

Holmesdale  
The Green  
Oxford.

Nov: 22.

copy

E. D. McDowell Esq.  
33 Seymour Rd  
East Molesey.

Dear Sir

I am very glad you will be able to attend  
the meetings on Monday 26<sup>th</sup>.

The reasons for calling these meetings are as follows:-

1. The remains of the Palace are scheduled by the Office of Works, but this only means that they cannot be pulled down. They may be built round or they may fall down from lack of care. Some months ago the architect for the Society <sup>for the Preservation</sup> of Ancient Buildings, Mr. Weir, made a survey of the ruins and reported that they were in a dangerous condition and that parts were liable to fall in at any time. His estimate for immediate necessary repairs was £200.  
In the first place then we wish to start a fund

for putting in hand these repairs.

2. Four acres round the ruins have been scheduled provisionally by the R.D.C. as a permanent open space, but of course if they decide to acquire this land, compensation must be paid to Mr Collier. This question is now being debated and the R.D.C. are about equally divided <sup>on</sup> ~~as to~~ the question.

We wish by these meetings to arouse interest and enthusiasm and to discuss the future of the place - the planning of a garden, local museum, or recreation ground. We feel that if it were possible to get the National Trust to buy the Ruins & the ground this would be better than for the R.D.C. to do so. But the whole question of future ownership will come up for discussion at the conferences.

3. A resolution dealing with the future of the whole Darent valley and the safeguarding of sufficient open country <sup>in the neighbourhood</sup> is also being dealt with at the Bishop's Conference.

The body responsible for these meetings is the Sevenoaks <sup>District</sup> Community Council.

Yours very truly

V.K. Moore (Mrs H. Moore)  
(Oxford representative on the S. Community Council)

Cop'd

November 22nd 1934

Owen Fleming Esq.  
Toys Hill,  
SEVENOAKS.

Dear Sir,

I am very much obliged by your letter of the 20th inst. I have already heard from Mr. U.K. Moore of Otford with regard to the proposed Meetings, and I enclose a copy of letter sent to him in reply. I have now definitely made arrangements to attend these Meetings, and I am bringing with me my Architect, Mr. David E. Nye, who is working on the restoration of the Farm House, and is a Member of the Society for the Preservation of Ancient Monuments. Possibly you already know this gentleman, as he knows Mr. Powys quite well.

With regard to the land between the remains of the Palace and the Churchyard, this does not belong to me, and the only reason I should wish to purchase same is to give me direct access through the land to the village green. I certainly agree with you that fresh building work on this land should be prevented at all costs. I think any new buildings would completely ruin both the Church and the Palace, so much so that I should imagine the matter could be dealt with under the Town and Country Planning Act, and the land scheduled as a private open space by the Rural District Council. I had heard rumours of its purchase by Mr. Nash, but I was informed that he only intended to use the land and sheds as a storage place for his building material, and was not aware that he proposed to construct new houses.

I am not aware exactly of what is comprised in the parcel of land under discussion. Do you know whether it includes the actual remains of the Palace and the cottages constructed therein, and is the piece of land included which adjoins the village green? If so, this piece of land adjoining the village green could well be purchased by the local Council and thrown into the green as public land; and if the price of the remainder were reasonable, I might be prepared to purchase same and covenant not to erect any fresh buildings thereon, unless same were approved by the Sevenoaks Community Council. If I did this, I should probably convert some of the existing stables, sheds etc. into cottages. At the moment I am not aware of the extent of my liabilities in connection with the restoration of the Farm House, and I do not wish to undertake further commitments.

A further point which rather perturbs me is the question

contd.



22.11.34

of the remains of the external wall on the South side of the Palace, which is being demolished by Mr. Collier during the construction of his new road. I think this is a great pity, as a small deviation of the road would save the wall, and I think steps should be taken to preserve this if at all possible.

Another point is the remains of the stone wall on the South side of the stream, which I believe is the only remaining wall of the first Palace. This wall will be on the land of the new houses now being erected, and I think steps should be taken also to see that the new owners do not destroy this.

My opinion regarding the field comprising the precincts of the Palace is outlined in the letter to Mr. Moore.

You may rest assured that you have my wholehearted support in any effort made to preserve the remains of the Palace and its environs. There is no doubt that the electrification of the railway will cause a lot of building around Otford which no one will be able to prevent, but I suggest that all such buildings could be erected well down the Sevenoaks Road, and so not spoil the Village or the Palace in any way.

I am, dear Sir,  
Yours very truly,

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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*Copy*

MINUTES of the TWENTY-FIFTH Meeting of the Council held in Otford Village Hall at 6.15 p.m. on Monday, 26th November, 1934.

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PRESENT: Messrs Fleming, Hillier, Hugh Knight, Mrs Moore and Mrs Deane Streatfeild.

1. OTFORD PALACE:

RESOLVED that the resolutions submitted to the Conference to be held at 6.30 p.m. under the presidency of the Lord Bishop of Rochester be as follows:-

1. That this Conference, held within the Parish of Otford in the County of Kent on 26th November 1934 records its opinion that the remains of the Archiepiscopal Palace now existing within the said Parish are of great historic value, and that it is in the National Interest that they should be preserved from further decay and handed down to posterity.

2. That, should such a course be found necessary, a Public Appeal be issued forthwith to obtain the sum of £200 estimated by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings to be necessary to secure the remains from the ravages of the weather and that the Society be requested to put the work in hand as soon as a sufficient portion of the £200 has been subscribed, and the necessary procedure has been completed.

3. That the Sevenoaks District Community Council be desired to study the best method by which the buildings and curtilage can be acquired and preserved, and, if possible, vested in the National Trust for Places of Historic interest, and further to examine the possibilities of forming a garden and museum for the use of the public.

4. That the rapid growth of the surroundings of London renders it essential to the Public Health that adequate provision of open space should be retained in Otford, and the surrounding Parishes, for the recreation and rest of the people, and that the Ministry of Health and other Public Authorities be asked to formulate their policy in this respect for the guidance of local action in the Valley of the Darent.

RESOLVED that the appointment of Lt-Col. Sir Francis Young-husband, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E. to be Chairman of the local Conference to be held at 8 o'clock p.m. be approved, and that his Conference be invited to endorse the resolutions adopted by the Bishop of Rochester's Conference and to pass any further resolutions that may be moved in the room



OTFORD CONFERENCE 1934.

First Sitting:

(Held at the Village Hall in the Parish of Otford, in the County of Kent under the Presidency of the Lord Bishop of Rochester on Monday, 26th November 1934, at 6.30 p.m.)

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The Conference RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY to adopt Resolutions Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4 as recorded in the Minutes of 26th November 1934.

MARTIN ROFFEN (Chairman of the Conference)

OWEN FLEMING (Hon. Sec. Sevenoaks District Community Council, Convenors of Conference.)

Nov. 26, 1934.

Second Sitting:

(Held at the Village Hall, Otford, under the Presidency of Lt-Col. Sir Francis E. Younghusband, K.C.S.I., K.C.I.E. on Monday 26th November, 1934 at 8 p.m.)

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The Conference RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That this SECOND SITTING of the OTFORD CONFERENCE do CONCUR UNANIMOUSLY with the four resolutions adopted by the First Sitting. The Conference further resolved:-

5. That the works of repair reported by Sir Charles Peers, F.S.A. to be necessary to secure the buildings from the ravages of the weather be put in hand under the direction of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings as soon as it is found practicable to do so, and that the urgency of the position be laid before His Majesty's First Commissioner of Works.

6. That the Ancient Monuments Board be desired to give very careful consideration to the possibility of scheduling the existing foundations of the building constructed by Archbishop WARHAM, and also those of previous buildings occupied by Archbishops of an earlier date and that the First Commissioner of Works be asked to endeavour to arrange that these historic remains be not damaged until the Board have had a full opportunity of deciding the propriety of scheduling them.

7. That the Conference do welcome the decision of the Rural District Council of Sevenoaks to schedule as a Public Open Space under the Town and Country Planning Act 1932,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land of the Curtilage of the Palace, but they are of opinion that the whole of the curtilage occupied by the foundation of Archbishop Warham's building together with that portion of the curtilage between the old Farm House and the Parish Church, should also be scheduled as a Public Open Space, and that the Rural District Council be asked to amend the scheduling accordingly.

FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND (Chairman of the Conference)

OWEN FLEMING (Hon. Sec. Sevenoaks District Community Council  
Convenors of the Conference).

November 26, 1934.

Notes made at Otford Conference Committee 19.11.34

1. The scheme for building in the sheds, & constructing cottages between the Old Farm House and the Churchyard is not a scheme of Mr. McDowell's, but a separate matter altogether. The proposed purchaser being a Mr. J. H. Nash an Otford builder.

2. The bargain does not seem yet to be completed. The point was raised as to whether this scheme is a good one? It was urged that the Palace Curtilage should properly include this area. Then the whole of the area around Church and Palace would be as in the days of old.

3. Told the Otford Committee that this scheme did come up at the Severnash Committee in Nov. 12, but we all thought it was part of Mr. McDowell's scheme and therefore were reluctant to interfere. But an entirely new scheme does have a different aspect - I promised to ascertain Mr. McDowell's views upon the project?

PD



# SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL.

PLEASE REPLY TO TOYS HILL, SEVENOAKS, KENT.

10th November, 1934.

Dear Sir,

## REMAINS AND CURTILAGE OF ARCHIEPISCOPAL PALACE AT OTFORD.

*Conference on November 25th and 26th, 1934.*

I am desired by this Council to forward to you the enclosed papers relating to the forthcoming Conference at Otford to consider the future of the remains of Otford Palace. The imminent advent of the Electric Railway at Otford emphasizes the need for an early formulation of policy. The historic interview between King Henry VIII and Archbishop Cranmer took place in the year 1537. The 400th Anniversary of this event will occur in 1937, and it is suggested that something practical may possibly be achieved during the intervening period of three years.

The Conference will be presided over by the Bishop of Rochester, who will be the bearer of a message to us from the Archbishop of Canterbury. It will be preceded by a special service in the Parish Church, when Canon Wheatley of Rochester will deliver the address, and succeeded by a Local Conference in Otford Village Hall, at 8.0 p.m., when addresses will be delivered by eminent historians, and a plan of action will be formulated.

As a large attendance is anticipated, arrangements have been made to reserve seats for those able to attend, and I am to ask you if you will be good enough to fill up and return to me the enclosed card **not later than Monday, November 19th**. Seats will then be reserved for your party. Seats will be allotted in strict order of application. **Early Return** is therefore advisable. No other intimation can be made. The seats will be reserved until **5 minutes** before the hours fixed for the opening, except those reserved for London passengers due to arrive at Otford Station by the 5.28 train from Victoria (arr. Otford 6.14). These seats will be kept open until a later hour. The transport service is given below. Cars may be parked behind the BULL INN (6d.)

Faithfully yours,

OWEN FLEMING,  
Honorary Secretary.

### SUNDAY, Nov. 25.

Sevenoaks (M.P.)	Bus	6.2	...	Otford	6.16.
" "	"	6.3	...	"	6.17.
Eynsford	"	5.57	...	"	6.15.

### MONDAY, Nov. 26.

Sevenoaks (M.P.)	Bus	6.2	...	Otford	6.16.
Victoria,	Train	5.28	...	"	6.14.
Sevenoaks (T.H.)	Train	5.53	...	"	6.1.
" (B. & B.)	"	5.56	...	"	6.1.
Malling	"	5.27	...	"	5.50.

*Copied*

December 18th 1934

Dear Mrs. Moore,

I noticed in the paper a few days ago that you had been elected to the Town Planning Committee, and if this is so I should be very glad if you could let me know the date by which the Sevenoaks R.D.C. have to purchase the land they have already scheduled as an open space at the rear of your house.

You will appreciate that if this land is not preserved as an open space, I should probably be obliged to give up the idea of living at the Farm. The only thing for me to do under these circumstances would be to develop the whole of the land in conjunction with Mr. Collier. This would mean, of course, that the Farm House would probably be demolished, and I am afraid that the new houses which would be erected would not add much to the beauty of the surroundings.

I have at the moment given instructions that the alteration work is not to be proceeded with, but should you know that the land referred to above is going to be purchased or preserved in any way, I could get on with the work.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs. U. K. Moore,  
Holmesdale,  
The Green,  
OTFORD.



COW

December 10th 1934

The Editor,  
"Kent Messenger",  
80, Fleet Street,  
E.C.4

Dear Sir,

re OTFORD PALACE.

In your issue of December 8th I notice a letter from Mr. A.O. Wolfe Aylward, stating that in the report of the recent Meeting at Otford Village Hall, no mention was made of St. Thomas's Well. At the Meeting itself, however, the Well was mentioned, but the scheduling of the surrounding land as an open space was not suggested because the Well, the Lake (which is also mentioned in the old records) and the old fifteenth century Farm House are included with the land I have recently purchased, and intend to preserve and use as a private residence.

It transpired at the Meeting that between the Sevenoaks Road and the Farm House are approximately four acres of land which are at present scheduled by the Sevenoaks R.D.C. as an open space, but will not continue to be so scheduled unless the purchase price of approximately £1,350 is paid in 1935. If not paid for, the scheduling will have to be removed, and the present owner (who is a Builder) will then build the usual small houses over the land, which, by the way, actually adjoins the Palace. In this event, the Farm House would not be suitable for a private residence, and I should probably be obliged to develop the seven acres of land comprising the Well, Farm House etc. in conjunction with the other building work on the four acres mentioned above.

Possibly some of your readers will be interested in the foregoing facts, for if they can convince the Sevenoaks R.D.C. of the necessity of paying for the four acres of land they have already scheduled, they will preserve approximately eleven acres of land as an open space, together with St. Thomas's Well and the adjoining Lake.

Yours faithfully,

Copy

December 19th 1934

John Mudd Esq.  
Sevenoaks Rural District Council,  
Inglewood,  
Oak Hill Road,  
SEVENOAKS, Kent.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter of 17th inst., I enclose a plan of the land under discussion, which is coloured as follows:-

Pink: Land owned by me.

Yellow: Land scheduled as an open space by S.R.D.C.(assumed).

Brown: Land owned by Mr.Nash between Church and Palace, which it is suggested should now be scheduled.

Green: Land on which exist remains of Palace walls and foundations, owned by Mr.Collier, which it is suggested should now be scheduled.

Hatched Green: Area of my land on which Palace foundations exist.

Dark Green: Palace remains now existing above ground.

If the land coloured yellow is preserved as an open space (which I understand means purchase by the S.R.D.C.) I propose to preserve my land as a private open space, modernise the Farm House and live in it, but should not agree to my land being scheduled unless compensation were paid in the event of my having to sell the land, and being unable to find a purchaser for same as a private residence, or in the event of my death. If the land coloured yellow is not thus preserved, I should have to make other arrangements and would probably develop the whole of the land in conjunction with Mr.Collier as a building site. By the whole of the land is meant the areas coloured pink and yellow.

If the land coloured brown and green be scheduled and preserved as an open space, in addition to the land coloured yellow (as was suggested at the recent Meeting in Otford), I would agree to that portion of my land hatched green also being scheduled as a private open space without compensation.

contd.



John Mudd Esq.

- 2 -

19.12.34

I should be greatly obliged if you would let me know the Council's intention, particularly with regard to the land already scheduled (coloured yellow), as, pending a decision, I have had to cease work on the Farm House. In any case, would you please let me know the date provided in the Town and Country Planning Act for the purchase of land already scheduled.

I would draw your attention to the fact that if the whole of the coloured area on the plan is maintained as an open space, the new developments will be kept sufficiently clear of the old Village and Palace to preserve the present amenities.

The plan, by the way, is a survey plan made about thirty years ago, and there may be additional buildings existing, not shown thereon. Will you please return the plan when you have finished with same.

Yours faithfully,

C.E.P.

December 28th 1934

Dear Mr. Pym,

I am much obliged by your letter of the 23rd inst.; I have received a communication from the Clerk to the Council, to which I have replied with plan. No doubt this will be brought up at your next Meeting.

You will appreciate that when I purchased Castle Farm and the surrounding land, I was informed that the space between the Farm House and the Sevenoaks Road was scheduled as an open space, but neither my informant nor myself knew that if this land were not paid for, the scheduling would have to be removed.

I will approach a few people I know in Otford, and see what can be done towards stirring up local interest in this matter, but I am afraid the village inhabitants will not realise what Otford will be like with houses built on this land, until the houses are actually built. I am of the opinion that if Otford itself would subscribe a further amount to add to the Council's £750, the National Trust might then be approached to find the remainder.

I am rather at a loss now to understand the position should some private person find the balance of £600, for if such a person should wish to maintain the land as a private open space, the ratepayers would naturally object to even £750 being spent. On the other hand, the donor of the balance of £600 would be equally within his rights in requiring the land kept as a private open space.

I am anxious to find out the date by which the land has to be paid for, for I assume this time is all that will be allowed to find the required money.

Yours very truly,

C.E. Pym Esq.  
Chairman,  
Sevenoaks R.D.C.  
Foxwold,  
B R A S T E D .



copy -

December 28th 1934

Dear Mrs. Moore,

I have heard from the Chairman of the R.D.C. to the effect that the Council have now made a definite offer of £750 for the remains of the Palace and the land between the green, and they expect Otford, through its Parish Council, to find the remaining £600 for the four acres of land between your house and mine. In a way I agree with this view, as I think the people of Otford should show a lot more interest in the matter than they do at present. I think that if a certain amount of money were subscribed, the R.D.C. would then have a very good reason to approach the County Council for a further contribution, and if that did not make up the amount of £1,350, the National Trust could be approached and they might find the balance. I am quite sure the National Trust will do nothing unless the local inhabitants do their utmost first. At the present moment I think you will agree they have done nothing.

I enclose a copy of my reply to Mr. Pym, and should be very glad to hear whether you could do anything to call a Meeting of those interested, with a view to making a contribution towards the preservation of this land.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs. U. K. Moore,  
Holmesdale,  
The Green,  
O T F O R D .

copy for Mr Mc Dowall

HOLMESDALE.

OTFORD.

NE SEVENOAKS.

14th January 1935.

John Mudd, Esq.,  
Clerk to the Sevenoaks Rural District Council,  
"Inglewood",  
Oakhill Road,  
Sevenoaks.

Dear Sir,

Otford Palace.

With reference to the negotiations in progress for the preservation, as an open space, of the land between the Palace ruins and the Sevenoaks Road, you are no doubt aware that this land is bounded on the north by the garden and grounds of my freehold house, having a frontage of about 400 feet on the Sevenoaks road, much of which is suitable for building development. Subject, however, to the land now in question, for which I understand the present owner is willing to accept £600, being finally and legally secured as a permanent open space in private occupation, I am prepared to accept a similar restriction for the land belonging to this house. I would, of course, reserve the right to maintain all existing buildings and to carry out reasonable alterations and additions to this house and its premises.

You will understand that such a restriction will lessen the prospective value of my land very considerably, and this offer must therefore be regarded as a substantial contribution towards the cost of maintaining the land surrounding the Palace ruins as an open space.

I may also point out that the land now going with Castle Farm, together with my own land, largely exceeds in area the land which the Rural District Council are considering purchasing as an open space. If therefore the R.D.C. will secure the ruins, cottages, etc. plus the land between these and the Sevenoaks road the total area secured as open space will far exceed that purchased at public expense. If on the other hand the R.D.C. fails to secure the 3 to 4 acres in question quickly, the whole of the very much larger area is extremely likely to be developed as building estates.



John Mudd, Esq.

For reasons not connected in any way with the Otford Palace question I shall probably offer my house for sale this year. I shall therefore be glad if the permanent preservation, as an open space, of the whole of the land in question, including my own, can be finally established at an early date. If the matter is still undecided when I begin to negotiate for the sale of my property I shall probably have to withdraw the offer made in this letter.

Yours truly,

*(signed) H. Moore*

# Sevenoaks Rural District Council.

JOHN MUDD,  
CLERK.

TEL. N° 890/1, SEVENOAKS.

*Inglewood,  
Oak Hill Road,*

(NEAR TUB'S HILL RAILWAY STATION)

*Sevenoaks, Kent.*

*Copy/*

1/4.

G. 10(c).

11th. January, 1935.

Dear Sir,

re Otford Palace.

I am in receipt of your letter of the 9th. instant.

Both Major Streatfeild and Mr. Knight reported to the Meeting of the Town Planning Sub-Committee held on Wednesday that they had met you on Saturday last with regard to the above.

The position at the moment is, that subject to the approval of the Minister of Health, the Council will purchase the ruins and the cottages and the tongue of land running towards the centre of the Village for the sum of £750. I do not anticipate that the Minister will object to my Council purchasing at this price.

In the Contract for Sale, Mr. Collier will covenant with the Council that the rest of the land shall be purchased by the Council or its nominee, for the sum of £600. This covenant is, of course, necessary, otherwise, if the purchase of the ruins and cottages is completed without any reference to the remaining land, then it is quite possible that the land would not be purchased for £600 in the future.

The Sub-Committee have decided to notify the Sevenoaks Branch of the Kent Council of Social Service and the Sevenoaks Housing and Town Planning Association of these facts, when it is anticipated that those two Associations will endeavour to raise by public subscription this sum of £600, in order to reserve the land as an open space. I cannot, of course, say whether this money will be definitely raised, neither can I commit my Council at the present moment to purchase this site if the public subscription fails. The Members of the Sub-Committee are, however, very hopeful that this money will be forthcoming in the very near future, and the owner, Mr. Collier, has asked that something definite shall be done before the end of August.

I am sure you will appreciate the difficulty in giving you the assurance you require, but I will submit your offer to the next Meeting of the Sub-Committee and write you again. This Committee will not meet before the 30th. instant.

Yours faithfully,

  
Clerk to the Council.

E. D. McDowall, Esq.,  
33, Seymour Road,  
EAST MOLESEY,  
Surrey.



(X) *Copy*

January 9th 1935

John Mudd Esq.  
Sevenoaks Rural District Council,  
"Inglewood",  
Oak Hill Road,  
SEVENOAKS, Kent.

Dear Sir,

re OTFORD PALACE.

I thank you for your letter of 2nd inst., explaining the position with regard to the scheduling of land on the above site.

As you are probably aware, I met Major Streatfield and Mr. Knight at Otford on Saturday last. It appears that it will not be necessary to pay the balance of £600 (assuming the owner accepts the £750 now offered) until such time as he asks for compensation to be paid ~~for the scheduling to be~~

It is fairly certain that he will not do this until such time as he has developed the remainder of the land, which will take him, I should imagine, about three years. Obviously I cannot wait this length of time to make a decision regarding the modernization of Castle Farm.

I consider that the balance of land for which £600 will have to be paid (about 3½ acres) is worth as agricultural land - which it would be if scheduled as a permanent open space - about £100; but considering that this adjoins my land, I confirm the offer made to Major Streatfield and Mr. Knight, that I am willing to pay £200 for this land and agree to its being scheduled as a permanent private open space without compensation.

The only condition I would make is that I should be allowed, if I wished, to build a lodge on the Sevenoaks Road near the end of the drive.

This means, in effect, that I would be willing to purchase the land for £600, if the Council would guarantee to compensate me to the extent of £400 by virtue of my agreeing to its being an open space. In view of this offer, would it be possible for me to have the Council's assurance that, whether this offer be accepted or not, the land would be preserved as an open space, for if I could have this assurance I would proceed forthwith with the modernization of the Farm House.

I would remark that, considering that the loan charges on the £750 offered already would be met by the rent of the cottages,

John Mudd Esq.

- 2 -

9.1.35

the loan charges on the balance of £400 (even if the whole of this amount had to be found by the Council) would only amount to about £16 per annum; thus the charge upon the rates would be so small as to be almost negligible.

I am not anxious by any means to purchase this land, but I feel that an offer of this description might enable the Council to give me the assurance asked for above, should all other methods of raising the £600 fail. In my opinion, the Parish of Otford would never subscribe anything like this figure, or even such sum as would be worth consideration.

Yours faithfully,



ENCL:

# Sevenoaks Rural District Council.

JOHN MUDD,  
CLERK.

TEL. N<sup>o</sup> 890/1, SEVENOAKS.

*Inglewood,  
Oak Hill Road,*

(NEAR TUB'S HILL RAILWAY STATION)

*Sevenoaks, Kent.*

2nd. January, 1935.

1/7.

Dear Sir,

Adverting to your letter of the 19th. ultimo, I send you the present position of the areas coloured on your Map.

The area coloured yellow, with the exception of that part in which I have written in pencil the word "Collier", is, including the three Cottages and Palace ruins, the area which it is suggested should be reserved as an Open Space. My Council have had some difficulty in proceeding at the present time with the purchase of the whole of the area marked yellow, but have definitely decided, subject to acceptance by the owner and the approval of the Minister of Health, to purchase the three Cottages and the Palace ruins and the area of land leading towards the Village coloured yellow and hatched by me in pencil. The price offered the owner for these Cottages and land is £750, but it is being made clear to the owner that this price is a portion of the purchase price for the whole area for which he requires £1350. In other words, if the Council are successful in purchasing these Cottages and land for £750, it will be necessary to find only £600 for the purchase of the remaining land.

The area coloured brown has been the subject of a proposal for development by Mr. Nash. The proposals were referred back by the Committee for amendment and further details, but no amended Scheme has been submitted to the Council, so that at the moment there is nothing definite before them with a view to development. The scheduling of this area by the Council would, of course, depend on whether it was possible for sufficient funds to be obtained to purchase it.

The same remarks apply to the area coloured green, in so far as the financial side is concerned.

My Council would, I am sure, be only too happy to schedule this extended area, but I think there would be difficulty in persuading the Members, particularly those who live at some distance from the site, to contribute towards the purchase of this land as an Open Space.

I sincerely hope that something definite will be evolved in the very near future with regard to the preservation of the 4½ acres, at least, as an Open Space.

I have written a long letter to Mr. Owen Fleming on this matter and he may have some suggestions to make.

There is no necessity for the Council to purchase any land scheduled as an Open Space until after the Council's Scheme has been finally approved. When this approval has been given, the owner has then a limited time in which to make a claim for compensation, or within which the Council must purchase.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'J. H. M.', written over a horizontal line.

Clerk to the Council.

E.D. McDowall, Esq.,  
33, Seymour Road,  
EAST MOLESEY,  
Surrey.



## SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL.

PLEASE REPLY TO TOYS HILL, SEVENOAKS, KENT.6 FEB. 1935

193

Dear Mr. McDowall,

OTFORD

I will bring your letter of 5.2.35 before the Committee on Monday. My own view is that there should be a Committee of Management consisting

- 7
- (a) One member appointed by signatories of appeal.
  - (b) do. do. Rural District Council.
  - (c) do. do. Owner of Otford Castle Farm
  - (d) do. do. Owner of Holmerdale
  - (e) do either co-opted by four members as above or appointed by the National Trust (?)

Could you let me have a line as to this? It is important to get a good "basis" as soon as we can.

Sincerely yr.

Owen Henning

E.D. McDowall

C470

February 5th 1935

Dear Mr. Fleming,

I am much obliged by your letter of 2nd inst. enclosing Minutes of the Council Meeting at Otford, together with draft of the appeal which you propose making. This appears to be in order so far as I can ascertain, but without the plan which is mentioned I do not quite know what is proposed regarding the adjoining land. The position, however, is quite clear in my mind, and is as follows:-

The R.D.C. have definitely offered £750 for the remains of the Palace and a small piece of land between the Palace and the village green, which offer I believe has been accepted, and the Conveyance is in course of preparation. This leaves approximately  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land, bounded by the Palace to the North, Castle Farm to the East, Mr. Collier's new building land and my drive to the South, and the Sevenoaks Road to the West.

I understand the money required to purchase this land is £600. I also believe it has been stated that the Council's offer of £750 is made contingent on its being taken as a part payment towards the whole of the land, but in view of the fact that two Conveyances are being made I am of the opinion that this is not correct, and that it is now possible, if the £600 is not found, for the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres mentioned above to be de-scheduled, in which case Mr. Collier would either build over it or sell it to his best advantage.

I am not anxious that this land should be used as a public playground, and I have therefore offered the Council £200 for the land, and would agree to covenant for it to be maintained as an open space in perpetuity. This would mean that £400 only would have to be found, but the land would not be public property. If this offer is accepted, Mrs. Moore of Holmesdale, whose land adjoins this  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres, would also agree to her land being scheduled as a private open space, but I believe she would not agree to its being so scheduled if the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land becomes public property. However, if this  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres of land is maintained as an open space, either public or private, I intend to modernise Castle Farm House, and maintain approximately 7 acres of land as a private open space for my use; but if the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  acres is not kept open, I am afraid I shall have no alternative but to develop my land as building estate in conjunction with Mr. Collier.

In the event of my living at Castle Farm I should not agree to the land being scheduled as an open space,

contd.



although I should have no intentions of building on same, my reason for this being that when I purchased the land I was informed that the R.D.C. had scheduled the land as an open space, and it was on this assumption that I proposed to preserve my land. However, I have made an offer to the Council that I would agree to such of my land as contains Palace remains being scheduled as a private open space without compensation, if they on their part would schedule more land as an open space, viz. that portion which lies between the Palace and the Church (which has now been purchased by Mr. Nash), and the portion to the South of the stream upon which exists the Southern external wall of the Palace. This is the land mentioned in your Minutes of the Second Meeting held at Otford.

I trust this explanation makes the position quite clear, but if I can give you any further information I shall be only too pleased to do so. Meanwhile, I await any further comments you may have to make.

Yours faithfully,

# Sevenoaks Rural District Council.

JOHN MUDD,  
CLERK.

TEL. NO 890/1 SEVENOAKS.

*Inglewood,  
Oak Hill Road.*

(NEAR TUB'S HILL RAILWAY STATION)

*Sevenoaks, Kent.*

8th. March, 1935.

1/7.

Dear Mr. McDowell,

Otford Palace.

I reported to the Town Planning Committee at their Meeting yesterday the conversation which we had at Otford last Tuesday. The Committee has decided to report the facts to the Council at their Meeting to be held on the 21st. instant, after which I will write you again.

May I have your agreement that the present position, so far as you are concerned, is as follows:-

- (i) if the four acres south of the Palace ruins are purchased either by my Council, the Sevenoaks District Community Council, or by any other person, or persons, for use exclusively as a public open space, then you will only agree to the reservation of your land as a private open space during your life time;
- (ii) that you are prepared to purchase these four acres for the sum of £600, providing the Council will pay to you the sum of £400 in consideration of which you will agree that the land you own at present and these four acres shall be scheduled as a private open space in perpetuity without further claim for compensation of any description.

Yours faithfully,

E.D. McDowell, Esq.,  
34, Seymour Road,  
EAST MOSELEY, Surrey.

*[Signature]*  
Clerk to the Council.



March 8th 1935

John Mudd Esq.  
Sevenoaks Rural District Council,  
Inglewood,  
Oak Hill Road,  
SEVENOAKS. Kent.

Copy

Dear Sir,

re OTFORD PALACE.

You will no doubt remember that at our meeting on the site on Tuesday last, you expressed surprise when I informed you that I had no intention of allowing my land to be scheduled permanently as a private open space. I remarked at the time that I thought there was no room for misunderstanding in view of the letters I had written, and I find on referring to the copies of correspondence, that I wrote you personally on December 19th, in reply to a letter of yours asking whether I was prepared to have my land scheduled, in which I stated quite definitely that I should not agree to such scheduling. I enclose a copy of this letter with the part referred to underlined in red.

You also stated that Mr. Fleming was under the impression that I would agree to my land being scheduled, and I therefore enclose a copy of a letter I wrote him on February 5th, which I think should have removed any doubt from his mind on this point. I have marked the appropriate passage also in red.

I trust these two letters make my views on the matter quite clear without further comment.

A brief summary of the position is as follows:-

- (1) If the R.D.C. fulfils its undertaking to maintain the 4 acres of land adjacent to the Palace as a public open space, the position remains as I found it when I purchased approximately 7 acres of land surrounding Castle Farm at building land price, with the intention of maintaining same as an open space during such time as I should live at the Farm.
- (2) I am not anxious that this land should become a public open space, and I therefore confirm my previous offer that I will pay £200 towards the cost of compensating the present owner, if the land is made a private open space and the freehold transferred to me. I appreciate that there may be some difficulty in this, and I will therefore extend this offer to payment of the same amount for a 999 years lease.
- (3) Referring to your suggestion that I should agree to my land being

contd.

John Mudd Esq.

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8.3.35

scheduled as a private open space, I might be prepared further to consider this if the 4 acres of land under discussion were transferred to me free of charge. I would remark that this, in effect, would mean that the Council would be obtaining 11 acres of good building land as a private open space at a total compensation price of £600. A fair compensation price for this amount of land would, in my opinion, be about £2,000.

Yours faithfully,



OTFORD PALACE ESTATE.

Notes of a Conference held at Inglewood,  
Oak Hill Road, Sevenoaks, on Thursday,  
21st. March, 1935, at 2.30 o'clock p.m.

PRESENT.

Sevenoaks Rural District Council.

Mr. H. D. Knight, Major C. E. Pym,  
Major G. E. S. Streatfeild, Mr. John Mudd (Clerk).

Sevenoaks District Community Council.

Mr. Owen Fleming.

Sevenoaks Housing and Town Planning Association.

Dr. Gordon Ward.

Mrs. V. K. Moore, Mr. E. D. McDowall,  
and Capt. A. B. W. Thomas (representing Mr. W.B. Collier).

(9)

Chairman.

Major C. E. Pym in the Chair.

2. Otford Palace Estate.

The Chairman outlined the position of this matter, and intimated that Mr. McDowall would agree to the zoning of his land as a private open space during his life-time if the Council would acquire the site (4 acres - part of Ord. No.104) fronting upon the main road, and zone it as a public open space: alternatively, he would be prepared to consider the zoning of his land as a private open space in perpetuity if the Council would purchase this site for the sum of £600 and convey the freehold to him.

Captain Thomas intimated that the footpath across this site for a distance of 120 feet from the main road belonged to Mr. Collier, over which Mr. McDowall had a right-of-way. The remainder of the footpath had been purchased by Mr. McDowall.

The Chairman added that the Council were now purchasing from Mr. Collier the palace ruins, three cottages, and the land fronting upon the Green, for the sum of £750, to, inter alia, preserve the view of the palace ruins from the Green.



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Major G. E. S. Streatfeild, Mr. John Mudd (Clerk).

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Sevenoaks District Community Council.

Mr. Owen Fleming.

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Dr. Gordon Ward.

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The Chairman added that the Council were now purchasing from Mr. Collier the palace ruins, three cottages, and the land fronting upon the Green, for the sum of £750, to, inter alia, preserve the view of the palace ruins from the Green.



Mr. Owen Fleming, at the invitation of the Chairman, outlined the position in so far as it concerned the District Community Council, and the National Trust.

He intimated that the National Trust had two types of open spaces, firstly those in respect of which no charge was made for admission, and secondly those in respect of which such a charge was made, to view some specific object or objects of archaeological interest. The usual charge, he said, was sixpence per head, the income thus derived being applied to the repair and maintenance of the site.

The National Trust, he added, heard of the Conference held at Otford to consider the possible acquisition of the site and the preservation of the ruins of the Archbishop's Palace, and had signified their readiness to assume its guardianship. They had informed Mr. Fleming that a lady was prepared to spend £100 or more towards the preservation of such a site, and asked to be furnished with further details.

Mr. Fleming added that the Archbishop of Canterbury, who was interested in the matter, wished as much as possible of the old palace ruins to be preserved.

The Archbishop had asked that the ruins situated on the land to the south of the 4 acres (Ord. No.174) should also be preserved.

Mr. Fleming said that Mr. Ormsby-Gore, First Commissioner of Works, had intimated that the Office of Works were unable to take over the site, and that it should be preserved by the Council under the Town Planning Scheme.

Major Pym, in reply to Mr. Fleming, intimated that the Council had never contemplated the acquisition of the land to the south of the 4 acres, but had concentrated upon the site between the road and Mr. McDowall's land.

Mr. Fleming intimated that if this was the case he must again refer the matter to the Archbishop and the National Trust.

General discussion then ensued, and Mr. McDowall then confirmed his offer with regard to the zoning of his land, as mentioned by the Chairman in his opening remarks.

Mr. Fleming said he would arrange to inspect the site with Mr. Collier, and to reconsider the question of the preservation of the foundations, particularly those on the land to the south of the 4 acres.

Mr. McDowall then made an offer in the following terms:-

that if the Council would purchase the site between the main road and his land (4 acres - part of Ord.No.104) and rent it to him for a period of five years, he would be prepared to pay to them an annual rental equivalent to the amount of loan charges for that period, and that at the expiration thereof the question of the disposal of the site be considered.

Mr. Owen Fleming asked whether there would be any objection to commencing the repairs to the palace ruins on the site now being purchased by the Council. Mr. Mudd said that the Contract had not been signed, but Capt. Thomas undertook to ask Mr. Collier



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whether he would agree to the repairs being commenced before the contract was signed, and would let Mr. Fleming know.

Mrs. Moore said that she would agree to her land being zoned as a private open space only so long as the 4 acres referred to remained an open space, either public or private.

The Conference adjourned at 4 p.m.

copy

March 27th 1935

John Mudd Esq.  
Sevenoaks Rural District Council,  
Inglewood,  
Oak Hill Road,  
SEVENOAKS, Kent.

Dear Sir,

re OTFORD PALACE.

I thank you for your letter of the 23rd inst. enclosing notes of the conference held at Inglewood on the 21st inst.

The terms of my offer as stated therein are substantially correct, but, of course, this offer is conditional on the land being maintained after the expiration of the five years as a permanent open space, either public or private, and I should require your Council to sign an agreement to this effect.

Also, the amount of the loan charges would be limited to £25.

Although I do not think it is of any importance, I would mention that the statement made by Captain Thomas that the entrance to the Farm from the main road belonged to Mr. Collier for 120 feet is incorrect. The fact is that the whole of this belongs to me, and the tenants of Mr. Collier's shops on the main road have a right of way over my drive for 120 feet.

In my last letter to you dated 8th March regarding this matter, clause No. 3 mentioned that I would be prepared to consider the scheduling of my land as a permanent open space if the freehold of the 4 acres in question were transferred to me. Since that letter I have gone very carefully into this matter, and have taken advice about it, and my final considered decision is that the permanent scheduling of my land would make my property of value only as a private residence, which value would be very small so long as my land is traversed by two public footpaths. I am, therefore, prepared to agree to the whole of the land at present owned by me being scheduled as a permanent private open space provided your Council will

- (1) divert the footpath which runs from the Churchyard in a south-easterly direction across my land so that this path runs on the northern boundary of my land
- (2) close up entirely the footpath which runs from the Churchyard due south, passing close to my house, for the distance for which this path crosses my land. I would point out that

contd.



John Mudd Esq.

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at the moment this path does not appear to serve any useful purpose. I believe at one time it was used as a means of access to a railway station which is no longer in existence. Also, when the new road which is in course of construction by Mr. Collier reaches the point at which this path emerges from my boundary, the remainder of the path across my land would not be necessary at all.

- (3) transfer to me the freehold of the 4 acres of land, as mentioned above.

Yours faithfully,