

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Housing & Environmental Services Portfolio Holder 11th February 2008
AUTHOR/S: Executive Director / Lands Officer

TRANSFER OF LAND AT NETHER GROVE, LONGSTANTON

Purpose

1. To consider the transfer of Council land at Nether Grove, Longstanton as shown on the attached plan and photographs, to Longstanton Parish Council.

Background

2. The site is a wide grassed area bordering Nether Grove, requested for transfer to the Parish Council to be retained as public open space.
3. Part of the area is subject to a planning consent for one bungalow for the Papworth Trust, ref. S/0110/06/F (approved 26.07.06).
4. Complaints about the proposed development were made to the Ombudsman by local residents on grounds that the site should be retained as public open space.
5. As a result, on 8th June 2006 Cabinet deferred a decision on disposal of the land to the Papworth Trust, pending further consultation.
6. At their meeting of 10th September 2007, Longstanton Parish Council unanimously agreed that if transferred, this green area would be kept and maintained as public open space.

Considerations

7. There are no covenants included in the conveyance of the land to the Council dated 19.09.70 but the area is labelled "public open space" on the plan attached to the conveyance. This plan is a copy of the architect's plan submitted with the planning application for residential development off Church Lane, Longstanton (ref. C/0715/67/D, approved 06.12.67).
8. As the site has potential for the development of affordable housing in the longer term, the Council may wish to consider the future of the land in conjunction with the long term future of the housing stock.

Options

9. Retain the land in Council ownership.
10. Defer a decision on the land until the long term future of the Council's housing stock is determined.
11. Transfer the land to Longstanton Parish Council to be retained as public open space.

Consultations

12. Councillor Riley strongly supports the transfer of the land to the Parish Council to be retained as public open space.

Implications

13.	Financial	Disposal of this site would save the Council costs of maintenance
	Legal	The disposal of this site is not subject to the Right to Buy legislation
	Staffing	None
	Risk Management	None
	Equal Opportunities	None

Effect on Annual Priorities and Corporate Objectives

14.	Affordable Homes	The site offers some potential for the development of affordable housing
	Customer Service	None
	Northstowe and other growth areas	None
	Quality, Accessible Services	None
	Village Life	Transfer of the land to the Papworth Trust and implementation of the current planning consent would increase the supply of affordable housing in the village
	Sustainability	As above
	Partnership	None

Conclusions/Summary

15. Part of this grassed area is subject to a planning consent for one bungalow for the Papworth Trust and thus has some potential for the development of affordable housing. Following objection from local residents who wish the site to remain as public open space, a decision to dispose of the land was deferred by Cabinet. The Council needs to decide whether to dispose of the land as open space or consider its future at a later date in conjunction with the long term future of the housing stock.

Recommendations

16. Defer a decision on the land until the long term future of the Council's housing stock is determined.

FOR DECISION

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

None.

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