

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET MEETING

4 DECEMBER 2006

PETITION in accordance with Standing Order No. 8

Martin Brommell to submit the petition to the Lead Councillor for Culture and Sport:

LAND AT MAPLEDURHAM PLAYING FIELDS

We, the undersigned, do hereby strongly object to any proposals by Reading Borough Council or by any other Trustee, to the sale of any land on Mapledurham Playing Fields for the purposes of any building.

nb. The land was bequeathed by the late Mr C.E.Hewett in 1938 and held in Trust on the understanding that it is specifically and forever used for outdoor games, sport and past-times for the purposes of a Recreation Ground and Public Playing Fields only.

REPLY by the Lead Councillor for Culture and Sport (Councillor Wilton):

I would like to thank Mr Brommell for submitting this petition objecting to the sale of any land on Mapledurham Playing Fields for the purpose of any building.

Reading Borough Council embarked on this consultation at the request of the Management Committee of Mapledurham Pavilion. This was a classic example of genuine consultation. The Management Committee and the Council were genuinely interested to gauge public opinion, particularly about whether the public thought that the loss of a small parcel of land was acceptable and how strong was the demand for a new facility.

Funding would be required for major changes to the Pavilion and unfortunately the Council could not justify the spending of over £1m on a new facility in this area. This is because of the low fall in usage of the facilities as well as the fact that we have invested £3m in Highdown Hall which is less than two miles away for which community usage is an important element.

Our recently-published draft Open Spaces Strategy proposes that there will be no net loss of open space anywhere in Reading. If open space had to be lost at

Mapledurham, compensatory open space would have been provided elsewhere to ensure that this project fitted with our strategy.

I am able at this meeting to announce the headline results of the consultation on Mapledurham Pavilion.

Option A (complete new facilities)	252
Option B (improved and increased changing)	34
Option C (maintain minimum changing)	2097
Option D (new school to provide community hall)	499
No option selected	68

Many of the replies for Option C along with those of who did not select an option said that they did not want to see any loss of open space, similar to your petition.

The results of this consultation are very clear and we are also taking on board the recommendations from the Mapledurham Management Committee in this particular area. The Management Committee have asked us to proceed with Option C but have also asked that officers investigate options for delivering this without any loss of land at Mapledurham.

There will be a full report to Cabinet in January at which we will consider the results of the consultation but it is our intention to proceed to deliver the improvements as stated in Option C, hopefully without selling any part of the field for building.

Petition No. 1