

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	CABINET
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	THE DISPOSAL OF LAND AT BROADLANDS ROAD AND RE-PROVISION OF ALLOTMENTS AT BRICKFIELD ROAD.
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	22 NOVEMBER 2010
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	CABINET MEMBER FOR RESOURCES & WORKFORCE PLANNING

#### **STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

Confidential Appendix 3 contains information deemed to be exempt from general publication based on Category 3 of paragraph 10.4 of the Councils Access to Information Procedure Rules. Publication of the information could influence bids made on the Authority's other property transactions which maybe financially detrimental to the Council.

#### **BRIEF SUMMARY**

This report seeks authority to dispose of the Broadlands Road Allotments site to Southampton University to enable the University to develop the Highfield campus and to approve the conversion of the vacant land at Brickfield Road into replacement allotments.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- (i) To approve in principle the sale terms of the Broadlands Road allotment site to Southampton University, subject to Secretary of State Consent.
- (ii) To approve the conversion of the land at Brickfield Road into replacement allotment plots, subject to Planning Approval.
- (iii) To delegate authority to Head of Property & Procurement after consultation with the Executive Director for Neighbourhoods to take any such action as considered necessary to facilitate the conversion of the Brickfield Road site into allotments and for the disposal of the Broadlands Road site.

#### **REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

This report is submitted for consideration as a General Exception under paragraph 15 of the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution, notice having been given to the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Panel and the Public. The matter requires a decision following the recent conclusion of confidential negotiations with Southampton University.

1. The disposal of the Broadlands Road Allotments to Southampton University will enable the University to develop the Highfield Campus, to support the Universities academic activities.
2. The allotment site at Broadlands Road has been allocated within the University's Development Zone in the previous Local Plan, which is now imbedded in the Councils Core Strategy for an Educated City – Policy CS11.

3. The disposal of Broadlands Road Allotments will require Secretary of State' consent, one influencing factor in the Secretary's decision will be the re-provision of allotments and therefore the conversion of Brickfield Road will enhance the Councils ability to secure the Secretary's consent for the disposal of Broadlands Road.

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

4. Do not dispose of the allotment site – this inhibits the Universities ability to develop the Highfield Campus, the Universities main campus.
5. Do not provide replacement allotments – Government Guidance for the disposal of allotments requires the provision of suitable alternative allotments.
6. Dispose of the Brickfield Road Site for residential development – although the site is allocated in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, a conversion to allotments provides an opportunity to dispose of the Broadlands Road site to enhance the University's growth and development.

### **DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)**

7. Broadlands Road Allotment site is a small allotment site providing 17 plots, situated to the rear of Broadlands Road., although one plot cannot be cultivated due to significant shading from mature trees neighbouring the site. The remaining 16 plots are all let, with 88 people on the waiting list. The allotments vary in size from 4 – 9 Rods (1 Rod = 25.sq metres). The site is gently sloping and is accessed by a narrow path from Broadlands Road. The site does not provide any car parking facilities to plot holders. The allotment is identified in appendix 1 plan V2954.
8. The Development Plan for the City comprises saved policies of the Local Plan Review (adopted March 2006) and Southampton City Council Local Development Framework Core Strategy adopted in January 2010. The Broadlands Road allotment site is allocated as part of the University's Development zone. The Core Strategy policy CS11 "an Educated City" safeguards the University sites to enable further development and intensification of use.
9. Sections of the allotments were registered as Statutory Allotment in 1992. The disposal of Statutory Allotments requires the consent of the Secretary of State for the Communities & Local Government, in accordance with Section 8 Allotment Act 1925. As part of the application process the Secretary of State will give consideration to the provision of alternative allotments plots for displaced allotment holders.
10. The Council currently has 100% occupancy across all allotment sites in the City. Alternative allotment provision is not available from within the existing portfolio of allotments. The land at Brickfield Road has been identified as providing suitable alternative allotments plots for the displaced allotments plot holders. Brickfield Road is shown in Plan V2953 in appendix 2.
11. Brickfield Road can be landscaped to provide 17 plots; each plot will be of equivalent size compared with the existing plots at Broadlands Road. There will be a net gain of one plot available to let to a party on the current waiting list. The Brickfield Road site is level and the initial design considerations have included the provision of 3 car parking spaces within the allotment to enhance

the sites ability to received deliveries and increase accessibility for plot holders. Broadlands Road and Brickfield Road are approximately 0.8 miles (1.2 km) apart.

12. To enable the conversion of the Brickfield Road site, the City Council will need to secure full planning consent for a change of use.
13. The Brickfield Road site is subject to soil contamination, due to infill material being deposited on the site at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It will be necessary to undertake a full remediation programme across the site prior to any landscaping work to arrange the site as allotments.
14. The allotment plot holders will be entitled to compensation for the loss of long term crops and fixtures. Each plot holder will receive a new shed, water butt and compost bin, compost, manure and financial compensation for the long term crops lost i.e. Fruit trees, asparagus, rhubarb crowns, raspberry canes.
15. The allotment plot holders have received an initial consultation letter in June 2010 advising the Broadlands Road site is allocated as a University Development zone and that Council would relocate the allotment as and when the Broadlands Road site was no longer available.
16. The application to the Secretary of State requires the Local Authority undertake consultation with the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners. The City Council will also consult with the plot holders, SAGA (Southampton Allotment Gardeners Association) and the other key stakeholders.
17. The City Council has over 1,600 allotment plots. The Council has created 18 additional new plots at Newtown Road Allotments and 6 new plots at Bitterne West allotments this year and will provide an additional 28 plots at Oakley Road South and 18 new plots at Southwells Farm, allotments by March 2011, providing a total of 64 new plots in 2010/2011. The City Council will be investing a further £25,000 in 2011/2012 to upgrade fencing, pathways and improve drainage, a potential additional 5 new plots maybe created at Athlestan Road allotments, although this will depend upon the condition of the land once cleared.
18. Brickfield Road is allocated as for residential development within the Councils Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA). The conversion of the site into allotments will result in the Council forgoing a capital receipt from the sale of the land at Brickfield Road. However the terms agreed with the University include the loss in value to the Council in converting the site to allotments.
19. Detail of the capital receipt to be received for the sale of the land at Broadlands Road, the loss in value at Brickfields Road and the contributions in cost the University will make towards the whole project are set out in confidential appendix 3.
20. The overall delivery timescale of the project is currently estimated to be 28 months, with the Broadlands Road allotments becoming vacant in March 2013 and Brickfields Road being fully operational as allotments. The timescales are estimated at this time as there are no set timeframes available for the Secretary of States consent process.

21. The availability of the Broadlands Road site in 2013 accords with the Universities medium term plan to provide additional academic activities.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Capital/Revenue**

22. The capital receipt will be allocated to the general fund
23. The professional fees, application fees and a proportion of the compensation due to allotment holders incurred by Council will be paid from the capital receipt. The details are shown in confidential appendix 3.
24. Southampton University will contribute to specific costs incurred in this project including the cost of soil remediation, the conversion and landscaping costs to convert Brickfield Road and a proportion of the compensation due to allotment plot holders as detailed in confidential appendix 3. The University has agreed to pay the actual costs incurred as the figures in the appendix are estimates based upon the information available at this time.

### **Property/Other**

25. Broadlands Road will be appropriated from the Housing Portfolio to the Resources Portfolio.
26. Brickfield Road will be appropriated from Children's Services & Learning Portfolio to the Neighbourhoods portfolio to enable management of the allotments by the Allotment Service.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:**

27. The Council will make an application to the Secretary of State for the Environment in accordance with Section 8 Allotments Act 1925, for consent to dispose of Statutory Allotments. The Secretary of States consent will not be forthcoming unless he is satisfied that adequate provision will be made elsewhere for displaced allotment holders
28. The appropriations will be implemented in accordance with the Head of Property & Procurements Delegated Powers.
29. Broadlands Road will be sold in accordance with S123 Local Government Act 1972.

### **Other Legal Implications:**

30. None.

## **POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS**

- 31 The disposal of a council property for capital receipt supports the Councils medium term plan for revenue generation.

<b>AUTHOR:</b>	Name:	Ali Mew	Tel:	023 8083 3425
	E-mail:	Ali.mew@southampton.gov.uk		

**KEY DECISION?** Yes/No    Yes

<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	Portswood
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**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Non-confidential appendices are in the Members' Rooms and can be accessed on-line**

**Appendices**

1.	Plan V2954 Broadlands Road
2.	Plan V2953 Brickfield Road
3.	Confidential - Detailed Terms

**Documents In Members' Rooms**

1.	None
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**Integrated Impact Assessment**

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to be carried out.	No
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**Other Background Documents**

**Integrated Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:**

Title of Background Paper(s)

Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)

1.	Note	
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