

Report of Land and Property

Report to Director of City Development

Date: 1 May 2020

Subject: Throstle Recreation Ground, Throstle Road, Middleton, LS10 4ET

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s): Middleton Park	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: 10.4(3) Appendix number: 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Summary

1. Main issues

- Throstle Recreation Ground is a large area of open space in Middleton, which is owned partly by Leeds City Council and partly by Wades Charity. Part of the land is allocated in the Site Allocations Plan for housing and part as greenspace.
- It is proposed to build new a Council-owned 60 unit extra care facility, 98 general needs council houses and 16 working adult council bungalows on some of the land. As part of the proposed scheme, there will be an improved greenspace that will act as a focal point.
- In order to deliver an improved greenspace that sits more centrally within the scheme, it is necessary to agree terms for the land exchange between the Council and Wades Charity. The detailed terms for the proposed land exchange are set out in the confidential appendix of this report.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- The proposal will help meet a number of Best City Priorities, including Housing and Health & Wellbeing. The proposal will help in providing housing of the right quality, type, tenure and affordability in the right places, as well as delivering the right housing options to support older and vulnerable residents to remain active and independent. In relation to Health & Wellbeing, the provision of an enhanced

greenspace is hoped will lead to its greater use and thereby supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles.

3. Resource Implications

- The costs associated with the proposed land exchange are detailed in the confidential appendix of this report.
- In June 2019, Executive Board approved the proposed investment required to deliver c174 additional new build council houses, which included the general needs properties and working age adult bungalows to be delivered on the two sites in Middleton. This was in addition to Executive Board approval in July 2017 of a £30m investment in the delivery of council owned Extra Care Housing which included the Extra Care element of this scheme.

Recommendations

- a) It is recommended that Council approval is given to the terms of a land exchange between the Council and Wades Charity for land at Throstle Recreation Ground, Middleton, in order to facilitate the development of new council housing, an extra care scheme and an improved area of greenspace.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to the terms of a land exchange between Leeds City Council and Wades Charity for land at Throstle Recreation Ground, Middleton, in order to facilitate the development of new council housing, an extra care scheme and an improved area of greenspace.

2. Background information

- 2.1 Throstle Recreation Ground is a large area of open space in Middleton, which is owned partly by Leeds City Council and partly by Wades Charity. That part of the site which is owned by Wades Charity is held and managed by the Council on a long lease for the purpose of open space.
- 2.2 The attached Site Ownerships plan shows the land affected by this proposal with the Council-owned land shown hatched (areas labelled A, B, C & F), with Wades' land shown dot hatched (areas labelled D & E). Further information in relation to each area is set out below:
 - a) Area A is believed to have been previously occupied by Council housing until the 1990s when the properties were demolished. The site is presently laid to grass and allocated in the Site Allocations Plan (SAP) for housing.
 - b) Area B was previously occupied by the former Middleton Skills Centre, which has recently been demolished following its closure. The site is unallocated in the SAP.
 - c) Areas C & D were previously occupied by Council housing until the 1990s when the properties were demolished. The site is presently laid to grass and allocated in the Site Allocations Plan (SAP) for housing.

- d) Areas E & F formed the extent of the original open space, until the property clearance of areas C and D provided a temporary larger space. This area is allocated as greenspace in the SAP.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 It is now proposed to build new a Council-owned 60 unit extra care facility, 98 general needs council houses and 16 working adult council bungalows. As part of the proposed scheme, there will be an improved greenspace that will act as a focal point. An illustrative masterplan for the scheme is attached.
- 3.2 The proposed development will require planning permission, which shall consider the reordering of the location of the greenspace allocation. It is understood that planners are supportive of the proposal to relocate the greenspace, on the basis that the total provision will not be adversely affected and it shall provide a more appealing space.
- 3.3 In order to deliver an improved greenspace, which sits more centrally within the scheme, it is necessary to agree terms for the land exchange between the Council and Wades Charity. In terms of the extent of respective land ownership, the existing and proposed land areas will be broadly the same, so neither party will be significantly advantaged or disadvantaged. The detailed terms for the proposed land exchange are set out in the confidential appendix of this report.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 Ward Members have been regularly consulted about this proposal and are supportive. The most recent meeting took place on 9th January 2020, to provide an update following the issue of the Feasibility Study.
- 4.1.2 Pre-planning public consultations will be held prior to the planning submission to enable the Middleton community to express their views on the proposals. This will cover both the development of the housing and the green space improvements to Throstle Recreation Ground.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 There are no specific issues arising from the proposal made in this report.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The proposal outlined in this report will help meet a number of Best City Priorities, including Housing and Health & Wellbeing. In terms of the Housing priority, the proposal will help in providing housing of the right quality, type, tenure and affordability in the right places, as well as delivering the right housing options to support older and vulnerable residents to remain active and independent. In relation to Health & Wellbeing, the provision of an enhanced greenspace is hoped will lead to its greater use and thereby supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles.

Climate Emergency

4.3.2 The construction of the new housing will comply with all current legislation relating to provision of energy efficient housing. The current greenspace comprises a large area of grassed treeless space, but the new greenspace will see the introduction of trees and potentially ponds which should help reduce carbon dioxide pollution and promote more wildlife.

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

4.4.1 The costs associated with the proposed land exchange are detailed in the confidential appendix of this report.

4.4.2 In June 2019, Executive Board approved the proposed investment required to deliver c174 additional new build council houses, which included the general needs properties and working age adult bungalows to be delivered on the two sites in Middleton. This was in addition to Executive Board approval in July 2017 of a £30m investment in the delivery of council owned Extra Care Housing which included the Extra Care element of this scheme.

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, Head of Land and Property and Deputy 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 Significant Operational Decision and is therefore not 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 the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (or under the Housing Act 1985).

4.6 Risk management

4.6.1 There is a risk that Wades Charity could withdraw from the proposal, but this is unlikely given that the proposal set out in this report was passed by their trustees in April 2020.

5. Conclusions

5.1 It is concluded that approval be given to the terms of the proposed land exchange between the Council and Wades Charity for land at Throstle Recreation Ground, Middleton.

6. Recommendations

6.1 It is recommended that Council approval is given to the terms of a land exchange between the Council and Wades Charity for land at Throstle Recreation Ground, Middleton, in order to facilitate the development of new council housing, an extra care scheme and an improved area of greenspace.

7. Background documents¹

7.1 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.