

**WARDS AFFECTED:** Clifton North

## **REPORT OF HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT**

### **Wilford Bowls Club, 55 Main Road**

#### **1 SUMMARY**

Reference: 13/02534/ASCMVL

Nomination by: David Boulton

Proposal: Request for Wilford Social and Bowls Club 55 Main Road Nottingham to be included on the List of Assets of Community Value.

#### **2 RECOMMENDATION**

That the nomination be **ACCEPTED**, and the property be placed on the Council's List of Assets of Community Value and placed on the Local Land Charge Register.

That the decision on any subsequent request for review of the decision by the owner of the site be delegated to the Director of Legal and Democratic Services.

#### **3 BACKGROUND**

3.1 A nomination has been submitted requesting that the Wilford Social and Bowls Club be listed as an Asset of Community Value. The nomination includes the two storey building known as Wilford Social and Bowls Club, the beer garden, the bowling green, the bowls club pavilion and its car park.

3.2 The nomination has been received from Wilford Community Group. Their nomination is based upon the fact that Wilford Social and Bowls Club was established in the 1930's and has been at the centre of community life since this time. They consider the club to be unique within Wilford, due to it being the only facility which can call itself a social club, where the main aim is the cultivation of relationships with local residents. At present the clubs total membership is just under 200, which is largely made up of residents from the Wilford but also extends to Clifton and West Bridgford. The Club also forms the meeting venue for the Wilford Community Group and is widely used by public sector and voluntary organisations for community meetings and events. They consider that its use as a bowling club and leisure facility, with over 62 local members of which over 50% are over 70 years of age, further reinforces the social well-being or social interests of the local community.

#### **4 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION**

**Owner:** An objection has been received from Route Organisation Ltd who purchased the Wilford Club from Marstons (formerly Mansfield Brewery Co Ltd) in August 2006. On purchasing the club a tenancy agreement was signed with the social club in 2007 with a rent of £200 a week excluding vat. This agreement runs for consecutive periods of twelve months.

They state that since taking over, the club has struggled financially and there has been a continued decline in membership numbers and usage. The bowls club is attached to the social club with their own membership, which is mostly elderly and not being replaced with younger members. Only 50% of the bowling club membership are members of the Social Club which is responsible for the running of the club including all the associated costs. Route state that they have financially supported the club by not putting the rent up since 2007 and helped them to purchase more competitively priced services. They have been asked to invest in the club but consider this difficult due to mortgage and rising operational costs such as insurance. In addition the club is generating little income and the club committee does not want an increase in the rent. They have asked the club committee to commit to a longer term agreement (5 years) to allow investment in the club, but that was refused by the bowls club committee in August 2013.

Route is unhappy that they were not consulted or made aware of the application for the club to become an Asset of Community Value. They consider that if the club is currently seen to be a strong asset to the community, it would have a much higher membership base, there would be a much higher usage of both the social club as well as the bowling facilities and it wouldn't be in such a difficult financial situation. It is also their opinion that if the bowling club is considered to 'further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community' its impact is limited due to being a spring/summer and weather reliant leisure activity.

**Other:** The Chairman of Wilford Social and Bowls Club has written in support of the nomination. He has stated that historically the club has been involved in many community groups in the village, who have used the club as a meeting place and for events, such a weddings and funerals. They hold free bowling sessions on Sundays mornings and hold family discos and charity events in the club house. The Wilford Lion Football team use the club as a meeting place and display their trophies within the club.

**Ward Councillors:** The Ward Councillors have been consulted on the proposed recommendation and have made no comment on the proposed nomination.

## **5 ASSESSMENT**

5.1 Land and premises must be listed as an Asset of Community Value if:

- (i) A nomination is received from an eligible body; and
- (ii) In the council's opinion, an actual or recent former main use of the premises furthers (or furthered) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, and
- (iii) It is realistic to think that there can continue to be such a use (the future use need not be the same as the previous use).

'Social interests' includes cultural, recreational and sporting interests.

### **Criteria (i) - Eligibility to nominate**

5.2 Wilford Community Group was founded in 2002 as the tenants and residents association for Wilford. The principal objective of the group is to promote tenants'

and residents' interests and campaign for improvements to their housing conditions, services and environment and enshrined in the groups constitution. The group's membership is made up of all residents of Wilford. It has an annual elected committee and monthly open meeting to further the aims and objectives of the group. As an unincorporated body the group have confirmed that all surplus monies generated by the group from external funding, donations and fund raising events is spent wholly in Wilford. The nomination has also been accompanied by 21 member signatures as required by the legislation. It is therefore considered that the group is eligible to nominate.

- 5.3 The legislation requires the nominators to set out their reasons for thinking it should be nominated. Officers are satisfied that the information supplied satisfies this basic requirement, and that the nomination is valid.

**Criteria (ii) - Does the existing or recent former use further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community?**

- 5.4 Clubs such as Wilford Social and Bowls Club are undoubtedly an important part of many local communities throughout the city, and may be considered to be of community value. Many clubs provide an important meeting place, and operate as a focus for music, clubs, sporting and other activities of importance to the local community. Guidance published by the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) suggest that community services such as social club and sports facilities such as bowling greens are likely to fulfil the definition.
- 5.5 The Wilford Community Group detail in their submission that the club is not only used as a social club by its members but is also a base for meetings of local groups including the Group itself, charity groups, the Nottinghamshire Beat Team, the local football team. The club and its grounds has been used to hold local community events such as BBQ's, quiz nights, bingo evenings and bingo events. The bowls club as a leisure facility clearly makes an important contribution towards maintaining a healthy lifestyle, and means of exercise for its members and the local community but as importantly provides a vital social link for its more elderly members.
- 5.6 It is therefore considered that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that the use of the site as a social and bowls club would further the social well being or social interests of the local community.
- 5.7 It is therefore recommended that the club be listed as an Asset of Community Value.

**Criteria (iii) – Is it realistic to think there can continue to be such a use?**

- 5.8 As well as considering whether the current use of furthers the social well-being or social interests of the community, it is also necessary to consider whether it is realistic to expect that this use, or another use that also furthers the social wellbeing or interests of the community, could continue into the future as a use of community value.

- 5.9 CLG guidance suggests that for uses that are currently ongoing there should be a presumption that the present use can continue into the future, unless clear evidence suggests otherwise.
- 5.10 The Wilford Social and Bowls Club is an on going use and no evidence has been submitted to demonstrate that its use as a club could not continue into the future. Whilst the owner of the site have raised concerns that the club's membership may be in decline and be in a difficult financial situation, the City Council stills consider that the social and bowls club could still have an important social and community function.
- 5.11 It is therefore considered that it would be realistic that the social use of the club for can continue in the near future.

**Contact Officer:**

Mrs Jo Briggs, Case Officer, Development Management.

Email: [joanna.briggs@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:joanna.briggs@nottinghamcity.gov.uk) Telephone: 0115 8764041

## Nomination Form for Assets of Community Value

### SECTION 1 – ABOUT YOU

|                               |               |
|-------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Name of Lead Nominator</b> | David Boulton |
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|                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Address</b> | 6 Vernon Avenue<br>Wilford<br>Nottingham |
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|                 |          |
|-----------------|----------|
| <b>Postcode</b> | NG11 7AE |
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|                         |                               |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Telephone Number</b> | 0115 981 8919<br>07584 888589 |
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|                      |                       |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Email Address</b> | WilfordCG@hotmail.com |
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|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Your relationship to the nominating organisation</b> | Secretary |
|---|-----------|

### SECTION 2 – ABOUT THE ORGANISATION MAKING THE NOMINATION

*Please tick any that apply*

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|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Unincorporated Body</b> <i>(see next section)</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Neighbourhood Forum</b>                           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Parish Council</b>                                | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>Charity</b>                                       | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>Community Interest Company</b>                    | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>Company Limited by Guarantee</b>                  | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>Industrial and Provident Society</b>              | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

|  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Numbers of members registered to vote locally (unincorporated bodies only)</b>  |                                     |
| In the case of an unincorporated body, at least 21 of its members must be registered to vote locally.  |                                     |
| We are enclosing evidence that at least 21 members locally registered voters support the registration of this club as an asset of community value <i>(please tick box)</i> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

**SECTION 3 – MORE ABOUT YOUR ORGANISATION AND DEMONSTRATION OF LOCAL CONNECTION**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Please explain a bit more about the organisation</b> (<i>such as how and why it was formed</i>)</p> <p><b>Please also demonstrate that your organisation has a local connection</b> (<i>i.e., that everybody concerned lives locally</i>)</p> | <p>Wilford Community Group was founded in December 2002 as the tenants and residents association for Wilford, Nottingham. It is recognised as such by Nottingham City Council and is a member of the Council's Area 8 Committee. The Group received its initial funding from the City Council and periodically receives top-up funding from the Council for its ongoing work.</p> <p>The prime purposes of the Group, as enshrined in its constitution are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote tenants' and residents' interests and campaign for improvements to their housing conditions, services and environment;</li> <li>• Promote housing issues;</li> <li>• Encourage local tenants' and residents' involvement;</li> <li>• Work in a non-discriminatory way and work towards combating discrimination;</li> <li>• Represent the interests of tenants and residents when dealing with the local authority and other bodies;</li> <li>• Preserve and improve the amenities of Wilford.</li> </ul> <p>The Group's membership is made up of all residents of Wilford and once a year it elects a committee to further the aims and objectives of the Group.</p> |
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| <p><b>If the Group is constituted, its surplus must be wholly or partly applied for the benefit of the authority's area or a neighbouring authority's area. Please provide evidence of this if you can.</b></p> | <p>Any surplus generated by the Group from external funding, donations and fund-raising events is spent wholly within Wilford. Previously, this had included supporting the purchase of trees and plants for a new school garden; the planting of spring bulbs throughout Wilford. Funds have also been used to support local "Open Gardens and Fete" events and a Diamond Jubilee event in 2012 where the Group worked with the local Church, uniformed groups and other organisations within Wilford.</p> |
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**If the Group is constituted, please provide evidence here.**

The Group's constitution can be found at <http://www.thisiswilford.org.uk/Constitution%20060223.htm>

#### SECTION 4 – ABOUT THE ASSET YOU WANT TO LIST

|  |  |
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| <b>Name of Asset</b>   | Wilford Social and Bowls Club  |
| <b>Address and Postcode of the Asset</b>   | 55 Main Road<br>Wilford<br>Nottingham<br>NG11 7AP  |
| <b>Description of what exactly should be listed</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The building known as Wilford Social and Bowls Club and associated footways required for access</li><li>• The beer garden</li><li>• The bowling green</li><li>• The Bowls Club pavilion and associated footways required for access</li><li>• The Social and Bowls Club car park</li></ul> |
| <b>Land Registry Title Number</b>  |  |
| <b>Link to any photos or building plans of the property</b> <i>(if you're attaching these to the application please confirm that here)</i> | See Section 6 below marking the boundary.  |
| <b>Any information you have about the freeholders, leaseholders and current occupants of the site</b> <i>(if known)</i>                    | The freehold is held by Route Organisation, 2 Winmarleigh Street, Warrington, WA1 1NB.<br><br>Wilford Social and Bowls Club has a tenancy agreement with Route and are the current occupants.  |



**Reasons for nomination: why do you believe the asset is of community value**

Wilford Social and Bowls Club ("the Club") was established in the 1930s and has been at the centre of community life in Wilford ever since. Whilst only one of five social facilities in Wilford, it is unique within the area as being the only facility that can genuinely call itself a Social Club where the main aim is the cultivation of relationships with local residents. This is contrasted with other establishments within Wilford which consist of a chain restaurant, gastro-pub, public house and Rugby Club and, therefore, the Club has a unique asset of the highest community value.

Whilst the Club's main membership base is drawn from the Wilford parish, its membership extends to Clifton, West Bridgford and the wider county. At present, the Club's total membership is just under 200.

The membership is drawn from a broad social demographic base, with members aged from 18 to over 80.

The Club is located at the centre of Wilford and is well-served by Main Road and by the riverside walk at the rear. Visitors to the Club have on-street parking facilities in addition to a small car park attached to the Club itself.

The Club hosts regular quiz nights as well as music events and bingo evenings. The Club has also taken part in fetes organised by Wilford Community Group.

The Club is the venue of choice of Wilford Community Group which holds not only its monthly committee meetings there but also public meetings where residents can meet local politicians and council officers to discuss issues of importance to Wilford. Local authors and charity groups have also used the Club to meet residents and the City Council has used the Club to provide advice sessions on finance, debt, benefits and other financial issues. The Nottinghamshire Police Beat Team for Wilford holds regular meet-and-greet events at the Club.

The Club has a garden which hosts barbecues during the summer which are well-attended by local families and inside there is a snooker table and TV screens that show sporting events that are enjoyed by customers in the bar.

The Social Club also organises regular outings, developing a further element of camaraderie.

Of great significance, of course, is the contribution the Bowls Club makes to the local community. The Bowls Club membership totals

some 62 members of which some 50% are over 70 years of age. The Club not only provides a means of exercise for its members but also provides a vital social link for those members who would otherwise be isolated and alone.

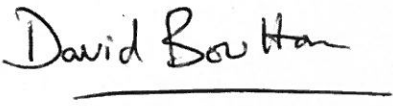
Additionally, the Bowls Club arranges a yearly trip to the Potters World Indoor Bowls Championships. This is always a well-attended event and many of the participants have attended for several years.

In the event that Wilford lost its Social and Bowls Club, it would lose a vital facility that serves to provide a means for those residents new to the village to cultivate relationships, those residents who wish to take part in discussing affairs that matter to Wilford, and a means of aiding its elderly residents to maintain a healthy lifestyle both mentally and physically.

**SECTION 5 – CONFIRMATION**

I confirm that all the information provided is accurate and complete to the best of my knowledge.

|             |                              |
|-------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Name</b> | David Anthony Haydon BOULTON |
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|                  |   |
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| <b>Signature</b> |  |
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| <b>Date</b> | 15 <sup>th</sup> October 2013 |
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SECTION 6 - Satellite View of Area to be Listed, outlined in Red

