

S77 Disposal of School Playing Fields; Former Hethersett Woodside Infant and Nursery School site

Norfolk County Council wishes to dispose of the school playing fields at the former Hethersett Woodside Infant and Nursery School, Firs Road, Hethersett, Norfolk NR9 3EQ. The former school site has an overall area of some 0.78 hectares of which 0.53 hectares are classed as playing field land.

Hethersett Woodside Infant & Nursery School has relocated to Coachmaker Way, Hethersett, Norfolk NR9 3JL and is now called Hethersett Woodside Primary & Nursery School.

In order to dispose of these playing fields, it will be necessary for Norfolk County Council to apply for written consent from the Secretary of State for Education. It is only at that point that we will be able to dispose/change the use of this land.

Our Proposal

Norfolk County Council would seek to sell the former playing fields to develop affordable housing for people with a care and support need to help independent living in the local community.

There is need in Norfolk for specialist housing for local people with care and support needs to continue living in their own home as part of the community. Subject to development viability and changing need profiles, the actual requirement identified for this site could range from a scheme of apartments to support independent living for older people or more specific housing for adults with disabilities. Importantly, it would be affordable housing and would prioritise local residents, allowing people to continue to live near their family and friends.

If this scheme does not come forward, the land will be disposed of via the open market. However, we are confident that a scheme will come forward as our priority is for the land to be developed for independent living for local people with care and support needs.

Any scheme proposal would be subject to a full planning submission to South Norfolk Council. As part of this process, it is expected there would be pre-planning consultations with the local community.

Whilst Norfolk County Council is keen to ensure a new scheme progresses as quickly as possible, timescales are dependent on scheme feasibility, tenders for the initial proposals, pre-planning work and formal planning submissions. Once land is declared surplus, it is hoped to progress discussions with potential providers about the scheme.

There is a separate process to dispose of the school building with the Secretary of State, which is not part of this consultation. It is proposed that the scheme outlined for the former playing fields would also include the school building land.

How can I have my say

We would like to hear your views on our disposal proposals. The closing date is 12 noon on Wednesday 16 March 2022. You can have your say by;

- completing the online questionnaire via this link;
<https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/hethersett-woodside-section-77>
- Sending an email to; schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk
- Writing to: School Organisation Team, FREEPOST 1H 2076, Children's Services, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2BR. You don't need a stamp.

What happens next

We will collate all responses received in response to this consultation.

If we need any further information from you, we will contact you via your email address.

Following the consultation process, all comments will be forwarded along with the application under s77 of the School Standards and Frameworks Act to the Secretary of State for Education, who will consider these and will make a decision on the proposal to dispose of the land at the former Hethersett Woodside Infant and Nursery School, Firs Road, Hethersett, Norfolk NR9 3EQ.

Appendix A – plan referred to

