

If you're not following what's happening in detail, it's easy to lose track of what's happening with the proposed move to Caversham Heath Golf Club and selling the RGC (Reading Golf Club) land for large scale housing development.

There has been a lot of news coverage from the local press, including the Henley Standard and GetReading around the plans to move from the current site in Emmer Green. Despite the on-going local plan consultation (closed at the end of July), RGC announced in the Henley Standard (also covered in Thames Valley Property and GetReading), that they were going to carry on regardless of the outcome of the consultation with the intention of building 700 properties on the site.

"Reading Golf Club is working with Fairfax Acquisitions, of West Sussex, which hopes to build up to 700 homes on the land.

Almost four acres of the site are earmarked for 130 homes in Reading Borough Council's draft local plan."

This unprecedented scale would be around three times the size of the Bugs Bottom development in the 1990s; a development which residents might be aware had also promised facilities, including a new school, which remained unenforced by the council.

RGC had also hoped to expand the site further by building in South Oxfordshire, however have so far been rebuffed by the South Oxfordshire district council.

RGC also claim that the overprovision of golf in the local area has reduced membership, despite being in a unique position within walking distance of two schools and thousands of residents.

There is a case for the golf course to be reduced to a 9-hole course and RGC mentions that;

"Clubs with standalone 18-hole courses and little to no additional facilities are facing the greatest challenges for survival and we are not prepared to let this 109-year-old club be another sad statistic."

But this ignores the ability to build suitable facilities on the existing course while reducing the number of holes.

RGC go on to say

"The bold steps the board and its members have been prepared to take will ensure the legacy of both clubs long into the future. With Caversham Lawn Tennis Club also considering a move on to adjacent land, the prospect of a regionally renowned 'sporting hub' is a real possibility."

There had also been hopes to combine Caversham Lawn tennis club at the Caversham Heath course, however due to facility costs at Caversham Heath this is now in doubt.

KEG issued a strong rebuttal to the RGC proposals and was quoted by all the outlets in response to the announced RGC plans;

"... there was "significant opposition" to the plans, based on "healthcare, often stationary traffic and the resultant pollution, pressure on schools generally and, more specifically, places in first choice schools."

[KEG] says there is significant opposition from hundreds of residents, the MP and local councillors to the building of any housing on RGC land."

We continue to keep on top of developments and welcome input from concerned residents in Emmer Green, Caversham and Reading.

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