

**Notes on Anstey Park development group discussion held at Alton Assembly Rooms
on Monday 1st February 2010**

Present representatives of

ARG, Tony Souter, Graham Hill,

Alton Casual Users Group and Manor Estate residents, Chris Lockett, Margaret Lockett,
Valarie Henderson, Martyn Brake,

The Bowls Club, Sheila Goodwin,

Tennis Club, Gary Johnson

Rugby Club, Andy Gay, Charles Clark

Alton Town Football Club Jim McKell,

Alton Junior Football Club, Frank Goddard.

Town Councillors, Roger Fitzer (chair) Robyn Fitzer, Robert Saunders, Pam Bradford,
Steve Parkinson.

ARG expressed concern that the extraordinary general meeting that was called for 13th January was not properly constituted. That the Coors consultation document would not have been available, indeed the document had only been released late today and only 2 persons (other than counsellors) present had seen a copy. In it there is no reference to any of the public that attended the consultation exhibition and no comments or suggestion that were made by the approximate 400 who attended. It seemed to be based on the 88 people that Coors agents had interviewed in the High Street at another time. There is no mention of the plans for the sports provision at all. The document had been delayed because it had been referred back to Coors with some inaccuracies and was too thin to be able to inform the counsellors. There was a figure in it that was incorrect for the population of Alton. It was stated by a number of people there that this could not be considered as a proper consultation document. It did not address the sports facilities at all. Steve Parkinson and Roger Fitzer agreed with this.

Steve Parkinson said that licences could be granted to build on their land if the 5 criteria were met in full. Satisfactory Design, Proposed facilities must meet the requirement of the existing tenants, planning licences would be subject to planning permission, (I can only remember 3)

Martyn Brake suggested that unless the council had given consideration to the best value of the disposal of the land they could be contravening the rules that govern councils. Martyn asked if the council would be in a position to grant licences if they had not followed the requirements to advertise in local papers the enclosing of land and change of use. Steve Parkinson conceded that the wording on the agenda for next weeks meeting would have to be changed and licences would not be able to be granted next week. Until consultation had taken place.

Chris Lockett from APCUG stated that we were still not in favour of any enclosure of land or development of the open space in Anstey Park that would restrict the use to existing users of the park. Steve Parkinson asked what the APCUG position would be of having unfenced pitches and he stated that this would be fine

The rugby club are not in favour as it will restrict the area that the 400 rugby players use at present on Sundays and 2 evening a week, They are concerned that the extra parking up there with all 3 clubs operating on the same days will make parking impossible. For instance last weekend 30 cars had to be parked on the grass areas and access roads were restricted with 50 cars parked outside marked designated parking areas. They are concerned about the space the road will take up and render dangerous for sport being played close to it. Also the flood light alongside the access road would be pulled up and there is no mention of replacing these.

Margaret Lockett asked if the Adults are re-housed in the Juniors present facilities will they have to have flood lights installed. The answer is yes.

Also would the adults need to expand their play area or would the present facilities be big enough for them. The answer was no they were not big enough and the Adult would want to practice on ground adjacent to the enclosed junior ground. This area would not be fenced and no trees would be cut down to enable them to practice there.

Margaret Lockett asked if the Juniors were being squeezed out of their present location and if it was necessary and desirable to have 4 licence bars on the sports ground?

Steve Parkinson confirmed that the junior foot club will not be forced out of their club and will only agree to be re homed if they are given equivalent or better facilities. They have 11 or so years to run on their present lease. They would have to have a function room and bar as they have built one on their present site at their own cost. The fenced in pitch would be flood lit but not the railed in practice ground. Parking at the new building is limited and both ends of the access road would have bars to stop casual use of the road. It has yet to be decided if the access road would be lit and fenced.

Valarie Henderson raised concerns that the park will be ruined for life and a tree consultant had recommended last time that this was discussed that the road could not be put in close to the convent edge as the mature trees there had shallow root system and it will kill them. Alton needs more open space not less.

Sheila from the bowls club asked if there was any way that the bowls and tennis development could go ahead outside of this arrangement with Coors as their club had been frustrated by the delays and cannot grow or developed while they are in planning blight. Tony Souter said how frustrated all parties were by this situation as many of the residents in Eggars Close wanted to move and houses were not selling at present because of the uncertainty of the situation. Steve Parkinson said unless they could come up with the sort of money that was on the table from Coors there was little they could do about it.

The tennis club stated that they were pleased to be included and had nothing to add but they hoped it would not be long in coming.

Alton Society were greatly concerned that public park would be reduced. Steve Parkinson stated that under section 106 the developer would still be required to provide funding to replace the open space that had been lost to Alton by the enclosing of the Alton Park dogleg. This would be expected to be replaced within 9/12 months he thought.

Margaret summed up the groups position of not wanting land enclosed and emphasised the fact that the group was not against sport and football in particular but that she was concerned about mention of 1000's of sports club members that were being disadvantaged by the development not going ahead. The facts are that the Juniors already have very good facilities and don't need to move, the bowls club and tennis club nobody is objecting to, the only problem is re-housing a small number of adult footballers and although she has some sympathy with them in not wanting to stop playing. She didn't see why there need was more important than all the other park users at present.

The Town Council meeting has been moved in to the main room at the Assembly rooms next week.