

AMESBURY AREA BOARD
20 SEPTEMBER 2012

COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER

Land at Southmill Hill, Amesbury

Executive Summary

This report deals with an application for the transfer of land at Southmill Hill, Amesbury to be transferred to Amesbury Town Council in accordance with Wiltshire Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

Proposal

The Area Board is asked to consider an application submitted by Amesbury Town Council for the transfer of land at Southmill Hill, Amesbury. The applicants' proposal is set out at Appendix 2.

Reasons For Proposal

This proposal supports and implements Wiltshire Council's Community Asset Transfer Policy.

Recommendation

To approve the transfer subject to the matters referred to in paragraph 9 of the report.

Karen Linaker
Amesbury Community Area Manager

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Purpose of Report

1. The Area Board is asked to consider an application submitted by Amesbury Town Council for the transfer of land at Southmill Hill, Amesbury (see plan attached at Appendix 1). The applicants' proposal is set out at Appendix 2.

Background

2. Wiltshire Council is supporting the principle of the transfer of community assets in order to empower and strengthen local communities. The Council believes that transferring appropriate public assets to communities leads to more responsive services that better meet local people's priorities.
3. Transfer of an asset can also provide the opportunity to lever more resources into a community and provide a more accessible and responsive base from which to deliver local services.
4. A community group or organisation can benefit from greater financial stability and build confidence through having ownership (or long term security through a lease) of a physical asset. This financial sustainability can help the organisation become less dependent on grants, provide security for further borrowing and opportunities for further growth.
5. Typically, organisations that would be considered appropriate are Voluntary and Community Groups/Associations, Town or Parish Councils, Trusts or Charities, or Social Enterprise Groups.

The application before the Area Board

6. The application from Amesbury Town Council is attached at Appendix 2 and relates to the transfer of land at Southmill Hill, Amesbury for the provision of allotments.
7. The application was submitted in accordance with the Council's application process and meets the requirements for consideration by the Area Board.

8. The Community Area Manager has consulted with Strategic Property Services, who have undertaken appropriate consultation with service departments across the Council. Local consultation has been undertaken by the applicant in accordance with the application checklist and the outcome of the consultation is included within the application. Cllrs Noeken and Westmoreland, the local members, have been appraised.

The views of Council officers

9. On behalf of the Council, Strategic Property Services (who have overall responsibility for the Council's estates and property) have provided the following observations to the Area Board.
 - 9.1 The land was acquired for a highway improvement scheme and is still within the adopted highway. Amesbury Town Council will be required to pay for a stopping up order to remove the land from the highway and enable it to be used for allotment purposes.
 - 9.2 As the land was acquired by compulsory purchase, Wiltshire Council is obliged to offer it at market value to the original owners. This has been done but they have two months in which to respond. That period has not expired and no response has been received to date. If the original owners decide that they wish to buy the land the proposed transfer will not be able to proceed.
 - 9.3 Access to the site is via a lay-by on the A345 formed by the old line of the road. Parking will need to be managed so as to avoid conflict with general use of the lay-by.
 - 9.4 This part of Amesbury contains significant archaeology. Amesbury Town Council will need to ensure that the allotments are designed in such a way that any archaeology which may remain on the site is not disturbed.
 - 9.5 The land is to be transferred on the standard basis. This is that there will be a covenant restricting use of the land to community purposes. If the land should cease to be used for this purpose it will revert to Wiltshire Council.
 - 9.6 Financial implications are limited to the maintenance cost previously incurred by Wiltshire Council being transferred to Amesbury Town Council.

Recommendation

10. To approve the transfer subject to the matters referred to in paragraph 9 above.

Karen Linaker
Amesbury Community Area Manager