

From: John.Illingworth@leeds.gov.uk
Date: 05/03/2008 10:13
To: info@abbeygrange.leeds.sch.uk
Cc: Bernard.Atha@leeds.gov.uk, Elizabeth.Minkin@leeds.gov.uk,
johnbattle@leedswest.freeserve.co.uk, Phil.Crabtree@leeds.gov.uk,
bishop.riponleeds@virgin.net, Chris.Edwards@educationleeds.co.uk
Subject: Powerleague proposals at Butcher Hill

Dear Mr Key

Thank you for your letter of 18 February 2008.

I do not support the Powerleague proposals. I do not consider they would be in the best interests of the school, the wider community or the people I represent. I do not believe that the school owns the whole of the site, and I will oppose any vehicular access being granted across public land.

This is a former landfill site within the Leeds Green Belt that has been levelled and grassed for public recreational use. Engineering work associated with these proposals might expose buried toxic materials which presently are safely confined below ground. Built development within the green belt would be contrary to Leeds City Council policies N33 and GB20 in the adopted Development Plan. In particular, the proposed bar and car park are not essential sporting facilities, and the fences would damage the presently open nature of the site.

I am concerned that these proposals will conflict with "extended schools" and that sports facilities could be unavailable in the future when they are required for educational use. The scheme will also restrict public access to the land at times when these open spaces should be available for public use.

I am also concerned that these predominantly male-oriented proposals are contrary to the council's equality policies, and I would insist that equivalent changing areas and sporting facilities are allocated in any development for male and female use. I object strongly to the proposed bar and drinks licence, and I do not consider that "men only" stag nights are appropriate for an educational site.

The proposed charging regime is incompatible with the "Index of Deprivation" statistics for neighbouring areas. This would be an expensive, exclusive facility for rich young men that will do little to help those in greatest need.

My major concern is that the proposals will generate noise nuisance at unsocial hours, that the floodlighting will be intrusive, and that the car park and buildings will be a hideous eyesore in an otherwise attractive area. Experience at existing Powerleague facilities does not inspire confidence in the company. I hope that the school will rapidly abandon this extremely unpopular scheme, and will instead work with the local community to achieve better integration between the school and its residential neighbours.

John Illingworth