

Dear Catherine,
I have been asked by a local resident to comment on the proposed development of the former St Colette's site. In particular I have been asked to comment on the suggestion that there is no interest in the site from educational providers. I am one of the owners and directors of Sancton Wood School in St Pauls Road, Cambridge. Naturally we do have an interest in the site which we pursued to the extent of contacting the developer. We were led to believe that a conversion to residential would be forthcoming and so did not pursue our interest further. Nevertheless it remains the case that, subject to finances, we remain interested in the site and would of course be interested in developing it as an educational site.

Yours sincerely
Daniel Sturdy
Director, Sancton Wood School

Dear Tony

Further to our telephone conversation, I write as agreed to set out our interest in the captioned property.

I became aware of the site's potential availability through an advertisement placed locally by January's in 2010 inviting expressions of interest. My contact at January's thereafter was Nick Muncey.

On 11 June 2010 we submitted a letter expressing our interest; this letter was acknowledged by Muncey on 25 June who indicated that he had reported our interest to 'the College' (which I understood to be Jesus College) and the College's development partner and that a meeting had been arranged with the Local Planning Authority to discuss the relative merits of the parties that had expressed an interest. I subsequently asked Muncey to provide some clarification as to the criteria he would be using to determine our 'relative merits' but despite hastening I did not receive a reply to this request. My concern at the time was to ensure my organisation would be properly presented to the decision makers. It seems from our telecon this morning that my concerns were justified given that you were under the impression that the majority of our students resided outside the city boundaries when in fact over 75% of our 180 or so reside within the city itself; moreover, we have on occasion been mistaken for a language school when in fact we are an educational charity and a 'School' as defined by the Department for Education with whom we are registered (873-6021). We provide courses leading to GCSE and A-levels.

I heard nothing thereafter and concluded that the invitation for expressions of interest had been little more than a 'kite-flying' exercise. You will appreciate I am sure that it was not within our gift or power to compel the owners to discuss development opportunities with us so reluctantly we let the matter lie. The reason I contacted you today was that I have been advised informally that the Planning Committee will be told (at their meeting next week) that there were no viable expressions of interest for the site to be developed for continued educational use. This is clearly not the case. We expressed an interest and we continue to express an interest. As to the qualifier 'viable', I suggest that this could not have been determined until we were given the opportunity to discuss any number of options that we could have put forward had we been given the chance.

Finally, it is worthy of note that in a recent conversation with one of our trustees, Mr Richard Mutty of MPM Properties (who I believe were Jesus College's development partner) revealed that the details of our interest had not been passed to him by January's.

I would be grateful if you would ensure that the members of the Planning Committee are made aware of the contents of this e-mail. A copy goes to the Petersfield Ward councillors.

Yours sincerely

Chris Forte
Bursar
CCSS

Dear Mrs Fleet,

Our parish was very interested in obtaining the site about two years ago. Our interest remains.

It was not that there was no interest, it as simply that the amount of money being offered was considerably less than the Pounds 2 million for which, I understand, Jesus College were looking. Clearly as a 'restricted site' (i.e. for educational/religious purposes) the land would command nowhere near that amount.

A previous application to build 13 dwellings on the site had been rejected by the City Planning Dept. It seemed to us that the property was placed on the market simply to demonstrate that there was 'no interest' in its purchase for educational/religious purposes; i.e. a 'window-dressing exercise'.

At the time our offer was rejected, the Secretary of the our Church Council wrote to the City of Cambridge stating our interest in the property but I imagine that either has been conveniently buried beneath other documents. We did not actually file a planning application, due to lack of time to do so.

I believe your assessment to be exactly right: anyone, other than the chosen' developer, was quickly turned away.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

V. Rev. Raphael Armour
Rector, Orthodox Parish of St Ephraim the Syrian,
and Dean of the East of England,
Russian Orthodox Diocese of Sourozh

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