

Dear Sir/Madam,

Gledhow Primary School is expanding to accommodate more pupils. As part of this plan, the School intends to move the fence that surrounds their existing playing fields to enclose an open green space at the back of the school. This land is 'vested in Education' but has not been used by the school for decades and has been openly accessed by the local community for all of this time. Indeed, the space is separated from the school by a fence erected in 1996.

A consultation on the expansion of the school took place in 2014 but on the statutory notice there was no reference to the closure of the green space and it is clear that many local people did not know of this. Since the school's plans became more widely known we, The Friends of Gledhow Field, have collected, (at the time of writing), approaching 450 signatures of people opposed to the loss of this space in just 4 weeks.

We ask that the decision to enclose this space be reviewed by the Scrutiny panel. There are several reasons this decision should be called in for scrutiny, four of which are:

- Evidence for lack of consultation is that the council stated: "I understand that when the proposals for expansion were put to a public consultation last year, no objections were received relating to the field." We now have more than approaching 450 signatures opposed to the loss of this space which strongly suggests that appropriate consultation and community engagement was not conducted.
- We are concerned the drawings on display at the consultation exercise were not accurate. The drawings showed the school had only one football pitch: the school has three football pitches.
- The school already has more land than many Primary Schools. The amount of space required by the school was assessed under "Area guidelines for mainstream schools BB99". These guidelines have now been replaced by "Area guidelines for mainstream schools BB103".
- Due to the well documented issues relating to a lack of school places, decisions have had to be forced through with extreme haste and the wider impact of these decisions on the local community has not been given adequate consideration.

As documented in the Design and Cost Report, capital scheme 16981/BGE/GPS, the rapid programme of works to be carried out has lead to considerable monies being spent 'at risk', (due to planning consent not yet being granted). The fence which will enclose the field could be erected as early as Monday 20th July. It is, therefore, urgent that the erection of the fence be put on hold in order to prevent risk to further public money before there has been a full and proper scrutiny of this decision.

The Leeds City Council website asks: "What is Overview and Scrutiny" and answers that: "Leeds wants its policies to be relevant to the needs of local people - and its services to be of the highest quality. To achieve this, the council aims to examine and review its policies and services in an open and accountable way that involves local people." In light of the above we feel it is essential this decision be reviewed.

Finally, it should be noted our group is not against the expansion of the school. As there are no legally binding rules in place that would restrict the school's growth if they do not extend the land, there is no reason why they could not continue to fulfil the desperately needed additional school places whilst allowing the local community continued free access to this green space.

Yours faithfully,
Paul Sellars
Chair, Friends of Gledhow Field