

From: Brian Collins, Deputy Leader
Rebeca Spore, Director of Infrastructure

To: Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee – 10 September 2025

Subject: Disposal of land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP

Decision no: 25/00061

Key Decision: Yes

Classification: **Unrestricted report with exempt appendix A**, *not for publication under Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).*

Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: Northfleet and Gravesend West, Local Members – Matthew Fraser Moat (Reform UK) and Sharon Roots (Reform UK)

Is the decision eligible for call-in? Yes

Summary: This report considers the proposed disposal of land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP.

Recommendations:

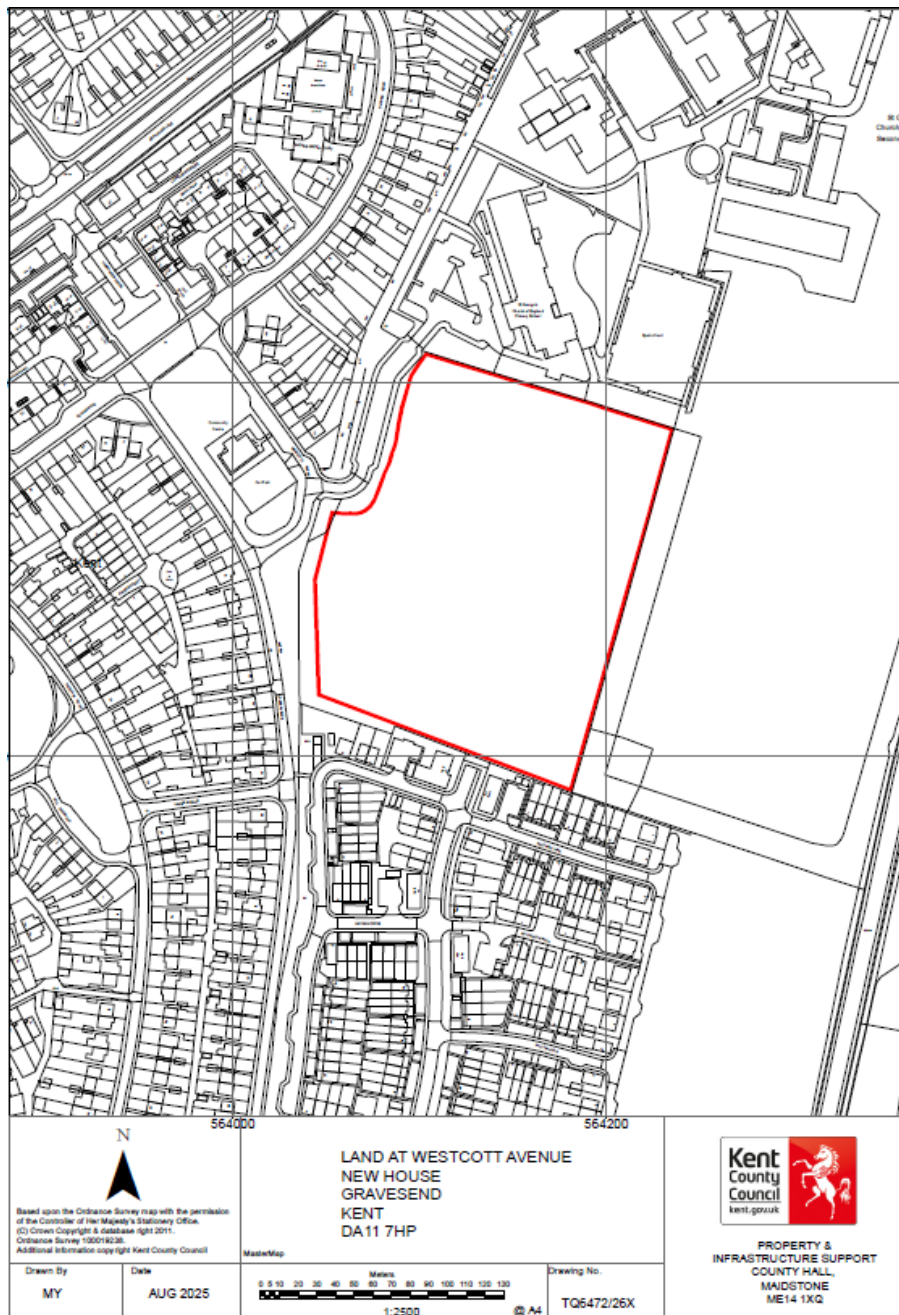
The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree to:

1. the disposal of land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP; and
2. delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report addresses the Council's intention to sell land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP, which comprises approx.3.02 ha (7.46 acres). The site is mainly grassland with some border shrubs and trees.
- 1.2 The land is located on the eastern side of Westcott Avenue and Lanes Avenue. It is approximately 1 mile south of Gravesend town centre accessed via the A227.

- 1.3 Site plan below shows redline boundary for the proposed disposal, attached at Appendix B.



- 1.4 Exempt Appendix A attached includes more detailed considerations and financial information which is considered commercially sensitive.

2. Background

- 2.1 The property, which covers approximately 7.46 acres, was formerly a farm tenancy but is now vacant. KCC holds the freehold to the property under Title Number K518366. The site is unoccupied.
- 2.2 Originally held for potential future educational use, the Education Directorate has declared the land surplus as it is no longer required for this purpose.

- 2.3 Other KCC service needs have been reviewed, but there are presently no operational requirements for this site. As a result, the land is considered surplus to KCC's requirements and is being prepared for disposal.
- 2.4 The proposal is to dispose of the site on the open market on an 'all enquiries' basis, with any offers to be evaluated according to KCC's disposal policy and financial criteria.
- 2.5 As the disposal value exceeds £1 million, a Key Decision will be necessary.

3. Options considered and dismissed, and associated risk

- 3.1 ***Reuse the site:*** KCC has no operational requirement for the site.
- 3.2 ***Continue to hold the site vacant in case of a future requirement:*** There is no current indication that KCC requires this land for future use. If no reasons are identified to retain an asset, the Council is legally obligated to dispose of it and seek best consideration, as retaining unnecessary assets may result in additional costs and liabilities. Not recommended.
- 3.3 ***Disposal of the asset:*** A freehold disposal will allow a capital receipt to be generated for reinvestment back into the Council's stated capital priorities and support the delivery of the Council's statutory obligations and reduce any holding costs and risk associated with the property. The disposal will also release land suitable for residential redevelopment of up to 106 homes in line with National Policy. *Recommended.*
- 3.4 ***Letting the asset to generate an income:*** The land will not generate an income of substance and furthermore any such tenancy is likely to reduce the assets value potential. Not recommended.
- 3.5 ***Recommended option:*** A freehold disposal is the preferred option for the site, and this will be pursued in accordance with adopted KCC Freehold Property Assets Disposal Policy.

4. Marketing

- 4.1 Subject to the necessary approvals being forthcoming, KCC will appoint a suitably qualified agent in accordance with KCC's procurement processes to openly market the site in Q4 2025 on an 'all enquiries' basis to allow any interested parties to submit a bid for the site.
- 4.2 A marketing campaign to advertise the site through various media channels will be undertaken to ensure a wide audience is reached; appropriate due diligence will be undertaken on any bidders by KCC and its agent.
- 4.3 Bids will be appraised in line with the Council's legislative and fiduciary duties, and in compliance with KCC Freehold Asset Disposal Policy and any other relevant Council policies.
- 4.4 Following the formal submission of bids, these will be assessed considering:

- Ability for the purchaser to complete within the proposed timescales.
- Overall price, any pricing caveats or exclusions.
- Any conditionality on the proposals and the deliverability of these.
- Deliverability of the proposals submitted, if they are reliant on the planning process.
- Funding security.
- Any benefit cost that may be relevant.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.
- 5.2 The disposal will remove any holding costs associated with the site, easing pressure on revenue budgets. It will also eliminate holding risk where costs may arise.
- 5.3 Further financial information is set out in the Exempt Appendix A.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 The Council has an overarching duty under s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 to obtain not less than best consideration in the disposal of property assets and it also has a fiduciary duty to the residents of Kent.
- 6.2 External legal advisors have been appointed in consultation with General Counsel.

7. Equalities implications

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken and identified no direct equalities implications arising from the disposal of the site.

8. Data Protection Implications

- 8.1 As part of this approval process and in the handling of the disposal of the site, Data Protection regulations will be observed.
- 8.2 A Data Protection Implication Assessment (DPIA) screening has been sought to confirm that there are no DPIA implications and that a (further) DPIA assessment is not required in respect of this decision.

9. Other corporate implications

- 9.1 This decision will not have any impact on other areas of the Council's work.

10. Governance

- 10.1 A Key Decision is being sought in line with the constitution and the Council's governance processes.

- 10.2 The views of the local Members in accordance with the property management protocol will be sought and will be reported to the Cabinet Member taking the decision.
- 10.3 The Secretary of State's permission is not required as the land has never been used for education purposes and was never used for playing fields.
- 10.4 Delegated authority is to be given to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of any disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement a decision to affect a disposal.
- 10.5 The Government has announced plans for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR), aiming to abolish two-tier government by 2028. At present, KCC has not received specific guidance from Central Government about how LGR will be implemented in Kent and Medway; further details are expected between May and August 2026. Until directed otherwise, KCC remains responsible for making decisions in the best interests of Kent taxpayers and disposing of assets it no longer requires.
- 10.6 When the exchange of contracts is approaching, the Director of Infrastructure will consider all relevant factors including financial considerations, any pending LGR decisions, and applicable legislation before finalising any contract agreements.

11. Next steps and Conclusions

- 11.1 An indicative timetable for the planned disposal and collaboration agreement is set out below:

Stage	Timescale
Marketing	Q4 2025
Bid Appraisal	Q1 2026
Exchange of contracts	Q2 2026
Completion of sale assuming unconditional sale	Q4 2026
Completion of sale assuming conditional sale	Q2 2028

12. Conclusions

- 12.1 KCC has no operational requirement to retain the site.
- 12.2 The sale of the property will result in a capital receipt which will be reinvested back into the Council's Capital Programme.
- 12.3 The disposal of the property will remove associated management costs associated with the property easing pressure on revenue budgets.
- 12.4 At the point where an exchange of contracts is imminent the Directorate of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, will reexamine the circumstances taking account all relevant matters such as KCC statutory duties, the latest LGR position etc and make the final decision on the terms.

Recommendations:

The Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Deputy Leader on the proposed decision to agree:

1. the disposal of land at Westcott Avenue, Gravesend DA11 7HP; and
2. delegate authority to the Director of Infrastructure, in consultation with the Deputy Leader, to finalise the terms of the disposal and execution of all necessary or desirable documentation required to implement the above.

13. Appendices

- 13.1 Appendix A – Exempt Appendix A
- 13.2 Appendix B – Site Plan
- 13.3 Appendix C – Proposed Record of Decision
- 13.4 Appendix D – Equalities Impact Assessment

14. Contact details

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