing development yielding funds to defray the debt incurred by previous council maladministration.

- 5. There is a complete absence of any detail in the proposal.
  - For example, what proportion of the land will be enclosed and presumably "out of bounds" to the general public?
  - · Will there be a possibility to incorporate a running track in the stadium design, and will it be available to casual runners on non-match days?
  - · What are the implications for flood water run-off if yet more grassland is converted to the buildings associated with its use as a sports arena with stands and catering facilities.
  - Having handed over the lease of the land to new occupants, what control will RBWM have on the design, use and accessibility of the site?
  - Where are the documents relating to traffic and access analysis?
- 6. I have not seen any public discussion of this proposal. Apart from a 6cm square announcement in the Maidenhead Advertiser there has been no media coverage. The (very sketchy) plan is dated 1<sup>st</sup> December 2021. Why the delay in the application? When the possibility was first discussed there was no further announcement and I think you will find that most Maidenhead residents think the proposal has been abandoned.
- 7. Is there actually a need for the housing capacity that presumably is the justification for the release of the current football club land? There has been much debate re the need for housing driving the Golf Club development, and the recent announcement by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities would indicate a much greater role for community voices to be heard. Are we not entitled to a more transparent public debate on this?

This is not good government.

- New stadium is subject to statutory planning application and public consultation through MUFC.
- Whilst there will be a changed layout to rugby pitches and the athletics track, there will remain some rugby pitches on the Braywick site
- Gym facilities to be provided within the plans.
- Maidenhead Athletic Club requirements to be accommodated within plans.
- Flood impact assessment as part of planning application.
- The club feel that the current football ground is considered to be no longer fit for purpose.
- Plan originally prepared for Cabinet report and utilised for the purposes of the notice.
- Redevelopment of the existing football ground site is subject to statutory planning application.
- Recent developments in the town centre such as Watermark at York Road benefit from private outdoor space through a balcony or terrace, in addition to podium gardens.

 Redevelopment of Maidenhead Golf Club site is identified in the BLP and is subject to statutory planning application.

19/05/2022

Dear Sirs/Madams,

**Section 123 Local Government Act 1972** 

Section 10 Open Spaces Act 1905

**Section 164 Public Health Act 1875** 

**Section 5A Local Government and Housing Act 1989** 

Regulation 5 The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000 Pursuant to Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, I am writing to object to the proposed disposal of land, held by RBWM, comprising part of the public open space known as Braywick Park, on the grounds that the proposed action is an executive function yet is contrary to the adopted Policy Framework of the Council.

As a resident of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, I personally enjoy use of the land held by the Council as public open space, including this part of Braywick Park, and assert that its disposal through the exercise of executive function *ultra vires*, freeing it from the statutory trust, established under Section 10 of the Open Spaces Act 1906 and/or under Section 164 of the Public Health Act 1875, through which all members of the public benefit, would constitute an injustice to me and all those members of the public who enjoy this space.

### Background

On 26th November 2020 Cabinet agreed to the following resolution in relation to the future of the land now proposed for disposal:

"That Cabinet notes the report and:

- i) Approves the release of land identified at appendix B, subject to planning for £460,000 as recommended in the s.123 report.
- ii) Delegates authority to Executive Director of Place, to undertake the statutory procedure required under Section 123(2A) of the Local Government Act 1972 as required and negotiate draft agreement for lease, for 999 years at a peppercorn rent."

However, when Cabinet made this decision-in-principle to dispose of the land to Maidenhead United Football Club, approving the "release" of the land, this was within a Policy Framework that has since been significantly updated through the adoption of new plans and strategies by the Authority.

- In November 2021, Full Council adopted a new Corporate Plan (2021-2026).
- Without prejudice, in February 2022, Full Council purported to adopt a new Development Plan Document, the Borough Local Plan (2013-2033).

Notwithstanding the authority delegated to the Executive Director of Place by the resolution of Cabinet, to perform the executive functions under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 and to negotiate with the Football Club, he can only perform these functions in accordance with the prevailing Policy Framework.

The decision made by Cabinet in November 2020 does not exempt the Director, when performing the delegated functions and making distinct determinations regarding the matters arising, from the legal requirement to determine these matters in accordance with the Authority's adopted Policy Framework at the time. In proceeding with both the statutory process and contractual negotiations, the Director's actions demonstrate he is minded to make determinations otherwise than in accordance with the current Policy Framework, which is not a lawful exercise of executive power.

### Conflict with the Corporate Plan (2021-2026)

The proposed disposal of public open space in Braywick Park conflicts with the policies of the Corporate Plan. Specifically, within the, "Inspiring Places" goals, under the, "Quality infrastructure

that connects neighbourhoods and businesses and allows them to prosper" priorities is the following policy:

"Enable delivery of the key social, physical and green infrastructure to support new development at the Desborough / South West Maidenhead site (AL13 in the Borough Local Plan), including strategic highway improvements, public transport, cycling and walking infrastructure, new primary and secondary schools, community facilities and open space." [Emphasis added]
Braywick Park sits within the South West Maidenhead placemaking area, which is expected to undergo intensive growth in households with the AL13 site allocated in the BLP for 2,600 homes. Critical in supporting this new development, as envisaged in this Corporate Plan policy, the Council has committed itself to delivering adequate levels of green infrastructure within the placemaking area. Retention of all existing open space, as recommended in the Open Spaces Study (2019) evidence base, is surely paramount to achieving this Corporate Plan objective, and this proposed disposal, with the consequential removal of the statutory trust protection, is clearly in direct conflict with this.

## Conflict with the Borough Local Plan (2013-2033) – Quality of Place policies

The strategic Quality of Place policies of the BLP do not exist solely for the purposes of determination of individual planning applications but also form an integral part of the Policy Framework of the Council. All executive decision making must accord with the confines of the clear policy objectives provided. This is in contrast with the application of the BLP policies for the determination of planning applications, which is a function of the Authority, where decisions are made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise; this flexibility to diverge from the Development Plan

may be exercisable by the Authority but for the executive function relating to disposal of land must be exercised within the Policy Framework of which the BLP is an integral part, Policy QP1b, South West Maidenhead Strategic Placemaking Area, contains the following text; "5. The design and delivery of development within the SWMSA should adhere to the following key principles and requirements

g) A strategic green infrastructure framework and network of green spaces to meet strategic and local requirements, including retention of existing green spaces and edges where possible and provision of new public open space in accordance with the Council's standards." [Emphasis added] The land in Braywick Park being proposed for disposal is existing green space. Its retention as open green space is currently protected by the statutory trust in which it is held. The disposal of this land is not unavoidable but is an elective determination by the Council so is is reasonable to conclude it would be possible to retain this land is the Council chose to to do so. The executive decision to dispose of this land is therefore clearly contrary to Policy QP1b of the BLP and it would be irrational to conclude otherwise.

The supporting text to Policy QP1b identifies the challenge presented by the the need to provide sufficient green infrastructure/accessible open space to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population in South West Maidenhead and reinforces the importance of the retention of open spaces within the South West Maidenhead Strategic Placemaking Area:

"6.6.10 In addition to the transport challenges, the scale of development and the transformation of the open space poses challenges for the retention and enhancement of green infrastructure to serve the new community and for the delivery of net gains in biodiversity . Furthermore, the current approach to Maidenhead from the south is characterised by green, leafy corridors. The challenge for the development of the SWMPA is to provide sufficient green infrastructure and accessible open space for the benefit of existing and new communities. Whilst on-site provision of open space and green infrastructure is important, the improvement and provision of new connections to areas of formal and informal open space elsewhere in the SWMPA area for pedestrians, cyclists and nature will be key to creating a healthy, sustainable community." [Emphasis added]
Whilst not referring to existing open space specifically in the main text, Policy QP2, Green and Blue Infrastructure, is supplemented by the following supporting text that further reinforces the strategic

Maidenhead:
"6.10.3 The benefits of green and blue infrastructure are fully realised when delivered at a strategic scale. In areas subject to strong intensification (for example, the Maidenhead Town Centre and South West Maidenhead strategic placemaking areas) the need for a comprehensive, high quality network of green and blue infrastructure will be especially important."

# Conflict with the Borough Local Plan (2013-2033) - Infrastructure policies

Policy IF4, Open Space, relates to both existing and new facilities. Paragraph 1 states;

importance of retaining intact the existing network of green infrastructure in South West

"1. Existing open space in the Borough will, where appropriate, be protected, maintained, and where possible, enhanced to increase capacity and make it more usable, attractive and accessible." [Emphasis added]

Paragraph 3 goes on to allocate the whole of Braywick Park as an upgraded open space;

"3. The following sites are allocated as new or upgraded open space as part of the Borough's Green Infrastructure network:

Ref. Site

AL15. Braywick Park, Maidenhead

Site specific requirements for these green infrastructure sites are set out in proformas in Appendix C. The proformas form part of this policy."

Again, there is a clear conflict between the proposed disposal of part of Braywick Park (AL15) and this policy, which calls on existing open space to be protected and maintained, where appropriate. "Protected", surely does not allow open space to been freed from the existing statutory trust,!a consequence of disposal by the Council, and clearly in the case of land allocated within site AL15 such protection is "appropriate".

In conclusion, in proceeding to exercise the powers under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to dispose of this public open space land, the Director of Place has made and continues to make determinations in exercise this delegated executive function that are contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council.

In these circumstances, I respectfully call on the Monitoring Officer to lay a report before Cabinet, under Section 5A of the Local Government Housing Act 1989, giving the Cabinet the options to either seek the approval for the disposal from Full Council (as per Regulation 5 The Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000) or, alternatively, to abandon the disposal of this public open space thus retaining the statutory trust over the land that guarantees that it continues to be held for the enjoyment of the public. Yours faithfully,

- The Corporate Plan sets out several ambitions and specific service goals, at times projects may conflict with certain aspects or span a number of themes and the interpretation of these. For example whilst the disposal of land does result in reduction of open green space the new facilities create more usable sports facilities all year round and increase levels of activity due to all weather playing surface. The decision is therefore a balance of impact and benefits each option presents,
- From a planning perspective It is definitely true to say that as a result of the proposal there would be an inevitable loss of green space and part of the land that is identified for green infrastructure (AL15) which references use for SW Maidenhead. However, this in itself does not necessarily mean that the contents of a subsequent detailed planning application/applications would be contrary to the policies or objectives of the BLP or the Corporate Plan.
- To assess a proposal against these policies officers would need full details of the proposal and the extent of wider community benefits, proposals for enhancement/provision of green space on site/elsewhere etc.
- Judgements about whether there will be adequate provision of open space have both quantitative and qualitative elements to them and would be impacted by factors such as the final amount/form of development which comes forward within this site allocation area and the detailed nature of any proposals for this parcel.
- They are matters that would need to be considered at the planning application stage with fuller details. It does not follow that that the decision to dispose of land would necessarily be in conflict with these policies, although it would impact on how they might be achieved and due consideration would have to take place under any planning application

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