

**AGENDA ITEM: 7**                      Page nos.                      20 - 25

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Meeting                                      Cabinet Resources Committee  
Date    10 November 2005  
**Subject**                                      **The former Watling Boys Club, Dryfield Road, Burnt Oak, HA8**  
Report of                                      Cabinet Member for Resources  
Summary                                      To report the outcome of best and final offers from the five short-listed parties and a late offer and to seek authority to proceed with the freehold sale of the property.

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Officer Contributors                      Rob Colville, Principal Valuer, Property Services & Valuation  
Status (public or exempt)              Public (with a separate exempt section)  
Wards affected                              Hale  
Enclosures                                      Appendix A – Submission summaries  
For decision by                              Committee  
Function of                                      Executive  
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in (if appropriate)              N/A

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## **1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 That the recommendation set out in the Exempt report for the freehold sale of the Watling Boys Club be approved.**

## **2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

- 2.1 Cabinet, 8<sup>th</sup> July 2004 resolved that, subject to obtaining vacant possession of the property, the freehold sale of the land at Dryfield Road for re-development be agreed, and for the property to be marketed for sale by non-binding tender by the Property Services & Valuation Group.
- 2.2 Cabinet Resources Committee 17<sup>th</sup> March 2005 – considered the outcome of the initial tender process and agreed a short-list of five developers with whom to continue negotiations. All five parties were invited to prepare scheme proposals for discussion with the Head of Planning, with final offers being submitted thereafter and the results thereof being reported to a future meeting of the committee.

## **3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.1 The Corporate Plan commits the Council to plan and manage land use and development in Barnet to enhance the quality of life and provide tangible benefits for the community. The proposals in this report will result in the achievement of a capital receipt, which could be used to assist in funding the capital programme.

## **4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

- 4.1 The property remains vacant and subject to acts of vandalism and forced entry. The Council has spent a considerable amount of money on maintaining the security of the premises, yet the integrity of the building has been breached on a number of occasions. In one instance attempts were made to start a number of fires within the building resulting in internal damage. Whilst the premises are unoccupied the site also provides an access route onto the adjoining nature reserve. The London Wildlife Trust, the lessee of the adjoining site, is also reporting vandalism to their demised area as a result of unauthorised access through the Watling Boys Club site. The Watling Boys Club site has become a financial liability to the Council, and will continue to be so until such time as the site is disposed of. Whilst the premises remain in the Council's ownership, revenue outgoings will still have to be met for which there is not budgetary provision.

## **5. FINANCIAL, STAFFING, ICT AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no ICT or staffing issues.
- 5.2 The financial implications are set out in the exempt report.
- 5.3 The property issues are set out below.

## **6. LEGAL ISSUES**

- 6.1 None.

## **7. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS**

- 7.1 Constitution – Council Procedure Rules – Financial Standing Orders & Rules for Disposal of Land and Real Property
- 7.2 Constitution – Part 3 - Responsibility for Functions – Section 3.6 Functions delegated to the Cabinet Resources Committee – All matters relating to land and buildings owned, rented or proposed to be acquired or disposed of by the Council.

## **8. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 8.1 In accordance with the decision of this committee, five local developers were invited to prepare and submit final scheme proposals and financial offers for the site. A further interested party was additionally permitted to enter into the process and put forward similar information after submitting a late amendment to their initial proposal. All parties were invited to make further enquiries with the Head of Planning so as to refine the details of their submissions. A deadline of the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2005 was set by which all best and final offers were to be received by the Property Services & Valuation Group. The details of the submissions and comments thereon are set out in Appendix A and in the exempt report.
- 8.2 The submissions detail 3 nursing home schemes, 2 residential schemes and one scheme detailing the proposed use of the site to accommodate a primary school. All submissions would generate a capital receipt which may be put towards the Council's Capital Programme.

## **9. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 9.1 None.

Legal Department:  
BT:

**APPENDIX A**

Bid No.	TENDERER	PROPOSAL	PLANNING COMMENT	OTHER COMMENT
1	The Huntingdon Foundation	Redevelopment to accommodate a part 2, part 3 storey primary school with associated car parking (19 spaces) and playground facilities.	<p>Highways issues will have a large bearing on this scheme, which can only be assessed within the context of an application.</p> <p>The proposed parking block with hall/ studio above, situated adjacent to the boundary with number 127, would be detrimental to the living conditions of the occupiers of number 127 Dryfield Road and are considered to be unacceptable.</p> <p>Details of levels have not been submitted. Officers are therefore unable to comment on the design and external appearance of the scheme. Concern is again expressed over the relationship of the proposed playground with number 127 Dryfield Road. The inclusion of wider buffer zones around the site would aid in the screening of adjoining sites.</p> <p>Overall the scheme in its present form is not considered to be acceptable</p>	<p>The bid is submitted on the basis of the transfer of either the freehold interest in the site or alternatively of the grant of a long lease with a minimum term of 150 years at a peppercorn rent. The financial offer remains the same for either of these two options.</p> <p>Highways &amp; Design comment has been sought. The Huntingdon Foundation has been provided with some initial comments. Traffic implications will require further clarification at the planning application stage, should the Huntingdon Foundation be chosen as the preferred bidder, at which time the applicant will be asked to submit a Traffic Impact Assessment and Travel Plan.</p>
2	Pavillion Developments Ltd (Off shore company)	Redevelopment to accommodate a 2/3 storey, 70 bed, care home. The scheme will involve part culverting of the watercourse.	<p>The use as a residential care home is acceptable in principle.</p> <p>The design and footprint of the building are considered acceptable in principle, subject to accurate level drawings to show the relationship between adjacent properties.</p> <p>A parking layout to the front of the site should be provided to the satisfaction of the traffic and transportation team, in accordance with the unitary development plan parking standards for care homes. The site is in a medium accessibility area as stated by map 7.3 of the Revised Deposit Draft UDP and would therefore be required to provide 1 parking</p>	<p>Freehold interest required</p> <p>Highways &amp; Design comment has been sought but has not been forthcoming to date.</p>

			space per 10-15 occupants and 1 parking space per 2-3 staff. Provision for disabled and minibus parking should also be considered.	
3	Starfare Ltd	Redevelopment of the site to accommodate a 2-3 storey, 70 bed, care home. The scheme will involve part culverting of the watercourse.	As detailed for Bid number 2	Freehold interest required  Highways & Design comment has been sought but has not been forthcoming to date.
4	Classgrade Ltd	Redevelopment of the site to accommodate 1 * 2 storey and 1 * 3.5 storey blocks of residential flats. The scheme provides a total of 26 * one, two and three bedroom flats (80 habitable rooms) and includes 39 car parking spaces.	The use of the site for residential purposes would be acceptable in principle.  The westernmost block is considered to be too close to the rear garden of number 127 and would have a detrimental effect upon the living conditions of the occupiers of that property. The frontage has been set back and would not have a detrimental effect upon the character of the street scene. No levels details have been submitted. Officers cannot therefore comment comprehensively on the design and external appearance of the proposal.	Freehold interest required.  The scheme has been submitted on the basis of 100% affordable housing. When questioned further the developer said that he could provide anywhere between 30% and 100% affordable housing without altering his bid. The Housing Strategy & Development Manager has raised concern that a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) would not be able to gain grant funding for a scheme with high levels of affordable housing as detailed. The cost of transfer to an RSL is not specified. The scheme will be built to the Housing Corporation's Scheme Development Standards. The Housing Strategy & Development Manager would rather see a 70/30% mix of social rent and private sale.  Highways & Design comment has been sought but has not been forthcoming to date.

5	Rockley Dene Homes Ltd	Redevelopment to provide a 2/3-storey care home with nursing provision. The scheme will involve the full culverting of the watercourse.	<p>Use as a residential care home is acceptable in principle.</p> <p>The footprint of the building is considered acceptable in principle. The two storey extension to the west and front projection could potentially be increased to 2.5 storeys. The inclusion of a wider buffer zone to the front and western boundary should be incorporated to reduce the visual impact of the proposal.</p> <p>A parking layout would need to be provided on the frontage in order for the parking provision to be assessed. The site is in a medium accessibility area as stated by map 7.3 of the Revised Deposit Draft UDP and would therefore be required to provide 1 parking space per 10-15 occupants and 1 parking space per 2-3 staff. Provision for disabled and minibuss parking should also be considered.</p>	<p>Freehold interest required.</p> <p>Highways &amp; Design comment has been sought but has not been forthcoming to date.</p>
6	Genesis Housing Group	Redevelopment of the site to accommodate 14 residential units. The scheme will involve the part culverting of the watercourse.	<p>Use of the site for residential purposes would be acceptable in principle.</p> <p>The block to the front of the site, although set back from the position of the previous plan, is considered to be too close to the road, to the detriment of the character of the street scene and to the amenities of the occupiers of 127 Dryfield Road. No indications of heights have been submitted. Officers cannot therefore comment in detail on the design or external appearance of the scheme.</p> <p>An access road along the western boundary with number 127 Dryfield Road is considered to impact unacceptably upon the amenities of the occupiers of that property.</p> <p>In its present form the scheme is not viable in planning terms.</p>	<p>Freehold interest required.</p> <p>The proposed scheme includes five 1-bedroom flats for shared ownership, six 2-bedroom flats for shared ownership and three 3-bedroom houses for social rent. The proposal will meet Scheme Development Standards as a minimum requirement. The scheme has the approval of the Housing Strategy and Development Team.</p> <p>Highways &amp; Design comment sought but has not been forthcoming to date.</p>