



## Report of Land and Property

### Report to Chief Officer Asset Management and Regeneration

Date: May 2021

Subject: Park Lees, St Anthony's Road, Beeston, LS11 8DP

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s): Beeston	<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: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

## Summary

### 1. Main issues

- The property comprises of vacant cleared site measuring 0.51 hectares (1.2 ac).
- The Council has no further requirement for the site, so it is now proposed to dispose of the site on the open market by way of auction.

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

- The disposal of the site will result in a capital receipt to the Council that will contribute to the Best Council Plan by supporting communities and promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

### 3. Resource Implications

- The site is surplus to the Council's requirements and no operational reason has been identified to justify its retention. In these circumstances, its disposal represents prudent and economic assets management, obviating any holding costs associated with managing the property and therefore supports the best value objective of the Council.

## **Recommendations**

- a) It is recommended that approval be given to the sale of land at Park Lees on the open market by way of auction, with the reserve to be set by the Head of Asset Management.

### **1. Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to the sale of land at Park Lees on the open market by way of auction.

### **2. Background information**

- 2.1 The property comprises of a vacant cleared site measuring 0.51 hectares (1.2 ac). The site is allocated for housing in the Site Allocations Plan.
- 2.2 The site was previously the location of Park Lees Home for Older People building, however this was demolished in autumn 2011. The site is level and laid to grass and has remained vacant ever since.
- 2.3 Approval was given to dispose of the site at Executive Board on the 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

### **3. Main issues**

- 3.1 The Council has no suitable use for the land and it is therefore proposed to sell it on the open market by way of auction.

### **4. Corporate considerations**

#### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 Ward Members were consulted on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2020, regarding the proposal detailed in this report. Councillor Andrew Scopes responded raising concerns regarding a reserve price and the current planning position on the land. It was confirmed that an appropriate reserve price would be set for the site and that any development on the site would require planning permission.
- 4.1.2 Ward Members have since been provided with an update 19<sup>th</sup> March 2021 to advise that the property was now to be marketed, subject to this report being approved. Councillor Angela Gabriel raised concerns regarding the protection of the trees onsite. It was confirmed that the trees would be considered as part of the planning process, as planning permission would be required before the commencement of any development.
- 4.1.3 Notification has been given to the public on 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> April on the proposed disposal of Public Open Space and no comments on the disposal were received.

#### **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- 4.2.1 Marketing details will be made available in different languages, Braille etc, if requested. There are no other equality and diversity, cohesion or integration implications arising from this proposal.

### **4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan**

- 4.3.1 The disposal of the site will result in a capital receipt to the Council that will contribute to the Best Council Plan by supporting communities and promoting sustainable and inclusive economic growth.

#### Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 Any development proposal will be subject to planning permission and building control regulations, which would consider the impact this site will have on the climate.

### **4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money**

- 4.4.1 The site is surplus to the Council's requirements and no operational reason has been identified to justify its retention. In these circumstances, its disposal represents prudent and economic assets management, obviating any holding costs associated with managing the property and therefore supports the best value objective of the Council.
- 4.4.2 The reserve will be set ahead of the auction by the Head of Asset Management which is in accordance with the Director's Sub-Delegation 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 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 Deputy Head of Land and Property confirms that the proposed method of disposal set out above is the method most likely to result in the Council achieving 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 The risk associated with the proposed disposal and consider below:
- a) If the site is not sold, the maintenance responsibility will remain with the Council.
  - b) There is a risk that the site may not sell. This is unlikely given the buoyant housing market and demand for land in Leeds.
- 4.6.2 Options relating to the proposed disposal and are considered below:
- a) **Option1: Not to sell the site.** This is not recommended as there is no operational reason to justify its retention.
  - b) **Option 2: To sell the site on the open market by way of offers.** This is a possible option, but this method can take many months to conclude, particularly

if parties need to secure funding and/or a planning permission, and does not offer the same level of certainty that the sale will complete or necessarily realise a higher receipt than auction.

- c) **Option 3: To sell the site by public auction.** This is the recommended option, particularly as it enables a swift sale with the successful bidder required to exchange contracts on the day of the auction and complete the transaction four weeks later.

## **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1 It is concluded that approval be given to the sale of land at Park Lees on the open market by way of auction.

## **6. Recommendations**

- 6.1 It is recommended that approval be given to the sale of land at Park Lees on the open market by way of auction, with the reserve to be set by the Head of Asset Management.

## **7. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> 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.