

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORT

LAND REGISTRY, CHALFONT DRIVE

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to introduce a presentation to the Committee concerning redevelopment proposals for the Land Registry site on Chalfont Drive.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Committee's views on the contents of the presentation are welcomed.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Land Registry site extends to 13.42 hectares (33.16 acres) of which approximately 60% is covered with largely single storey office buildings, roads and car parks. These are set within landscaped grounds comprising largely grassed areas interspersed with small domestic scale tree planting and a few groups of larger more mature trees. The site slopes gently from north to south and also contains, towards its southern end, a Grade II Listed nuclear bunker that was to house the Regional Seat of Government in the event of nuclear attack.
- 3.2 With the exception of its western boundary which runs alongside Robins Wood Road, the site is surrounded by housing and bungalows. The only other point of vehicular access is from Chalfont Drive to the east.
- 3.3 The Land Registry currently occupy a relatively modest proportion of the existing office accommodation with the remainder leased largely to other government and public sector organisations. The expectation is that the site will be available for redevelopment from 2015, when the Land Registry relocate to alternative office accommodation in Nottingham.
- 3.4 Negotiations for a residential development of the site are at a pre-application stage. The intention is for the Land Registry to pursue an outline application based on a masterplan and design code which are currently being developed by consultants on their behalf. Key elements of the current proposals are:
- In the region of 450-500 dwellings
 - Predominantly 2-3 stories in scale
 - A possible bus route through the site, onto Chalfont Drive
 - The incorporation of an approximately 1hectare area of open space, with equipped play area
 - Creation of landscaped areas based on the more significant of the existing trees
 - The incorporation of a swale (a green channel to hold surface water) between the open space and bunker
 - Various ideas for the re-use of the bunker and treatment of its appearance and surroundings

3.5 A public exhibition setting out initial concepts and proposals for the site was held at the Land Registry site between 29-31 January 2009. The consultants carrying out this exercise advise that the key findings were as follows.

3.6 From the approximately 500 members of the public who attend the exhibition, 120 completed questionnaires. Of these 77% were supportive of the principle of residential development on the site and 21% opposed to it. Additional issues raised were:

- Concern about extra traffic, particularly during construction
- Concern about a proposed bus route and increased traffic on Chalfont and Trentham Drives
- Impact of development on local infra-structure including schools, medical facilities, public transport
- Preference for bungalows, especially for elderly who wish to downsize
- Overlooking/loss of privacy if 2 storey adjacent to existing bungalows
- Concern about possible building heights, particularly if 3 storey adjacent to the site's boundaries
- Proposed noise levels from family housing relative to existing situation
- Potential for anti-social behaviour if pedestrian access onto Trentham Drive is re-opened
- Respondents encouraged by retention of trees and strategic landscaping/open space
- Concerns over long term security for the bunker, which could become a focal point for anti-social behaviour. Some would like to see it removed

3.7 Those opposed to the development raised the following issues:

- Lack of infrastructure – buses, shops, schools, doctors, leisure centres
- Site should remain in employment use
- Site should be mixed use with some office development around bunker
- Buildings should be leased to local businesses
- Land Registry should remain on part of the site
- Retain as enclosed secure site, ideal for retirement village

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

None.

7 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

None.

8 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Transforming Nottingham's Neighbourhoods

9 CRIME AND DISORDER ACT IMPLICATIONS

Creation of activity and surveillance associated with a new residential development

10 VALUE FOR MONEY

None.

11 List of background papers other than published works or those disclosing confidential or exempt information

None.

12 Published documents referred to in compiling this report

Nottingham Local Plan (November 2005)

Contact Officer:

Mr R. Percival, Case Officer, Planning Services.

Email: rob.percival@nottinghamcity.gov.uk. Telephone: 0115 9155139