

c/o The Secretary,
37 Ingarfield Road
Holland on Sea
Essex
CO15 5XA.

Councillor Neil Stock OBE
Leader of Tendring District Council
Town Hall
Station Road
Clacton on Sea. CO15 1SE

24 August 2022

Dear Councillor Stock

OBJECTION TO INITIATION OF THE PROPERTY DEALING PROCEDURE IN ORDER TO EXPLORE THE DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL OF VARIOUS AREAS OF COUNCIL LAND - RE HOLLAND ON SEA

The Holland on Sea Residents Association, a democratically elected body serving the residents of Holland on Sea for almost 100 years, was both shocked and concerned to see that a report had gone to Cabinet, and been moved to further pursue, on the possible sale and/or development of safeguarded public open space in Holland on Sea, as well as other parts of the district. The six sites referred to in Holland on Sea are:

1. Lyndhurst Road
2. Brighton Road
3. Hereford Road
4. Manor Way
5. The Chase
6. Haven Avenue/The Esplanade

Holland on Sea is a unique community, with its own clear identity, made up of a very wide blend of architecture, and abounded by the coastal strip on its southern side, open farmland on the northern side, and capped by the Holland Haven Country Park to the east. It is separated from Clacton on Sea, to its west, by Eastcliff Playing Fields and Sea Lane, the latter a popular haunt of smugglers in the 18th century. The residents of Holland on Sea are understandably proud of the village and are proactive in looking after it. We have our own volunteer litter picking teams, aside from the many individuals who pick-up discarded detritus, and also work parties that clear overgrowth and clean road signs; all because we love the area we live in. We like to think that the Residents Association is at the heart of Holland on Sea, and that its soul is the attractive pockets of open space so importantly safeguarded in the Tendring District Council Local Plan.

So essential are these open spaces to the village of Holland on Sea that many of them are covered by covenants and, in one case, by the formal recent designation as a "village green". Long before most of us were born these open spaces were passed to Tendring Rural District Council, subsequently transferred to Clacton Urban District Council, and currently residing with Tendring District Council, for safekeeping; looking after the best interests of the community of which they formed part. As guardians/custodians of this land the Council must surely have a duty/responsibility to the residents of Holland on Sea to ensure they continue to serve the purpose that they were given when entrusted to the local authority.

These open spaces are used for a variety of purposes – Tai-Chi classes, Boules, regular work-out lessons, organised day-out bases for nurseries, and senior citizen fun days (to encourage everyone out of the care homes), Holland's village fete, plus large family gatherings and celebrations, and specific camping (with the permission of Tendring District Council) when events near-by are held. This list is just a few examples, over and above which are the visitors of all ages simply using them for games and relaxation, plus residents enjoying them all-year round.

What is particularly worrying is that Tendring District Council has only just recently (25 January 2022) adopted its Local Plan 2013 – 2033, a plan all local councils must have to provide a clear

framework of how an area should maintain its identity, what specific sites are safeguarded, and where possible future development might be considered. This Council, that so rightly produced and published the existing Local Plan, after full consultation with its stakeholders, appears to now be ignoring it when looking at possible TDC sites for development, either by selling off to a third-party or carrying out the works in-house; what message does that send out to the residents of Tendring? Can we trust the Local Plan? Can we trust our own Council?

We are sure we don't need to remind you of the relevant sections of the current Local Plan but feel we must draw your attention to the following in Section 2: Part 4 - Healthy Places clearly lays out the importance of the green infrastructure and public open space on the community.

4.3 Green Infrastructure - The whole of this section identifies the importance of maintaining public open space which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Further, in 4.3.7 the Local Plan highlights that "The Haven Gateway Green Infrastructure Study (2008) and the Open Space, Sport and Recreation study (2017) identified Tendring District as an area deficient in green infrastructure. The Council will work with its partners to resolve existing deficiencies." Referring back to 4.3.3, again the Plan states "A good green infrastructure network provides opportunities to enhance tourism in the Tendring District, while ensuring that its most sensitive assets are protected. As well as the obvious benefits to the natural environment, such measures can also provide an economic boost by helping to attract more visitors and improve residents' health and wellbeing by creating a more attractive environment for people to actively use. The network should be made as accessible as possible to all users."

4.3.5 states that "Throughout our District, there are a number of existing areas of green infrastructure falling into the various different categories which are important to the character of our towns, villages and rural areas and provide valuable space for formal and informal recreational activities in our communities. Areas of existing green infrastructure, including open space, sports and recreational facilities, *will be protected from development*, are shown on the Policies Map."

When turning to the Policies Map the following sites are all clearly identified as "Safeguarded" (see Appendix 1)

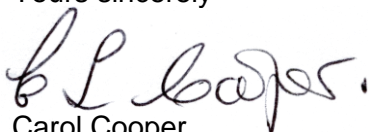
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Under 4.4 Open Space, Sports and Recreation Areas - The proposal in the application flies in the face of the whole of this section, but we specifically draw your attention to 4.4.4. which states "The above typologies are protected by Policy HP4 and are shown on the Policies and Local Maps collectively as Safeguarded Open Space." This statement alone should immediately take these sites off any list of possible change of use/development.

Public Open Space is fundamental to the unique character of an area. Remove that and you take away both the heart and the soul of the community, and leave a sterile mix of development that just runs from one town/village name, to another.

The recent coastal protection works, coupled with the aftermath of the pandemic, has drawn a lot more visitors to Holland on Sea and shown them just what it has to offer. Coupled with the hot weather, our public open spaces have seen heavy use by visitors as well as residents; to consider taking these away, in whole or part, would appear to be wanting to commit "tourism suicide" as well as harming the community itself; the very people you have been elected to represent - "Pro Bono Omnium".

Yours sincerely



Carol Cooper
Chair

Holland on Sea Residents Association

APPENDIX 1

Areas of “Safeguarded Public Open Space” extracted from the:
Tendring District Local Plan 2013 – 2033 and Beyond
Adopted by Tendring District Council on 25 January 2022

