

**Committee:** Community Committee

**Agenda Item**

**Date:** 6 September 2007

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**Title:** SAFFRON WALDEN SKATE PARK –  
ADJOINING LAND, PEASLANDS ROAD

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Item for decision

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## Summary

- 1 This report seeks Members' approval for land at Peaslands Road, on the site of the Saffron Walden Skate Park, to be leased to the Saffron Walden Town Council for recreational purposes.

## Recommendations

- 2 Members are recommended to approve the request from Saffron Walden Town Council to add the area of land shown hatched on the plan attached at Appendix 1 into the existing skate park lease to the Saffron Walden Town Council subject to
  - a) the existing covenant for the open space land to be used for sporting purposes be retained but widened to include recreational purposes;
  - b) that no permanent structures be constructed alongside the Leisure Centre and Turpin's Indoor Bowls Club that would preclude development of either of these buildings in the future.
  - c) that the provisions of the existing lease be applied to this area of land i.e. term of 99 years at a peppercorn rent per annum and a break clause in the year 2034.

## Background Papers

- 3 Conveyance Document 1983, Lease dated

## Impact

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Communication/Consultation	Leisure Connection Ltd
Community Safety	Skate Park Neighbours Meetings (including Police representation) established to discuss community safety issues. Multi-agency approach to dealing with situations.

Equalities	This area provides the opportunities for a smaller play/skate park area to be developed to encourage multi-generational use of the recreation space.
Finance	The Council would not incur any additional costs. Saffron Walden Town Council will take on the responsibility for the grass cutting and litter clearance of the area. Therefore, the District Council's grounds maintenance contract will no longer be responsible for the grassed area but will still be responsible for the hedge and tree line along the boundaries.
Human Rights	None
Legal implications	The land can be leased for a reduced rent if the value is less than £2 million and is for the benefit of the community.
Ward-specific impacts	This arrangement will have impacts for recreation provision in the Shire Ward.
Workforce/Workplace	None

## Situation

- 5 In 1983 the Saffron Walden Town Council conveyed the area of land on which the Lord Butler Fitness & Leisure Centre and Turpin's Indoor Bowls Club is situated and the surrounding open space. The land was transferred specifically for the construction of the Leisure Centre.
- 6 A covenant was placed on the land stipulating that it must only be used for sporting purposes.
- 7 In 2006 Saffron Walden Town Council requested that an area of land be leased to the Town Council to enable the construction of a skate park. A lease was granted for 99 years on a peppercorn rental by the Community Committee subject to the restriction that a break clause be inserted to coincide with the conclusion of the 32 year Private Finance Initiative arrangement so that the future of the site could be reviewed.
- 8 The construction of the skate park was completed in July 2007 and it has been decided to install a path along the side of the Leisure Centre open space to provide dry access to the skate park and to try to avoid young people skating through the car park in front of Turpin's Indoor Bowls Club.
- 9 The Town Council is of the opinion that it would be less complicated if it had responsibility for the whole of the grassed open space rather than the split

arrangement that currently exists with the District Council. The path will be the responsibility of the Town Council in future. Additionally, the shrub planting required to screen the skate park area from Tukes Way residents would also be the Town Council's responsibility.

- 10 The Town Council and the Saffron Walden Initiative have also been discussing proposals to install smaller children's play equipment on the area as well to encourage the development of multi-generational use to detract from the area being regarded as specifically for any particular age group
- 11 The area shown hatched on the plan at Appendix 1 would be added into the existing lease to Saffron Walden Town Council and that authority would have responsibility for the grounds maintenance of the trees, shrubs and grassed area except for the boundary tree and shrub line. The District Council's Grounds Maintenance Contract would still include the responsibility for the trees shrubs and fences along the boundary of the site.
- 12 It would be necessary for the legal arrangement to provide for no development of a permanent structure that might prevent development of either Turpin's Indoor Bowling Club or the Leisure Centre in the future. Provision must also be made for such a requirement to be honoured and land leased back to the District Council should this be deemed necessary by the District Council for future development.

## Risk Analysis

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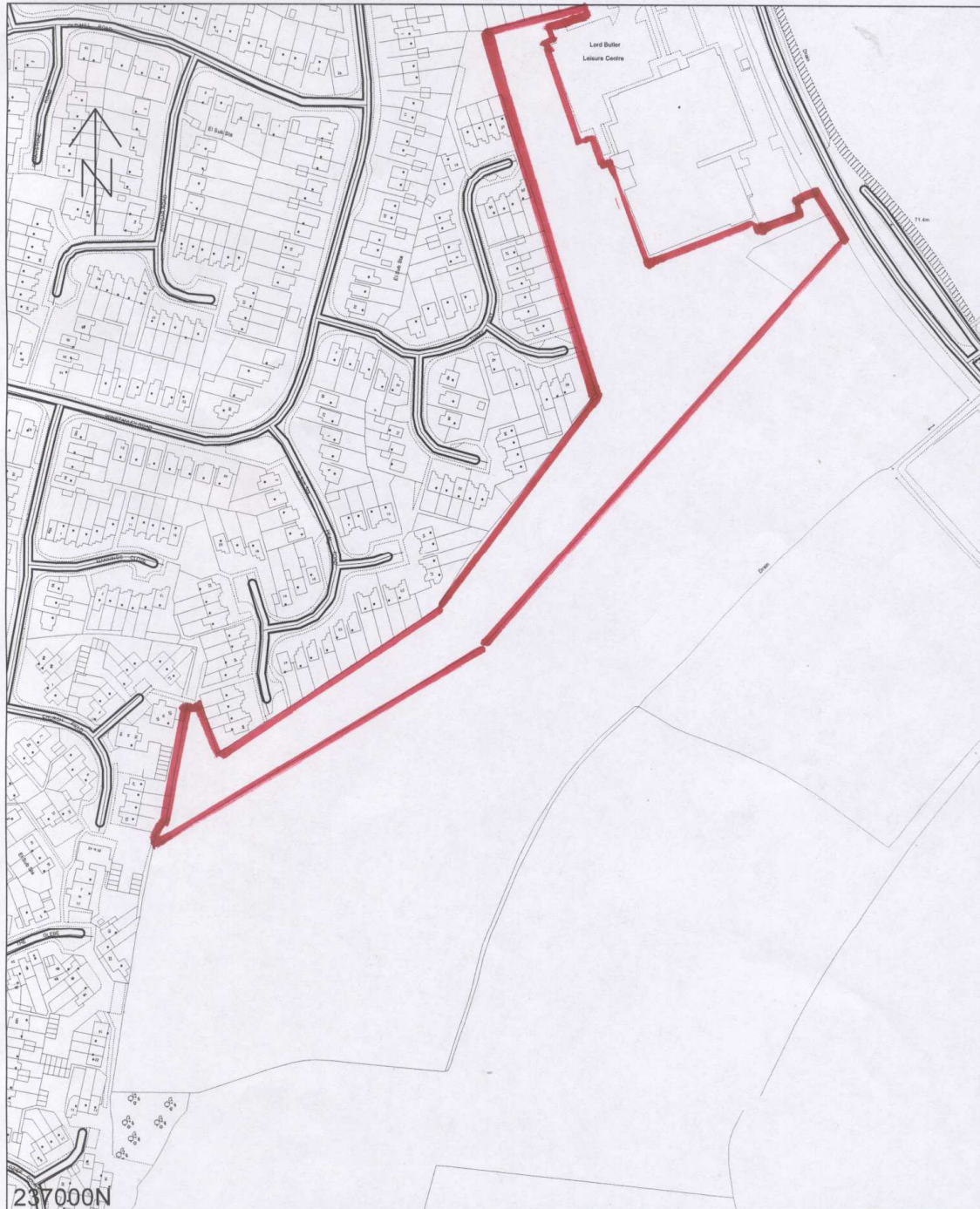
Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
If the land is not added into the existing lease with the Town Council the confusion from users and local residents as to which authority is responsible for the area would continue.	High	Excessive UDC officer time committed to the area.	Transfer of land would clarify the situation.
If the land is leased to the Town Council that authority might not agree to reciprocate the leasing/conveyance arrangement to enable the existing facilities to be extended or developed in the future.	High	Lack of future leisure development in Saffron Walden	Insert a clause in the lease requiring the Town Council not to construct any permanent features on the site and to ensure that there is compliance with any developmental requests in future.

## Uttesford District Council- Local Land Charges

APPENDIX 1

MAP REFERENCE: TL5437SE SCALE: 1:2500

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**LOCATION PLAN FOR SEARCH:**