

	<p style="text-align: center;">Executive 11 April 2011</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Joint Report from the Directors of Regeneration and Major Projects and Environment and Neighbourhood Services</p>
Ward Affected: Alperton	
<p>Former Alperton Cemetery Offices Clifford Road Alperton HA0 1AF - disposal in the Open Market</p>	

1.0 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report invites the Executive to consider the impact of withdrawing office-based staff from the Alperton cemetery at Clifford Road and seeks approval to the open market disposal of the adjoining surplus vacant former cemetery offices, after all due regard to planning and architectural considerations in connection with the resolution of access and separation issues so as to ensure the best price is achieved

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members approve the open market disposal of the vacant former cemetery offices building and suitable curtilage land which forms part of the cemetery offices, excluding the mess rooms building, yard and the toilet, The office building is now surplus to the Council's operational requirements
- 2.2 Members agree that the Assistant Director Regeneration & Major Projects (Property & Asset Management) to instruct auctioneers after all due regard to planning and architectural considerations in connection with resolution of access and separation issues so as to ensure that the best price is received on sale and to instruct Legal Services in the matter of the disposal

3.0 DETAIL

- 3.1 In April 2010 a decision was made to make savings by reducing 250 posts across the Council. As part of this process within the then environment and Culture Department, the decision was made to disband the Cemetery and Mortuary Service and with effect from 13th September 2010 the grave digging and grounds maintenance element of the work transferred to the Parks Service. Linked to this, the office based cemetery staff moved from the Alperton Cemetery office to Brent House in September 2010. This is consistent with the

Council's policy of reducing the number of buildings and offices the Council operates around the borough.

- 3.2 The cemetery offices comprise a mixed site providing offices and adjacent cemetery staff mess rooms with toilets for staff and public use, garage/workshop and yard (marked A on plan). There is also a separate toilet for cemetery visitors including those with disabilities located in front of the offices building (marked B on plan).
- 3.3 The offices are located within a two storey former dwelling house. The cemetery staff mess rooms comprise a single storey building adjacent which also houses toilet facilities. The garage/workshop is attached with a small yard at the top end of the site with vehicular access from the cemetery. The proposed area for disposal is outlined in black on the attached plan.
- 3.4 The mess rooms building, yard and the toilet need to be retained to enable the Council to continue to provide its cemeteries function and operation of Alperton cemetery. In addition, it was agreed that the staffing at the cemetery would be reviewed after six months of operations by the Parks Service. It is now proposed that the grounds maintenance 'grass verges' team be based at the Alperton Cemetery yard and this proposal is currently out to staff for consultation. If this does proceed, it will provide a staff presence in the cemetery at various times in the day and will help alleviate cemetery users concerns regarding the previous withdrawal of staff from this site.
- 3.5 Planning advice is that the most likely possible uses of the offices building are residential, either a dwelling house or flats or possibly a small scale children's nursery to serve the local catchment area.
- 3.6 The building has some architectural merit but is not listed. The planning view is that should the building be redeveloped it is unlikely that a larger replacement would be supported given the scale and character of buildings within the area
- 3.7 There will need to be some separation between any proposed residential use and the continuing works yard. There are also access considerations which will have to be addressed. Bridgewater Road is a London Distributor Road and the highways authority would not support a new separate access onto this road. The existing access to the offices building from Clifford road is restricted
- 3.8 The possible alternative childrens nursery use is problematic in that the site is not easily accessible by public transport and therefore only a small scale facility serving a local catchment area could be considered. There would be a need to demonstrate a parking/drop off area, external play space, cycle/buggy parking areas and a buffer between this use and retained cemetery yard
- 3.9 Officers consider that disposal for residential use will achieve the best consideration and the intention is to take architectural advice in tandem with planning considerations to ensure that there is a viable scheme for redevelopment or conversion of the offices building for residential use

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 An indicative disposal price for the offices building for residential purposes assuming proper access and separation and with suitable curtilage land for gardens is considered to be in the region of £350,000 -£400,000.

Any related costs arising related to the sale (such as the resolution of access and separation issues) to achieve best price will be met from the derived receipt.

The net capital receipt will accrue to the Council's overall funding of the capital programme.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council has a general power to dispose of properties including by way of the sale of the freehold or the grant of a lease. The essential condition is that the Council obtain (unless it is a lease for 7 years or less) the best consideration that is reasonably obtainable.
- 5.2 Disposals on the open market, including by way of auction, after proper marketing will satisfy the best consideration requirement.
- 5.3 The value of this property is in excess of the value of properties which can be sold under the delegated authority of the Head of Property and Asset Management. As such the Executive needs to agree to this disposal before this can be undertaken.
- 5.4 The land and Cemetery Offices are held by the Council under the Burial Acts 1852 to 1900 and officers are contacting the Metropolitan Archives as to whether the same is consecrated land.
- 5.5 If the land is consecrated land it will need to be deconsecrated prior to disposal. In that event the Council will apply to the Diocese of Lambeth for a Church faculty or consent to deconsecrate the land.

6.0 DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None specific

7.0 STAFFING/ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Office based staff who used to work for the Cemeteries and Mortuary Service are now based within Brent House following a restructure in 2010. The yard, mess room and toilet need to be retained so that the groundstaff can operate from the site to provide the cemeteries function, as explained in para 3.4

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Papers held in Regeneration & Major Projects and Environment and Neighbourhood Services

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