

**25 April 2016****Agenda Item: 6a****REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORT &  
PROPERTY****LAND AT WILFORD LANE, WEST BRIDGFORD (THE FORMER  
“WILFORD LANE COMPLEX”)****Purpose of the Report**

1. To advise members of the outcome of a three stage marketing exercise for the sale of land at Wilford Lane, West Bridgford.
2. To seek approval for 2 Ha (4.94 acres) of the former Wilford Lane Complex to be retained by the County Council for the possible future provision of a primary school.
3. To seek approval for the disposal of 7.41 Ha (18.31 acres) of the former Wilford Lane Complex.
4. To seek approval for the selection of a preferred developer for the 7.41 Ha site in accordance with the matters as contained within the exempt appendix.
5. To seek approval to the proposed sale terms for the disposal of the 7.41 Ha site to the preferred developer as detailed in the exempt appendix.

**Information and Advice**

6. Some information relating to this report is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Having regard to the circumstances, on balance the public interest in disclosing the information does not outweigh the reason for exemption because divulging the information would significantly damage the Council's commercial position. The exempt information is set out in the exempt appendix.

**Education Advice**

7. The Strategic Place Planning and School Administration (SPPSA) advise that pupil places in the West Bridgford area have been at a premium for several years and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future. All primary schools have been expanded to their respective capacities, including Heymann Primary School which was recently expanded to become a 630-place school. In spite of this several schools are heavily over-subscribed.
8. Additional land will be required to further increase primary school capacity, but there are no sites immediately available in a suitable location. County Council-owned land

at Adbolton Lane has been considered as having potential for a school site but it is not in a location which would support a new school, as it is too far from the main catchment/population areas.

9. Part of the County Council-owned Wilford Lane Complex site has been identified as a suitable location on which to build a new school to support the provision of needed places in West Bridgford, together with the numbers arising from the proposed housing development on that site.
10. Securing a 2 Ha (4.94 acres) site out of the Wilford Lane Complex site will “future proof” the County Council if additional primary school accommodation for the town of West Bridgford becomes an absolute necessity.

### **Land and Property Advice**

11. The site known as the former Wilford Lane Complex is located in West Bridgford. The Nottingham Express Transit (NET) has a tram stop on Wilford Lane, within immediate proximity of the site.
12. The total land area of the site comprises approximately 9.41 hectares (23.25 acres).
  - a. It is proposed to dispose of an area for residential development totalling 7.41 Ha (18.31 acres), shown cross hatched, and
  - b. Retain an area of 2 Ha (4.94 acres) for the construction of a primary school at some time in the future.

These areas are shown on the attached Plan. The site is currently heavily contaminated.

13. In the event that this potential need for a primary school in the West Bridgford area does not arise, or if this requirement can be accommodated elsewhere, then the County Council will have a 2 Ha (4.94 acres) site, which will have been fully remediated and have the benefit of all services and which could then be sold for development.
14. The former Wilford Lane Complex land has been subject to landfilling in prior years, principally with Pulverised Fuel Ash (PFA), but also other waste materials. The site was operated as a District Landfill prior to 1974 and is believed to contain 50% inert and 50% putrescible waste. The site is believed to have accepted PFA from the nearby Clifton Power Station. That site was closed in the late 1970's.
15. The County Council inherited the closed site in the early 1980s. The site was not an engineered landfill, however, and had not been capped on closure. In consequence, the County Council undertook remedial works to partially restore the site. This partial remediation merely consisted of capping the site with clays and clayey soils before the site was seeded and planted. Site specific screening values were developed, which confirmed widespread contamination should the site ever be utilised for either residential or a school use.
16. It is for this reason that the value of the Wilford Lane site is significantly reduced to reflect the significant remediation costs required and the consequent significant

extension of any development programme. The remediation will take a number of forms:-

- a. Removal of hot spot contamination.
  - b. Installation of gas venting trenches and ground improvement techniques.
  - c. The foundation design of the housing will also require attention - either piled foundations or a beam and block slab, both with passive gas venting facility.
17. The site also has the development constraint of surface water drainage issues. The present arrangement is that the clay topped PFA tends to hold water, which can be observed under heavy rain conditions. Part of the site is located in the River Trent Flood Zone 3.
  18. The site does benefit from the flood protection afforded by the River Trent embankment scheme. However when the River Trent is in spate, the opportunity to discharge to the Trent is greatly reduced and, with part of the site in Flood Zone 3, a robust and integrated surface water attenuation scheme will be required for the proposed residential land to be sold site and for the land to be retained for the proposed primary school.
  19. In comparison with a "greenfield site" of a similar developable site area, it is therefore expected that the value of all the land at the former Wilford Lane Complex is reduced by virtue of the site constraints identified above. It is estimated that the remediation and flood alleviation costs could be in the region of £1million plus.
  20. The County Council have previously used this land for sports grounds and pavilion and it is understood that the land was also used for a small landscaping depot. The County Council also own a large area of land to the west of Greythorn Dyke, which is located on the western boundary of the Wilford Lane and which is currently used as a recreation area. The County Council will continue to monitor this land, which was previously used for gravel/ chalk extraction.
  21. An outline planning application for development of the land for housing was submitted by the County Council in 2007. Rushcliffe Borough Council (RBC) resolved to grant a planning consent however no final agreement was reached with RBC regarding the necessary Section 106 Agreement. It is proposed that this application is withdrawn, to be followed by the submission of a new planning application.
  22. In accordance with the requirements of Section 123 Local Government Act 1972 a Public Notice was placed for two consecutive weeks in the Nottingham Evening Post, specifying that it was the intention of the County Council to dispose of the land at former Wilford Lane Complex. No objections to the proposed disposal have been received.
  23. As part of the overall transaction for the disposal of the residential development site, it is proposed that any purchaser will be required to remediate the 2 Ha site to be retained by the County Council for future development of the primary school and to provide access and services to serve the retained land, within a period of 2 years from commencement of the remediation of the residential development site.

24. The site has been extensively marketed by the County Council's appointed joint agents. A wide range of offers has been received for the property both on a gross and net basis. All of the offers received were subject to a satisfactory planning consent being obtained.
25. The marketing of the site was undertaken by informal tender, in three stages. First stage offers were invited for the whole site i.e. 9.41 Ha. Second stage offers were invited on a "net of costs" basis, with the prospective purchasers being required to identify/estimate the cost for remediation and planning. Third stage offers were invited on the basis that 2 Ha (4.94 acres) would be retained by the County Council, for the possible future construction of a primary school. At each stage of the informal tender process, the offers received have been subject to "due diligence" scrutiny by the County's joint agents. A summary of all the offers received is included as part of the exempt appendix.
26. It is proposed that the Council enters a contract, conditional on planning, with the recommended preferred developer. It is proposed that the contract will provide for the County Council to approve the purchaser's planning application before this is submitted to RBC. The contract will be conditional upon the purchaser receiving a satisfactory planning consent for residential development.
27. The contract will also require the purchaser to remediate the whole of the Wilford Lane Complex site, including the 2 Ha (4.94 acres) to be retained by the County Council. The Purchaser will provide access and all services to enable the construction of a primary school within a period of 2 years from commencement of the site remediation.
28. A summary of the proposed contract commercial terms is contained in the exempt appendix.

### **Other Options Considered**

29. Apart from the County Council retaining part of the land for the future construction of Primary School, it is confirmed that the Council have no operational requirement for this land and it has been declared surplus and can be sold.
30. An alternative to disposal would be the letting of the property however for various commercial reasons this is not a viable alternative.
31. Alternative sale options have been considered and reflect the various offers received. More detailed commentary on these alternative sale options are contained in the exempt appendix.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

32. To enable the Council to enter a sale contract conditional on planning.
33. To generate a capital receipt.

34. To ensure that the site for the proposed Primary School is remediated by the adjoining developer, to a suitable specification to allow development as a primary school or for future disposal.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

35. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) That Committee note the outcome of a three stage marketing exercise for the sale of land at Wilford Lane, West Bridgford.
- 2) That approval be given to the retention of 2 Ha (4.94 acres) of the former Wilford Lane Complex for possible future provision of a primary school.
- 3) That approval be given to the disposal of 7.41 Ha (18.31 acres) of the former Wilford Lane Complex.
- 4) That approval be given to the selection of a preferred developer for the 7.41 Ha site, in accordance with the matters contained within the exempt appendix.
- 5) That approval be given to the proposed sale terms for the disposal of the 7.41 Ha site to the preferred developer, as detailed in the exempt appendix.

**Jas Hundal**

**Service Director – Environment, Transport & Property**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact: Oliver Dyke 07525 699698**

## **Constitutional Comments (CEH 23.03.16)**

36. The recommendations fall within the remit of the Finance and Property Committee. When disposing of its land the Council is required to obtain the best price reasonably obtainable on the open market and Committee should satisfy itself of this.

## **Financial Comments (GB 23.03.16)**

37. The financial implications are set out in the report.

## **Background Papers and Published Documents**

38. None.

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

39. Ward(s): West Bridgford West  
Member(s): Councillor Gordon Wheeler

File ref.: /OD/SB/00212

SP: 2858

Properties affected: 00212 - Wilford Complex