

EXECUTIVE

30th June 2021

(A) Questions from Members of the Public for Oral reply (agenda Item 9)

1. From Professor Bernard Williams FRICS to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

The whole of the golf course land is designated as Metropolitan Open Land. The officers are on record (answers to question raised at the RRH PDS Committee on 18th June) as saying that this is irrelevant as the land is of 'special architectural and historic merit' and that its status as MOL does not come into consideration when considering whether or not to designate the golf course as part of the Conservation Area.

Do the members agree that if it is felt necessary to protect the golf course land from built development then MOL status is an adequate safeguard and that using an unsubstantiated case for designating the land on its 'special architectural and historic merit' in order to bolster this security is a misuse of the Council's powers under Section 69 of the Civic Amenities Act 1967?

2. From Professor Bernard Williams FRICS to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

Guidelines from Historic England stipulate that : 'working with community groups, including both residents and businesses during the preparation of an appraisal will help to reduce potential need for significant amendments to the draft document later'. (Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition.)

No approach was made to Shortlands Golf Club by BEAMS during the appraisal period in spite of the fact that the Club is by far the largest landowner in the proposed Conservation Area. As a consequence the Club's valid objections to the proposals could not be discussed face-to-face with the consultants resulting in the Report failing to address the critical issue of whether or not the golf course has any 'special architectural and historic interest'.

*As a result of this failure to observe best practice the golf club has had to rely upon the consultation process, public questions and lobbying committee members to get its case understood – and in this process has had **no opportunity** to debate the issues **face to face** with those arguing for the inclusion of the golf course in the Conservation Area.*

Do the members agree that the failure of BEAMS to follow best practice guidelines laid down by Historic England in not consulting with Shortlands Golf Club during the Appraisal Period has resulted in the case for exclusion of the golf course not being properly investigated and presented to the members of the various committees charged with scrutinising the proposals?

3. From Mr Denis Cooper, Chairman of Shortlands Golf Club, to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

Shortlands Golf Club produced a 42-page written objection to the proposal to include the Club's land in the proposed Shortlands Village Conservation Area. The author of that report, Dr. Jonathan Edis, is a highly respected heritage expert who spent 10 years as conservation officer for Beds. CC before becoming a consultant.

Following a very detailed evaluation of the BEAMS Report and its findings Dr. Edis concluded that the BEAMS Report had not made a proper assessment of the status of the golf course in terms of its special architectural or historic merit as required by Historic England and the National Planning Policy Framework for the purposes of designation within the Conservation Area.

In spite of the weight which ought to have been accorded to the opinions of such an eminent authority on heritage matters the officers decided not to pass this back to BEAMS or Historic England for comment on the grounds that in their opinion the report 'raised no issues which would have warranted referring his report to BEAMS or Historic England'

Do the members of the Executive Committee agree that this failure to afford BEAMS and Historic England the opportunity to reconsider their views in the light of Dr. Edis' report constituted a flaw in the consultation procedure sufficiently serious as to call into question the legitimacy of the whole process of designation of the golf course?

4. From Mr Denis Cooper, Chairman of Shortlands Golf Club, to the Portfolio Holder for Renewal, Recreation and Housing

At the RRH PDS Committee on 18th June a member expressed the view that it was essential to designate the golf course as part of the Conservation Area on the basis that at some time in the future the Trustees might decide to sell the land for property development. The members present accepted this statement without demur and voted by a large majority to retain the golf course in the proposed Conservation Area.

Do the members agree that this is not a valid reason for voting to designate the golf club as part of the Conservation Area given that the only permissible consideration has to be whether it has special architectural or historic merit and that members of the RRH PDS Committee should have been made aware of this fact before being asked to vote in favour of endorsing the BEAMS Report unamended?

(B) Questions from Members of the Public for Written reply

1. From Dermot Mckibbin to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

Please publish for all the wards in Bromley the number of electors entitled to vote and those that did vote in the 2021 London elections, the 2019 general election and the 2018 local elections. When will the Council review the 2021 election results?

2. From Dermot Mckibbin to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

Please show the number of postal and proxy votes cast in each ward for all wards in Bromley for the 2021 elections, the 2019 general election and the 2018 local elections.

3. From Helen Brookfield to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

How does the Council define an empty property and how does it research possible empty residential properties over commercial properties?

4. From Helen Brookfield to the Portfolio Holder for Resources, Commissioning and Contract Management

In view of the increasing numbers of empty properties in the borough and the rising cost in temporary accommodation will the Council now review its decision not to increase the maximum amount of council tax for the owners of empty properties and if not why not ?

5. From Angela Barnett to the Portfolio Holder for Public Protection and Enforcement

What procedures does the Council have for making empty properties safe after a fire? Why was there a second fire within days at Northdene?