



REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATE: 25 JUNE 2009

REPORTING OFFICERS: HEAD OF ECONOMY & HOUSING
JULIAN RUDD

SUBJECT: WENTWORTH STREET CAR PARK

WARDS AFFECTED: MALTON DIRECTLY, ADJACENT WARDS INDIRECTLY

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval from the Council as landowner, to take forward the resolution of the Full Council on 21 May 2009 to include the Wentworth Street Car Park for consideration through the Ryedale Local Development Framework process, for the purpose of 'redevelopment for food retail and parking'. This requires the District Council to invite expressions of interest from developers in order that deliverable proposals are put forward with the necessary level of detail for consideration.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Council be recommended to invite expressions of interest for the purchase and redevelopment of either the whole or part of the Wentworth Street Car Park site (as shown on the plan at Annex A) for future use to include food retailing and a substantial parking facility for use by the public, and that following the receipt of such expressions the matter be referred back for consideration.

3.0 REASONS SUPPORTING DECISION

- 3.1 Full Council on 21 May 2009 resolved (Minute 10b) to adopt the recommendation of the Policy and Resources Committee (Minute 397) 'That the Wentworth Street Car Park be included in the June consultation for redevelopment for food retail and parking through the LDF process'.
- 3.2 In order for consideration of land use options to take place through the LDF / planning process it is necessary for deliverable proposals to be worked up for analysis. Whilst the Council as landowner could commission the preparation of detailed proposals for this site this is not recommended, particularly given the expense involved (in terms of fees for architects, surveyors, transport engineers etc). It is more appropriate to utilise the vision, skills and knowledge of the development industry by inviting expressions of interest in the site.
- 3.3 Submissions from developers that outline their proposals for the site will provide or lead to the necessary detail for consideration through the planning process. Such
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submissions would also illustrate how the market could respond to controversial issues such as the amount of parking that can be provided whilst allowing some redevelopment of the site. This is required in time for the publication draft of the Core Strategy in December 2009 and as such proposals will need to be considered in advance of this.

- 3.3 By inviting expressions of interest in the redevelopment of the site the Council, as landowner, can also understand the nature of redevelopment that the market could deliver on the site and its value. *NB This process is without prejudice to the consideration of the future use of Wentworth Street Car park through the LDF / planning process.* At that stage the Authority can decide to specify its requirements for redevelopment of the site and formally invite tenders for redevelopment on that basis, which would then lead to formal proposals for the site. Alternatively a decision could be taken not to proceed with release of the site and to retain it in its current form.
- 3.4 Members should note that any detailed proposals that are taken forward for the site following consideration of submissions received at expressions of interest stage will have to be separately considered for acceptability in land-use terms through the LDF/planning process.
- 3.5 In addition to its responsibilities as both the planning authority and for promoting the social, environmental and economic well-being of Ryedale, the Council also has responsibilities as a landowner to ensure best utilisation of its assets. Recent DCLG guidance to local authorities on asset management states: "local authorities ensure that they secure better value for money whilst making more effective use of their asset base as the foundation for delivering high performing public services." – (Building on Strong Foundations - A Framework for Local Authority Asset Management - DCLG - Feb 08).

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The District Council owns the freehold of the land shown on the Plan at Annex A although a number of peripheral areas are currently leased to other users. The then local authority acquired the land in two stages, with the first parcel acquired on 30 December 1950. This amounted to some 2.024 acres, now used as the upper tier of the current car park and part of the lower tier. The remainder of the lower tier was acquired on 6 December 1962 and amounted to 2.23 acres.
- 4.2 There is no legal restriction on use for most of the lower tier, although there are covenants on the remainder of the site that limit uses to car parking and housing.

5.0 POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 To create the conditions for economic success and to have a high quality, clean and sustainable environment are aims of the Council Plan for 2009-13.

6.0 REPORT

- 6.1 In advertising for expressions of interest for purchase of the land at Annex A and its redevelopment for future use to include food retailing and a substantial parking facility for the public it will be considered that this should be on the basis of a long lease as opposed to release of the freehold.

- 6.2 It is important that developers are not unduly fettered in drawing up submissions for this site. However, it is proposed that developers are advised that the Council's consideration, as landowner, of submitted proposals will include reference to the following factors, in addition to the value that would be raised through the land asset:
- The amount and type of parking to be provided, including during construction – proposals should support the vitality of the wider town centre and encourage linked trips to retailers and services in Malton and Norton;
 - The wider regeneration benefits for Malton town centre;
 - The integration of the scheme with the town centre and the urban design and transport impacts;
 - The extent to which the proposals can help achieve benefits for the local economy and community.

7.0 FINANCIAL & LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Beyond use of officer time the only financial impact of inviting expressions of interest for this site is limited to the cost of an advert, which can be funded through existing budgets.

8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 At this stage no decision is being made about the future of this site and there are consequently no environmental implications of note in relation to advertising for expressions of interest.

9.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 No decision is being made at this stage regarding disposal or redevelopment of land. Instead the recommendation is to invite expressions of interest that can then be considered by the Authority. This approach reduces the risk of there being no workable proposals for redevelopment of the site for food retail and parking to be considered through the LDF / planning process.
- 9.2 The risks and possible mitigations attached to the various options that are available to the Council following the receipt of submissions for the site will be outlined at that stage.

10.0 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 Expressions of interest are required in order for the Council as landowner to assess the potential of redevelopment of the Wentworth Street Car Park. This process will also encourage production of proposals that can be separately considered through the LDF / planning process.

Background Papers: Report of the Malton Town Centre Strategy & Accompanying Development Briefs, Policy & Resources Committee, 2 April 2009 (Minute 397 & Minute 10a of Full Council 21 May 2009 refers).

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