

WIRRAL COUNCIL

DELEGATED DECISION

SUBJECT:	CHURCH ROAD REGENERATION INITIATIVE AJ MOTORS
WARD/S AFFECTED:	<i>TRANMERE</i>
REPORT OF:	<i>HEAD OF UNIVERSAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES</i>
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	<i>COUNCILLOR ADRIAN JONES</i>
KEY DECISION?	<i>NO</i>

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to a land transaction aimed at accommodating AJ Motors' operations within the Church Road Regeneration Initiative.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

2.1 The Council is undertaking a Regeneration Initiative in Church Road Tranmere, along with its development partner, Lovells, which requires the acquisition and demolition of aging housing and commercial properties. The acquisition of property for the scheme has nearly completed with the exception of AJ Motors vehicle repair garage and two terraced properties numbered 31-33 Church Road, all of which are in the same ownership.

2.2 The vehicle repair garage was originally identified for acquisition and demolition as part of the Church Road Masterplan, however, the owner of the garage along with officers from the Council tried extensively to identify suitable alternative accommodation to relocate the business, but without success. Consequently, more recent discussions have centred on an amendment to the original scheme which would enable AJ Motors to remain in the current location. A revision to the scheme has therefore provisionally been agreed with the owner of A J Motors which would enable it to remain in the current location with a more regular shaped site and would also provide more off road parking provision which would offset the loss of local parking elsewhere in the scheme. Lovells have prepared provisional drawings to demonstrate that this revision can be incorporated in to their plans for the area.

2.3 The transaction would include an exchange of land immediately to the rear of the properties in Church Road. The land shown edged blue would be transferred to the owner of A J Motors and the land shown edged red would be transferred to the Council. This would provide a regular boundary to the rear of the properties which Lovells would construct on the Church Road frontage. In addition, the Council would transfer the ownership of the land shown edged green to A J Motors, with the transfer to include a restrictive covenant permitting only activities associated with vehicle repairs.

2.4 The sites shown edged red and blue are of sufficiently similar size to allow a straight swap. The area shown shaded green could potentially have a value in the region of £36,000 if it was capable of being sold unrestricted on the open market. However, it will not be sold unrestricted on the open market. In reality, should the transaction not proceed as reported, then the land would remain within the Development Agreement with Lovells, which has a land value attached to it at a nominal amount based on a development appraisal by the Council's consultants. Members will, however, be aware of the Council's obligation to obtain the best price reasonably obtainable on the disposal of its land and property. However, under the General Consent, the Council does have the power to restrict the value of land by imposing restrictions as to its use on the grounds that to do so is in the interest of the economic and / or environmental and / or social wellbeing of the inhabitants of the Borough and provided also that any such restriction in value does not exceed two million pounds, per transaction.

2.5 Members should note that terms for the purchase of 31 and 33 Church Road have also been provisionally agreed and approved under a separate authority, but will be implemented in conjunction with this proposed exchange.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

3.1 The transaction as described deviates from the initial Masterplan for the area, but will enable completion of land assembly for the scheme.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 Discussions with the owner of A J Motors have been ongoing for some time and have included a number of scenarios, however, this proposal is considered to be the most mutually beneficial.

5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 The Church Road Regeneration Initiative has been the subject of discussion at a number of residents meetings in Tranmere.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

6.1 There are no implications for Voluntary, Community and Faith groups arising directly from this report.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

7.1 There are no direct implications for IT or Staffing.

7.2 The sites shown edged red and blue are of sufficiently similar size to allow a straight swap. The area shown shaded green could potentially have a value in the region of £36,000 if it was capable of being sold unrestricted on the open market. However, it will not be sold unrestricted on the open market. In reality should the transaction not proceed as reported then the land would remain within the Development Agreement with Lovells, which has a land value attached to it at a nominal amount.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The proposal will require the preparation of appropriate legal documentation.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

No because there is no relevance to equality.

10.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no carbon reduction implications arising directly from this report.

11.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The sites are designated as part of the Primarily Residential Area as shown on the Wirral Unitary Development Plan, where any future application for vehicle repairs would be subject to Policy HS15 'Non Residential Uses in Primarily Residential Areas', which only permits small scale development that would not result in a detrimental change to character of the area and would not cause a nuisance to neighbouring uses. Planning permission would be required for any future proposal involving a material change of use in the land.

12.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

12.1 That the transaction as described be approved.

13.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

13.1 To complete the land assembly for the Church Road Regeneration initiative.

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APPENDICES

Location plan

REFERENCE MATERIAL

No reference material has been used in the preparation of this report.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date