

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet
AUTHOR: Housing & Environmental Services Director

13 April 2006

SALE OF CAR PARK OFF HIGH STREET, MELBOURN

Purpose

1. To seek endorsement by Cabinet of the following decision made by the Housing Portfolio Holder on 8th March 2006:

“Subject to Cabinet approval, offer the car park site off High Street, Melbourn for sale to Melbourn Parish Council at the price of £100,000 plus legal costs, subject to the following:

- i) **that the portion of the site to be designated for parking is to remain in use as a free public parking area in perpetuity**
- ii) **that the Parish Council is responsible for maintenance of the site and payment of NNDR (rates).”**

Effect on Corporate Objectives

2.	Quality, Accessible Services	
	Village Life	The proposed new parish offices and community hall will be an asset to the village together with free car parking provision.
	Sustainability	Imposing car parking charges could increase parking and congestion in village streets.
	Partnership	To work in partnership with the Parish Council

Background

3. The disposal of all the Council's public car parks is being put forward as part of the budget savings exercise following council tax capping.
4. The car park has 48 parking spaces (see location plan attached at **Appendix A**).
5. Melbourn Parish Council have requested to purchase the car park in Melbourn. They propose to use part of it to develop a building to house a small hall, Parish Council offices and Library Access Point plus necessary facilities. The remainder of the site will remain as a car park.

Considerations

6. Planning officers have indicated that consent is likely to be granted for the Parish Council's proposal, subject to agreement on the scale and appearance of the building in the Conservation Area and effect on the setting of an adjacent Listed Building and provided sufficient car parking spaces are retained.
7. Out of 14 existing garages at the rear of the car park, 10 are currently being rented and 4 are void. The garages are not in good condition and have cemented asbestos

roofs. Garage tenants will be consulted regarding use before any proposals for this area are finalised.

8. A right of access exists over the car park to the school and this will be retained.
9. Problems with youths have occurred in the car park on occasions and the Parish Council's proposals will provide closer monitoring of the site.
10. Planning have indicated that affordable housing on this site together with the Parish Council's proposals would not be feasible.
11. Maintenance costs of the car park over the last 10 years and current National Non-Domestic Rates are shown at **Appendix B**.
12. A valuation of the car park site has been obtained from the District Valuer, based on a sale subject to the proposed new offices and hall and a covenant restricting the use of the remainder of the site to car parking only but not precluding the purchaser from charging for car parking use. The market value of the freehold interest with vacant possession has been assessed on this basis at £185,000. If a condition were imposed to preclude parking charges, the value of the site is reduced to £100,000.
13. If parking charges were introduced, users may park in adjoining streets particularly at the peak times of school drop-off and collection.

Options

14. To accept the decision of the Housing Portfolio Holder as above.
15. To retain the land in Council ownership.

Financial Implications

16. By disposing of the site, a capital receipt will accrue to the Council and the Council will no longer be responsible for maintenance costs and payment of rates.

Legal Implications

17. None.

Staffing Implications

18. None.

Risk Management Implications

18. None.

Consultations

19. Shire Homes have been consulted and support the Portfolio Holder's decision.
20. Councillor Wherrell and Councillor Mrs Trueman have been consulted and support the Portfolio Holder's decision.

Conclusions/Summary

21. Planning officers have indicated that consent is likely to be granted for the Parish Council's proposal. The proposed new parish offices and community hall will be an asset to the village together with free car parking provision. By disposing of the site, a capital receipt will accrue to the Council and the Council will no longer be responsible for maintenance costs and payment of rates.

Recommendations

22. Cabinet is recommended to accept the decision of the Housing Portfolio Holder as stated above.

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

1. Melbourn car park: maintenance costs over last 10 years and current annual rate.

Contact Officer: Jenny Clark – Lands Officer
Telephone 01954 713336