

CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

Please note early
start time - 6.30pm

Monday
12 November 2007

Havering Town Hall
Main Road, Romford

Members 6: Quorum 3

COUNCILLORS:

Robby Misir (C)
Robert Benham
Fred Osborne
Melvin Wallace

Ray Morgon (VC)
Linda Hawthorn

For information about the meeting please contact:
Norman Bond (01708) 432439 norman.bond@haverling.gov.uk



NOTES ABOUT THE MEETING

1. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Council is committed to protecting the health and safety of everyone who attends meetings of its Committees.

At the beginning of the meeting, there will be an announcement about what you should do if there is an emergency during its course. **For your own safety and that of others at the meeting, please comply with any instructions given to you about evacuation of the building, or any other safety related matters.**

2. MOBILE COMMUNICATIONS DEVICES

Although mobile phones, pagers and other such devices are an essential part of many people's lives, their use during a meeting can be disruptive and a nuisance. Everyone attending is asked therefore to ensure that any device is switched to silent operation or switched off completely.

3. CONDUCT AT THE MEETING

Although members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Committee, they have no right to speak at them. Seating for the public is, however, limited and the Council cannot guarantee that everyone who wants to be present in the meeting room can be accommodated. When it is known in advance that there is likely to be particular public interest in an item the Council will endeavour to provide an overspill room in which, by use of television links, members of the public will be able to see and hear most of the proceedings.

The Chairman of the meeting has discretion, however, to invite members of the public to ask questions or to respond to points raised by Members. Those who wish to do that may find it helpful to advise the Committee Officer before the meeting so that the Chairman is aware that someone wishes to ask a question.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THE CHAIRMAN MAY REQUIRE ANYONE WHO ACTS IN A DISRUPTIVE MANNER TO LEAVE THE MEETING AND THAT THE MEETING MAY BE ADJOURNED IF NECESSARY WHILE THAT IS ARRANGED.

If you need to leave the meeting before its end, please remember that others present have the right to listen to the proceedings without disruption. Please leave quietly and do not engage others in conversation until you have left the meeting room.

AGENDA ITEMS

1 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman will announce details of the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS
(if any) - receive.

3 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members are invited to declare any interests in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting. Members may still declare an interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

4 PROPERTY DISPOSALS – requisition of Cabinet decision

Cheryl Coppel
Chief Executive



MEETING	DATE	ITEM
CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	12 NOVEMBER 2007	4

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT: PROPERTY DISPOSALS – requisition of Cabinet decision

In accordance with paragraph 16 of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Rules, a requisition signed by two Members representing more than one Group (Councillors John Mylod and Keith Darvill) has called in the decision of the Cabinet of 24 October 2007. The text of the requisition appears below.

CABINET DECISION

Cabinet had previously approved the disposal of a number of Council-owned sites that had been identified as surplus, either as a result of specific projects such as the Corporate Office Property Strategy or more general property reviews carried out by Strategic Property Services.

As the Council had pursued a policy of selling surplus sites for many years it had become more difficult to identify new sites for disposal that do not pose challenges, either technically or in terms of planning, and especially in respect of objections to disposal that arise in many cases. Nonetheless, constant and ongoing appraisal of property assets to identify disposal opportunities is a requirement on all local authorities and at Havering is essential in providing capital receipts to fund spending to support and enhance Council services. The receipts will be used to support future expansions to the capital programme relative to Council priorities including improvements to parks, children's play facilities, highways and the Hornchurch Urban Strategy.

The report submitted identified six further sites (details of which were appended to the report) that did not appear to meet the Council's approved criteria for property ownership and therefore needed to be considered for disposal. The report also

sought authorisation to revise the disposal strategy in respect of a previously approved disposal.

The six sites were:

- Land at Linley Crescent, Romford
- Land at Hood Walk, Collier Row
- Former Park Keepers House, Spring Farm Park, Rainham
- Land at Lodge Lane, Collier Row
- Land at Corner of Wingletye Lane and Maywin Crescent, Hornchurch
- Land at Corner of Hornchurch Road and Abbs Cross Lane, Hornchurch

Reasons for the decision:

In order to improve the efficiency of the Council's portfolio of land and property assets and to generate further capital receipts it was important to ensure that surplus assets continued to be identified for disposal.

Other options considered:

If these sites were not sold, the most likely alternative was that they remain in their current use. Other alternatives were identified in the individual appendices for each site.

If the sites were not sold, it was likely that the capital programme would have to be reduced or funded from borrowing which would incur additional revenue costs.

Particular concern was expressed about the possible development of the land at the corner of Hornchurch Road and Abbs Cross Lane, Hornchurch. Members referred to its location at the entrance to Hornchurch Town Centre and sought assurance that any developer would be required to respect the location and to proceed with development in a manner sympathetic to the local environment. Members were also reminded that, for the Council to be able to commit the desired levels of capital expenditure, it was essential that the value of surplus land holdings be realised.

Cabinet agreed:

- 1 That the properties identified in Appendix 1 of the report be declared surplus and authorisation be given for their disposal (subject to obtaining any necessary planning permissions and other consents as appropriate) and that the Property Strategy Manager in consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) be authorised to deal with all matters arising and thereafter to complete the disposal of the properties identified.**
- 2 In respect of the property identified in Appendix 1A, that the Cabinet Member for Resources be authorised to approve all necessary arrangements to effect the disposal and development of the site (subject to any necessary planning permissions and other consents as appropriate).**

- 3 That the revised strategy for the disposal of land at Colne Drive be approved and that the Property Strategy Manager in consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) be authorised to deal with all matters arising and thereafter to complete the disposal of the site.

REASONS FOR REQUISITION

- 1 There has been insufficient public and member consultation about the proposals which in respect of some of the properties are of strategic and environmental importance to the Borough.
- 2 As a public authority and major land owner the Council should, before making decisions in principle to sell, consider the impact of such property disposals on the general public.
- 3 In respect of the proposal to sell Abbs Cross Gardens (a site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation) to examine closely the impact on the ecological and topographical characteristics of the site and its significance in respect of the Council's Hornchurch Urban Strategy. In addition, to consider the roll the land plays as an area of planting of commemorative trees by local voluntary organisations.
- 4 In respect of the proposal to dispose of Colne Drive, Harold Hill to examine closely the potential for development of the site for additional facilities for elderly residents linked to the adjacent 'Extra Care Scheme' development in Paines Brook Way.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee considers the requisition of the decision of Cabinet and determines whether to uphold it.

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For the report to the Cabinet:

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CHERYL COPPELL
Chief Executive



MEETING	DATE	ITEM
CABINET	24 OCTOBER 2007	7

Cabinet Member:
Councillor Roger Ramsey

Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee:
Corporate

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SUBJECT: PROPERTY DISPOSALS

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 At various occasions over the last two years Cabinet approval has been given to the disposal of a number of Council owned sites that had been identified as surplus either as a result of specific projects such as the Corporate Office Property Strategy or more general property reviews carried out by Strategic Property Services.
- 1.2 As the Council has pursued a policy of selling surplus sites for many years it becomes more difficult to identify new sites for disposal that do not pose challenges, either technically or in terms of planning, and especially in respect of objections to disposal that arise in many cases. Nonetheless, constant and ongoing appraisal of property assets to identify disposal opportunities is a requirement on all local authorities and at Havering is essential in providing capital receipts to fund spending to support and enhance Council services. The receipts will be used to support future expansions to the capital programme relative to Council priorities including improvements to parks, children's play facilities, highways and the Hornchurch Urban Strategy.

- 1.3 This report identifies further sites that do not appear to meet the Council's approved criteria for property ownership and therefore need to be considered for disposal.
- 1.4 The report also seeks authorisation to revise the disposal strategy in respect of a previously approved disposal.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That the properties identified in Appendix 1 of this report be declared surplus and authorisation be given for their disposal (subject to obtaining any necessary planning permissions and other consents as appropriate) and that the Property Strategy Manager in consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) be authorised to deal with all matters arising and thereafter to complete the disposal of the properties identified.**
- 2.2 **In respect of the property identified in Appendix 1A that the Lead Member for Resources be authorised to approve all necessary arrangements to effect the disposal and development of the site (subject to any necessary planning permissions and other consents as appropriate).**
- 2.3 **That the revised strategy for the disposal of land at Colne Drive be approved and that the Property Strategy Manager in consultation with the Assistant Chief Executive (Legal and Democratic Services) be authorised to deal with all matters arising and thereafter to complete the disposal of the site.**

3. REPORT DETAIL

- 3.1 On 28 July 2004 Cabinet considered a report entitled "Identification of Potential Property Disposal Opportunities". This report set out the process that was being undertaken to systematically review the Council's land and property assets to ascertain whether the Council should retain ownership of these assets or whether they should be sold.
- 3.2 Since then Cabinet have considered a number of reports that dealt with the results of these systematic reviews and have approved a number of property disposals. Approval has also been given to the disposal of assets that have been declared surplus as a result of specific projects such as the Corporate Office Property Strategy (COPS).
- 3.2 The Council's Asset Management Plan states that land and property assets should only remain in Council ownership if they:
 - need to be retained in Council control for the provision of services

- are of great value to the Council, community and other stakeholders and are in need of the degree of protection from development or other uses afforded only by ownership
 - are investment properties providing a financial return that can fully satisfy relevant investment criteria
- 3.3 The Council continues to need to generate capital receipts from the disposal of assets in order to pursue capital projects. The identification of new disposal and capital receipt opportunities is essential in funding the Council's capital programme. The reality is that much of the capital programme in respect of service improvements relies entirely on new receipts, without which the Council will not be able to undertake capital projects and make improvements in services. The capital allocation bidding process regularly identifies need far in excess of capital availability and selected projects can only be funded with new receipts arising from property disposals. The only alternative is prudential borrowing but unless this involves equivalent savings, the impact would be to add costs to the revenue budget.
- 3.4 The combination of these factors has highlighted the need for a continuing systematic review of the Council's assets to ensure that those that continue to be retained match one of the definitions in paragraph 3.2 above and those that do not are considered for disposal or re-use.
- 3.5 One of these reviews has been carried out by the Head of Cultural and Leisure Services and this has focussed on a number of Council owned areas of open land. Elsewhere on this agenda, Cabinet is considering this review in a report entitled "Green Spaces Project". That report deals with a range of issues relating to the future of parks and open spaces in Havering including the prioritisation of sites, resources required to make them fit for purpose and other improvement measures.
- Paragraph 3.2 of that report proposes the disposal of some sites that are categorised as either Low Value or Low Quality (in amenity terms) and four sites categorised in this way have been looked at in further detail and are highlighted for disposal in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 3.6 In addition to the above a further general examination of disposal opportunities has taken place and, at this stage, a further 2 sites have been identified for disposal and, again, they are shown in Appendix 1 of this report. The financial implications of individual sales are covered within the individual appendices.
- 3.7 Furthermore, on 15th November 2006 Cabinet approved the disposal of an area of land at Colne Drive, Harold Hill. The information that was considered by Cabinet in reaching the decision is attached as Appendix 2 to this report. The decision taken was to sell the land subject to a restriction that the development would consist of older persons housing subject to an age restriction on the occupants of the scheme.

- 3.7.1 The land has been marketed on this basis and bids have been received. A number of these fully complied with the proposed conditions of sale but following a full evaluation process it was not possible to identify a preferred bidder either because the scheme proposed did not appear to be deliverable or because the size of the offer was not high enough to be recommended.
- 3.7.2 Other bids were received that did not comply with the conditions of sale. Some of these bids were considerably in excess of the compliant bids described above but a decision has been taken that none of these should be pursued further at this stage. Firstly, they were not made in line with the Cabinet approval and, therefore, no authority exists to accept them. Secondly, if it is evident that non-compliant bids may well be made at a level that far exceeds the compliant bids it would be prudent to consider whether a completely unrestricted marketing process would bring further benefits to the Council.
- 3.7.3 The site has been withdrawn from the market and it is recommended that it should now be re-marketed without any specific condition of sale. The market will indicate the most valuable form of development (subject to any planning or other legal constraints) and this would almost certainly be for residential development of some type.

4 Financial Implications and risks:

- 4.1 The disposal of the properties identified in this report would generate capital receipts that would accrue interest until they were used in the capital programme.
- 4.2 The Property Strategy Manager is authorised to agree and incur reasonable pre-sale expenses up to a limit of £100,000 per transaction when disposing of property. These pre-sale expenses are offset against the capital receipt from the sale.
- 4.3 Interest on the receipts identified will be dependent on the timing and size of the receipt but for every £million of capital received, interest in the order of £48,000 per annum would be available until the receipt was used for capital purposes.
- 4.4 Where appropriate other financial implications are highlighted on the individual appendices that deal with each of the proposed disposals.
- 4.5 There is a risk that the disposal proceeds may be less than anticipated or that additional pre sale expenses may be identified in which case the Property Strategy Manager would reconsider the position in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Resources
- 4.6 The receipts will be used to support future expansions to the capital programme relative to Council priorities including improvements to parks, children's play facilities, highways and the Hornchurch Urban Strategy.

5 Legal Implications and risks:

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications in the property review itself or in identifying that certain properties are potentially surplus to the Council's requirements and can be sold.
- 5.2 The legal implications for each individual disposal will be considered on a site by site basis as they are brought to the market.

6 Human Resources Implications and risks:

- 6.1 The report deals with the disposal of surplus land and buildings and therefore has no direct Human Resources implications or risks

7 Equalities and Social Inclusion implications:

- 7.1 The report deals with the disposal of surplus land and buildings and therefore has no Equalities or Social Inclusion implications or risks

8 Reasons for the decision:

- 8.1 In order to improve the efficiency of the Council's portfolio of land and property assets and to generate further capital receipts it is important to ensure that surplus assets continue to be identified for disposal.

9 Alternative options considered:

- 9.1 If these sites are not sold, the most likely alternative is that they remain in their current use. Any other alternatives are identified in the individual appendices for each site.
- 9.2 If the sites are not sold it is likely that the capital programme will have to be reduced or funded from borrowing which will incur additional revenue costs.

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CHERYL COPPELL
Chief Executive

Background Papers List

None

APPENDIX 1

GENERAL FUND SITES

**DISPOSAL OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED THROUGH THE
REVIEW OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACES**

APPENDIX NUMBER	SITE ADDRESS
1A	Land at Linley Crescent, Romford
1B	Land at Hood Walk, Collier Row
1C	Ex Park Keepers House, Spring Farm Park, Rainham
1D	Land at Lodge Lane, Collier Row

OTHER DISPOSAL OPPORTUNITIES

APPENDIX NUMBER	SITE ADDRESS
1E	Land at Corner of Wingletye Lane and Maywin Crescent, Hornchurch
1F	Land at Corner of Hornchurch Road and Abbs Cross Lane, Hornchurch

LAND AT LINLEY CRESCENT, ROMFORD

Housing Revenue Account or General Fund:	General
Site Area:	1.00 acres
Description:	Land
Current use:	Informal open area following the relocation of the playsite elsewhere within King Georges Playing Fields
Planning/Transportation/ Access Issues:	<p>The site is designated as Parks, Open Spaces and Playing Fields. Policy LAR5 of the UDP applies.</p> <p>LAR5 seeks the retention of existing parks and open spaces, with exceptions only being made where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It can be clearly demonstrated that the leisure and recreation needs of the area will be at least as well provided for after development• There will be no significant reduction in the quality of the local environment• There will be no loss of a site of nature conservation importance <p>The site is a redundant play site with facilities formerly located there being subjected to vandalism. As a result, the equipment was removed and disposed of and a new playsite was built adjacent to the café at the other end of King George's playing Field. This was part of the 2006/2007 Parks Capital Programme. The site has one existing access route from Linley Crescent.</p> <p>Subject to further detailed appraisals and investigations it would seem that a low key development could be served by the existing access route.</p> <p>The site forms part of a flood zone 3 covered by Policy DC49 of the LDF. Any development proposal will need to demonstrate through formal flood risk assessment and liaison with the Environment Agency that there are no adverse flooding issues thereby satisfying the requirements of PPG25.</p>

Legal Title:	The site is registered and the title is subject to various restrictive covenants none of which would preclude residential development.
Other Issues:	There is a surface water sewer travelling across the site in a north westerly direction. This is not considered to be in a location which would restrict the development potential of the site.
Financial Implications/ Whole Life Costing and Risks :	The area of land that has been identified for possible disposal does not currently produce an income and is unlikely to do so in the future. Disposal will mean that the Council will not have an ongoing liability to maintain the land. Although this is likely to be a small saving that is difficult to accurately specify the overall effect of disposal will be to reduce revenue expenditure and generate a capital receipt.
Consultation with Service Department: Leisure	<p>The Head of Culture and Leisure advises that this site is not currently used as a play facility and is not likely to be required for such a use in future.</p> <p>Part of the capital receipt will be used to provide play equipment in this part of the park or reinforce provision elsewhere.</p>
Alternative Use Options:	If the site was not developed for residential accommodation, its current informal use would continue.
Disposal Options:	<p>The area is considered potentially suitable for disposal as a development site.</p> <p>It should be noted that the accessway from Linley Crescent is used by the public to obtain access into King George's Playing Field. Any disposal would need to take this into account.</p>
Recommended Strategy:	The site be declared surplus to Council requirements and the Lead Member for Resources be authorised to approve all necessary arrangements to effect the disposal and development of the site (subject to any necessary planning permissions and other consents as appropriate).

LAND AT HOOD WALK, COLLIER ROW

Housing Revenue Account or General Fund:	General
Site Area:	0.35 acres
Description:	Former playsite – play equipment removed due to consistent vandalism
Current use:	Open land
Planning/Transportation/ Access Issues:	<p>The site is subject to the relevant open space/play site policies. As such, it will need to be demonstrated that the disposal of the site will not adversely affect play space provision.</p> <p>The site has two access ways - a vehicular access from Clovelly Gardens (adopted highway) and a pedestrian access from Hood Walk.</p>
Legal Title:	Part of the title is registered and contains no covenants which would restrict residential development.
Other Issues:	Enquiries have shown that there is an underground electricity cable travelling across the site from Clovelly Gardens which runs along the western boundary and out into Hood Walk via the pedestrian accessway. There is also an underground surface water sewer which travels through the site. These are not considered to preclude residential development.
Financial Implications/ Whole Life Costing and Risks :	The area of land that has been identified for possible disposal does not currently produce an income and is unlikely to do so in the future. Disposal will mean that the Council will not have an ongoing liability to maintain the land. Although this is likely to be a small saving that is difficult to accurately specify the overall effect of disposal will be to reduce revenue expenditure and generate a capital receipt.

Consultation with Service Department: Leisure	<p>The Head of Culture and Leisure advises that this is not used as a formal play area and is unlikely to be required for such a use in the future.</p> <p>Alternative play space provision is provided nearby in Rodney Way.</p>
Alternative Use Options:	<p>If the site is not acquired for residential development, it could be acquired by adjoining residents for the purpose of extending their gardens but such disposals are extremely difficult to coordinate. Alternatively, its current use would continue.</p>
Disposal Options:	<p>The site is considered suitable for residential development or to extend rear gardens.</p>
Recommended Strategy:	<p>The site be declared surplus to Council requirements and sold.</p>

EX-PARK KEEPERS HOUSE, SPRING FARM PARK

Housing Revenue Account or General Fund:	General
Site Area:	0.14 acres
Description:	Former park keepers property
Current use:	Vacant
Planning/Transportation/ Access Issues:	<p>The site is designated as Park / Open space and Greenbelt within the UDP. Policies LAR5, GRB2 and ENV28 will apply.</p> <p>Access to the site is via the public highway – Lambs Lane North.</p>
Legal Title:	<p>The title is unregistered.</p> <p>There are no covenants that are considered to restrict a future disposal.</p>
Other Issues:	Rainham Tennis Club had expressed interest in the site as a café/club house. This option has not been pursued by the tennis club since late 2006.
Financial Implications/ Whole Life Costing and Risks :	The area of land that has been identified for possible disposal does not currently produce an income. Disposal will mean that the Council will not have an ongoing liability to maintain the land. Although this is likely to be a small saving that is difficult to accurately specify the overall effect of disposal will be to reduce revenue expenditure and generate a capital receipt
Consultation with Service Department: Leisure	The Head of Culture and Leisure Services advises that this property is not required for the management of the adjacent park.
Alternative Use Options:	If the property is not sold it could possibly be used in association with the park (e.g., tennis club) but no current need / demand is apparent.

Cabinet,24 October 2007

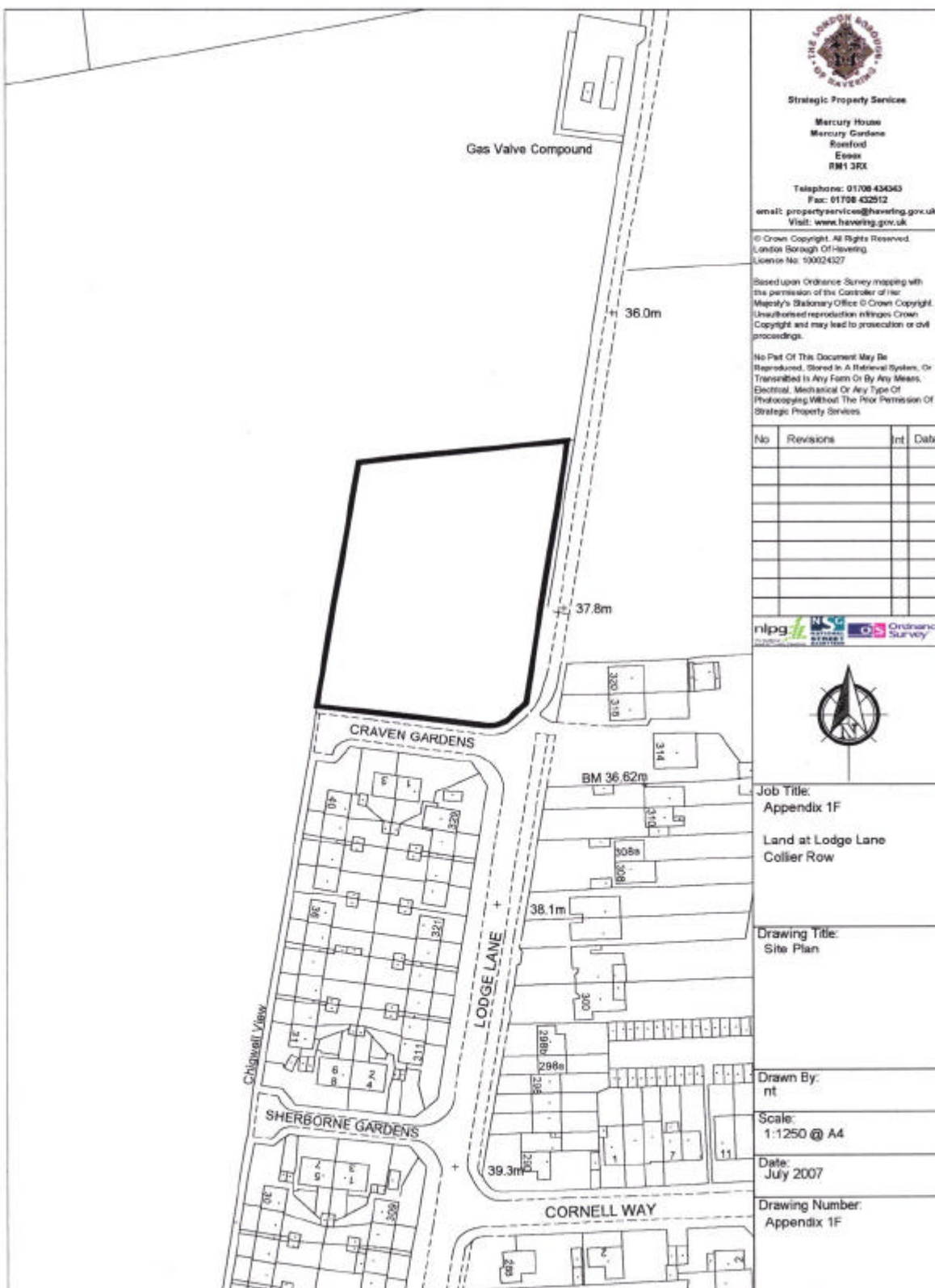
Disposal Options:	The site is considered suitable for residential disposal. There is the potential to demolish and rebuild the existing footprint.
Recommended Strategy:	The site be declared surplus to Council requirements and sold.

LAND AT LODGE LANE, COLLIER ROW

Housing Revenue Account or General Fund:	General
Site Area:	1.00 acres
Description:	Former playsite
Current use:	Informal open area – majority of play equipment removed due to consistent vandalism.
Planning/Transportation/ Access Issues:	The majority of the site is designated greenbelt. The remainder (approx. 0.2 acres) is subject to the relevant open space/play site policies. As such, it will need to be demonstrated that the disposal of the site will not adversely affect play space provision.
Legal Title:	Registered title to be deduced by Legal Services.
Other Issues:	None.
Financial Implications/ Whole Life Costing and Risks :	The area of land that has been identified for possible disposal does not currently produce an income and is unlikely to do so in the future. Disposal will mean that the Council will not have an ongoing liability to maintain the land. Although this is likely to be a small saving that is difficult to accurately specify the overall effect of disposal will be to reduce revenue expenditure and generate a capital receipt.
Consultation with Service Department: Leisure	<p>The Head of Culture and Leisure advises that the site is not required for recreational use and is unlikely to be required in the future.</p> <p>A new high quality playsite provision will be made available as part of the Forest Lodge site that is approximately 600 metres away in Lodge Lane.</p>
Alternative Use Options:	If the site is not sold for development, the current informal use will continue.

Cabinet,24 October 2007

Disposal Options:	The non-greenbelt section of the site is considered suitable for residential development, possibly for a single dwelling subject to detailed planning and legal title.
Recommended Strategy:	The site be declared surplus to Council requirements and sold.

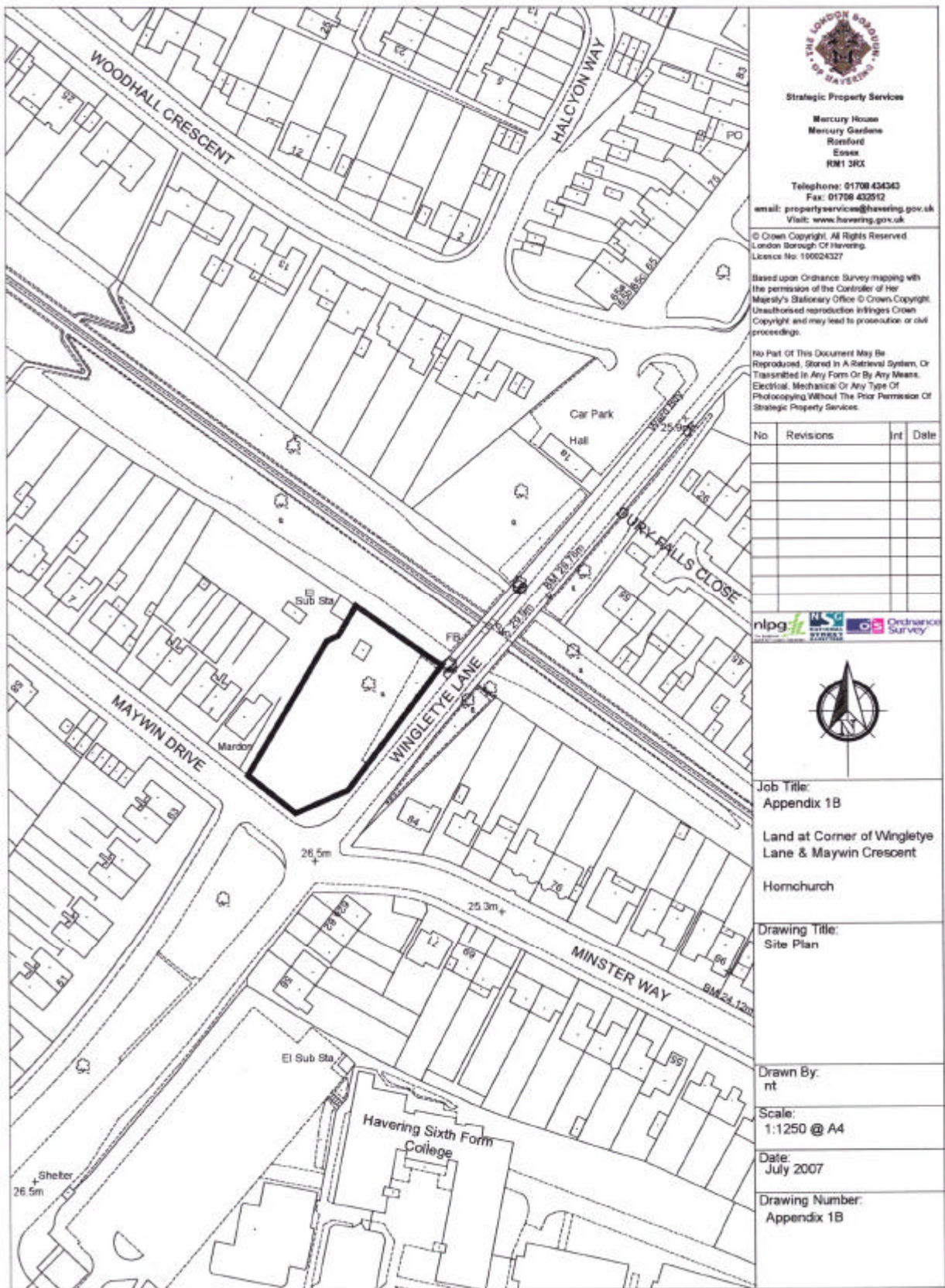


LAND AT THE CORNER OF WINGLETYE LANE & MAYWIN CRESCENT

Housing Revenue Account or General Fund:	General
Site Area:	0.35 acres
Description:	Land with gas transmission station on site
Current use:	Land with gas transmission station on site
Planning/Transportation/ Access Issues:	<p>Designated as part of the green chain. Policy LAR9 of the UDP applies.</p> <p>Although this site is designated as being part of the Green Chain the policy does allow for flexibility in the precise alignment of the route provided that the objectives of the Green Chain is achieved</p> <p>The Council treats areas such as this in accordance with Policy LAR5 which seeks the retention of existing parks and open spaces, with exceptions only being made where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It can be clearly demonstrated that the leisure and recreation needs of the area will be at least as well provided for after development• There will be no significant reduction in the quality of the local environment• There will be no loss of a site of nature conservation importance <p>The site has frontage on Maywin Drive and Wingletye Lane. Both of these roads are adopted public highways.</p>
Legal Title:	<p>The title is unregistered and does not contain any covenants which would restrict development of the site.</p> <p>A small parcel of the land is subject to a lease in favour of British Gas.</p>
Other Issues:	<p>Any development of the site will need to take account of the existence of the gas governor and gas pipes on site. The location of these features are not considered to prevent residential development.</p>

Cabinet,24 October 2007

Financial Implications/ Whole Life Costing and Risks :	The current reserved rent for the gas governor is £10 per annum and the Council would not receive this if the freehold interest is sold. Disposal will mean that the Council will not have an ongoing liability to maintain the remainder of the land. Although the net effect of disposal is likely to be a small saving this is difficult to accurately specify. The overall effect of disposal will be to reduce revenue expenditure and generate a capital receipt
Consultation with Service Department: Leisure	The Head of Culture and Leisure advises that the site is not required for recreational use.
Alternative Use Options:	If the site is not sold for residential development, it will continue in its current use.
Disposal Options:	The area is considered suitable for disposal as a development site.
Recommended Strategy:	The site be declared surplus to Council requirements and sold.





Strategic Property Services

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No	Revisions	Int	Date

nipg   



Job Title:
Appendix 1B

Land at Corner of Wingletye Lane & Maywin Crescent

Homchurch

Drawing Title:
Site Plan

Drawn By:
nt

Scale:
1:1250 @ A4

Date:
July 2007

Drawing Number:
Appendix 1B

LAND AT THE CORNER OF HORNCHURCH ROAD & ABBS CROSS LANE

Housing Revenue Account or General Fund:	General
Site Area:	2.29 acres
Description:	Land
Current use:	No existing formal use
Planning/Transportation/ Access Issues:	The site has no UDP designation. The site is situated at the junction of Abbs Cross Lane and Hornchurch Road. Access to the site is possible from either or both road frontages. A Planning Briefing Note has been produced and is attached.
Legal Title:	The title is unregistered and there are no covenants which would restrict the development of the land.
Other Issues:	The site has a number of large trees on it which would warrant protection
Financial Implications/ Whole Life Costing and Risks :	The area of land that has been identified for possible disposal does not currently produce an income and is unlikely to do so in the future. Disposal will mean that the Council will not have an ongoing liability to maintain the land. Although this is likely to be a small saving that is difficult to accurately specify the overall effect of disposal will be to reduce revenue expenditure and generate a capital receipt
Consultation with Service Department: Leisure	The Head of Culture and Leisure Services advise that the land is not part of the adjacent Harrow Lodge Park although operationally Culture & Leisure Services do carry out some grounds maintenance.
Alternative Use Options:	If the site is not sold for residential development, its current informal use will continue.

Cabinet,24 October 2007

Disposal Options:	The site is considered suitable for residential development. In accordance with the policies being adopted within the Council's Hornchurch Urban Strategy, a high quality development will be pursued for this site.
Recommended Strategy:	The site be declared surplus to Council requirements and sold.

Abbs Cross Gardens – Planning Guidance

The purpose of this brief is to set out how the relevant development plan policies should be interpreted in relation to the site and to provide additional guidance to developers on how the Council's planning objectives can be achieved.

The briefing note provides planning policy guidance on the Abbs Cross Gardens site in Hornchurch. It highlights that this is a key gateway site on the approach to Hornchurch town centre, and that the site has the potential for a high quality residential development that embraces the privileged position the site enjoys and harnesses its topographical and ecological character.

The note refers to the Core Policies (CP) and Development Control Policies (DC) of Havering's recently Submitted Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan Document, which should be consulted for more detailed information.

Site description

The site is 0.92 ha in area and is grassed with a number of mature established trees within it and on the north, west and south of the site. The River Ravensbourne (and its banks) is a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation. The site slopes from west to east upwards away from the river to the point where Abbs Cross Road meets Hornchurch Road.

The site is on the western approach to Hornchurch town centre and is bounded to the north by the A124 (Hornchurch Road), to the east by Abbs Cross Lane, and to the west by the River Ravensbourne. The southern boundary is defined by the old people's bungalows (numbers 20-32 Abbs Cross Lane) and then extends westwards from the rear of 34 Abbs Cross Lane to the Ravensbourne.

Existing development is limited to the south and east of the site. The development to the south runs along Abbs Cross Lane and terminates at the entrance to this site. Development also runs along the eastern side of Abbs Cross Lane. Beyond Annabel Court the development changes from traditional terraced housing to flats which have an oblique relationship to Abbs Cross Lane. At Lyndhurst Drive east, Abbs Cross Lane and Grey Towers Avenue development has been set back from Hornchurch Road to provide a green buffer to Hornchurch Road which enhances the green and open character of the Ravensbourne Valley.

Vehicular access to the site is from Abbs Cross Lane and is currently limited to the bungalows. This road will need to be extended into the site to allow access to any new development. To the south of the site, the land to the rear of numbers 34-80 Abbs Cross Lane is privately owned. Any development of the site should provide and protect a development access route to this land.

Housing

Although this is a green open space, the site is not protected open space and does not form part of Harrow Lodge Park which is situated on the western side of the river. Therefore the land is undesignated on the Submission Proposals Map and, in line with CP1 which aims to increase the supply of new homes, housing is the first priority here.

Due to its proximity to Hornchurch Town Centre the site has a Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) of 3-4, and enjoys a density range of 30-80 units per hectare with regard to DC2, and a corresponding maximum car parking standard of 1-2 spaces per unit. However, please note that due to the absence of a controlled parking zone in this area car free housing would not normally be allowed.

In line with CP2, the proposals must help create sustainable, attractive, mixed and balanced communities and aim to ensure that the needs of those households with special needs are met. As required by DC2 a design-led approach must be taken to determine the type, size and form of new development with regard to local and sub-regional housing needs. For market housing, the indicative mix is: one bed (24%), two bed (41%), three bed (34%), four bed (0) and five bed (1%).

Affordable housing policy will apply to this site. The current policy DC6 requires 35% affordable housing on sites above 15 units or 0.5 hectare, split 70/30 between social rented and intermediate housing. DC6 sets the indicative mix for affordable housing of: one bed (19%), two bed (25%), three bed (47%) and four and five bed (10%).

As highlighted in the introduction this site presents an exciting opportunity to provide a high quality development on a prominent site on the approaches to Hornchurch. In line with DC3, developers will be expected to demonstrate how they have addressed the policies in the plan which impact on the design and layout of new developments. In particular, DC61 sets out detailed urban design criteria that any proposal will need to satisfy and emphasises that development should maintain, enhance or improve the character and appearance of the local area. In this regard, the site presents a number of challenges which developers will need to respond to, in particular:

- The ecological character of the site, particularly the Ravensbourne and its banks which are a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation, and the mature trees which are within and bound the site;
- The topographical character of the site. The site rises away from the Ravensbourne to the junction of Abbs Cross Lane with Hornchurch Road, with a change in level of five metres which emphasises the prominent position of the site; and
- Open views to and from the site and the marked transition from the rural character of the Ravensbourne Valley to the more urban character of the Hornchurch approaches beyond Abbs Cross Lane.

Therefore in line with DC61, new development should respond positively to these unique characteristics, in particular by:

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- Providing a green buffer zone to the Ravensbourne (DC59);
- Integrating trees worthy of retention within the landscaping of the scheme (Please see DC60 and Supplementary Planning Guidance on the Protection of Trees During Development);
- Maintaining the open aspect along Hornchurch Road by setting back development from Hornchurch Road and ensuring development provides a positive frontage to Hornchurch Road and Abbs Cross Lane; and
- Evidencing the change in levels across the site.

At a more detailed level any proposal should not result in unacceptable overshadowing, loss of sunlight/daylight, overlooking or loss of privacy to existing and new properties. This is particularly important with regard to the old people's bungalows, most of which have open access onto the site.

In addition in line with DC7 the Council will seek all new homes to be built to Lifetime Home standards.

In line with DC34, developers will be required to take account of the needs of pedestrians in the design of the new development and access from it to local destinations including Hornchurch Town Centre and Hornchurch Sports Centre and the bus stops on Hornchurch Road and Abbs Cross Lane. Attention also needs to be paid to lighting, safety and security, and barriers to local movement. The need for a new pedestrian crossing across Abbs Cross Lane and access through the site to the westbound bus stop on Hornchurch Road should be investigated. There are no public rights of way on the site.

Similarly, DC35 requires that the design and location of access and circulation of the development takes into account the needs of cyclists and that safe and secure cycle parking is encouraged. Annex 6 of the Core Strategy sets out the following cycle standards:

- Flats – one cycle space per unit
- Dwelling Houses – one per 1 or 2 bed dwelling and two per 3 bed plus dwelling

Developers also need to adhere to DC63 which sets out a range of criteria focused on achieving the 'Secure by Design' award scheme. Please contact Donal Nolan for more advice and also see 'Safer Places' (ODPM, 2004).

Environmental Management

A high priority of the Council is to ensure new development is built to a high standard of sustainable design and construction and minimises its impact on the environment. Due to the Ravensbourne forming the western boundary of the site, part of the site is in a Flood Zone. Therefore with regard to CP15 and DC49, a Flood Risk Assessment will be required and the Environment Agency should be consulted at an early stage. A suitable green buffer should be provided alongside the river to manage flood risk.

Surface water should be controlled as near to its source as possible. Any proposals should consider the use of sustainable urban drainage systems.

In line with DC50, development must be built to a high standard of sustainable construction. Applicants will be required to produce documentation from the Building Research Establishment to confirm that the development is predicted to achieve a rating of at least 'Very Good' under the Eco-Homes or BREEAM schemes, although the Council will encourage an 'Excellent' rating.

DC51 requires an energy assessment showing how the development has sought to ensure that energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions are minimised and the incorporation of on-site renewable energy equipment to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by at least 10% (although the Council will encourage 20% in line with further alterations to the London Plan).

With regard to DC52, development of the site must avoid any significant impact on water quality, water courses, groundwater, surface water or drainage systems unless suitable mitigation measures can be secured. This is an issue for this site due to the western boundary being formed by the River Ravensbourne. Applicants will be required as a minimum to incorporate a high standard of water efficiency, including grey water and rainwater recycling, to help reduce water consumption. Sewers cross the site NE and SW quadrants. Thames Water need 6m clearance or diversion.

In line with DC57, the Council may seek river restoration and/or financial contributions towards restoration of the Ravensbourne. Developers are encouraged to refer to the Environment Agency publication 'Bringing Your Rivers Back To Life'. Development should be set back from the river, particularly as the western boundary of the site along the Ravensbourne is identified as a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation. In line with DC58, any development of the site should not have an adverse affect on this designation. Moreover, the Council will expect the development to enhance biodiversity in line with Havering Biodiversity Action Plan targets as an integral part of new development, please see DC59.

Other Guidance

Supplementary Planning Guidance on Residential Amenity Space sets out the residential amenity space standards and also includes guidance on distances between the backs of houses. For houses, rear gardens should normally have a minimum area equivalent to 100% of the gross floorspace of the house OR 100 square metres per dwelling, whichever is the greater. For flats and elderly persons accommodation, amenity space should normally be provided with a minimum area of 50 square metres per unit for two bed flats, 40 square metres per unit for one bed flats and 30 square metres per unit for unit for bedsits and studio flats. These are not absolute standards and an important consideration will be the quality of the amenity space; for example, is it screened from public view, convenient, usable and accessible. Of particular relevance to this site is the fact that buildings may overlook green space and if they are designed to benefit from this open aspect this too could justify a reduction in amenity space requirements.

Education contributions

Contributions will be sought towards the capital infrastructure of schools required to meet demands for school generated by the development. Interim Planning Guidance available from the Council's website provides detail on how contributions are calculated.

Colne Drive, Harold Hill

Housing Revenue Account or General Fund:	Housing Revenue Account
Site Area (acres):	0.85 acres
Description:	Land
Current Position:	The Council owns the freehold of the site. An adjacent site has recently been developed and is now in use as an Extra Care scheme.
Current use:	Unused area of larger development site
Planning/Transportation/ Access Issues:	The cleared site had formed part of a larger former residential scheme now demolished. The majority of that land has been used for the provision of an extra care residential scheme. That site was designed so as to not prejudice the possible future development of the remaining land. Therefore the remaining site has potential for residential or specialist residential development in character with the area. Frontage access is available. As with the adjoining site some trees on the site may be worthy of retention in any new development.
Legal Title:	The site is registered and there are no covenants which would restrict the development of the site.
Other Issues:	None
Financial Implications/ Whole Life Costing and Risks :	<p>This is a non-operational area of land which is not subject to Council expenditure barring routine grass cutting. The Council would, therefore, benefit from the complete capital receipt less disposal expenses.</p> <p>Interest from the receipt will be in the order of £48,000 per £million received and will accrue to the General Fund until the capital receipt is used for the provision of social housing, in accordance with Council policy.</p> <p>It should be noted that under the capital legislation, if the receipt is not used for social housing or</p>

	regeneration, 50% of the net receipt (after allowing for disposal costs) would have to be passed to the Government for pooling.
Alternative Use Options:	If the site is not sold on the basis set out below the Council would need to consider other options for disposal.
Disposal Options:	Develop the site in accordance with planning policy
Recommended Strategy:	That the site be declared surplus to Council requirements and sold.
Comments:	<p>When this site was originally considered for disposal the comments considered at that time were:</p> <p><i>“In view of its location immediately adjacent to a new Extra Care scheme and as a result of demand for additional facilities for elderly residents in this area this site will be offered for sale subject to restrictions that the development will consist of older persons housing subject to an age restriction on the occupants of the scheme. The Council will also seek nomination rights over some units.</i></p> <p><i>If these restrictions result in a best offer that is lower than would be expected if the site was sold on an unrestricted basis the Cabinet would need to approve a sale at below Market Value under the General Disposal Consent. It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for resources be delegated to deal with this decision should the need arise.”</i></p> <p>As stated earlier in this report a sale has not been completed on this basis and it is now recommended that it should be re-marketed on an unrestricted basis.</p>

