

Cabinet Meeting		Agenda Item: 12
Meeting Date	25 September 2019	
Report Title	Landholdings Review - Sale of Land at Queenborough	
Cabinet Member	Cllr Monique Bonney, Cabinet Member for Economy and Property	
SMT Lead	Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer	
Head of Service	Anne Adams, Head of Property Services	
Lead Officer	Kent Parker, Estates Surveyor	
Key Decision	Yes	
Classification	Open with restricted appendix	
Forward Plan	Reference number:	
Recommendations	<p>1. That Cabinet agrees to dispose of the freehold of the site by auction with outline planning permission at the reserve price agreed with the auctioneers set out in Appendix II.</p> <p>2. That the Head of Property Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Economy and Property be authorised to finalise the terms and the Head of Legal Services be authorised to complete the necessary legal formalities in due course.</p>	

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 As part of the Council's landholdings review work the site in Queenborough was considered in terms of its development potential. The objectives being to release sites for development where this is considered appropriate and generate capital receipts for the Council.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to obtain approval for the freehold sale by auction of the Council owned plot in North Road (as shown on the attached plan Appendix I) as a potential building plot.
- 1.3 The site was held as a potential future development plot and is currently let to Queenborough Rowing Club for boat storage. It has now been agreed to relocate the rowing club to an alternative larger site to the rear of the Queenborough Guildhall. As part of the Landholdings Review the site is considered to have development potential and disposal by auction is recommended.

2 Background

- 2.1 The site was held by the Council as a potential infill building plot. The site has been occupied under a licence agreement by the Queenborough Rowing Club for boat storage since 1997. The club are now looking for a larger site and have identified the land to the rear of Queenborough Guildhall as a suitable alternative site which would give them potential to develop and increase their membership.
- 2.2 Both these sites were considered as part of the Council's recent landholdings review and were considered to have development potential. Pre application advice has been obtained for each site. The site currently occupied by the rowing club is, however, considered to be a community facility and under the Local Plan policy planning permission for development for housing would only be granted if the community use was relocated to an alternative site or it was no longer viable.
- 2.3 Planning permission has been granted for a pair of semi-detached houses on the adjoining site and the owner of this site has approached the Council wishing to purchase the plot and made previous offers. This had not been pursued as the site was occupied by the rowing club.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 Pre application advice indicates that the site has potential for a pair of semi-detached houses similar to the permission granted on the adjoining site. Subject to the rowing club relocating to the alternative site, it is proposed that the site be sold by auction in order to obtain the best consideration. It is not considered that a sale to the adjoining owner would generate additional marriage value as the number of units on a combined site is likely to be the same.
- 3.2 Disposal of the site with outline planning consent for development of a pair of semi-detached houses could potentially enhance the value but would result in increased costs and delay. There is also a risk of refusal which would have a significant impact on its attractiveness to developers and a subsequent negative impact on value. The proposed guide and reserve prices discussed with the auctioneers are set out in the attached Appendix II.
- 3.3 It is proposed that the site is sold by auction. This method of sale will ensure that the disposal will be for the best consideration reasonably obtainable and complies with the Council's statutory obligations.
- 3.4 The site would not be sold until the rowing club has relocated to the alternative site.
- 3.5 Given that this plot could be suitable for self or custom build housing, subject to an appropriate planning permission being granted, consideration could also be

given to alerting entrants on the Council's Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Register as to the means and timing of disposal.

- 3.6 It is proposed that the capital receipt is to be earmarked for provision of social housing.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 Do nothing i.e. site either remain vacant or let for alternative storage: This is not recommended as it would be a missed opportunity and not achieve any capital receipt
- 4.2 Sell by private treaty: This is not recommended as it is not as transparent and not as likely to achieve the best price.
- 4.3 Offer to the adjoining owners: This is not recommended as it is not considered that this would achieve a higher price than a sale by auction.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Consultations have been carried out with Planning through the pre-application advice, the Asset Management Group, Ward Councillors and the Town Council who support the proposal.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The proposal contributes to Delivering regeneration by helping to deliver small scale regeneration and additional housing. It also contributes to Delivering the Council of tomorrow by disposal of underused land for a capital receipt which strengthens our financial resilience.
Financial, Resource and Property	The consideration to be paid for the site will be the best consideration reasonable obtainable. The proposal will also remove the Council's liability for managing and maintaining the site in the future.
Legal and Statutory	The Council has power under section 123(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 to dispose of land and property in any manner that it wishes. The proposed disposal must be for the best

	consideration reasonably obtainable in accordance with section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 or meet the requirements of Circular 06/03: Local Government Act 1972 General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 - disposal of land for less than the best consideration that can be reasonably obtained failing which, the Secretary of State's consent would be required.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environmental Sustainability	None identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	The provision of new housing will benefit the health and wellbeing of the residents
Risk Management and Health and Safety	In the event that an application were made for outline planning consent prior to disposal, there is a risk that this could be refused which would have a significant impact on the property's attractiveness to developers and a negative impact on value.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Site Plan
- Appendix II: (Restricted): – Details of guide and reserve prices

8 Background Papers

None