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BOGGART HOLE CLOUGH COMMUNITY ACTION TRUST
Protecting and revitalizing Boggart Hole Clough Ancient Woodland Park

Peter Babb,
Head of Planning,
Manchester City Council,
P.O. Box 463,
Town Hall Extension,
Manchester,
M60 3NY.

01612344501.

p.babb@manchester.gov.uk

Peter F. Milner,
Secretary,
Boggart Hole Clough Community Action Trust,
54 York Street,
Blackley,
Manchester,
M9 4FH.

01612035009.

peterfmilner@hotmail.com

8th December 2007

Dear Peter Babb,

**Planning application 082039/FO/2007/N1
to build 50 houses on site of former Clough Top School adjacent to Boggart Hole Clough.**

Boggart Hole Clough Community Action Trust (BHCCAT), the Clough's friends group, was informed 26.11.07 by a local residents association about this proposed development. BHCCAT was not informed by Manchester City Council (MCC) although it is surely incumbent upon MCC to inform community groups representing areas next to a proposed development about any such proposal.

Many BHCCAT members have concerns about this proposed development.

Has an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) been carried out ? If so I would be grateful if you would send me a copy - as an email attachment would be preferable, thank you. If an EIA has not been made would it not be appropriate to carry one out ?

The Clough was recently designated by MCC and Natural England as a Local Nature Reserve. The proposed development would diminish the conservation value of the Clough by e.g. deterring bats & birds from nesting in the area adjacent to the proposed housing. Building substantially fewer houses and setting them further back away from the Clough would to some extent ameliorate this problem. Another improvement would be gated pedestrian / wheelchair access to the Clough from the southwest corner of the proposed development.

The ground on this site is unstable. The former school was shored up with timbers due to subsidence leading to its eventual demolition. Planting trees across the site, instead of building houses, would stabilize the ground.

The site is presently owned by MCC Education Department. The proposed development would entail a change of use from the site's former educational use to residential housing. The site's former educational use could however be re-established by e.g. planting a community orchard.

An orchard in Charlestown has long been an aspiration of MCC. Originally an orchard was suggested for the site now taken by the new Under-8s Playground near the Clough Visitor Centre on Charlestown Road. The Clough Top site would be an ideal location for the orchard. It could be co-managed by MCC Education & Leisure departments in cooperation / partnership with the local community as represented by local schools (e.g. North Manchester High Schools for Girls & Boys) and community groups (e.g. Whitemoss Youth Club & BHCCAT) thereby enabling the voluntary participation of local people (students, teachers, parents, families,

friends, neighbours, residents) of all abilities / disabilities, and ages, in the work of planting, tending, harvesting and protecting the orchard. Such a scheme would bind the community together and help to reduce anti-social behaviour in the area. The benefits of such a scheme are manifold – potentially a new biological, commercial, communal, ecological, educational, environmental, health resource in North Manchester. This alternative proposal would increase Manchester’s biodiversity / conservation value / wildlife (rather than reduce it) thus acting against (rather than fuelling) extreme climate change...

Some other matters which may impinge upon this planning decision are also debatable e.g. population densities supposedly required in North Manchester and the need for so many new houses when many empty properties require renovation & reoccupation.

I hope you agree that the local community, including BHCCAT members, are entitled to be properly consulted about the future of this site. We request MCC hold a public meeting enabling concerns to be expressed & addressed and alternative proposals to be presented & discussed. MCC’s Community Engagement Strategy surely requires that such consultation meetings are held in this case.

We hope this representation on behalf of BHCCAT members will be noted and planning permission not granted at this time.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Peter F. Milner

Peter F. Milner.

Copied to, among others, BHCCAT Members including Officers - chair pro tem Joan Kavanagh, deputy chair Mark E. Hackett, treasurer Jean W. Finch.