

Assets of Community Value

Application Number: 15/001

Nominated Asset: The Florence Park Community Centre

Site Address: Cornwallis Road, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 3NH

Ward: Cowley

Applicant: The Florence Park Community Association

Recommendation: The Head of City Development is recommended to:

1. Agree that the Nominated Asset should be confirmed as an Asset of Community Value;
2. Agree to include the asset on the City Council's Local Assets of Community Value Register and place the asset on the Local Land Charge Register.

Background to Report:

1. The Localism Act and the Assets of Community Value Regulations set out the opportunities and procedures to follow for communities wishing to identify assets of community value and have them listed.

2. The City Council is able to list a nominated asset if, in its opinion:

The actual current use (not an ancillary use) of the building or other land is one that furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community; AND

It is realistic to think that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the Building or other land that will further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community (whether or not in the same way as the current use).

OR

There was a time in the recent past when an actual use (not an ancillary use) of the building or other land is one that furthered the social wellbeing or interests of the local community; AND

it is realistic to think that there is a time in the next 5 years when there could be non-ancillary use of the building or other land that would further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community (whether or not in the same way as before).

3. These definitions have been taken from the Government's Regulations. There is no national guidance as to what the key terms in these definitions mean. It

is for the nominating organisation in the first instance to argue why it considers the nominated asset meets the definition in the Regulations.

4. If the owner objects to their property being placed on the List, they have a right in the first instance to an internal review by the City Council of this decision.

Nomination

5. The Florence Park Community Association wrote to nominate the Florence Park Community Centre, Cornwallis Road for inclusion as an Asset of Community Value on the 14th January 2015. A plan of the nominated area is attached to this report.
6. The Florence Park Community Association has argued that:
 - The land and associated premises have been in use as a community asset since the 1950s. There has been a close relationship between the community and club since. The Florence Park Community Association have managed and occupied the premises since 1967.
 - The premises are in use as a community centre (currently 120 full memberships and 209 Associate Memberships (2013)) that is in the social interests of the local community. The centre offers activities which promote the social and physical well-being of the Florence Park Community.
 - The club hosts the popular, monthly "Sunday Sessions" providing an opportunity for the whole community to enjoy high quality bands throughout the day.
 - The club has developed a successful collaboration with the social enterprise – Equip – who runs their Saturday Community Café. This creates a community space where people can gather socially and enjoy complimentary activities.
 - It is entirely realistic to think that current usage, both social interests and social wellbeing usage can continue as the club has been in operation since the 1950s, is solvent, well attended and active.

Response to consultation

7. Oxford City Council is the owner and the applicant is the leaseholder. Oxford City Council has been consulted and has no objection to this nomination. Although, the current lease expired in 2010, there are currently discussions ongoing between the leaseholder and landowner about another 10 year lease. At present there are only

plans to improve the community centre.

Assessment

8. The Florence Park Community Association is eligible to make a nomination as a registered charity (number 304301).
9. The Regulations require the City Council to consider whether the Florence Park Community Centre meets the definition of an Asset of Community Value as set out in section 88 of the Localism Act, ie in this case that it is currently in a use that furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, and also that it is realistic to think that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the building or other land which will further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community (whether or not in the same way).

Whether the current use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community

10. The Community Centre is used by many local people. It has an important community function. The Club has been based in this building for over 60 years, since its inception. The Club is a place for people to interact with others from the local area. The Club acts to further the social wellbeing and interests of the local community.

Whether it is realistic to think that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the building or other land which will further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.

11. As well as considering whether the current use of the Florence Park Community Centre furthers the social well-being or social interests of the community, it is also necessary to consider whether it is realistic to expect this use, or another use that also furthers the social well-being or interests of the community, to continue.
12. From the comments made by the nominator and the landowner it seems reasonable to assume that a use will continue in the nominated part of the building that furthers the social well-being or interests of the local community. The nominator has said that the Club is well-attended, active and solvent. The landowner has said that the lease, which ran out in 2010, is currently being held over, and a new lease is being negotiated. The landowner also confirmed that, at present, there are only plans to improve the community centre.

Decision

I confirm that:

Nominated Asset: Florence Park Community Centre
Site Address: Cornwallis Road, Cowley, Oxford.

Should be an Asset of Community Value and included on the City Council's Local Assets of Community Value Register and placed on the Local Land Charge Register.

Name: M Crofton Briggs
Title: Head of City Development

Signature



3rd March 2015

Date: [INSERT DATE]

Background Papers: Nomination application

Contact Officer: Michael Crofton Briggs
Extension: 2360
Date: [INSERT DATE]

3rd March 2015

