

Leicester  
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED:  
BELGRAVE WARD**

**CABINET**

**18 NOVEMBER 2002**

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## **FORMER JOHN ELLIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE - UPDATE**

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### **Report of the Corporate Director of Resources, Access and Diversity**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

The purpose of this report is to advise Cabinet on the outcome of the public consultation undertaken as a requirement of Department for Education and Skills (DfES) Guidance 0580/2001 for the disposal of the site (see attached plan), following closure of the Community College last year.

#### **2. Summary**

This report outlines the consultation undertaken on the proposed disposal of the site, the likely timetable for planning guidance and seeks approval for marketing the site for disposal, subject to receiving DfES consent.

#### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 That the outcome of the public consultation is noted, and Cabinet is invited to comment on the comments received.
- 3.2 That the site is marketed in 2003 once the Site Development Guidance is completed and DfES approval is obtained for disposing of the site.

#### **4. Financial and legal Implications**

##### Financial Implications

The freehold disposal of the 9.09 acre site will realise a capital receipt which will contribute to the City Council's capital receipts target. The value of the redundant school sites including John Ellis Community College was taken into account by Central Government when allocating resources for the secondary review. Accordingly, the City Council contributed £4.88 million from corporated resources towards the secondary review, with the receipts from the school sites to reimburse the corporate Capital Programme.

Legal Implications

An application under Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 for Secretary of State's consent to dispose or change the use of school playing fields at closed schools is currently being undertaken. A disposal of the site cannot proceed unless this consent is obtained.

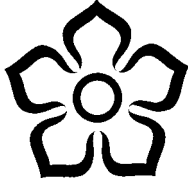
**5. Officer to contact:**

Brendan McGarry  
Investment and Development  
Extn. 5042

**Tom Stephenson**  
**Corporate Director of Resources, Access and Diversity**

**DECISION STATUS**

<b>Key Decision</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Reason</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Appeared in Forward Plan</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Executive or Council Decision</b>	<b>Executive (Cabinet)</b>



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### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

#### **1. Report**

##### **1.1 Background**

Following the decision to close the John Ellis Community College under the Secondary Review, school age teaching ceased on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2000. However, the site continued to be used until December 2001 for Youth, Community and Special Needs Teaching. The site, which has an area of approximately 3.68 ha (9.09 acres), is still used occasionally as an overflow car park for the Space Centre and Abbey Pumping Station.

In November 2001 Cabinet approval was given to undertake a consultation exercise with interested parties as to the future of the site. The City Council envisaged the site of the former school buildings and some auxiliary playing fields being redeveloped, and the main playing fields being retained by the Council (see the attached plan). Consultation was sought on these proposals as this was necessary in respect of:-

1. The requirement to consult prior to submitting an application under DfES (Department for Education & Skills) Guidance 0580/2001. This is the procedure to obtain Secretary of State's consent to dispose of the ancillary playing fields at John Ellis within the site identified for disposal on the attached plan;
2. The Planning Guidance for the site. The views received will be considered when the Site Development Guidance is prepared.

## 1.2 **Consultation Method**

Consultation began in May 2002 and covered a period of approximately 2 months. A quarter page announcement appeared in Link magazine notifying interested parties that it was proposed to develop the site and that more detailed information could be obtained either by contacting Property Services or by looking at the Council's web site.

In accordance with DfES requirements other parties were contacted in writing for their views i.e. all primary schools within half a mile, all secondary schools within a mile, the local M.P, Sport England and Leicestershire and Rutland Playing Field Association (LRPFA).

## 1.3 **Response to the Public Consultation**

The following responses were received:-

- There were 3 responses from the general public. They suggested the site could be used for a school, open space or for community facilities.
- 2 private schools have expressed an interest in the site.
- Sport England and LRPFA have some concerns over possible development but need more detail before providing a detailed response. They are encouraged by the possible provision of new changing rooms for the retained playing fields as part of any new development.
- 2 schools have responded stating they have no objection to the proposals. Despite reminders and a deadline of 12<sup>th</sup> July 2002 no other schools have yet responded. (The DfES will require formal responses and these are currently being pursued)
- Leicester University has indicated that the site could be suitable for research-led development / science park and such a development could receive Objective 2 European Regional Development Funding.
- Leicester Museums Technology Association and the Curator of Riverside Museums at the City Council have indicated that part of the site should be retained for car parking for Abbey Pumping Station, the riverside, the Space Centre, Abbey Park and Belgrave Hall. Uses suggested for the remainder of the site include Leisure, Science Park and Educational Activities. Both parties' comments objected to residential development.

#### 1.4 **Way Forward**

The Urban Design Group will draw up the preliminary Site Development Guidance for the site, which should be completed in January 2003. This will then be subject to internal and public consultation, Scrutiny and Cabinet before it is formally adopted. An approximate date for completion of this process is May 2003.

An application to the DfES is now being completed for submission to dispose of the playing fields within the proposed development site.

Once Cabinet approval, DfES approval and the Site Development Guidance are in place, the site can be openly marketed.

#### 1.5 **Approach from the Leicester Regeneration Company (LRC)**

An informal approach has been received from the LRC with regard to the future redevelopment of this site and how it relates to other initiatives likely to develop from the emerging LRC Master plan. I have indicated to the LRC that the process for the release of the site is not yet completed and that it is premature to begin detailed discussions. Nevertheless, I have indicated that the Council will consider any proposals which will facilitate regeneration and secures 'best consideration' for the site.

#### **Officer to contact:**

Brendan McGarry  
Extn. 5042

**Tom Stephenson**  
**Corporate Director of Resources, Access and Diversity**

## FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

### 1. Financial Implications

The freehold disposal of the 9.09 acre site will realise a capital receipt which will contribute to the City Council's capital receipts target as referred to in the Summary on page 1.

### 2. Legal Implications

An application under Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 for Secretary of State's consent to dispose or change the use of school playing fields at closed schools is currently being undertaken. A disposal of the site cannot proceed unless this consent is obtained.

### 3. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph Within Supporting information	References
Equal Opportunities	NO		
Policy	YES	1.1	
Sustainable and Environmental	NO		
Crime and Disorder	NO		
Human Rights Act	NO		
Elderly/People on Low Income	NO		

### 4. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

Correspondence from interested departments.

### 5. Consultations

Environment, Regeneration and Development (Urban Design)  
Director of Education  
Resources, Access and Diversity (Legal & Financial Services)

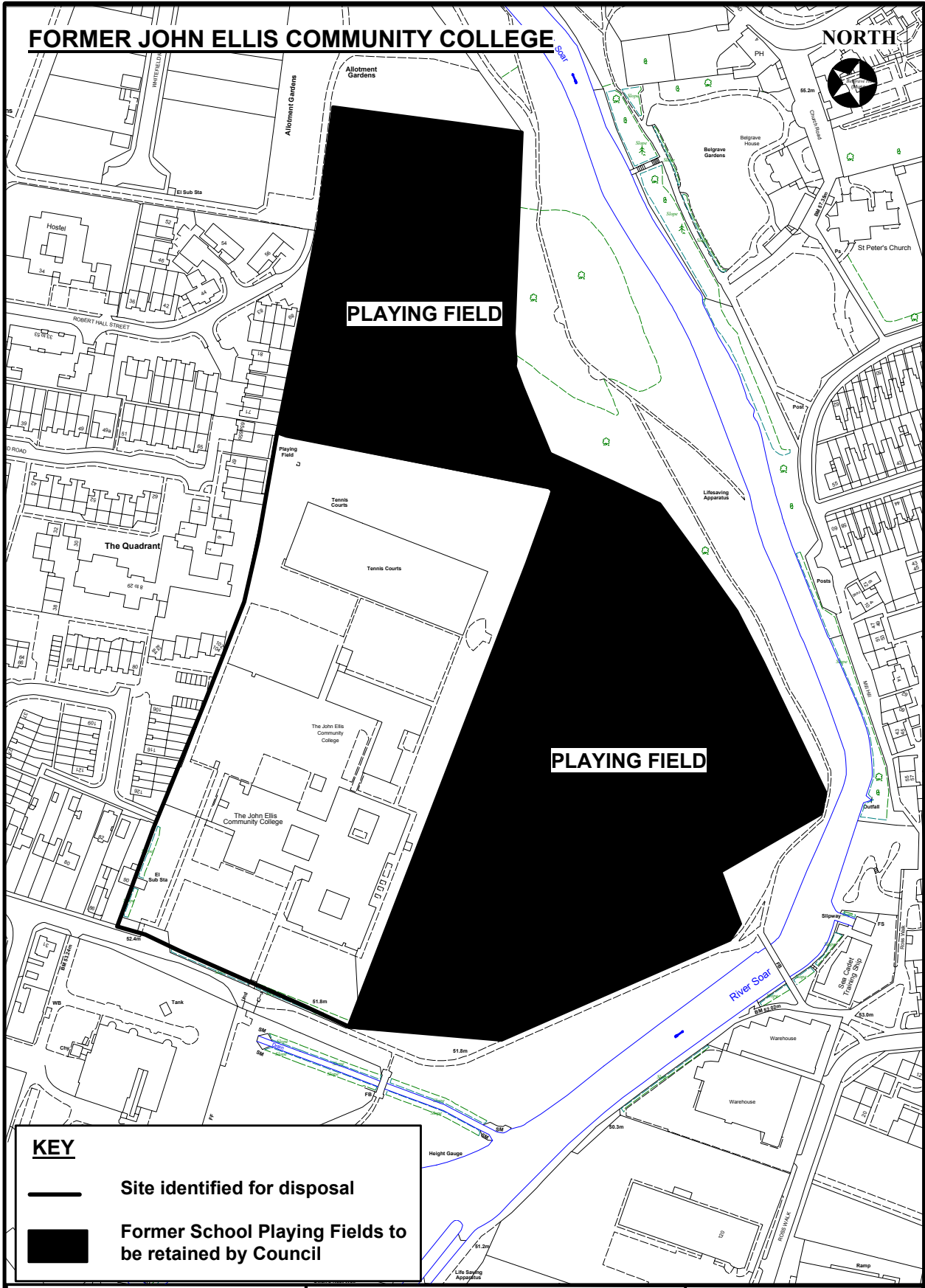
### 6. Report Author

Brendan McGarry  
Investment and Development  
Extn. 5042

**Tom Stephenson**  
**Corporate Director of Resources, Access and Diversity**

**FORMER JOHN ELLIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**NORTH**



**PLAYING FIELD**

**PLAYING FIELD**

**KEY**

- Site identified for disposal
- Former School Playing Fields to be retained by Council

BASED UPON THE ORDNANCE SURVEY MAP WITH THE SANCTION OF THE CONTROLLER OF H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE. CROWN COPYRIGHT RESERVED. LICENCE No. LA 078417

DRAWN BY .....RF..... PLAN No ..... Cttee 62  
 CHECKED BY .....BMG DATE ..09/10/2002

**NOT TO SCALE**

PETER CONNOLLY, DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND COMMERCIAL SERVICES LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL