



Report of the Director of Environment and Neighborhoods

Inner North West Area Committee

Date: 28th June 2007

Subject: Leeds Girls' High School

<p>Electoral Wards Affected:</p> <p>Headingley Hyde Park & Woodhouse</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Ward Members consulted (referred to in report)</p>	<p>Specific Implications For:</p> <p>Equality and Diversity <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Disabled People <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Narrowing the Gap <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	
<p>Council Function <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Delegated Executive Function available for Call In <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>Delegated Executive Function not available for Call In Details set out in the report <input type="checkbox"/></p>

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a basic overview of the current situation in relation to Leeds Girls' High School and the disposal of its sites for redevelopment. The report is not intended as a comprehensive update on proposals but as an aid to initiate debate on the subject, with a view to the Area Committee deciding on whether to submit a formal response to the current draft planning brief.

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 This report provides Members with information on the current issues in relation to the redevelopment of land presently occupied and owned by Leeds Girls' High School.

2.0 Background

2.1 In January 2004 it was announced that the Girls' High School and Grammar School were to merge to form The Grammar School at Leeds. The merger will see the Girls' High co-located with the Grammar School at Alwoodley Gate. The physical merger is proposed for completion by September 2008.

2.2 The school plans to dispose of the main school site, Ford House Garden, the Elinor Lupton Centre and the Victoria Road site (swimming pool, gymnasium and sports pitch to the rear). The only element planned for retention by the school is the Ford House building (Buckingham Road/Headingley Lane).

- 2.3 The Elinor Lupton Centre will be considered separately to the other sites, and will be subject to submissions of proposals for reuse, given the listed status of the building and difficulties anticipated with conversion for alternative use.

3.0 Planning Brief

- 3.1 A draft planning brief has been published by the school, outlining the potential scope for reuse and redevelopment of all the sites for disposal, excluding the Elinor Lupton Centre.
- 3.2 The brief was published in mid May 2007 following Planning Board approval for public consultation. The expiration of the consultation period was Wednesday 27th June.
- 3.3 Although there are a number of listed buildings across the sites, the brief points out that this does not preclude the opportunity for new buildings elsewhere.
- 3.4 The majority of the redevelopment proposals included in the brief are for residential provision. The main school site would see the most housing provision, but there is also a proposal to develop housing on the Victoria Road playing field (to the rear of the gymnasium/swimming pool building). This is being off-set against the proposed retention of Ford House Garden and the gymnasium/swimming pool.
- 3.5 A Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan is to be prepared as part of the planning application process.

4.0 Community Activity

- 4.1 In response to plans to redevelop sites within the school's ownership, an action group has been formed by the coalition of a number of local community groups.
- 4.2 A number of public meetings have been held which have been very well attended, where the planned disposal and redevelopment of the sites have been debated. At the most recent meeting an agreement was reached to reject the draft planning brief in full.
- 4.3 There is a strong feeling amongst community members that the greenspace within the sites must be retained and not lost to development. Attached at appendix 1 is a draft letter produced by the Chair of the Area Committee, which is intended to be finalised and sent to City Development as a formal Inner North West Area Committee response to the draft planning brief consultation.
- 4.4 Suggestion has been made that a working group be formed, with direct links to the Area Committee. The group would comprise ward Members, Leeds City Council officers and representatives from Leeds Girls' High School Action Group.

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 The Area Committee is asked to:
- a) Note the contents of the report;
 - b) Decide upon any formal response it wishes to give; and
 - c) Decide whether it wishes to support the formation of a working group.