

Report to Tidworth Area Board

ITEM 9

Land at St Andrews Road Tidworth

1. Purpose of the report

To seek approval from Tidworth Area Board to the disposal of approximately 852sqm of land at St Andrews Road Tidworth to the Ministry of Defence for a nominal sum.

2. Background

Aspire Defence is contracted to deliver and service Project Allenby for the MOD over a 35 year term. This work is progressing and is already dramatically improving the working, living and social built environment for all service and civilian personnel.

One of the buildings to be designed and delivered under the Project is a replacement for the present Garrison Theatre, which is proposed to be located on the site of the former Garrison Medical/Dental Centre in St Andrews Road, Tidworth. It is considered that the location is convenient and centrally placed site offering excellent access to both military and civilian use.

It is understood that the facility should accommodate up to 700 people for central briefings and will incorporate space and facilities available for sharing with local community groups and services.

3. Main considerations for the Tidworth Area Board

The site is non-strategic and therefore the Area Board has the authority to approve, refuse or approve with conditions the proposal to dispose of the site to the Ministry of Defence.

The Board may consider that the proposed disposal is beneficial to the community, as well as enhancing the spirit of partnership working between the Council and the military.

The Board in arriving at its decision will no doubt consider whether the benefits of the proposal outweigh keeping the land in its current use.

4. Comments from the Council's Strategic Property Department

The Council can either transfer the freehold or grant a 999 year lease, the consideration in both cases amounting to £1.

Whichever method is adopted, the Council will include 2 covenants:

- I. Not to use other than for operational or community purposes. This will be enforced by a condition of leasehold or a 'reverter clause' (the property automatically reverts back to Council ownership free of charge should such use come to an end) if a freehold transfer is decided upon.
- II. There will be a condition obliging the MOD to make the property available to the community for hire at a cost reflecting pro rata running costs plus any caretaking requirements (lock up at end of evening) when not being occupied for operational lectures etc.

It is understood that the facility could be constructed without the Council's land. However its inclusion will improve the quality of the environment.

5. Comments from the Council's Legal Department

Officers in the legal department are retrieving copies of the Council's legal Title to ensure that there are no encumbrances that would have a prejudicial impact upon the proposal.

The open market value of the land is substantially below the threshold and therefore consent from the Secretary of state is not required.

6. Comments from the Council's Finance Department

The land has not been identified as a disposal for which the capital receipt has been allocated to fund either the Council's capital programme or a specific Council project.

Furthermore the open market value of the land is not of sufficient significance to warrant a recommendation for a refusal to the proposed disposal.

7. Recommendation

To dispose of approximately 852sqm of land at St Andrews Road Tidworth to the Ministry of Defence for a nominal sum, subject to a condition that the facility is made available to the community at a cost that reflects the pro-rata running costs of the facility.