

**STOURBRIDGE AREA COMMITTEE**

**DATE: 4<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2003**

**REQUEST FOR: APPLICATION TO LEASE LAND**

**LOCATION: REAR OF 117 OAKFIELD ROAD, WOLLESCOTE**  
**(As shown on the plan attached)**

**BACKGROUND**

An application has been received from the owner of 117 Oakfield Road, Wollescote, to lease an area of land to the rear of the property that, although controlled by the Housing Directorate, forms part of an area of public open space.

The applicant states that the land is currently overgrown and untidy and he therefore wishes to fence the land into the garden to cultivate as garden land.

An area of land to the rear of 119 Oakfield Road, has been leased to the owner of 119 Oakfield Road since the early 1970's for garden land. An area of land to the rear of 121 Oakfield Road was sold to the Doctor's surgery by the Council in 1996 and is used for car parking and access to the surgery.

**COMMENTS**

The relevant Council Directorates have been consulted regarding this application and the Directorate of Housing have no objections, from a housing management point of view.

The Directorate of the Urban Environment states that the land in question is an area of dense woodland including specimens of Oak, Ash and Holly amongst others. It is located between the applicant's own garden and open fields at the rear. There is also evidence that the land has already been used by the applicant as a gate has been formed in their rear garden boundary and a tree house formed in/on one of the trees.

**The site falls within the Green Belt (Policy 1), Wildlife Consultation Area (Policy 21) and Landscape Heritage Area (Policy 31) within the adopted Dudley Unitary Development Plan. Generally these policies seek to preserve the character and intended function of the area, appropriate management and improvement for nature conservation purposes and to preserve the character and quality of open landscapes.**

**The land in question immediately abuts the built up area and given that the two adjacent properties have been allowed to encompass similar land within their boundaries it would seem unfair to prevent the applicants from doing the same. However, they remain concerned that the further erosion of this important area of land may set a precedent for all properties along this side of Oakfield Road to make similar requests, which may impact the aforementioned policies.**

**Given the above comments the Directorate advise that they have strong reservations about leasing the land to the owners of 117 Oakfield Road. If considered acceptable they would recommend that the Council maintain strict control over the purposes for which the land is used, prevent the removal of any trees or vegetation, prevent the erection of any buildings on the land and seek approval of the type and position of any new fencing.**

## **PROPOSAL**

**That the Area Committee consider the contents of this report and make a recommendation to the Lead Member for Housing.**

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 1. Letter from applicant dated 15/4/03.**
- 2. E-mails and memos from the Directorate of Law and Property 5/8/03.**

- 3. E-mails and memos from the Directorate of Urban Environment 4/8/03.**
- 4. E-mails and memos from the Directorate of Housing 18/7/03.**

**Contact Officer: Gill Hudson, Property Manager, Ext. 5311**