

REPORT TITLE: Disposal of Land at North West Cheltenham

Cabinet Date	22nd November 2023
Cabinet Member	Lynden Stowe Deputy Leader & Cabinet Member - Finance and Change
Key Decision	Yes
Purpose of Report	To seek Cabinet approval to enter into a contract for the disposal of County Council land at North West Cheltenham within the parameters set out in Exempt Appendix A.
Recommendations	<p>The Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approves entering into a contract for the disposal of County Council land at North West Cheltenham within the parameters set out in Exempt Appendix A. • delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Asset Management and Property Services to conclude negotiations and enter into a contract for the disposal of County Council land at North West Cheltenham within the parameters set out in Exempt Appendix A, in consultation with the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Resources and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change.
Reasons for Recommendations	<p>Approval of the recommendation will enable Officers to achieve best value for the Council in the disposal of this land, contributing towards capital receipts targets.</p> <p>The land holding at North West Cheltenham was originally declared surplus and a disposal strategy agreed by Cabinet in 2013, most recently confirmed in March 2023 and has been identified for disposal as part of the Rural Strategic Estate Plan 2016 - 2030.</p> <p>The Council has reviewed the disposal options for this land holding in accordance with the agreed strategy and Officers are now recommending a disposal to achieve best value for the Council.</p>
Resource Implications	<u>Refer to Exempt Appendix A for the resource implications</u>

	<p>Not for publication by virtue of Reg 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 and Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.</p> <p>Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information).</p>
Background Documents	<p>Cabinet decision 29/03/2023 Schedule of Proposed Disposals March 2023</p> <p>Gloucestershire County Council's Policy for the Disposal of Property December 2012</p> <p>Rural Strategic Estate Plan 2016 – 2030 rural-estate-strategic-estate-plan-2016-2030.pdf (gloucestershire.gov.uk)</p>
Statutory Authority	<p>Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972</p> <p>Localism Act 2011</p>
Divisional Councillor(s)	<p>Cllr Paul McLain – Highnam</p> <p>Cllr Bernard Fisher – St Paul's and Swindon</p>
Officer	<p>Name: Neil Corbett</p> <p>Tel. no: 01452 328813</p> <p>Email: neil.corbett@gloucestershire.gov.uk</p>
Timeline	<p>It is anticipated the Elms Park urban extension planning application that includes GCC land at North West Cheltenham will be determined by Tewkesbury/Cheltenham Councils by the end of 2023.</p> <p>The Elms Park development is likely to take over 10 years to complete.</p>

Background

1. Asset Management and Property Services (AMPS) are undertaking a disposal programme by seeking capital receipts to assist the funding of the capital programme.
2. The disposal programme has been developed across the organisation, led by AMPS in consultation with Property Board, challenging the use of property across the Council to ensure the property portfolio is being used effectively to meet its future needs. Property and land are recommended to Cabinet to be declared surplus prior to disposal to contribute to the funding of the capital programme.

3. Council land at North West Cheltenham (“the Land”) was originally declared surplus and a disposal strategy agreed by Cabinet in 2013, most recently confirmed in March 2023 and has been identified for disposal as part of the approved Rural Strategic Estate Plan. The Council has been reviewing the disposal options associated with the Land in accordance with the agreed strategy.
4. The Land forms part of a mixed urban extension allocated in the Joint Core Strategy, which is currently the subject of a planning application - Elms Park - for up to 4115 new homes, 24ha of employment uses, hotel and mixed-use centres, transport hub, schools and green infrastructure.
5. Specialist property consultants and lawyers are advising the Council on the disposal options to maximise the value of this asset and on the terms of a disposal contract.

Options

6. Refer to Exempt Appendix A for the disposal options.

Risks

7. Refer to Exempt Appendix A for risks assessment.

Financial implications

8. Refer to Exempt Appendix A from financial implications.

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Climate change implications

9. The planning application for the mixed-use development of the whole of the Elms Park site proposes:
 - a) Over 113Ha of the site to be retained and enhanced as Green Infrastructure (GI) connecting to the wider countryside and GI network.
 - b) Enhancement or creation of new orchards, hedgerows, woodland, meadows, and wetlands which seek to increase the biodiversity at the site.
 - c) Avoidance of development in the floodplain and no increase to flood risk elsewhere.

- d) Extensive use of SUDS throughout development.
- e) Energy Efficient buildings throughout in accordance with the Building Regulations.
- f) Sustainable Transport measures including on-site Transport Hub with fast bus service to Cheltenham town centre and main employment areas, improved bus services, enhancements to off-site bus, pedestrian, and cycle routes, together with a rolling Travel Plan to inform future residents and occupiers.
- g) Construction Environmental Management Plan, Site Waste Management Plan and Soil Management Plan to avoid pollution or nuisance, protect on-site resources and enhance resource efficiency.

Ecological implications

Has an Ecological Impact Assessment (EclA) been produced, or will one be undertaken at a later stage? No

10. Ecological implications of the proposed development will be addressed through the planning application process.

Equality implications

Has an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) been completed?

11. No

Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) implications

12. A DPIA checklist has been completed and concluded no actions are required.

Social value implications

13. The planning application for the mixed-use development proposes:

- a) High Quality Masterplan and controlling Parameters to set the Framework for detailed designs to be brought forward.
- b) Provision of a range of house types to attract residents from across the community.
- c) Up to 35% Affordable Housing comprising a mix of tenures and housing types. Care Village for retirement living.
- d) Two Primary Schools incorporating Early Years provision, and a Secondary School.
- e) A new Healthcare centre.
- f) Sports Hub including new formal sports pitches on site for use by residents and wider community.
- g) Large areas of informal open space connected by walking, cycling, fitness and wildlife trails extending out into the surrounding countryside and communities.

h) Community facilities accommodating a broad range of related services.

Consultation feedback

14. None to date.

Officer recommendations

15. That Cabinet:

- approves entering into a contract for the disposal of County Council land at North West Cheltenham within the parameters set out in Exempt Appendix A.
- delegates authority to the Assistant Director of Asset Management and Property Services to conclude negotiations and enter into a contract for the disposal of County Council land at North West Cheltenham within the parameters set out in Exempt Appendix A, in consultation with the Interim Executive Director of Corporate Resources and the Cabinet Member for Finance and Change.

Performance management/follow-up

16. This project will be managed and kept under review by the Assistant Director for Management and Property Services.