

#### PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

#### INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING

## <u>TOPIC – SALE OF LAND FOR ACCESS AT WONSTON CLOSE, SUTTON</u> SCOTNEY

#### PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any other relevant overview and scrutiny committee. In addition, all Members are notified.

If five or more Members from those informed so request, the Leader may require the matter to be referred to Cabinet for determination.

#### **Contact Officers:**

Case Officer: Helen Farnham, 01962 848078

**Democratic Services Officer**: Nancy Graham, 01962 848 235

#### **SUMMARY**

The housing site at Beggars Drove, South Wonston (Plan attached as Appendix 1: Proposed Site Plan) is being brought forward as an HARAH (Hampshire Alliance for Rural Affordable Housing) site and Hampshire County Council who currently owns the site is selling the site to Hyde Housing Association. This is an exception site under Local Plan Policy CP4 (affordable housing on exception sites to meet local needs).

It is proposed that Winchester City Council sell to Hyde Housing Association a triangular piece of land (highlighted in red on the plan attached as Appendix 2: WCC Ownership) to enable access to the proposed housing site. In addition, it is proposed to grant a shared right of way over Council-owned land to the north, thus linking the site to Wonston Close (which is adopted highway).

Hyde Housing association will be responsible for widening and improving the access road to the Highway and paying a contribution to its maintenance thereafter.

Estates have valued this triangular piece of land at £19,000 bearing in mind that although it is a ransom strip there is an alternative access and that the adjoining land is an exception site. The value also takes into account the assumption that a small percentage of the housing could be market value housing to make the scheme viable. However Hyde Housing Association's proposed scheme is providing 100% affordable housing and the scheme would not be viable if any consideration was paid for the land. Therefore it is intended to sell the land for £1 subject to the Council's legal and estate surveyor's fees being paid.

#### **DECISION**

- 1. That the land edged red on the plan at Appendix 2 to the Decision Notice be sold to Hyde Housing Association.
- 2. That a right of way be granted to Hyde Housing Association with and without vehicles from the land in 1. above to Wonston Close, along a route and on terms to be determined by the Assistant Director (Estates and Regeneration).
- 3. That the consideration for the above transactions be £1 plus the Council's legal and surveyors costs.

## REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

The Council is also a member of HARAH and the opportunity of 15 affordable housing units being provided in this rural area at no cost to the Council should be welcomed. This site will provide a mixture of one, two and three bedroom properties to help meet the needs of this rural area. There are currently 66 applicants on Hampshire Home Choice stating a local connection to Wonston, as follows:

1 bed need: 40 2 bed need: 16 3 bed need: 8 4 bed need: 2

Under Consent A1 of the General Consent under Section 25 Local Government Act 1988 for the Disposal of Land to Registered Providers of Social Housing 2010, the Council is authorised to dispose of housing land to a registered provider (such as Hyde Housing Association) for the provision of an access to land for housing development, and to grant rights of way for such development, at an undervalue. Certain conditions must be included in the sale, including a requirement that the housing provided on the land should be social (including affordable rented and specified shared ownership) housing. No further consent under the Housing Act 1985 is required in such circumstances.

#### **Alternatives Considered**

Hyde has brought forward this proposal in consultation with the Parish Council and has secured external funding. The Council has considered purchasing the site and undertaking the development if Hyde were not able to progress with the development; however, there this would have involved a risk to the Council as developer and given Hyde's involvement, it is not considered that this course of action would be appropriate.

Officers have considered recommending refusing the application for access. However, this may have delayed/threatened the proposed scheme, as the alternative access would be more complicated for the Housing Association to achieve. In its current use, the land proposed for access has no development value to the Council. Hyde Housing Association has time-sensitive funding for some of the affordable homes and this could be lost if the project does not meet milestones within the funding period.

#### **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

No resource implications result from the sale of this land.

#### **CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN ON THE DECISION**

A consultation was carried out in May 2016 when appropriate Councillors and Council Divisions were approached as well as TACT and there were no objections to the sale of this access land at £19,000 or £1 depending on the viability of the scheme. TACT commented that they had no objection subject to the Council's legal costs being covered.

# FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

None.

# <u>DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED</u>

None.

#### **DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE**

n/a

Approved by: (signature) Date of Decision: 11.11.16

## **Councillor Caroline Horrill – Portfolio Holder for Housing Services**

### Appendices:

Appendix 1: Proposed Site Plan

Appendix 2: Proposed land in WCC Ownership to be sold.



Beggars Drove Sutton Scotney Site Address:-

Winchester City Council Estates Division

Scale:- 1:1000@A4 Date: - 5th May 2016

Map Ref:- SU 4639



