



COMMONS REGISTRATION ACT 1965

Reference No. 29/U/41

In the Matter of The Recreation Ground,
Woodcote, Oxfordshire.

DECISION

This reference relates to the question of the ownership of land known as The Recreation Ground, Woodcote, being the land comprised in the Land Section of Register Unit No. V.G.8 in the Register of Town or Village Greens maintained by the Oxfordshire County Council of which no person is registered under section 4 of the Commons Registration Act 1965 as the owner.

Following upon the public notice of this reference the Woodcote Parish Council claimed to be the freehold owner of the land in question and the Charity Commissioners claimed to have information as to its ownership.

I held a hearing for the purpose of inquiring into the question of the ownership of the land at Oxford on 21st November 1973.

At the hearing the Woodcote Parish Council was represented by Miss J. Goodway, its Clerk. In addition, the Charity Commissioners filed an affidavit by Mr. R.N. Platt, one of their officers.

By the Inclosure Award for the parish of Southstoke with the hamlet of Woodcote made 28th June 1853 under the Acts for the Inclosure, Exchange, and Improvement of Lands, parcel of land numbered 140 containing 3a. 1r. 10p. was allotted to the Churchwardens and Overseers of Southstoke on trust as a place of exercise and recreation for the inhabitants of the parish and neighbourhood. This parcel of land, which is named "Fair Place" on the map referred to in the award, was bounded on its southern and eastern sides by an L-shaped parcel of land numbered 142, which was allotted to the Churchwardens and Overseers without any specific purpose being stated. At the north end of, but surrounded by parcel 143 there was an area of 6 perches, which was set out and appointed as a public pond and watering place. This pond is not indicated on the modern Ordnance Survey map and it does appear to be necessary to consider it separately. Parcel 143 was bounded on its southern and eastern sides by a parcel of land numbered 146, which was allotted to the Churchwardens and Overseers to be held as an allotment for the labouring poor of the parish.

It appears from the minute book of the South Stoke cum Woodcote Parish Council that in 1949 the land which had been parcel 143 in the Inclosure Award was being used for allotments and was with the consents of the Minister of Health and the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries appropriated for the purpose of enlarging the recreation ground.

By the County of Oxford (Alteration of Rural Parishes) Confirmation Order 1952 the parish of South Stoke cum Woodcote was divided into the present two parishes of South Stoke and Woodcote.



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Finally by a letter dated 27th November 1966 to the Clerk of the Woodcote Parish Council the Minister of Land and Natural Resources, after consultation with the Minister of Housing and Local Government, gave consent under ~~section~~ section 22(1)(b) of the Land Settlement (Facilities) Act 1919 and section 9 of the Allotments Act 1925 for the appropriation of approximately 2 acres of allotments land shown on a plan annexed to the letter. This land formed part of what had been parcel 146 in the Inclosure Award.

The land the subject of this reference consists of parcels 140 and 143 and the portion of parcel 146 which was the subject of the 1966 consent.

For these reasons I am satisfied that the Woodcote Parish Council is the owner of the land, and I shall accordingly direct the Oxfordshire County Council, as registration authority, to register the Parish Council as the owner of the land under section 8(2) of the Act of 1965.

I am required by regulation 30(1) of the Commons Commissioners Regulations 1971 to explain that a person aggrieved by this decision as being erroneous in point of law may, within 6 weeks from the date on which notice of the decision is sent to him, require me to state a case for the decision of the High Court.

Dated this 21st day of December 1973

Chief Commons Commissioner