

By email to: planningpolicy@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

For the attention of:
Community Planning Team
Spatial Planning
Dorset Council
South Walks House
Dorchester DT1 1UZ

6th August 2020

Dear Community Planning Team

Puddletown Neighbourhood Plan (PNP) Submission Draft May 2020

Objection to the designation and inclusion of Catmead land as LGS4 in the PNP.

I write to object vehemently to the proposed inclusion of Catmead land as LGS4 "Catmead Green Space" in the PNP.

There are considerable inconsistencies in the wordings in Puddletown Area Neighbourhood Plan (Draft) regarding LGS4 and the Supporting Evidences LGS Assessment.

All of the Catmead land being proposed as LGS4 is Private Land, owned jointly and severally by all of the Freeholders of the Catmead houses. The land is managed for and by the Freeholders via Catmead Management Company Limited (**CMCL**) the directors of which, must be freeholders. Every freeholder is a member of CMCL.

The main area of LGS4 is our private grass area fronting Nos 1-3-4-5-6-7-8-9-10 Catmead, maintained superbly by and at the sole considerable expense of us residents. It is our private communal garden. If our control over our private communal garden is removed by inclusion as Catmead Green Space LGS4, I and other residents will not be minded to fund the expensive upkeep. The land will revert to an untidy state matching the poorly maintained publicly owned wide verges adjacent along the Blandford road

The Dorset Council website still shows: PNP/Consultation on submitted plan/Supporting evidence/Local green space assessment/ under main reasons/description of why important/4-Catmead grass space/ **"This green space provides a landscaped setting for the houses fronting on to the busy**

Blandford road, creating an attractive entrance into the village and a pleasant space to wait at the bus stop and for informal play".

Catmead green space does not provide a landscaped setting for the houses fronting Blandford road, if so, why isn't LGS4 called Blandford Road Green Space, all they see is scruffy poorly maintained public grass verge. Catmead lawns are well behind the bus stop and cannot be seen if in the bus shelter. Informal play!!! next to a busy main road is asking for an accident. The public verge is not defined sufficiently on the plan and this will encourage informal play on private Catmead lawns that will encourage trespass and result in confrontations requiring law enforcement.

Local Green Space Consultation October 2019

Page 12./Catmead/Summary of consideration:

Quote..... "the open nature of the northern part". This is an incorrect statement, the northern part is hidden mainly by a 3m high hedge, you do not see the Catmead lawns until you have virtually walked past, even less so if driving. The northern part is grass verge.

Quote....."Whilst it is clear from the planning history that these areas were intended to be public land". This is not true, an antagonistic statement serving no purpose and has no place within this plan. It is **not clear**, there are no specific clauses or paragraphs pertaining to that. Had there been, the land would be public now. The land is private and that will not change. This statement by the SG has no place in the summary of considerations, it is irrelevant, not true and hints of sour grapes by the Steering Group whose chairman is also Parish council chair. There has been a past attempt by the parish council to sequester Catmead lawns for dog walking after the council themselves restricted dog walking in the recreation ground.

As such, being private, the criterion of "demonstrably special" or "of particular significance" within the terms of NPPF are not met. Paragraph 77 of the NPPF advises that designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or spaces.

The proposed LGS4 is not "demonstrably special" to the local community within the terms of NPPF, being private communal lawns, the area is not accessible to "the local community at large". The tarmac public footpath through it is only used infrequently and it is not of "particular significance" within the terms of NPPF, its only significance at present is that it is superbly well kept by us at our expense.

At the very early stages, the Puddletown Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group did not contact CMCL to discuss or explain the full implications of designation.

Having looked at neighbourhood plan details for many other villages they all appeared to have understood and ensured that very early communication and discussion/explanation was paramount. The Steering Group appear to be insular, dogmatic and not to be trusted. Harsh words maybe but upheld by the following:

After a lengthy objection letter from CMCL 18 October 2019 to the Steering Group (SG), the parish clerk replied by email on 19 October 2019 11:09hrs. The last paragraph of that email reads:

"I have recommended to the group" (meaning the SG) "that they either remove the land which is owned by CMCL from the list of land for LGS designation (a disappointing but easy and quick solution) or request a meeting with the directors so that this can be discussed before moving forward as if you fully understand the intentions here then I cannot comprehend your position".

A meeting was swiftly arranged by CMCL for 23 October 2019, held at Catmead, attended by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] (Directors of CMCL) with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (chairman of SG) and [REDACTED] (SG member). **After lengthy discussion it was specifically agreed at that meeting by the SG attendees that LGS4 would be removed from the Draft Plan.**

The SG subsequently on 18 November 2019 wrote to CMCL advising that *"Catmead Green Space remains one of the several areas due to be designated as LGS in Puddletown"*. No mention what so ever was made about the 23 October 2019 meeting or the SG chairmans/members specific agreement to remove LGS4.

8 January 2020, CMCL wrote to the parish clerk complaining saying:

"This kind of behaviour, saying one thing and doing the opposite, particularly by the chairman of the SG is not acceptable. We are not confident that opportunities to make further representations will be considered in an unbiased manner."

No reply has ever been received to our letter of 8 January 2020.

The LGS4 Assessment spreadsheets are incorrect regarding LGS4. Landscape importance is shown as High only because the residents pay for the quality maintenance. If designated an LGS, this expenditure will cease. Also it shows recreational value as Medium. There is no recreational value to the village, the land is private.

The public footpath through Catmead and on through Home farm is not a public footpath on Home farm side as it is not adopted Home Farm side and Dorset Highways Dept have said in the past they have no intention of adopting it. Connecting public footpaths therefore do not exist through Catmead so the PNP is ambiguous.

Schedule 1. Article 8. of The Human Rights Act refers to "Right to respect for private family life" and sub section 2. states "There shall be no interference by a Public Authority". There is a breach here that we may need to seek action against if LGS4 is not removed.

I ask as below because your server has been down (a 503 error ??), I would appreciate acknowledgement of your receipt of this email. Also, an assurance that **all** correspondence/copies of emails from Catmead residents and CMCL will be available in full to the independent examiner.

Kind regards

Peter Berry

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