

Assets of Community Value

Under Localism Act 2012 –

Briefly put;

Parish as a community group can ask the city council to list certain assets as being of community value.

Community assets are usually land or buildings. They can be owned by anyone including local councils or parish council.

We would have to show that any asset has either;

a current use which *furtheres the wellbeing or social interests of the local community* and would continue to do so, or

was in the recent past such an asset and could be such in the next 5 years.

There is no definition of these terms, but city council would expect evidence of why it is such an asset, who benefits from its use, the impact of its loss on the community and the way in which it is of value (eg. community pride, inclusion, sense of place (history?) etc.

Process:

Identify the asset(s) and the owners. Current or recent use of the asset. Gather evidence as above, including maps and boundaries etc. Draw up a formal document and present to City Council.

After checking, city council will decide if asset is to be placed on a list of community assets. Owners can object to the nominated asset being placed on the list.

If the nomination passes all filters nothing will happen unless and until the owner decides to dispose of it - when they are required to notify the council. There is then a moratorium of 6 weeks during which any community group can apply to be a potential bidder to buy. If none do so the owner is free to sell at the end of 6 weeks.

If a community group does make such a request then a 6 month moratorium will apply during which a contract to sell/buy cannot be made unless to a community group.

Some examples of what could be community assets??

North Mill Lane area: Allotments. Fields either side (top) of Victoria Arms drive. Victoria Arms ph.

Conservation area: Back Lane. Red Lion ph. Mortimer Hall and rec. ground. Court Farm allots.

Marsh Lane area: Oxsrad/City FC. land (Court Place Farm). Boults Lane/Marsh Lane fields.

Way forward:

After discussions with Cllr. Williams on the Neighbourhood Plan, I have come to believe that work on ACV could go alongside the Neighbourhood Plan if that goes ahead. The in-depth examination of the parish that a NP would involve would inevitably throw up potential community assets, their use/value etc. in the course of its work.

Meanwhile, Cllr. Bartleet and myself will continue to examine the likelihood of identifying community assets, finding evidence of their use and/or social value, their owners etc. and making recommendations to council whether to proceed, either in association with the Neighbourhood Plan or not.

J.C. Batey. Nov.15