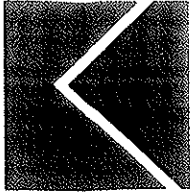


SUBMITTED BY FISHER ON BEHALF OF OLD HALL STATE RESIDENTS
INQUIRY DATE 19 NOVEMBER 2013 (RETAIL)



KNOWSLEY
METROPOLITAN BOROUGH

Leader's Office
Leader of the Council Councillor J Keight one JP

Mrs S Stankowski
1 Melling Drive
Kirkby
Knowsley
Merseyside
L32 1TT

JK/MM

23 May 1997

Dear Mrs Stankowski

Thank you for your recent letter.

My comments are as follows:-

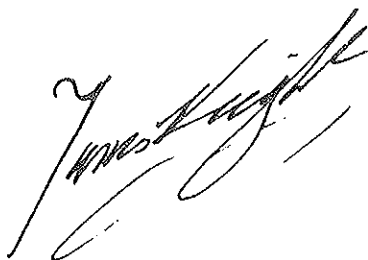
- a) Public Opinion: Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council canvassed every household about the future of the site, and then went back to each objector so that the nature of the complaint could be understood fully. The results of those exercises were made publicly available and reported to Policy and Resources Committee in February 1997. Those results showed the objectors to be a small minority of residents.
- b) Kirkby Challenge Article: Council land is not held centrally but by the various Service Committees of the Authority: this land belonged to the Education Committee, since the previous use was for school purposes, rather than being a general public facility. Since it is not (and never has been) *public* open space, the legal position is that unauthorised members of the public using it have been trespassing, as I said. However, although it would have been churlish to seek to prevent *informal* public use of educational land no longer in active use, (particularly since the land is ultimately a public resource) the Council, as elected custodian of Knowsley's public resources, has a responsibility to manage those resources effectively and efficiently to provide the best possible services at minimum cost to all Knowsley residents. We will not fulfil that role if we allow surplus land ***in areas with an existing public open space surplus*** to lie fallow indefinitely instead of recycling it for new uses when the opportunity permits. Consultation exercises are an integral part of how we go about discharging our responsibilities: the scale of this one was a response to what was claimed to be widespread public concern.

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- c) UDP: The land allocated in the UDP specifically for housing redevelopment was the site of the St Kevin's school buildings and land to the south between it and Ruffwood School. The remainder was allocated for a continuation of its educational use. However, the Plan also indicates that land uses will change over time and that allocations may become inappropriate. In this case, the previous educational use will clearly not resume, and in such circumstances policy EN10 would apply (copy attached). You will also find a reference to exactly the issue at question in the Strategic Planning Section of the Plan, at page 5 paragraph 1.13 (also attached).
- d) Site Visit re Traffic: Members of the Council dealing with this issue considered the need for a site visit in Committee. They determined that they were all well aware of the site characteristics and that a site visit would offer no added value to their deliberations.
- e) Availability of Proposals: In respect of this issue, arrangements have been identical to every other item of Council business. Members of the Council receive reports in advance of Committee meetings, and they are available in Members' rooms in Huyton and Kirkby. Requests from the public to see reports three days before Committee meetings are scrupulously met, as required by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985. Weekly lists of planning applications received are already available at Huyton and Kirkby Municipal Buildings and at public libraries.

I am sorry that you view our actions in such an unhelpful light. I have to remind you though that your community is part of Knowsley, and the decisions all Councillors take have to be based on the public interest of the citizens of the Borough as a whole. Factional self-interest in retaining levels of facilities not enjoyed by other parts of the Borough, but paid for by Knowsley as a whole, is inequitable and unacceptable, especially in times of general stringency when the efficient use of resources is key to maintaining public services for all our fellow residents.

Yours sincerely



COUNCILLOR J KEIGHT OBE JP
Leader of the Council