

Report of: Finance and Asset Management Business Manager

To: Executive Board

Date: 7th January 2008

Item No:

Title of Report : Littlemore Baptist Church – Easement



Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report To seek EB approval to extend the previous agreed easement with English Churches Housing Association



Key decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Patrick Murray, Improving Housing; Councillor Jim Campbell

Scrutiny Responsibility: Finance Scrutiny Committee



Ward(s) affected: Littlemore

Report Approved by:

Councillor Jim Campbell – Portfolio Holder

Councillor Patrick Murray

Jeremy Thomas – Legal

Sarah Fogden – Finance

Policy Framework: To improve the environment in which we live and work, provide more affordable housing, creating local prosperity and sustaining full employment, improving transport and mobility, and maintaining financial stability.

Recommendation: That the request for an extension to the area covered by an easement allowing the development proposed to proceed be approved, at no cost to the English Churches Housing Association.



Revision number: 2

Date 19th December 2007

1. In 2002 Asset Management entered into negotiations with the English Churches Housing Group over the granting of an easement over Council land to allow the construction of 8 one bed supported flats on the site of the church hall of the Littlemore Baptist Church.
2. The development forms part of a programme to increase the amount of move-on accommodation for clients of the homelessness hostels in the city. A recent review of move-on accommodation in Oxfordshire, carried out on behalf of the Supporting People Partnership, indicated that with sufficient additional provision an additional 100 to 150 people in the county could successfully move into a sustainable tenancy. Inevitably, given the demographics of homelessness, the majority of that additional capacity would need to be in Oxford city.
3. Oxford City Council and the Department for Communities and Local Government both recognise the need for increased capacity in this respect, and for that reason the Executive Board agreed in February 2003 to contribute a grant of £663,182 in Local Authority Social Housing Grant to the project, to complement funding from the then Homelessness Directorate of £500,000. This funding remains in place at the time of writing. At the same meeting the Executive Board further agreed to grant an easement over council land to English Churches Housing Group at nil cost.
4. Subsequently it has been discovered that an additional area of land of approximately 70 sq metres is required to construct the proposed scheme, and this report requests the Executive Board to grant an easement over this land, also at nil cost, to enable this important development to go ahead, following the granting of planning permission.


Recommendation

5. That the request for an extension to the area covered by an easement allowing the development proposed to proceed be approved, at no cost to the English Churches Housing Association.

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Background papers: None

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