

OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD - 25 August 2005.

EXECUTIVE BOARD - 12 September 2005.

Report of: Business Manager, Oxford Building Solutions

Title: Options for plot of land, Burchester Avenue, Barton.

Ward: Barton & Sandhills.

**Report author: Chris Pyle
Contact Tel No: 01865 335411
E-mail address: cpyle@oxford.gov.uk**

Key Decision: No

Lead Member: Ed Turner

Scrutiny responsibility: Housing

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Housing Advisory Board agrees to advise the Strategic Director, Housing, Health and Community that he might wish to advise the Executive Board on the following:-

- 1. Disposal of the site on the open market.**
- 2. If the market value is not realised then further consultations should be held with a social housing provider and the Community Land Trust.**

In addition to this, that he might wish to:-

Allocate sale receipts to the HRA Capital programme to help meet the Decent Homes targets.

1. Summary

- 1.1 In May 2005, Housing Advisory Board considered a report to dispose of this parcel of land adjacent to 43 Burchester Ave, Barton. It was agreed to submit a further report in three months time to in order to explore further options, particularly Community Land Trusts.

2. The Council's Vision and Strategic Aims

- 2.1 Providing more affordable housing and meeting the decent homes standard are major objectives for the Council and the options set out in the report will both directly and indirectly help meet the objectives.

3. Background

- 3.1. The plot is adjacent to 43 Burchester Avenue – 0.0894 acre, it is overgrown with no buildings.
- 3.2 The Housing Advisory Board received a report in May 2005 recommending disposal on the open market but it was decided to explore further options particularly relating to social housing possibilities for the land.

4. Options appraisal

The plot has been considered for the following options:-

4.1 Permanent social housing use through a housing association.

- 4.1.1 OCHA have indicated that they would like to put 4 x 1 bed shared ownership flats on the site adjacent to 43 Burchester Avenue, which could be done at the same time as developing Beckley View. Initial discussions with Planners have taken place and in general they have raised no objections to the idea.
- 4.1.2 OCHA are currently carrying out a feasibility study for the land. This has not been received at the time of writing the report but it is hoped that officers can report back verbally at the meeting.
- 4.1.3 Part of this feasibility is to look at the possibility of using Section 106 monies to part fund a new build social housing project.

4.2 Open market sale.

4.2.1. Indicative open market value is set out in the Confidential Appendix attached.

4.3 Community Land Trust.

4.3.1. Talks have been held with the Community Land Trust and they have advised officers that they are not in a position to submit a proposal for this site at this stage. In their opinion the site is too small to be cost effective but if the market value is not realised then further feasibility work with them may be appropriate.

4.3.2. A report from the Community Land Trust is attached. They have advised that if another Social Housing provider cannot make best use of this site, they would like to be kept in the frame, particularly if the market value for the land is not achieved.

4.3.3. It should be noted that the Community Land Trust will be making a presentation to Members on the 11 October, 5pm – 7pm and that they are currently interested in Council land off the Iffley Road which would better suit their needs.

5. Financial Implications

5.1 It is proposed that the receipts from any sale should go to the HRA Capital programme to help meet the Decent Homes targets.

5.2 As stated in 4.1.3 above, the possibility of part funding a small social housing development using Section 106 monies is being investigated.

6. Legal implications

6.1 Under Contract PR 17.05 of the Constitution, before the Executive Board is legally committed to the disposals, a further report will be submitted which addresses:-

6.1.1 the proposed use of the land or buildings by the proposed purchaser; and

6.1.2 the terms of the proposed disposal.

6.2 It should be noted that if the option to hand over the plot of land to a Housing Association is adopted, effectively at nil value, the Secretary of State's permission would be required.

7. Staffing Implications

- 7.1 There are no staffing implications to this report. If Outline Planning consent for a particular option is sought before sale, this will be applied for by the Neighbourhood Renewal Team.

8. The grounds for recommending a particular option

- 8.1 Due to the Community Land Trust showing no real interest in this particular plot of land and the lack of Capital receipts from the Housing association option, the Sale of the land on the open market is the Recommended option.

9. The timetable for action following the decision

- 9.1 The Estates Management Team have advised that the sale could take between six and nine months in the current climate.

THIS REPORT HAS BEEN SEEN AND APPROVED BY:
Portfolio Holder, Councillor Ed Turner; OBS Business Manager, Graham Bourton; Legal & Democratic Services, Jeremy King.

Background papers: Report and Valuation from Independent Chartered Surveyor.
Report from Community Land Trust dated 11 August 2005.