



Common Land Team,  
The Planning Inspectorate,  
3F Temple Quay House,  
Temple Quay,  
BRISTOL BS1 6PN      By email

Dear Sir,

Common Land Deregistration, Haslemere

Registration No. CL 340

The Haslemere Society (with a membership of more than 500) is strongly opposed to Waverley Borough Council's application to deregister the 'Fairground' site in Wey Hill, Haslemere for the following reasons :-

- 1) The application refers to 'land at St. Christophers Green and the Fairground Common Unit'. We are unclear as to whether St Christophers Green is included in the application to deregister but if it is then The Society is absolutely opposed to the Green being deregistered.
- 2) The main driver for the application is for the Council to derive income from the site by establishing lucrative Pay & Display parking for the large numbers of commuters using the nearby rail hub.



- 3) A public consultation held by Haslemere Vision (HV) whilst preparing the Neighbourhood Plan indicated a strong public preference for the site to be used for a mixed development of housing, retail, local parking and open space for public functions and enjoyment.
- 4) Until a feasible development scheme has been agreed by the public and steps taken to implement it The Society is strongly opposed to the removal of the Common Land protection for the site. There is a fear that if the common land status were to be removed and Waverley B C installed the cash raising pay and display parking it would then be very difficult, if not impossible to remove it and secure a development beneficial to the town and its residents.
- 5) In the application form the Council has failed to mention in Sections 17 and 18 that (in their strong intent to resurface and install a pay & display car park) they have recently erected and concreted in, yellow painted hinged steel height restriction gantries at the two access to the site. We question whether this is legal on common land.
- 6) The Council refer to an informal consultation held on 26 Feb to 30 March. This was not advertised and very limited such that only a few were involved. The Haslemere Society and its 500+ members were not consulted and we learned of the consultation through a third party and subsequently made our comments by letter (dated 29 March 2018) which is included in the application.
- 7) The replacement land that the Council has offered is grossly inferior to the prominent, valuable and well located land they wish to deregister. The replacement land is located on a hillside, separated from the main shopping area by the railway, remote from St Christopher's Green and the main thoroughfare and is currently an untidy rubbish dumping area.



Its value as a development or recreation site is minimal whereas the deregistration application site is particularly valuable as a development site. The Council's claim that the replacement land is more suitable as a public facility is manifestly not true.

We are suspicious that the quoted areas of the two sites are not correct but we are not able to accurately measure these areas. Planimeter area measurements of Ordnance Survey maps (not the maps submitted !), possibly also including the building in the S W corner of the Fairground site, are required for an accurate comparison.

8) From the Council's Reasons for Exchange and Deregistration we highlight the following :-

- 'reducing the risk of damage to cars and personal injury from heavily potholed surface'. Potholes only appear in the winter because the Council have discontinued the simple remedy of periodically filling the holes with granular stone material and there is no evidence of any car damage or personal injury.
- "to provide an income to the Council in future years enabling reinvestment in the local community". How many years and what will the money be invested in?- certainly not the enhancement of the site and this part of the town as the Neighbourhood Plan public consultation called for.
- "in 2014 the council withdrew its application in the spirit of localism" It was withdrawn because of overwhelming public protest and the Council have made no attempt to determine any development of the site since as the public expressed except a cash raising pay and display parking scheme which locals have made clear that they do not want.



9) Reacting to public pressure Haslemere Town Council arranged a public meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> July to determine the public reaction to this application. There was a unanimous objection to the deregistration of the Fairground site, any resurfacing and the introduction of Pay & Display parking. The desire for a comprehensive development of the site was clearly expressed.

An online petition has been organised to object to these deregistration proposals which others will report on.

The Haslemere Society, one of the oldest local Civic Amenity Groups in the country, hopes that you will consider seriously our objections which are made with the future benefits to the town and its residents in mind.

Yours faithfully,

John Greer (Vice Chairman, The Haslemere Society)