



Watford Borough Council

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Enquiries to: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

Our reference:

Your reference:

Date: 2 February 2015

Email: [REDACTED]@watford.gov.uk

Dear [REDACTED]

Please find below responses to the questions you have raised regarding Watford Borough Council's submission to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government seeking consent for the appropriation of Farm Terrace allotments (December 2014).

All questions raised and our responses will be forwarded to the Department of Communities and Local Government so they can raise any further, related issues with us if they feel they are relevant.

1. *In page 39 of the Council's submission you state that of the relocations that have been arranged to date have shown that current Farm Terrace allotment holders will not necessarily choose an allotment site in close proximity to Farm Terrace (only one so far has chosen to locate within West Watford – out of 10 who have already committed to alternative plots). Additionally, on page 3, you define the allotments in West Watford as being Holywell and Brightwell sites. Could you confirm to what sites the 10 tenants relocated to and how many to each site?*

As you are aware Veolia holds records on tenancies and relocations. A relocation to Chester Road was not facilitated through the council but with Veolia directly. It had, therefore, not been recorded correctly at the time of the council's submission in December 2014. This means two out of the ten identified as relocating in line with the council's relocation and compensation policy (set out in July 2014) have chosen to move within the west Watford area. The relocations on record are, therefore:

Paddock Road	1
Oxhey Grange	2
Wiggenhall	3
Timberlake	1
Callowland	1
Holywell	1
Chester Road	1

The addendum has been noted as part of the council's application

2. *I was reading the submission yesterday evening and was looking at appendix 2 "Holywell and Brightwell allotments indicating distance from Farm Terrace". I couldn't see an indication of distance on the map although you point to this on page 24 for Holywell although there was no reference to distance for Brightwell allotments. Can you confirm if a distance should have*



been stated on the map and if there is no reference to the distance to Brightwell allotments, does the Council's submission need updating?

The map is referenced in the appendices as 'indicating distance from Farm Terrace'. As you will see there is clearly a scale on the map from which an indication of distances can be seen as referenced by the appendices title. The map was included to provide a straight forward, visual guide to the distance between the allotment sites within the west Watford area.

3. *On page 3 of the submission the council points to the current vacancies at Holywell and Brightwell allotments having combined vacancies of 52 plots. It is also stated that these vacancies would be easily able to accommodate the remaining 27 Farm Terrace tenants who between them rent 33 plots (284.5 poles). Could you provide the equivalent in poles for the combined vacancies (52) at Holywell and Brightwell as this was omitted from the submission?*

As of 30 January 2015, there are 299.5 poles available at Holywell and Brightwell allotments.

4. *At appendix (Bii) the Council provides a map of the re-provision at Paddock Road. On page 23 of the submission it states the journey by car at 1.7 miles and 1.55 by foot and that the measurements were undertaken using the council's GIS system. I am assuming that this information was saved as part of the preparation for the submission and would request that the GIS data is provided. If not available, please can they be recreated on a map showing the start at end points as I assume the council has measured the total distance a relocated tenant would have to make to access a re-provided plot at either one of the two proposed areas of extension at Paddock Road. If so, there should be two measurements provided.*

This distance is the one use in the previous submission of September 2013. As previously advised through earlier Freedom of Information requests (available on the 'What Do They Know' website) this data was taken from an on screen measurement and is not information the council holds on record.

The council believes it has demonstrated that adequate alternative provision has been demonstrated, in line with Department of Communities and Local Government's Guidance: *Allotment disposal guidance: Safeguards and alternatives (January 2014)*. It has never contended that the re-provision at Paddock Road is within the three quarters of a mile criterion within the guidance. Our application seeks to distinguish between the council's plans for re-provision (to maintain the overall allotment land / plots available to Watford residents) and relocation (alternative sites and plots available to those allotment holders seeking relocation, some of which are within close proximity of Farm Terrace).

5. *Of the 27 remaining Farm Terrace tenants who will maintain a tenancy beyond 2015, please can you advise the first indicated preference for an alternative site should Farm Terrace be closed. I am simply asking for overall number so for example 4 have stated a preference for Holywell, 5 for Brightwell etc.*

The information on re-location preferences was collected over the summer of 2013, partly as a response to the survey we sent out and partly through face to face contact with [REDACTED], working on behalf of Watford Borough Council. Many of those who engaged with us in 2013 are no longer Farm Terrace allotment holders.

In terms of the information currently held on those still tenants on Farm Terrace:

- 2 have indicated they do not wish to relocate
- 3 have Brightwell as a first choice
- 10 have Holywell as a first choice
- 12 have not stated a preference for relocation to any site

It might also be helpful to note that of the 31 allotment holders identified as remaining tenants in the application, one has now ended their tenancy.

6. *On page 31 of the council's submission reference is made to promoting allotments. The submission states that dedicated leaflets have been produced, sheet bus posters and bus shelter posters. Please can you advise when each of these were last produced and provide copies?*

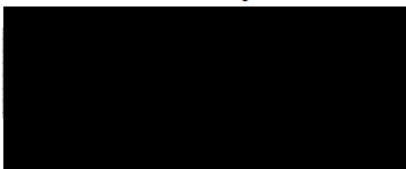
Copies of what the council holds electronically are provided in the appendices – see Appendix F. The council does not hold on record the exact dates of when the printed material was produced as the artwork was used on a number of occasions across different channels e.g. bus shelters, poster sites, smaller leaflets for use at events etc. The application to the Secretary of State indicates that, in line with government guidance, the council is now mainly using electronic channels to promote services, which is why the website is cited as the most up to date repository of promotional information. The draft promotional strategy appended to the application (Appendix 32) is on the agenda for discussion with the Allotment Stakeholder Panel this spring. The good news is that occupancy rates remain high across the council run allotment sites and we are in a position, now that the majority of the allotment improvement programme is complete, to action the promotional strategy. You will see from the strategy that most of the actions are around engagement (which will allow for more targeted promotion) and an online presence.

7. *On page 20 reference is made that 477 people completed a survey. Can you confirm how many leaflets were distributed and how many households in Watford were they delivered to?*

40,000 leaflets were produced. These were distributed in a number of ways. This included door to door delivery to homes across Watford and at the consultation and engagement events the Watford Health Campus team held in January 2014. The leaflet was also made available online through the dedicated consultation website that was set up during this period – this was open into the summer of 2014. The door to door delivery was to 37,500 households.

I hope this answers your questions.

Yours sincerely



Partnerships and Performance Section Head