

From: Peter Oakford, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services

Rebecca Spore, Director of Infrastructure

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 14 September 2022

Subject: Decision Number 22/00027 – Disposal of Saxon House, Tina Gardens, Broadstairs CT10 1BJ

Key decision: Yes, Involves expenditure or savings of over £1m

Classification: UNRESTRICTED Report

EXEMPT Appendix B – not for publication. Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, refers. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Electoral Division: Broadstairs, local Member, Rosalind Binks

### **Summary:**

The report considers the disposal of Saxon House, Tina Gardens, Broadstairs, CT10 1BJ.

### **Recommendations:**

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services on the proposed decision to agree to the disposal of the site and delegate authority to:

1. The Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to finalise the terms of the disposal.
2. The Director of Infrastructure to authorise the execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

## **1. Introduction**

1.1. This paper relates to Kent County Council's (KCC) intention to dispose of a c.0.59 hectares (c.1.46 acres) site known as Saxon House, Tina Gardens, Broadstairs CT10 1BJ ("the site").

1.2. The site is rectangular in shape and level. It comprises a c.223 sqm (c.2,400 sqft) single storey former education building of 1980/90s brick construction under a pitched tiled roof in fair condition, together with an outbuilding and a grassed area of open space.

1.3. The site was last used as a Special Education Needs (SEN) facility which closed in 2017 following the relocation of the school to a new site. The property has since been vacant and is surplus to the Council's operational requirements.

1.4. The site is allocated for residential development within the Thanet Local Plan that was adopted in July 2020. The allocation suggests a site capacity of c.14 dwellings.

1.5. The site contains several mature trees and hedgerows to the boundaries and is subject to a blanket Tree Protection Order (TPO) of the trees along the northern and western boundaries.

## **2. Location**

2.1 As illustrated and outlined in red on the site plan attached at appendix A.

2.2 The site is situated in the northern part of the popular coastal town of Broadstairs and under half a mile from the sandy beach at Stone Bay.

2.3 The immediate surrounding area is characterised by a mix of bungalows and 1970s houses in and around Tina Gardens, and large detached properties along Lanthorne Road and Newmans Close.

2.4 Lanthorne Court, an adjacent site to the east, has been allocated for 56 dwellings, and Millwood Designer Homes Ltd secured planning permission for up to 53 1,2,3 & 4-bed dwellings (Ref: OL/TH/19/1761), all private tenure due to the viability of the site. This scheme is currently under construction.

## **3. Marketing**

3.1. An open marketing campaign was undertaken on behalf of KCC by appointed agents during Spring/Summer 2022 seeking both unconditional and conditional (subject to planning) offers by way of informal tender with rights reserved to have a second round of best and final bids.

3.2. The sales particulars for the site and other relevant information were advertised online and a marketing email was sent to the appointed agents' developer/investor database to ensure the site was aired to the widest possible market.

3.3. Best and final bids were sought from bidders and supporting information was requested for their proposed schemes including any allowances (s.106, abnormal development costs etc); the extent of bidders' pre-exchange surveys, due diligence, etc. to obtain the best outcome for the Council.

3.4. Following ongoing bid analysis and due diligence, an emerging preferred bidder has been identified as set out in the exempt appendix B.

3.5. The ultimate selection of the preferred bidder will follow the process set out in the Council's Freehold Asset Disposal Policy.

## **4. Financial Considerations**

4.1. The site is surplus to KCC requirements and disposal will generate a capital receipt to support the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the delivery of KCC's Capital

Programme.

4.2. Planning development fees are kept to a minimum due to the structuring of a conditional contract with planning consultant fees being borne by the prospective purchaser.

4.3. Once the transaction completes, KCC will no longer be liable for the ongoing holding costs and other liabilities associated with this vacant property. The annual holding cost is approximately £53,350 per annum.

## **5. Legal implications**

5.1. The Council has a duty under s123 of the 1972 Local Government Act to obtain not less than best consideration in the disposal of property assets.

5.2. External legal advisors will be appointed in consultation with General Counsel to finalise the contracts.

## **6. Equalities implications (EQIA)**

6.1. An EQIA is not required.

6.2. The Key Decision to be taken by the Cabinet Member does not relate to a service delivery or change.

6.3. The site has been vacant since 2017.

6.4. No direct impact on any groups with protected characteristics have been identified in relation to the proposed decision to authorise disposal.

## **7. Other corporate implications**

7.1. None.

## **8. Governance**

A Key Decision is being sought in line with the Constitution and the Council's governance processes. The views of the local Member in accordance with the property management protocol have been sought.

## **9. Consultations**

9.1. Local Member consultation has been undertaken with Rosalind Binks, the local Member for Broadstairs, which noted the existing access arrangement to the site and a desire for an alternative access point to be carefully considered as part of any new scheme coming forward.

9.2. The decision in terms of any access solution will be considered and decided upon by the Local Planning Authority, in this case Thanet, in consultation with Highways as part of the planning process.

## 10. Recommendations

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services on the proposed decision to agree to the disposal of the site and delegate authority to:

1. The Director of Infrastructure in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Corporate and Traded Services, to finalise the terms of the disposal.
2. The Director of Infrastructure to authorise the execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

## 11. Background documents

Appendix A – Site plan  
Appendix B – EXEMPT Report  
Appendix C - PRoD

## 12. Author Details

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