

**OVER – LAND DISPOSAL**

*To:* **Cabinet**

*Date:* **31st January 2012**

*From:* **Local Government Shared Services - Director of Finance**

*Electoral division(s):* **Willingham**

*Forward Plan ref:* **20/12/10** *Key decision:* **Yes**

*Purpose:* **To seek Cabinet approval to dispose of land in the Council's ownership near to the junction of Willingham Road and Mill Road, Over.**

*Recommendation:* **To delegate to the Local Government Shared Services Director of Finance in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources and Performance the authority to agree terms for an Option agreement to a developer in order to facilitate one or more disposal transactions in respect of land in the Council's ownership near to the junction of Willingham Road and Mill Road, Over.**

<b>Officer contact:</b>		<b>Member contact</b>	
Name:	David Nuttycombe	Name:	Councillor Steve Count
Post:	Head of Strategy and Estates	Portfolio:	Resources and Performance
Email:	<a href="mailto:david.nuttycombe@cambridgeshire.gov.uk">david.nuttycombe@cambridgeshire.gov.uk</a>	Email:	<a href="mailto:Steve.count@cambridgeshire.gov.uk">Steve.count@cambridgeshire.gov.uk</a>
Tel:	01223 699081	Tel:	07989 032456

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The County Council owns two areas of land on the east and west sides of Mill Road, Over. Area 1 to the west extends to 1.59 hectares (ha) and is currently farmed. The land was acquired in 1963 as part of a much larger County Farms Estate acquisition and this particular detached parcel was, in the mid 1980's, proposed to be developed with a new primary school. However, section 106 monies were subsequently secured enabling Over Primary School to be extended on its existing site. That scheme has been implemented.
- 1.2 Area 2 (2.17ha) is bare land in agricultural use and lies on the east side of Mill Road as does Area 3, an old orchard extending to 1.55ha and Area 4 again bare agricultural land extending to 25.67ha. All four parcels comprise part of the same 1963 County Farms Estate acquisition.
- 1.3 Market testing has established that there is considerable developer interest in taking an Option in respect of Area 1. An Option is an Agreement whereby a developer agrees to promote a site via a planning application or through a Local Plan and in return for the work the developer is given the right to acquire the site at open market value less costs and an agreed discount to reflect their reward for risk. One prospective developer has put forward imaginative proposals to bring forward Areas 1 and 2 and is keen to promote the land through the emerging South Cambridgeshire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and /or Local Plan or directly via an early planning application. This application process would give the local community the opportunity to consider the merits of the proposals which could include open space, allotments and a community orchard. It is for this reason that authority is sought for the disposal of the combined area of 3.76ha.

## **2. MAIN ISSUES**

- 2.1 The putting together of a planning application or promotion of land through the SHLAA /Local Plan process is expensive and may take several months / years. The County Council could promote this site itself but does not have the resources to take forward all those sites that have development potential.
- 2.2 An alternative approach would be to dispose of an Option to a private developer who will promote the land at their risk. The Council would secure a modest upfront capital payment and the potential for a future capital receipt.
- 2.3 The most up-to-date pupil forecasts for Over Primary School based on child health register data received from the National Health Service (NHS) indicate that apart from one year (2012/13), the number of children born in the school's catchment area who might require Reception places at the school is less than the school's intake or Published Admission Number (PAN) of 40. The forecasts are attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.4 If the County Council should need to identify land from its own portfolio for a further primary school site in Over at some point in the future arising from population growth a site could be identified within the retained County Farms

land shown coloured blue (Area 4) on the electronic copy of the plan and the larger shaded area on the agenda version which extends to 25.67ha. Independent specialist highways advice has confirmed the land retained could be provided with a satisfactory access for school use.

- 2.5 The Executive Director of Children and Young People's Services has been consulted and is supportive of the disposal.

### **3. ALIGNMENT WITH PRIORITIES AND WAYS OF WORKING**

#### **3.1 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people when they need it most**

There are no significant implications for this priority.

#### **3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives in their communities**

There are no significant implications for this priority.

#### **3.3 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all**

Granting an Option to a developer creates the scope for stimulating the local economy via the use of consultants, architects and planners and if successful the construction sector. It will also provide the appropriate level of affordable housing and potentially other benefits for the community.

#### **3.4 Ways of Working**

There are no significant implications for this priority.

### **4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS**

#### **4.1 Resource and Performance Implications**

There is the prospect of a significant capital receipt which can be used to fund investment elsewhere on the Council's portfolio or repay debt.

#### **4.2 Statutory, Risk and Legal Implications**

There are no significant implications for any of the prompt questions within this category.

#### **4.3 Equality and Diversity Implications**

There are no significant implications for any of the prompt questions within this category.

#### **4.4 Engagement and Consultation**

The local member Cllr Shona Johnstone has been consulted and she is happy for the proposals to be tested via the due planning process. The proposals for this land being brought forward by the developer will be the

subject of public consultation through the planning process and this will include pre application discussions.

Source Documents	Location
<i>Location</i> Plan	<b><i>My cambridgeshire website-</i></b> <a href="http://my.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/myCambridgeshire.aspx">http://my.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/myCambridgeshire.aspx</a> 1) Select My Maps, 2) enter post code CB24 5PY 3) on side panel Map Categories tick CCC Assets <i>The map will then highlight CCC land at the junction of Mill Road/Willingham Road.</i>