

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Chief Officer: Supply, Distribution and Property****Infrastructure Regeneration and Economic Development Committee:****17 November 2021**

Subject : Sale of Sites at Charleston Way & Wilson Street, Alexandria**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Committee that the Council enter into a contract for the disposal of these sites to Bingham Homes and Co Ltd.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- (i) Approve the disposal of the sites for a gross value of Seven Hundred Thousand Pounds (£700,000) Sterling to Bingham Homes and Co Ltd subject to abnormals.
- (ii) Authorise the Chief Officer - Regulatory and Regeneration to complete the sale on such conditions as considered appropriate.
- (iii) Authorise the Chief Officer - Regulatory and Regeneration to conclude the transaction on such conditions as considered appropriate.

3. Background

- 3.1 These sites are owned by West Dunbartonshire Council and are currently disused and overgrown with vegetation.
- 3.2 The sites are allocated as housing on the Local Development plan and the Planning service have indicated that in principle they would welcome development of the sites.
- 3.3 Road service has confirmed that in principle they have no objection to the development of the sites.
- 3.4 Mr James Whyte who is a Director of Bingham Homes Co Ltd and previously acquired land at Heather Avenue from the Council in 2011 under his company Ballagan Developments Ltd, Mr Whyte is a neighbouring landowner. Approximately half of the site was sold to a Care Home operator (Rosshead Care Home) .The remainder of the site was developed for private housing which resulted in 20 units being built.

3.5 Given the success of the previous development Mr Whyte is keen to develop the adjoining sites in a similar fashion to complete the overall development of the area and approached the Council on this basis

3.6 Mr Whyte owns the former Gas works site which link the two Council owned sites and would intend to develop all three sites as a single project. As an adjoining owner the Council feels it is appropriate to enter into a deal with Mr Whyte/ Bingham Homes Ltd without openly marketing the sites

4. Main Issues

4.1 The property is not required by the Council for any operational purposes.

4.2 The proposed sale will provide a significant capital receipt to the Council. The agreed headline price is £20,000 per unit less any abnormal site costs. The proposed layout envisages 35 units which would produce a gross value for the 2 sites of £700,000 should planning permission be achieved

4.3 Bingham Homes Co Ltd at their own cost have undertaken a Stage 1 Site Investigation report and an Invasive Species report. Neither of these reports appear to raise significant concerns which would prevent the development of the sites.

4.4 The next stage is for Bingham Homes Co Ltd to enter into a dialogue with Planning and submit a planning application for the sites . They will also need to commission a Stage 2 Site Investigation report.

4.5 The proposed unit price of £20,000 is considered a fair value and is in keeping with the price achieved for similar recent housing land sales within West Dunbartonshire, notably Carrochan Road, Balloch and Garshake Road, Dumbarton.

4.4 The proposed development will develop an area of land which is currently unused and has attracted antisocial behaviour including fly tipping.

4.5. The development of these sites will provide further affordable level housing to the area and the economic benefits which come from having more people living within the Council area.

5. People Implications

5.1 There are no significant people implications other than the resources required by the various Council services to deal with the planning application, environmental assessments and legal documentation to conclude the deal.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 The Council will benefit from a capital receipt subject to deductions for abnormals.

- 6.2** The Council will no longer have to incur resources in managing and maintaining the site.
- 6.3** The Council can anticipate should all 35 units be granted planning permission an additional revenue in the region of £48,000 for council tax, water and sewage. This is based on an assumption that the site generates a net gross increase in Council tax payers equivalent to the number of new units being built.
- 6.4** There are no procurement implications arising from this report.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1** The disposal is subject to legal and technical due diligence and planning and licencing.
- 7.2** As with any potential sale of this nature, there is a risk of the deal not proceeding due to issues which arise during the due diligence.

8. Environmental Sustainability

- 8.1** The land is contaminated and this will need to be taken into account in the design of the proposed development and appropriate measures put in place.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 9.1** An Equality Impact Screening indicated no further action required.

10. Strategic Assessment

- 10.1** By agreeing to this proposal the Council will benefit in terms of receiving a significant capital receipt.
- 10.2** A significant area of overgrown and under utilised ground in Alexandria will be brought back into residential use thus contributing to the Council's strategic priority for a strong local economy and improved job opportunities.

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Date: 22 October 2021

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – Ownership Site Plan.
Appendix 2 -Plan showing proposed development layout.

Background Papers: **None**

Wards Affected: Ward 2