

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Housing Portfolio Holder

13 June 2012

AUTHOR/S: Housing Director

GARAGE SITE REAR OF CAR PARK, HIGH STREET, MELBOURN

Purpose

1. To seek agreement by the Housing Portfolio Holder to transfer the garage site rear of the public car park, High Street, Melbourn (as shown outlined in red on the attached plan) to the Parish Council at nominal cost.

Recommendations

2. That the Housing Portfolio Holder agrees to extend the long lease of the car park, High Street, Melbourn to Melbourn Parish Council to include the garage site at the rear, subject to SCDC meeting the costs of demolition and its own legal fees. Lease terms to remain the same as the existing lease of the car park.

Reasons for Recommendations

3. The Council would no longer be responsible for maintaining the garage block nor managing garage lettings.
4. Refurbishment of the site by the Parish Council and the extension to the car park will greatly improve the appearance of the area.

Background

5. A 99-year lease of the car park was granted to the Parish Council on 3rd August 2010. Lease terms include:
 - i) Site to be used as free public car park
 - ii) Lessee responsible for maintenance
 - iii) Lessee has option to purchase freehold of site within lease term, subject to 50% of open market value to be received by the Council if it is to be used other than for community purposes
6. Before the lease was drawn up, the Parish Council expressed interest in taking over the garage site but the matter was put on hold until the proposed review of all the garage sites had been undertaken.
7. The Parish Council has again requested that the site be transferred to them through extension of the existing lease, subject to SCDC meeting the costs of demolition and its own legal fees.

Considerations

8. The block consists of 14 garages, all in poor condition. It would not be cost-effective to refurbish the units or rebuild them as the 6 existing garage tenants can be

relocated to other garage sites in Melbourn. It is believed that some of these units are used for storage.

9. The garage site is not suitable for redevelopment for housing purposes.
10. The Parish Council propose to resurface the area following demolition of the garages and extend the car park to include some landscaping. This will greatly improve the appearance of this area.
11. No quotation for the demolition of the garages has yet been obtained but it may cost the Council up to £10,000. This includes the removal of roof asbestos.

Options

12. Extend the long lease of the car park, High Street, Melbourn for Melbourn Parish Council to include the garage site at the rear, subject to SCDC meeting the costs of demolition and its own legal fees. Lease terms to remain the same as the existing lease of the car park.
13. Retain the garage area in Council ownership and consider refurbishment or replacement.

Implications

14. Financial	Both options will incur cost to the Council but Option 1 will improve the appearance of the area and relieve the Council of any responsibility in the future
Legal	The parish Council will meet the cost of the legal fees associated with the lease.
Staffing	None
Risk Management	The Council is currently liable for the safety of the garage site
Equality and Diversity	None
Equality Impact Assessment completed	No Not relevant
Climate Change	None

Consultations

15. Councillor Hales and Councillor Barrett support the proposal to transfer the garage area to the Parish Council

Effect on Strategic Aims

16. AIM: To make sure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer outstanding and sustainable quality of life for our residents
Transferring this site to the Parish Council following demolition of the garages will enable significant improvements to be made to the area

Conclusions / Summary

17. Melbourn Parish Council have requested that the garage site at the rear of the car park, High Street be transferred to them as an extension to their existing 99-year

lease of the car park, subject to SCDC meeting the costs of demolition and its legal fees. Following demolition, they propose to extend the parking area and include some landscaping which will greatly improve the appearance of this area. Refurbishing or rebuilding the garages would incur significant cost and they would remain the responsibility of the Council. Existing garage tenants can be relocated.

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

None.

Contact Officer: Jenny Clark – Lands Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713336