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LAND AT FEETHAMS AND HOUNDGATE

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Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Stephen Harker,  
Efficiency and Resources Portfolio

Responsible Director – Ian Williams, Director of Economic Growth

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SUMMARY REPORT

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval to purchase the parcel of land situated at the corner of Feethams and Houndgate.

**Summary**

2. In November 2014, enquiries revealed that the site at the corner of Feethams and Houndgate was due to be marketed.
3. The site is currently used in part by the Council as part of the Beaumont Street pay and display car park, and measures 0.23ha ( 0.67 acres ) or thereabouts as shown on the attached plan (**Appendix 1**).
4. After a short marketing period and following internal discussions the Council made an offer stating that this offer was made subject to consideration and approval by Cabinet but that it was unconditional on planning or ground condition.
5. The agent has informed the Director of Economic Growth that his client would like to dispose of their site to the Council but in accepting the offer they would be seeking to recover 'Overage' on any uplift in land value should the land be developed within a period of 5 years.
6. By acquiring the site the Council can strategically control the future development of the Feethams area and ensure it complements the Leisure scheme and the Multi Storey Car Park. The site is considered to be a key asset and will lead to the future completion of the Feethams development and planning brief.
7. It will also enable the Council to improve the current appearance of the site and maximise its use as part of the Beaumont Street short stay car park. With a small element of investment, funded through the Local Transport Plan, temporarily extending the car park, so as to provide extra parking spaces during the period before the new Multi-Storey car park is opened.

## Recommendation

8. It is recommended that:-

- (a) Members agree to purchase the plot of land situated at the corner of Feethams and Houndgate and approve the purchase price and terms identified in Part III of this report (**Appendix 2**).
- (b) The Director of Economic Growth in consultation with the Efficiency and Resources Portfolio Holder be authorised to conclude negotiations and complete the purchase.
- (c) The Borough Solicitor be authorised to conclude the purchase accordingly.

## Reason

9. To acquire a parcel of land which adjoins Council owned land will provide the Council with an opportunity to improve the appearance, use it for short stay car parking in the interim and control the development potential of the site in the future.

**Ian Williams**  
**Director of Economic Growth**

## Background Papers

No backgrounds were used in the preparation of this report

Guy Metcalfe : Extension 6725

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|----------------------------------|---|
| S17 Crime and Disorder           | There are no crime and disorder implications.   |
| Health and Well Being            | The visual appearance of the site is currently poor and by acquiring the site it will provide the Council the opportunity to tidy it up.                      |
| Carbon Impact                    | There are no carbon impact implications in this report  |
| Diversity                        | The recommendation does not have any specific diversity implications.   |
| Wards Affected                   | Central   |
| Groups Affected                  | There are no groups adversely affected.   |
| Budget and Policy Framework      | This decision does represent a change to the budget framework.  |
| Key Decision                     | This is considered a Key Decision   |
| Urgent Decision                  | This is not an Urgent Decision  |
| One Darlington: Perfectly Placed | The recommendation will help to achieve the Perfectly Placed priority by securing the site and facilitating potential development and Economic growth         |
| Efficiency                       | Acquiring the site will provide the Council an opportunity to improve the appearance and make best use of the site in the interim pending future development. |

## MAIN REPORT

### Background

10. In November 2014, enquiries made to the agents acting for the owners of the site at the corner of Feethams and Houndgate established that the owners were looking to dispose of the site and it would be coming to the market.
11. The site which is currently used by the Council as part of the Beaumont Street pay and display car park, measures 0.23ha ( 0.67 acres ) or thereabouts as shown on the attached plan (**Appendix 1**).
12. After a short marketing period and following internal discussions the Council made an offer stating that this offer was made subject to consideration and approval by Cabinet but that it was unconditional on planning or ground condition.
13. The agent informed the Director of Economic Growth that his client would like to dispose of their site to the Council but in accepting the offer they would also be seeking to recover 'Overage' on any uplift in land value.
14. The seller is looking for an overage to be in place to share in any uplift in the value of the site, should it be sold within five years. Details in **Appendix 2**.

### Financial Implications

15. There is no funding identified in the MTFP and the proposed purchase price would need to be funded from corporate resources (either capital receipts or borrowing). In the short term, use of the land as short stay car parking will generate rental income and as and when the land is sold for development it is expected the purchase price will be recouped. Funding for minor improvements to the temporary parking will come from the Local Transport Plan.

### Legal Implications

16. There are no separate legal implications other than those already set out in the report.

### Asset Management

17. Acquiring the site will complete the Council's ownership of the Feethams/Beaumont Street area and enable the Council to apply a strategic approach to the short term use and appearance of the site but also enable the Council to facilitate comprehensive complimentary development opportunities.