

Representations received regarding RH Youth's CAT application for land behind Lockerbie Ice Rink

1.

I would like to put an objection in against RH Youth Organisation receiving a 10 year lease on the Land at the Old Caravan site in Lockerbie.

I have many reason's behind my objection and mainly I find that this Organisation are only out to get what they want for there own self importance not for the community, they look to be active in the community but actually they are only wanting to secure a higher pedestal for them self.

Then there is the fact that there is not alot of Common good land in and around Lockerbie and this land is huge to be selected to be leased to just any one Organisation. I am quite shocked at the fact you can actually do this when there are so many Organisation in the town who may benefit from it in the next 10 years.

Also I am quite concerned and I would like feed back as to if this Organisation is successful, what would happens after the 10 years...Do they actually receive Ownership of the land. Again what about the rest of the community.

Another reason for me emailing this tonight is I was helping tonight at the Run in Lockerbie and obviously there is a film crew setting up. When I was parking up the 2 head member of this Organisation were not happy at all at the vehicles presence there.

I do hope make the right decision on this because if you give this Organisation an inch they will well and truly take a mile. They can be argumentative if they Do Not get there own way and it doesn't matter who steps in there way they will always try and get what they want.

2.

I write to you in respect of the community asset transfer of a 10 year lease to RH Youth organisation for the land behind the Ice rink. I have some concerns regarding this and wish to make representation. I like many others in the community enjoy that particular area and have done for many years however recently an acquaintance of mine was told by the applicant that it was no longer permitted to walk dogs on this land as it is their land. Another acquaintance of mine was stopped from driving round while trying to find a parking space again being told by the applicant that it was their land. I find this behaviour concerning and given the manner they spoke in telling them it's their land these individuals are reluctant and scared to come forward and feel threatened to go near this land. This is not community spirited at all.

3.

I would like to lodge an objection to the asset transfer in Ward 11, of the land behind the ice rink in Lockerbie for a number of reasons, which are listed below.

The school already struggles for parking, especially outside of school hours when the car park is closed but also within school hours for certain events. They direct people to use the land behind the ice rink for parking. Also the ice rink and squash clubs occasionally need to make use of the land when hosting events.

The fair and traveller community are made welcome in Lockerbie when they utilise the common good land, and more recently film crews have used the land to save blocking access to other already stretched town parking, and allowing local businesses to be able to continue to operate.

The flexibility of the land currently is ideal for things like that.

There is a growing demand for more services, care and housing as well as entertainment in the town. While Lockerbie has a noticeable lack of available land that could meet that purpose.

Common good land should serve to meet more than one purpose, to serve more than one section of a community and help ease some of the most brought up complaints and concerns in the development of Lockerbie.

Despite the proposal for the asset transfer including a dog walking area, being hostile to dog walkers prior to actually taking up a lease seems at odds to the stated intentions.

Multiple signs were erected with various warnings on land not under the applicants current lease agreement.

People in cars/walking dogs/out exercising have been challenged by the current occupants for being on common good land that's not currently leased by them.

This is unacceptable behaviour.

Without an asset transfer I think this land could remain accessible to current community members and dog walkers much better without the need for the land to be transferred.

The current boundaries and remit of the land has been hugely overstepped already by the applicant, extending their boundaries of leased land and its use.

They have been storing things in areas not leased, taken down wildlife habitats in areas not leased, caused permanent changes to the land and with their actions and have effectively shut off public access to the land.

All of this done without consultation.

They are unwilling to share with any other businesses and groups that have shown an interest, they are not open to negotiating and hostile to other groups using the land nearby, despite it being common good land.

If ALL the community cannot make use the land or benefit from a transfer, and with this proposal they cannot due to applicants being barred from working with some other groups, then it shouldn't be transferred.

It's a large area of land. For the purposes set out in the proposal, that amount of land is absolutely not required.

They have acted outwith licensing on the CCTV installation, not having a licence to operate CCTV in public areas.

Putting up CCTV is all well and good if it's for protecting personal property and monitors the relevant areas under your tenancy or ownership.

That is not how the installed surveillance was set up. Placed on high poles in excessive numbers, looking out with views way beyond the leased land.

Intimidation appears to have been the objective with this installation, not personal safety and protection. After it was initially removed, it very quickly went back up when the fair arrived.

The transfer requests a 10 year lease and some of the work proposed would only be due to be completed towards the end of the 10 years.

That is not a good use of funds and unlikely that funders will agree to fund structures on a temporary lease. Would the work proposed actually get done?

After 10 years if the land were needed for another purpose would the proposed infrastructure be easy to remove to restore ground to its previous useable state if any agreement was not renewed? Would the leaseholder (given their other actions so far) be cooperative and helpful in ensuring that or not?

Looking at the structure of the organisation there appears to be no best practice policy (as given by the charity commission) of rotation for the board to ensure succession planning for the future or so that bad practice and habits can be better weeded out.

Surely we want charities on common good land acting to best practice guidelines, or at least attempting to.

Looking at the application I know funders listed are not accurately named, Muirhill is not an organisation.

CORRA is listed twice. Funders should have been given the respect to be accurately named.

Other sections are cut and paste, multiple times. Which is unnecessary.

I have also noticed that despite their regular online media presence that the group did not post on their public page that they were now in the consultation period for the asset transfer in order to inform the community and encourage discussion.

Most community groups would want to be open with the community they were involved with and would be excited about engaging the public in this process.

That appears to be missing here.

Overall my objection relates to the applicant not appearing to have demonstrated a wide reaching, inclusive, open, neighbourly, legitimate and community minded attitude so far.

4.

I want to object to the asset transfer of the land behind the ice rink for several reasons:

The current occupants have challenged people in cars, walking dogs, or simply out walking on common good land not leased by them. This behaviour is unacceptable and not community minded.

Despite the proposal including a dog walking area, hostility to dog walkers before taking up a lease seems counterproductive. They have erected multiple warning signs on land not currently under their lease. Without an asset transfer, this land could remain accessible to community members and dog walkers, while being available for other purposes if needed.

The tenant has overstepped the current boundaries and remit of the land, extending their leased land boundaries and use. They have stored items, taken down wildlife habitats, made permanent changes, and effectively shut off public land without consultation.

They are unwilling to share with other interested businesses and groups, are not open to negotiating or sharing, and are hostile to other groups using the nearby land. If the entire community cannot benefit from the land transfer, it should not be transferred.

The land area requested in the proposal is excessive for the intended purposes.

They have installed CCTV without proper licensing for public area surveillance. The setup suggests intimidation, not personal protection. After its initial removal, it quickly went back up when the fair arrived.

The school struggles with parking, especially outside school hours and during events. They direct people to park behind the ice rink. Additionally, the ice rink and squash clubs occasionally need to use the land for events.

Lockerbie welcomes the fair and traveller community, and youngsters look forward to their visits. Recently, film crews have used the land to avoid blocking other town parking and to keep local businesses operational. The land's flexibility is ideal for such purposes.

There is a growing demand for services, care, housing, and entertainment in the town, but Lockerbie lacks available usable land to meet these needs quickly. The common good land should serve multiple purposes and benefit various sections of the community.

The transfer requests a 10-year lease, with some proposed work only due towards the end of this period. This is not a good use of funds, and funders are unlikely to finance structures on a temporary lease. Would the proposed work actually get done? After 10 years, if the land is needed for another purpose, would the proposed infrastructure be easily removable to restore the ground to its previous state? Given their actions so far, would the leaseholder be cooperative?

The organisation lacks a best practice policy for board rotation to ensure succession planning and weed out bad practices. Charities on common good land should follow best practice guidelines.

The application inaccurately names some funders, with Muirhill not being an organisation, and CORRA listed twice. Funders should have been accurately named. Other sections of the application are repeated unnecessarily, which any proofread should have caught. The application should be clear and concise.

Despite their regular online presence, the group did not post on their public page that they were in the consultation period for the asset transfer to inform the community and encourage discussion. Most community groups would be open and excited about engaging the public. This seems to be missing here.