

# PORTHCAWL CIVIC TRUST SOCIETY

Registered Charity No 515757 Founded 1970

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## **The Green, Salt Lake, Porthcawl Legal Notice of disposal of Public Open Space**

The Porthcawl Civic Trust Society objects to the proposal by Bridgend County Borough Council to dispose of its freehold interest in The Green, Porthcawl.

The Society was unaware until the publication of the above notice that The Green is a designated Public Open Space and had itself suggested an alternative to the food store that the County Borough Council (BCBC) appears minded to approve for that site.

The revelation by BCBC that The Green is a Public Open Space significantly changes its status and the proposal to remove this area for retail or house building use is not acceptable.

The attention of BCBC is drawn to the Welsh Government's "Planning Policy Wales, Technical Advice Note "Sport, Recreation and Open Space". There is in this document reference to the importance of protecting and enhancing existing Sport and Recreation facilities **and Open Spaces** [our emphasis]. The avowed intention by BCBC is to allow a high density flat development to take place on Salt Lake, as a consequence of which there will be an even greater need for protected Open Space for recreational facilities. The Council might also refer to Para 4.1 25 of the Bridgend Local Development Plan 2006-2021, Deposit Plan for guidance.

The Society is aware that BCBC has indicated that part of the southern section of Salt Lake could be allocated for amenity use but there is no guarantee that this will ever be implemented. The area is not legally designated as a Public Open Space and the impression given by a BCBC representative was that the amenities it might provide were vague. The willingness demonstrated by BCBC to dispose of a legally established Open Space does not convince the Society that the area at the south end of Salt Lake would ever become a replacement for it.

The Society has previously suggested to BCBC that the proposed food store should be located on BCBC land in Dock Street instead of The Green. This would be preferable because it would bring the customers to the food store into John Street instead of separating them from the town by the Portway, the main traffic route into Porthcawl. There is, therefore a viable alternative to The Green.

The Society understands that The Green's past history includes its forming part of the inner dock swimming facilities. Certainly over the last fifty years successive Local Authorities have failed to ensure that it is developed and maintained as an outside recreational facility and this should be the future policy of BCBC. It is not acceptable to extinguish the right of access to this public open space.

The Society was surprised to be told at a meeting we held on April 4 with Porthcawl Town Councillors, some of whom were also BCBC Councillors, that they were unaware of the intention of the Borough Council to dispose of its freehold in land designated as Public Open Space, a decision that would appear to deserve prior consultation with Local Councillors and with local voluntary organisations.

We therefore ask the question - does BCBC hold a higher obligation to economic gain or to social well-being?

Yours sincerely

Mrs. Caroline Vaughan

(Honorary Secretary)