

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 08 February 2021
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Environment and Regeneration
Report Title:	Comprehensive Regeneration of Land at The Butts (Proposed disposal for redevelopment of former livestock market site and enhancement of car park land alongside town wall)
Purpose of Report:	To facilitate the marketing, disposal and regeneration of the former livestock market site, The Butts, Cowbridge (in order to redevelop Council owned vacant land, provide vital funding to enhance car parking and help boost the local economy).
Report Owner:	Cabinet Member for Education and Regeneration
Responsible Officer:	Rob Thomas, Managing Director
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	<p style="text-align: center;">Leader</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Education</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Local Ward Members (Councillor Hunter Jarvie, Councillor Geoff Cox and Councillor Andrew Parker)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Managing Director</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Head of Regeneration and Planning</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Director of Environment and Housing</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Head of Finance</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Operational Manager, Property</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Operational Manager, Regeneration</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Operational Manager, Accountancy</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Senior Lawyer</p>
Policy Framework:	This is a matter for Executive Decision

Executive Summary:

- The Vale of Glamorgan Council owns the freehold interest of vacant land located alongside The Butts, Cowbridge (indicatively identified edged red in Appendix A), which was previously a livestock market. The purpose of the report is to declare the land as surplus to the Council's requirements and seek authority to market and dispose of the land to a developer or investor for redevelopment, subject to statutory consents. On this basis the land will be marketed and disposed of for a food retail use and publicly available car parking provision with the aim of creating vital new jobs, encouraging greater retail spend in Cowbridge thereby boosting the local economy.
- A food retail development proposal would, at planning application stage, be subject to a Retail Need Assessment/Impact Assessment. Hence, any proposals would be subject to any prospective developer proving (through a retail impact assessment) that there was enough capacity in the Cowbridge area to warrant this proposed use without significantly harming the Cowbridge town centre.
- Subject to assessment it is anticipated a medium sized food retailer at this location would improve the retail offer of Cowbridge town centre, making it more resilient by reducing the need for residents to travel further afield to shop for food, which in turn is more environmentally sustainable.
- Considering the Conservation Area status of the site, an emphasis will be made on scheme designs being sensitive to the historic context of the land and its proximity to the Town Wall.
- Importantly the disposal of the main site would bring into the town a much-needed major capital investment. This is essential to raise funding to facilitate the physical improvement of the car parking areas alongside the Town Wall.
- Hence, this project offers the opportunity to afford to deliver the comprehensive master planned regeneration of the Council's land either side of the Butts.
- The report also refers to ongoing work associated with an Agri Hub concept to serve the farming industry in the Vale of Glamorgan.

Recommendations

1. That the site indicatively edged red in Appendix A is declared as surplus.
2. That authority is granted to the Head of Regeneration and Planning (in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning, Managing Director and Head of Finance) to market and dispose of the site (as indicatively edged red on the plan at Appendix A) by virtue of a 999 year lease at a peppercorn rental for a Food Retail use and publicly available car parking, subject to statutory consents;
3. That authority is granted for the Property Section to facilitate the marketing exercise and appoint any consultants required to achieve project delivery;
4. That authority is granted for a project budget of £50,000 to cover the cost of internal technical salaries, marketing, advertising and promotion of the site as a development opportunity and site surveys, and for the Capital Programme to be amended appropriately if required;
5. That authority is granted for part or all of the capital receipt generated from the disposal of the land edged red to be utilised towards the cost of implementing the physical enhancement (including the resurfacing and laying out) of the car parking area alongside the Town Wall subject to the works proceeding;
6. That authority is granted for the Head of Regeneration and Planning (in consultation with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Planning, Managing Director and Head of Finance) to let a works contract to physically enhance the car parking alongside the Town Wall subject to sufficient funding raised by the disposal of the land edged red and to amend the Capital Programme accordingly.
7. That authority is granted to the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services to prepare, execute and complete all legal documentation required to facilitate the disposal of the site.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To endorse the site in Appendix A being declared surplus.
2. To authorise the marketing and disposal of the site edged red in Appendix A;
3. To authorise the Property Section to carry out the marketing exercise and to appoint any necessary consultants if required;
4. To authorise a project budget and amend the Capital Programme if required;
5. To authorise utilising part or all the capital receipt from the land sale towards the cost of improving the car parking alongside the Town Wall;
6. To authorise the letting of a works contract to improve the car parking area alongside the Town Wall subject to funding;
7. To authorise the Monitoring Officer/Head of Legal and Democratic Services to prepare, execute and complete all legal documentation for the project.

1. Background

- 1.1** The Vale of Glamorgan Council owns the freehold interest of approximately 2.1 acres (0.9 Hectares) of land indicatively identified as site edged red in Appendix A. The land was previously a livestock market and is located alongside the public highway called The Butts. Part of the land accommodates a meanwhile car park use on a temporary surface;
- 1.2** The Vale of Glamorgan Council proposes facilitating the regeneration of the site edged red in Appendix A, by marketing and disposing of the land for a food retail use including the provision of publicly available car parking, subject to statutory consents.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1** The land edged red in Appendix A is a brown field site adjoining Cowbridge district retail boundary. Until recently the site was utilised once a week as a livestock market. The livestock market held its final auction on 2nd September 2020.
- 2.2** The site is surplus to the Council's requirements and is sustainably located close to shops and businesses in the centre of Cowbridge. Situated within a Conservation Area and near to the historic Town Wall, the site is in a sensitive historic location. The Council proposes marketing and disposing of the site to a developer or investor to redevelop the site with a well-designed food retail scheme and landscaped publicly available car parking, subject to statutory consents. It is anticipated a food retail scheme could create new jobs and increase retail spend within Cowbridge thereby boosting the local economy.
- 2.3** A food retail development proposal would at planning application stage be subject to a Retail Need Assessment/Impact Assessment. Hence, any proposals would be subject to any prospective developer proving (through a retail impact assessment) that there was sufficient capacity in the Cowbridge retail area to warrant the such a use without significantly harming the Cowbridge town centre. National Planning Policy by virtue of Planning Policy Wales Edition 10 (PPW) promotes a 'town centre first' policy in relation to new retail development. Therefore, developers would also be required to demonstrate that all potential retail and commercial centre options have been explored in the first instance before considering this edge of centre site (sequential test). TAN 4 (para 7.1) states "if no suitable sites are available in retail and commercial centres then edge of centre locations should be considered, with preference given to brownfield sites that are or will be well connected to the existing centre and accessible by a variety of means of transport, particularly walking, cycling and public transport."
- 2.4** Subject to assessment it is anticipated a medium sized food retailer at this location would improve the retail offer of Cowbridge town centre, making it more resilient by reducing the need for residents to travel further afield to shop for food, which in turn is more environmentally sustainable.

- 2.5** Considering the Conservation Area status of the site, an emphasis will be made on scheme designs being sensitive to the historic context of the land and its proximity to the Town Wall. Scheme designs will need to protect and enhance the Conservation Area.
- 2.6** Within the site edged red, car parking will also be provided alongside the proposed food retail development including some parking provision that will be publicly available. The actual number of car parking spaces provided within a redevelopment of the main site will be subject to viability and the separate planning application process.
- 2.7** The Council's car parking facility on the land alongside the Town Wall (i.e. outside the site edged red on the opposite side of the public highway called The Butts) will not form part of the site to be disposed of. However, it may be necessary for offsite highway works to include widening The Butts to accommodate a food retail development on the main site. This would be addressed as part of the future land disposal negotiations and subject to the separate statutory planning process and associated master planning.
- 2.8** The disposal of the main site would bring into the town a much-needed major capital investment, which is vital to fund the enhancement of the Council's land and car parking areas alongside the town wall. It is proposed that part or all the capital receipt raised from the disposal of the sited edged red would therefore be utilised for this purpose, i.e. to facilitate the physical improvement of the car parking areas alongside the Town Wall.
- 2.9** This project therefore offers the opportunity to afford to deliver the comprehensive master planned regeneration of the Council's land either side of the Butts.
- 2.10** The Council also owns the freehold interest in the adjoining land (which is not part of the proposed site disposal) on which a Scouts Hall and Cowbridge Amateur Dramatics hall are located. The Council will retain rights of access across the site edged red in Appendix A to access this adjoining land. Rights of access will also be protected to the Council's adjoining park land.
- 2.11** This proposed land disposal has been reported to and considered by the Council's Insight Board.
- 2.12** In addition, feasibility work continues regarding the viability of an Agri Hub to serve the region. Consultants PER Consulting have been reappointed by the Council and are refreshing the original report to reflect the current economic climate and potential funding sources. Discussions will continue with key farming stakeholders and other interested parties.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

- 3.1** Considering the highly sustainable central location within Cowbridge of the vacant site and its run-down brown field condition, the Council proposes

marketing and disposing the site for a food retail use. The aim being to secure new investment, create much needed new jobs and strengthen the retail offer of the town centre.

- 3.2** The proposed marketing and disposal of the land for a food retail development accords with the Five Ways of Working and our Well-being objectives as follows:
- a) Involvement - The Council will require the Purchaser of the site (i.e. the developer or investor) to consult the community as part of the statutory planning process;
 - b) Collaboration - The proposal will involve working closely with a developer to encourage the delivery of a well-designed redevelopment of a vacant, brown field site as stated, in consultation with the local community, via the statutory planning application process;
 - c) Integration - An aim of the project is to encourage the purchaser/developer of the site to sensitively integrate their development proposals within the historic town centre and its existing retail offer;
 - d) Prevention - An aim of the project is to prevent the leakage of food retail spend from Cowbridge town centre to other areas by improving the food retail offer within the town centre and to prevent the site at the Butts from remaining an unsightly semi derelict space;
 - e) Long Term - An aim of the project is to improve the retail offer of the town centre and in doing so provide long term economic benefits for Cowbridge and its surrounding area. It is also proposed to encourage the developer or investor to bring forward a scheme design that in the long-term protects and enhances the Conservation Area, within which the site is located.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1** A budget of £50,000 will be utilised to fund the delivery of the marketing and disposal exercise, for example towards the cost of internal technical salaries, surveys and marketing costs.
- 4.2** It is proposed that part or all the capital receipt raised from the disposal of the sited edged red in Appendix A, would be used to fund the survey, design and implementation of physical enhancements to the existing parking area alongside the Town Wall.

Employment

- 4.3** It is anticipated that a new food retail development will create much needed new jobs for the town.

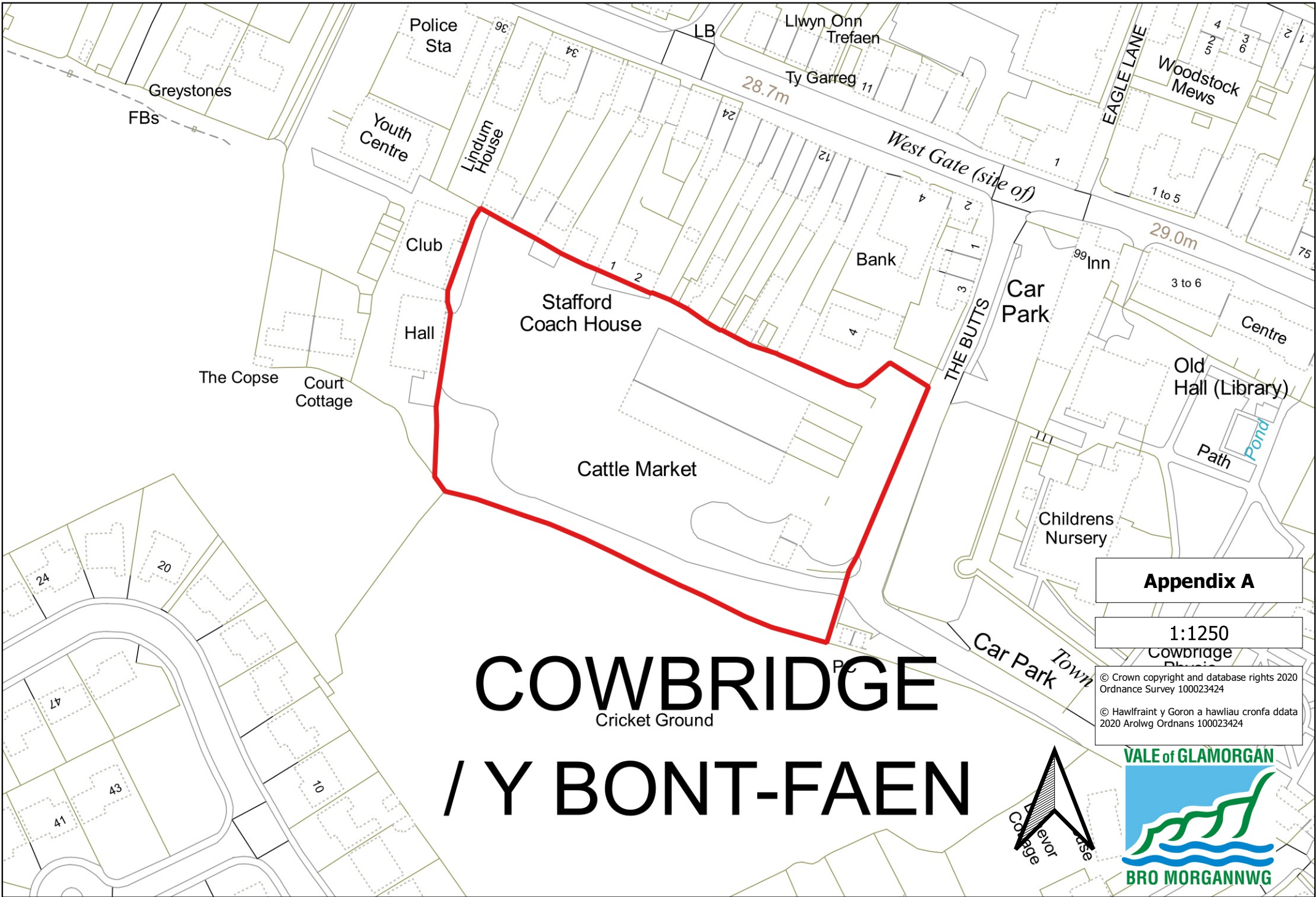
Legal (Including Equalities)

- 4.4** The Vale of Glamorgan Council owns the freehold interest in the land edged red in Appendix A.

- 4.5** A Deed of Easement between the Council and neighbouring properties runs along the northern and western boundaries of the site and will be accommodated within any redevelopment scheme. Rights of access to the Council's adjoining retained land will be protected for example to the Scouts Hall and Cowbridge Amateur Dramatics hall and the Council's adjoining playing fields.
- 4.6** A Public Right of Way traverses' part of the site and will need to be integrated as part of a master planned development.
- 4.7** The site edged red in Appendix A will be marketed and disposed of subject to Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972.

5. Background Papers

None.



Appendix A

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Cowbridge

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