

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Cabinet

Date of Meeting:	12 th November 2013
Report of:	Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity
Subject/Title:	Disposal of Land at Remenham, Chapel Lane, Wilmslow (Forward Plan Ref. CE 13/14-59)
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Don Stockton, Housing, Planning, Economic Development and Regeneration

1.0 Report Summary

- 10.1 The Council has a robust strategy in place to deliver positive, targeted and sustainable development to benefit all the people of Cheshire East. It will deliver 27,000 new houses, 20,000 new jobs, and the infrastructure needed for this to happen, and will continue to support Cheshire East's position both as the economic powerhouse of the North West, and as a beautiful and prosperous place to live.
- 10.2 As part of this approach, the Council is determined to use its asset base to assist housing supply and create jobs. The new East Cheshire Engine of the North development company will be the primary vehicle in this. This report seeks approval for the disposal of the Remenham site in Wilmslow to generate a capital receipt and for housing supply, led by Engine of the North.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Council-owned land at Remenham, Chapel Lane, Wilmslow be disposed of on terms and conditions to be determined by the Director of Economic Growth and Prosperity and Interim Head of Legal Services.
- 2.2 That if the officers conclude that any land within the property is open space, the Council's intention to dispose of that land be advertised and the Portfolio Holder for Prosperity and Economic Growth be authorised to consider any objections received.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The property has been declared surplus by the former service occupiers.
- 3.2 The Council has a responsibility and a commitment to using its asset base proactively to facilitate economic growth and housing supply.

4.0 Wards Affected

Wilmslow West and Chorley

5.0 Local Ward Members

Cllr Gary Barton, Cllr Wesley Fitzgerald

6.0 Policy Implications

6.1 The disposal of surplus properties is consistent with the Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan and Corporate Service Plan and will produce capital receipts.

6.2 This disposal will enable the Council to use its land and property assets to deliver new homes.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 Disposal of the property will save on holding costs in the revenue account and generate a capital receipt for the Council.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides that a local authority may dispose of land subject to its obtaining the best consideration that can reasonably be obtained.

8.2 In transferring assets, the Council must behave prudently to fulfil its fiduciary duty.

8.3 Section 123 of the Local Government Act also requires the advertisement of any open land before its disposal and consideration of any objections received following such advertisement.

8.4 If the property is sold the Council will need to arrange for the revocation of the off-street parking places order in relation to the Remenham car park.

9.0 Risk Management

9.1 It is important that there is certainty about the development outcome at the Remenham site. The potential for land banking by a developer will be minimised by allowing the Council to reacquire the site if development does not commence within a certain timeframe. There will be a condition to ensure this in the agreement between the Council and the purchaser.

9.2 A leading residential property agent, Colliers International, has been appointed to work with East Cheshire Engine of the North to advise the

Council and market the site through open market informal tendering. The marketing exercise and the subsequent disposal will include two specific provisions on (a) Developer Obligations - requiring the development to be undertaken and (b) Overage provision - to protect the interests of the council should the site be sold on and/or the viability improves significantly.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 The Council has a robust strategy in place to deliver positive, targeted and sustainable development to benefit all the people of Cheshire East. It will deliver 27,000 new houses, 20,000 new jobs, and the infrastructure needed for this to happen, and will continue to support Cheshire East's position both as the economic powerhouse of the North West, and as a beautiful and prosperous place to live.
- 10.2 As part of this approach, the Council is determined to use its asset base to assist housing supply and create jobs. The new East Cheshire Engine of the North development company will be the primary vehicle in this. A three-year Business Plan is currently being approved and one of the early priorities is to take forward the disposal of the Remenham site in Wilmslow on the open market to generate a capital receipt and for housing supply.
- 10.3 The Remenham site extends to approximately 1.92 acres (0.77 ha) and is situated in a residential area (see site plan).
- 10.4 It is located in Wilmslow, accessed off Chapel Lane and consists of two buildings (a three storey former house built c1870 and typical 1960s institution building) and hard and soft surface areas. The site has been allocated within the current local plan for residential use.
- 10.5 The developable area of the site is restricted to approximately 1 acre due to a number of Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) and a large sewer drain which runs through the centre of the site.
- 10.6 It is intended to complete this disposal and generate the capital receipt within the early part of financial year 2014/15.
- 10.7 Development of the Remenham site is identified as a key project within the East Cheshire Engine of the North Business Plan.

11.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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