

Business and Property Committee

Item No.....

Report title:	Disposal, Acquisition and Exploitation of Properties
Date of meeting:	3 July 2018
Responsible Chief Officer:	Executive Director of Finance and Commercial Services
Strategic impact Proposals in this report are aimed at supporting Norfolk County Council (NCC) priorities by exploiting properties surplus to operational requirements, pro-actively releasing property assets with latent value where the operational needs can be met from elsewhere and strategically acquiring property to drive economic growth and wellbeing in the County. One of the key strategic actions within the Asset Management Plan is a sharp focus on maximising income through adoption of a more commercial approach to property.	

Executive summary

As part of corporate management of property and a systematic approach to reviewing the use and future needs of property assets for service delivery there is a continued emphasis on minimising the extent of the property estate retained for operational purpose. However, on occasion there will be the requirement to acquire or reuse an individual property to support a service to delivers its aims.

By adopting a “single estate” approach internally, and sharing property assets with public sector partners through the One Public Estate programme, the Council is aiming to reduce net annual property expenditure by £4.25million over the next four years (2018/19 to 2021/22).

Consideration is also given to suitability of surplus property assets for use or redevelopment to meet specific service needs that could improve quality of services for users, address other policy areas and/or improve financial efficiency for the County Council, for example, facilitating the supply of assisted living accommodation and other housing solutions for people requiring care, or undertaking re-development to support jobs and growth.

This means that as well as continuing with the rationalisation of the operational property estate to reduce the number of buildings used by the County Council, a more commercial approach is being adopted over the sale or redeployment of surplus property assets.

Recommendations:

Business and Property (B&P) Committee are asked to:

- (i) **Formally declare the land north of Norwich Road Acle surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the**

land to Repton Property Developments Ltd, and, authorise the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee to agree the value of the land at which it is to be sold and report the sale at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.

- (ii) Formally declare the former Chapel Road School site, Attleborough surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.
- (iii) Formally declare the Land South of New Road, Attleborough surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.
- (iv) Formally declare the Old Westgate Farm Barn beet pad, Binham surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property to either:
The adjoining owner on the best terms possible.
Or
In the event of non-agreement with the adjoining owner dispose on the open market.
In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.
- (v) Formally declare the Market Garden Land, Hopton on Sea surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.
- (vi) Agree to the leasing of the land to the Rear of 101 – 106 Norfolk Street, King's Lynn to the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk for £3,500 per annum for 10 years.
- (vii) B&P Committee is asked to formally declare the land at Wootton Drift, King's Lynn surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the

Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.

- (viii) Formally declare the land at Whittington Hill, Northwold surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property to either:**

The adjoining owner on the best terms possible.

Or

In the event of non-agreement with the adjoining owner dispose on the open market.

In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.

- (ix) Agree to the leasing of Vauxhall Centre carpark, Norwich to RCP Parking (Vauxhall) Ltd for £65,000 per annum (first 6 months rent free) for 10 years on terms laid out in the tender documents.**

- (x) Formally declare the land at Parkside Drive, Old Catton surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property to either:**

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- (xi) Formally declare the Land at School Road (Burlingham Estate), South Walsham surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property considering in addition to price the economic growth and community benefits. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.**

- (xii) Formally declare the land off Wards Chase, Stow Bardolph surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.**

- (xiii) Agree to the leasing of Trimingham camp site to Swallowtails Leisure Ltd**

for £10,000 per annum plus 5% of turnover (less the base rent), first 6 months rent free, for 15 years on terms laid out in the tender documents.
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1.0 Introduction

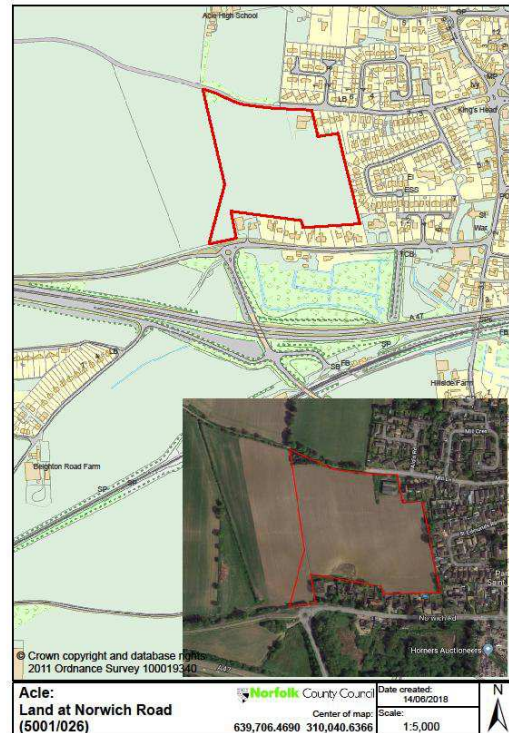
- 1.1 The Council actively manages its property portfolio in accordance with the adopted Asset Management Plan. Property is held principally to support direct service delivery, support policy objectives, held for administrative purposes or to generate income. Property is acquired or disposed of as a reaction to changing service requirements, changing council policies or to improve the efficiency of the overall portfolio.
- 1.2 The County Council challenges the use of its property on an ongoing basis. In the event of a property asset becoming surplus to an individual service need there are internal officer processes to ascertain whether other service areas have an unmet need that could be addressed by re-using the property asset for that service. This may lead to a change of use of individual properties, for example, an office building may be reused for operational service delivery. Any proposals for retention are only agreed if supported by a robust business case showing the benefits to the County Council and are funded from approved budgets. This assessment will also consider whether a property could be offered at best consideration to public sector or third sector partners.
- 1.3 The above assessments are carried out by the Corporate Property Officer (the Head of Property) in consultation with the Corporate Property Strategy Group (CPSG). Once it is confirmed there is no further County Council requirement the Business and Property Committee is asked to formally declare property assets surplus or re-designate for alternative purposes.
- 1.4 The Corporate Property Officer reviews options for maximising income from surplus properties usually by open market sale to obtain the best consideration possible. These will range from selling immediately on the open market (to the bidder making the best offer overall), enhancing the value prior to sale, strategic retention for a longer-term benefit through to direct development of the land and buildings and selling/letting the completed assets, in the expectation of enhanced income for the Council.
- 1.5 For properties to be sold immediately there is sometimes a need to consider selling directly to a specific purchaser instead of going to the open market. This may be justified where the third party is in a special purchaser situation and is willing to offer more than the assessed market value. Conversely this might be to a purchaser who is in a unique position of control for the unlocking of the full latent value of the Council owned site (ransom situation). A direct sale without going to market can also be justified if there are specific service benefits or a special partnership relationship which is of strategic value with service/community benefits.
- 1.6 In making recommendations for direct sale without going to market, or direct property development, the Corporate Property Officer will consider risks,

opportunities, service objectives, financial requirements and community benefits.

2.0 Proposals

Acle – Land North of Norwich Road (5001/026)

- 2.1 The Council's consultant, NPS, successfully obtained on 25 May 2018 a renewed outline planning permission for up to 140 dwellings on the land north of Norwich Road, Acle (site outlined in red).
- 2.2 Previously, Policy and Resources Committee, at their meeting on 1 June 2015, resolved "That the Assistant Director, Property be authorised to develop proposals for the direct development of the surplus land (working with appropriate partners) to maximise the financial return to the Council, bringing back recommendations to the Committee for approval."
- 2.3 This land forms part of the farms estate and is currently cropped. The Corporate Property Team is seeking a formal independent "red book" valuation of the site with the aim of selling the site to Repton Property Developments Ltd.
- 2.4 B&P committee is asked to formally declare the land north of Norwich Road, Acle surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the land to Repton Property Developments Ltd, and, authorise the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee to agree the value of the land at which it is to be sold and report the sale at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.



Attleborough – former Chapel Road School (3002/016)

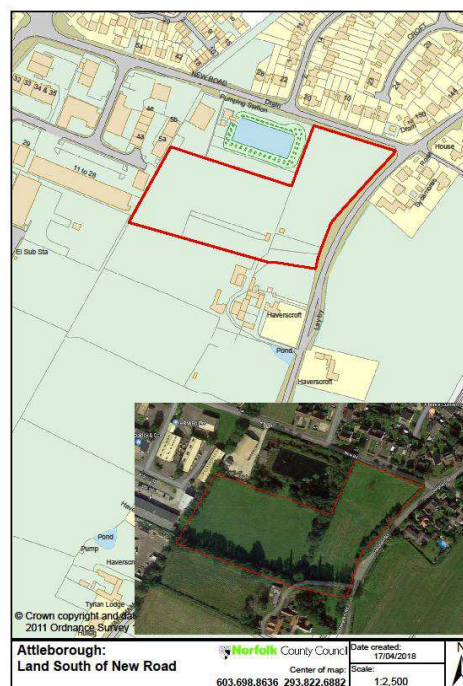
- 2.5 The former school site is owned by NCC with the adjacent playing field leased from Breckland District Council. The school site is approximately 0.45 hectares (1.12 acres) in area.
- 2.6 The school has relocated to new premises at Old Buckenham to become Chapel Green School. Childrens Services declared the site surplus to their needs on 17 November 2017, the declaration will come into effect once some final moves are complete.

- 2.7 Following a review by the Head of Property in consultation with CPSG it has been confirmed that the site is not required for NCC service use. The lease on the playing field is in the process of being terminated.
- 2.8 B&P Committee is asked to formally declare the former Chapel Road School site, Attleborough surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.



Attleborough – Land South of New Road

- 2.9 This land, edged red, is owned by NCC and forms part of the County Farms estate. It is currently occupied on a 1-year Farm Business Tenancy ending on 9th October 2018. The land area is approximately 2.05 hectares (5.06 acres).
- 2.10 The land lies to the south of New Road, Attleborough and west of Hargham Road and forms a distinctive detached parcel of land. The land has been promoted with the Local Planning Authority for residential development and outline consent is expected for a total number of 48 dwellings later in 2018.
- 2.11 The County Farms team have reviewed this site and have confirmed that it is no longer required for operational purposes.
- 2.12 Following a review by the Head of Property in consultation with CPSG it has been confirmed that the site is not required for NCC service use.
- 2.13 B&P Committee is asked to formally declare the Land South of New Road, Attleborough surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and



Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.

Binham – Old Westgate Farm Barn beet pad

2.14 This land forming a redundant pad was previously used for the temporary storage of beet is owned by NCC and forms part of the County Farms estate. It is approximately 363m² in area.

2.15 The tenancy has been surrendered.

2.16 The adjoining barn has recently been sold and the purchaser is interested in acquiring this additional land.

2.17 The County Farms team have reviewed this site and have confirmed that it is no longer required for operational purposes.

2.18 Following a review by the Head of Property in consultation with CPSG it has been confirmed that the site is not required for NCC service use.



2.19 B&P Committee is asked to formally declare the Old Westgate Farm Barn beet pad, Binham surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property to either:

- The adjoining owner on the best terms possible.
Or
- In the event of non-agreement with the adjoining owner dispose on the open market.

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Hopton-on-sea – Market Garden Land

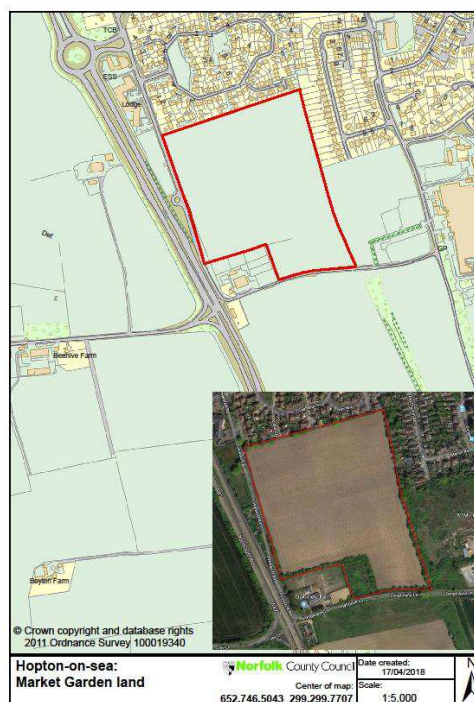
2.20 This land, edged red, is owned by NCC and forms part of the County Farms estate. The land area is approximately 9.3 hectares (22.9 acres).

2.21 Much of the adjoining land has been sold and redeveloped for residential use.

2.22 The County Farms team have reviewed this site and have confirmed that it is no longer required for operational purposes.

2.23 Following a review by the Head of Property in consultation with CPSG it has been confirmed that the site is not required for NCC service use.

- 2.24 The Head of Property will review the options for maximising the value of this land.
- 2.25 B&P Committee is asked to formally declare the Market Garden Land, Hopton on Sea surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.



King's Lynn - Land to the Rear of 101 – 106 Norfolk Street (2045/059)

- 2.26 This site is owned by Norfolk County Council and is let to the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (KLWN) for use as a car park. This lease was for a term of 10 years with a rent of £700 per annum (pa) and expired on 2 February 2016. KLWN have been "holding over" whilst a new lease was negotiated.
- 2.27 The site is "landlocked" and limits the use to which the County Council could use the site for.
- 2.28 Terms have been agreed for a new 10-year lease, with a rent of £3,500pa, with a rent review in 2023 and the tenant being responsible for upkeep, maintenance and insurance.
- 2.29 B&P Committee is asked to agree to the leasing of the land to the Rear of 101 – 106 Norfolk Street, King's Lynn to the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk for £3,500 per annum for 10 years.



King's Lynn – Land at Wootton Drift

- 2.30 This property was acquired by NCC for a highway schemes but not directly utilised. It is approximately 0.4 hectares (1.0 acres) in area.

2.31 The property was declared surplus by Community and Environmental Services on 4 December 2017. Following a review by the Head of Property in consultation with CPSG it has been confirmed that the site is not required for NCC service use.

2.32 B&P Committee is asked to formally declare the land at Wootton Drift, King's Lynn surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.



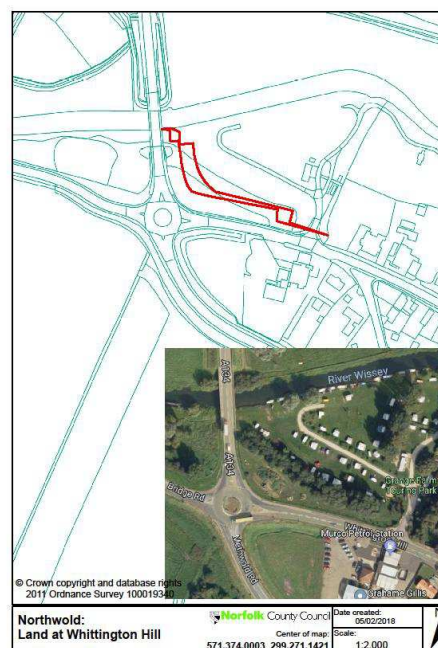
Northwold – Land Whittington Hill

2.33 This property, edged red, was acquired by NCC as part of a Highway scheme in 1986. The property is approximately 0.12 hectares (0.28 acres) in area.

2.34 The land adjoining on the west and south sides forms part of the adopted public highway.

2.35 The land was acquired under threat of Compulsory Purchase and may be subject to the Crichel - Downs Rules where by the land is offered back to the former owner or the former owner's successors at the current market value.

2.36 The adjoining landowner has expressed an interest in acquiring the land. The Head of property proposes to obtain a valuation and enter negotiations with the adjoining owner. In the event of non-agreement, the land will be disposed of by open market sale.



2.37 The property was declared surplus by Community and Environmental Services on 5 April 2018. Following a review by the Head of Property in consultation with CPSG it has been confirmed that the site is not required for NCC service use.

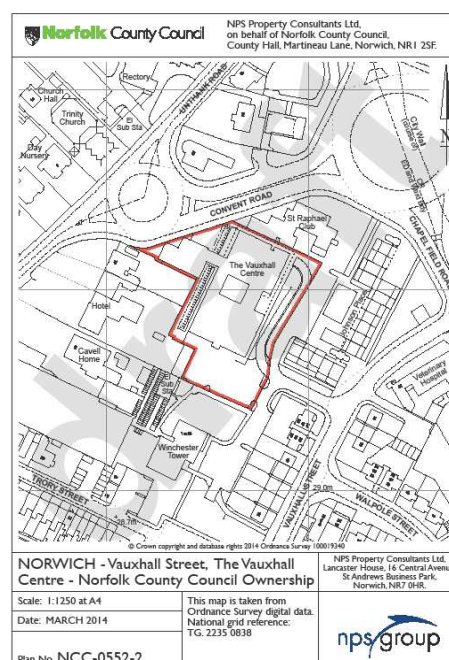
2.38 B&P Committee is asked to formally declare the land at Whittington Hill, Northwold surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property to either:

- The adjoining owner on the best terms possible.
Or
- In the event of non-agreement with the adjoining owner dispose on the open market.

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Norwich – Vauxhall Centre carpark (4113/019)

- 2.39 This property is owned by Norfolk County Council having been acquired as a result of the reorganisation of local government in the early 1970's.
- 2.40 The premises comprise a single storey underground car park with ramp access from Vauxhall Street which is marked out for 77 car spaces. The building above is the Vauxhall Community Building used and occupied by a number of County Council and voluntary sector partners delivering local services.
- 2.41 The car park has been fully refurbished with new lighting, sprinkler system and CCTV with the objective of letting out to secure a rental income.
- 2.42 Competitive tenders were invited from car park operators to take a 10-year lease. There were 9 expressions of interest resulting in 3 tenders being submitted.
- 2.43 The tenders have been reviewed and the best offer was received from RCP Parking (Vauxhall) Ltd, 15 The Close, Norwich, NR1 4DZ. The terms are, rent £65,000 per annum, first 6 months rent free, a rent review after 5 years, the tenant being responsible for business rates, internal repairs and a proportion of the building insurance.
- 2.44 B&P Committee is asked to agree to the leasing of Vauxhall Centre carpark, Norwich to RCP Parking (Vauxhall) Ltd for £65,000 per annum (first 6 months rent free) for 10 years on terms laid out in the tender documents.



Old Catton – Land at Parkside Drive (5017/020)

- 2.45 This small area of land was purchased by NCC as part of the Old Catton estate in 1948. It is approximately 69m² in area.

2.46 The adjoining part of the estate was sold for housing although the road was retained and forms part of the adopted public highway.

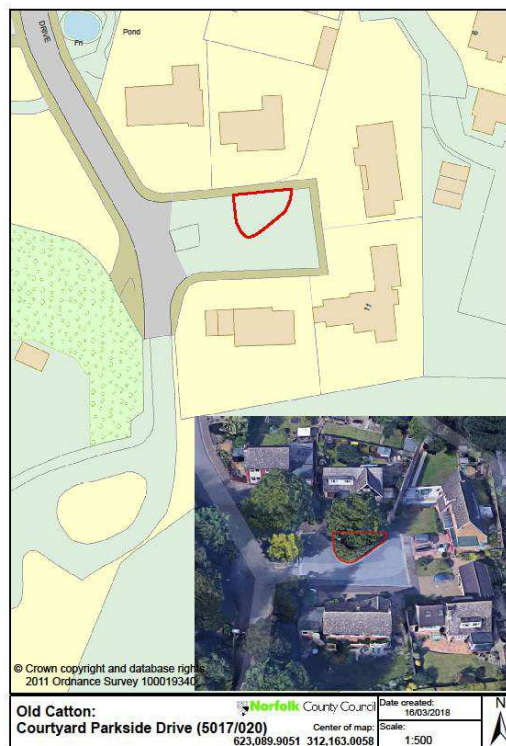
2.47 This parcel of land currently costs £400/year to maintain due to the nature of the planting (Rhododendrons and a Ghenko tree) and being in a Conservation Area.

2.48 Following a review by the Head of Property in consultation with CPSG it has been confirmed that the site is not required for NCC service use.

2.49 B&P Committee is asked to formally declare the land at Parkside Drive, Old Catton surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property to either:

- The adjoining owner on the best terms possible.
Or
- In the event of non-agreement with the adjoining owner dispose on the open market.

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South Walsham – Land at School Road (Burlingham Estate)

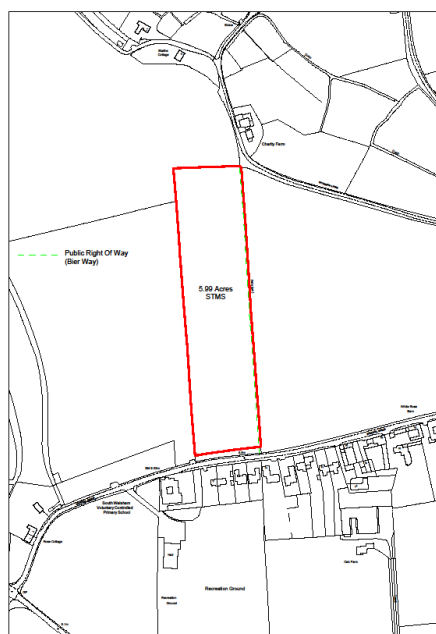
2.50 This land is owned by NCC and forms part of the County Farms estate. The land area is approximately 2.5 hectares (6.17 acres).

2.51 The land is tenanted until October 2018.

2.52 The County Farms team have reviewed this land and have confirmed that it is no longer required for operational purposes.

2.53 Following a review by the Head of Property in consultation with CPSG it has been confirmed that the site is not required for NCC service use.

2.54 It is understood there is local interest in acquiring this land and the Head of Property has advised it is openly marketed



should this committee declare the land surplus to NCC use. For this disposal the Council will consider wider benefits, such as economic growth and community benefits etc as well as the price per acre tendered for this land.

- 2.55 B&P Committee is asked to formally declare the Land at School Road (Burlingham Estate), South Walsham surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property considering in addition to price the economic growth and community benefits. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.

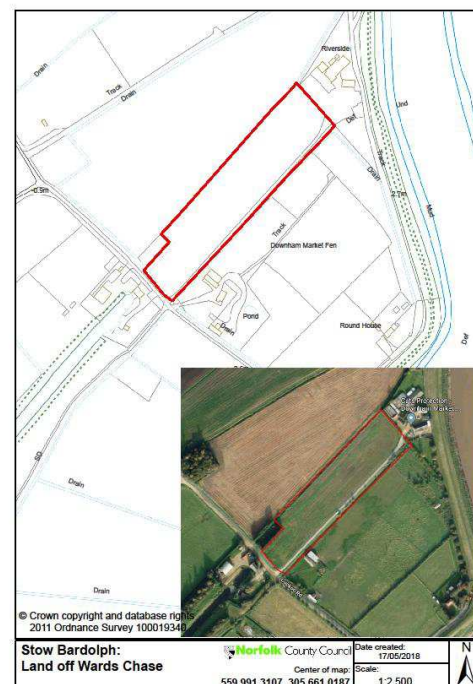
Stow Bardolph – Land off Wards Chase

- 2.56 This land, edged red, is owned by NCC and forms part of the County Farms estate (Stow & Marshland Estate). The land area is approximately 1.33 hectares (3.29 acres).

- 2.57 The County Farms team have reviewed this site and have confirmed that it is no longer required for operational purposes and the current tenant has agreed to surrender it.

- 2.58 Following a review by the Head of Property in consultation with CPSG it has been confirmed that the site is not required for NCC service use.

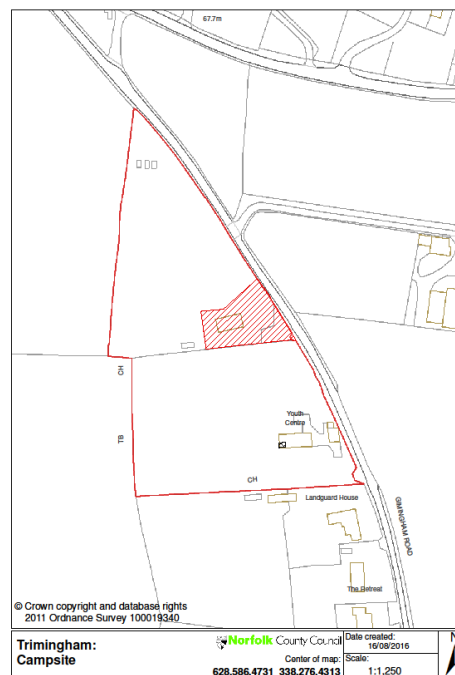
- 2.59 B&P Committee is asked to formally declare the land off Wards Chase, Stow Bardolph surplus to County Council requirements and instruct the Head of Property to dispose of the property. In the event of a disposal receipt exceeding delegated limits the Head of Property in consultation with the Executive Director of Finance & Commercial Services and Chair of B&P Committee is authorised to accept the most advantageous offer and report the fact at a subsequent B&P Committee meeting.



Trimingham - Campsite (1108/011)

- 2.60 This site is owned by Norfolk county Council and is approximately 1.4 hectares (3.5 acres) in area, edged red on plan, excluding the red hatched area which is already let for 25 years.

- 2.61 The site was previously used by Children's Services. A review by the Head of Property in consultation with CPSG in December 2015 determined that the site was not required for NCC service use. Subsequently Policy and Resources Committee at their 31 May 2016 meeting declared the site surplus to County Council use.
- 2.62 In the intervening period the Head of Property has considered how the site could be exploited and subsequently sought tenders to lease out the site.
- 2.63 Four tenders were submitted. The tenders have been reviewed and the best offer was received from Swallowtails Leisure Ltd to use the site for 20 "glamping" pitches. The terms are, £10,000pa plus 5% of turnover (less the base rent), first 6 months rent free, an annual rent review, a break operable every 5 years, and the tenant is responsible for full repairs and insurance. Furthermore, the tenant will refurbish existing buildings (subject to survey), create a car park for 20 cars, install a children's play area and outdoor picnic area.
- 2.64 B&P Committee is asked to agree to the leasing of Trimingham camp site to Swallowtails Leisure Ltd for £10,000 per annum plus 5% of turnover (less the base rent), first 6 months rent free, for 15 years on terms laid out in the tender documents.



3.0 Financial Implications

- 3.1 Decisions in this report will ultimately result in sale proceeds which will support funding of the Capital Programme or the repayment of debt. Other financial implications include:
- Reduction in property expenditure and financial efficiency through reduction in the number of sites and buildings retained.
 - Generating revenue income/capital receipts from the exploitation of surplus property assets.
 - Disposal and development costs to fund planning and assessment work. The cost of these will be funded from future receipts.

4.0 Issues, risks and innovation

- 4.1 For disposals and acquisitions in the usual way the legal implications are around the parties agreeing to the terms of the agreement for each acquisition and disposal and entering a contract.

5.0 Background

5.1 There are several strands forming the strategic background to these proposals, namely:

- The overall Council's priorities under the Norfolk Futures Strategy of:
 - Safer Children and Resilient Families.
 - Promoting Independence for Vulnerable Adults.
 - Smarter Information and Advice.
 - Towards a Housing Strategy.
 - Digital Norfolk.
 - Local Service Strategy.
 - Commercialisation.
- Norfolk County Council Asset Management Plan 2016-19.
- The adoption of an updated property savings plan, that calls for savings of £4.25m over the next four years.
- The Norfolk One Public Estate Programme that is supporting the joint strategic exploitation of the combined public-sector property estate.
- The medium term financial strategy includes commercialisation of NCC property assets as a priority to help diversify the Council's funding.

5.2 Strategic asset management is focussed on:

- Releasing properties that are costly, not delivering services efficiently or in the wrong location.
- Exploiting the latent value of the property estate with an emphasis on using the retained estate more intensively or identifying opportunities to generate revenue income or increasing the capital value.
- Reducing future maintenance liabilities and reducing the overall carbon footprint.
- Directing spend on "core" property assets that are to be retained over the long term.

5.3 There are several key targets in the prioritised work plan in the Asset Management Plan that support these proposals:

- Ongoing implementation of the property savings plan.
- Continued focus on property rationalisation.
- Property commercialisation.
- Reduce cost of retained property.
- Ongoing implementation of a 3-year disposals programme, allied with seeking opportunities for development.
- Surplus Highways land – implement disposals of packages of land parcels no longer required for road schemes.
- Deliver strategy to promote surplus/fringe sites for housing.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper please get in touch with:

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