

Decision time over land sale

THE future of land at Matley Lane known as Waldorf Fields is hanging in the balance as Tameside Council studies a report into the impact of its sale.

Economic Services Cabinet Deputy Councillor Kieran Quinn and Estates Manager Paul Brown Tameside met a delegation from the Waldorf Protection Group (WPG).

The group are opposing the sale of a 5.7-acre parcel of the 10.4 acre piece of land to Dukinfield Golf Club.

In a proposed land swap, the golf club is offering 2.63 acres of its own land, leaving a net loss to the community of three acres of land.

However, the group maintains

BY NIGEL PIVARO

that the land donated by Waldorf Mills in 1973 to the people of Hyde for its use for leisure purposes, is protected under a covenant that is not subject to negotiation.

Now the group is considering applying for the land to be registered as a village green that will further protect it from sale.

A spokesperson for WPG David Shoemith said: "We have shown the council the strength of opposition to the sale and put forward a letter outlining what we intend to do.

"Firstly, we intend to protect the status quo and we will try to register the land as a village green.

"We have written formally to the council asking them to withdraw it from sale and to the golf club informing them about our applica-

tion to register for village green status.

"Our issue is with the council, not with the golf club. As far as we are concerned the issue is between the people and the council.

"The council is trying to do something that they should not. The Waldorf Protection Group is not in any position to compromise."

If the council does decide not to proceed with the sale, the golf club will face a serious blow to its development plans.

The club needs the land to restructure its course after selling some of its own land for housing.

Club treasurer Geoff Priestly said: "We are losing four holes due to the sale of land to developers adjacent to Yew Tree Road.

"Taking the holes away from Yew Tree Road reduces the risk of

stray golf balls going off course.

"Acquiring the land at Matley will enable us to maintain the course and also drain the public land.

"If we do not get the land at Matley, it will make it difficult to service and drain the land and our golfers will not be able to access the rest of the course when they reach the twelfth hole.

"They would have to either double back or follow Matley Road on to Early Bank Road to get back to play the next hole."

Mr Priestly added: "There would be no loss of public rights of way if the land came into golf club ownership."

A spokesperson for Kieran Quinn's office said: "A report is being prepared and a decision is expected to be made within the next four to six weeks."