

Report of: Land and Property
Report to: Director of City Development
Date: October 2018
Subject: Land at Oldfield Lane, Wortley

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	Farnley and Wortley	
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:	10.4.3	
Appendix number:	1	

Summary of main issues

1. Parcel of vacant land on Oldfield Lane extending 4.91 acres, part in Council ownership (1.1 acres), part in Private ownership (3.09 acres), which together had a former use as sports pitches, but has since been allocated for housing within the Site Allocation Plan (SAP).
2. The Private land owner is the Leeds Schools Sports Association (LSSA). The LSSA intend to dispose of their asset to raise funds to continue their operations to provide sporting activities throughout Leeds.
3. The Council Housing Growth Programme has identified the Oldfield Lane site as being suitable for delivering a new build social housing scheme.
4. Officers have provisionally agreed heads of terms with the LSSA for the acquisition of the privately owned element of the site. This report recommends that the terms of the acquisition are approved, and that the Council acquires the land for the development of council housing.

Recommendations

5. This report recommends that the Director of City Development approves the acquisition

of land at Oldfield Lane for Resources and Housing Directorate in order to advance a new build council housing scheme on the site.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend that the terms of the acquisition be approved, and to request approval to acquire the land for the development of council housing.

2 Background information

- 2.1 The LSSA holds the freehold title of the subject site. The site was formerly used as sports pitches and operated by the land owner. The site has stood vacant for over 13 years.
- 2.2 The adjacent Council owned land is leased to the land owner for the provision of sports pitches and the two land holdings were used in conjunction with one another. The Lease is to be surrendered.
- 2.3 The LSSA are a registered charity with the objective of providing sporting activities throughout Leeds at School and Representative level. It is their intention to sell their interest in the subject site and use the receipt to invest in the future charitable functions of the association.
- 2.4 The Unitary Development Plan allocates the land as N6 Green Space. The revised submission draft of the SAP however allocates the site as a phase 1 Housing Allocation (HG2-84) for 61 units. The SAP is now at such an advanced stage that the material weight attached outweighs the N6 status.
- 2.5 There has been a longstanding relationship between the LSSA and the Council regarding the use of the subject site, and the Council has worked closely with them with both the regeneration of the site, and the provision of alternative facilities.
- 2.6 A report will be taken to Executive Board in November 2018 providing an update on the Council Housing New Build Programme which will set out proposals for the delivery of new social housing across the city. The programme includes the use of 7 sites for the delivery of general housing, 6 of which are within Council ownership, and the seventh being the Oldfield Lane site. The Council owned element of the site will be incorporated into the wider site development. This element represents approx. 26% of the total site.
- 2.7 The Council delivers new council homes through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), the overall level of investment being governed and capped by the application of a limit on financial headroom within the HRA. MHCLG announced a bidding round in July 2018 for temporary additional HRA headroom over the next 3 years to enable Councils to build more affordable, mixed tenure and social rented homes. The Council Housing New Build Programme submitted a series of bids, including one for this site. However the acquisition of the subject site is not conditional upon the Homes England HRA Headroom Bid and costs can be met via existing HRA funds. As such it is proposed that the land be purchased in advance of the outcome of the bid.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Heads of Terms have been provisionally agreed with the LSSA for the Council's acquisition of the subject site. The terms are subject to the approval of the Director of City Development.
- 3.2 With regard to site capacity and housing requirements, officers from Planning (including the Environment and Design Group) and Highways (including the Site Development Group) have been involved in the development of site options for the scheme. The capacity study has been designed in accordance with Neighbourhoods for Living and Street Design Guide best practice.
- 3.3 The capacity study has identified that the site can deliver 50 new homes, comprising of a mixture of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom homes in line with the requirements of Housing Leeds. At this density, the scheme can deliver a policy compliant level of Public Open Space and meet the site requirements of the SAP allocation.
- 3.4 The site will be paid for via the HRA account. Further details are contained within the Confidential Appendix.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 Ward Members for the Farnley and Wortley Ward were briefed in meetings held on 20th and 25th September 2018 attended by Regeneration and Land & Property Officers.
- 4.1.2 Councillors David and Ann Blackburn have objected to both the SAP allocation for Housing and the principle of development on the site. Further details are contained within the confidential appendix.
- 4.1.3 Councillor Matthew Gibson is aware of the need for housing, and the regeneration of the site. He is supportive of the proposal outlined by the council. Further details are contained within the confidential appendix.
- 4.1.4 Housing Growth Executive Members (Housing & Regeneration) have been engaged in the development of these proposals and are fully supportive.
- 4.1.5 Elected Members Development Group have also been briefed and are supportive.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 There are none.

4.3 Council Policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The delivery of affordable housing underpins the Council's ambition for Leeds as a Strong Economy and a Compassionate City.
- 4.3.2 The Best Council Plan includes targets around increasing the number of new affordable homes and supporting sustainable growth. The proposed schemes will contribute to:
 - ensuring everyone in Leeds lived in good quality, affordable homes within clean and well cared for places.
 - provision of housing of the right quality, type, tenure and affordability in the right places.

- ensuring the right housing options are available to support older and vulnerable residents to remain active and independent; and
- tackling fuel poverty.

4.3.3 In aspiring to be the 'Best city in the UK', the Core Strategy also takes forward the spatial and land use aspects of the Vision for Leeds, City Priority Plans and the Best Council Plan (in particular, Objective 2: to 'Promote sustainable and inclusive economic growth').

4.4 Resources and Value for Money

4.4.1 Moving forward, delivery of the proposed housing development at Oldfield Lane will be led by the Director of Resources and Housing, with support from a multi-disciplinary cross directorate team which includes officers from City Development, Procurement, and Resources and Housing.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 Under Part 3, Section 3E(g) of the Council's Constitution (Officer Delegation Scheme (Executive Functions)) the Director of City Development has authority to discharge any function of the Executive in relation to Asset Management.

4.5.2 The Chief Officer - Asset Management and Regeneration, Head of Asset Management and Head of Land and Property have authority to take decisions in relation to Asset Management as delegated in the Director of City Development's sub delegation scheme.

4.5.3 The proposal constitutes a key decision and is therefore subject to call in.

4.5.4 The Head of Land and Property confirms that in his opinion the terms offered to the Council represent a fair market value for the property.

4.5.5 The information contained in the Appendix attached to this report relates to the financial or business affairs of a particular person, and of the Council. This information is not publicly available from the statutory registers of information kept in respect of certain companies and charities. It is considered that since this information was obtained through one to one negotiations for the acquisition of the land then it is not in the public interest to disclose this information at this point in time. Also it is considered that the release of such information would or would be likely to prejudice the Council's commercial interests in relation to other similar transactions in that prospective sellers of other similar properties would have access to information about the nature and level of consideration which may prove acceptable to the Council. It is considered that whilst there may be a public interest in disclosure, much of this information will be publicly available from the Land Registry following completion of this transaction and consequently the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing this information at this point in time. It is therefore considered that this element of the report should be treated as exempt under Rule 10.4.3 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 This section is contained within the Confidential Appendix.

5 Recommendations

5.1 This report recommends that the Director of City Development approves the acquisition of land at Oldfield Lane for Resources and Housing Directorate in order to advance a new build council housing scheme on the site. The terms of the acquisition are detailed within the Confidential Appendix.

6 Background documents¹

6.1 There are none.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.