

**Transcript of an article which appeared on page 3 of the
Staffordshire Advertiser on 15 January 1927**

STAFFORD TOWN COUNCIL

PURCHASE OF LAND FROM LORD STAFFORD

Alderman Young (Chairman) stated that the committee had certain schemes in hand for which the site was suitable, and one of these was a parking place for motor cars, to relieve the congestion in the main street and the Market Square. If the Council did not purchase the land they would have to erect a fence at a cost of £200. He regarded it as a good opportunity to purchase a piece of land of this size so near the centre of the town.

Alderman Miller declared that he could not see to what useful purpose the land could be put to justify the price of 5s per square yard. It was not required as a parking space because there was already accommodation for over 100 cars in the town, and not more than 50% was utilised. It could never be utilised for building purposes, except for storage and to place a public Smithfield there, near the junction of four main roads would be extremely bad for traffic.

Councillor Merrey moved the reference back to the recommendation, remarking that the price asked was too much, having regard to the fact that probably another £1800 would have to be spent to convert it into a parking place. The approach road was only 15 feet wide, and the entrance was in close proximity to narrowest part of the town. To place a Smithfield on the site would be absurd. Alderman Bedford seconded the amendment, expressing the opinion that the price ought to be half-a-crown per square yard.

Alderman Dunn agreed that the price was a little high, but said the land could not be bought cheaper. The canal basin would in the course of time have to be filled in, whether the council purchased the land or not. He maintained that, if the site were used as a parking place it could be made a perpetual source of income and it would pay the Corporation to employ a man to collect the charges and look after the place.

Alderman Bostock said it was a useful piece of land and near the centre of the town, but it was by no means front land and the Corporation had sufficient undeveloped parkland without buying this site. It could be distinctly undesirable to place a Smithfield there, and personally he considered the price asked was too high.

Councillor Thompson, supporting the recommendation, said that on the question of providing a Smithfield farmers who brought cattle or sheep for sale into Stafford were entitled to as much consideration as those who drove Rolls Royce motor-cars through the town.

Alderman Read suggested that what was now a 'black spot' could be beautified by improving the land and making it a river promenade. He urged the Council to look ahead in these matters.

Alderman Young stated that another offer had been made for the site, and it would be a great pity if the Corporation lost the opportunity of securing it.

The amendment was lost and the recommendation adopted.

The Estates and Works Committee recommended "that the canal basin and site thereof, together with a piece of land adjoining the said basin, and extending from the rear of Mr Burgess's premises in Bridge Street, to a point about 250 feet east of the White Bridge and containing about 7000 square yards, including a right of access thereto, be purchased from Lord Stafford for the sum of £1800, the Corporation to pay a sum not exceeding £100 in respect of Lord Stafford's legal and other costs in this matter.

Transcribed: David Jones 2015.

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William Salt Library Visit: 28 March 2012
