

**NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM**  
**REPORT TO CABINET**

**23 April 2024**

**Report Title:** Asset Disposal – Apedale Business Park, Watermills Road, Chesterton, Newcastle

**Submitted by:** Interim Chief Executive

**Portfolios:** Finance, Town Centres and Growth

**Ward(s) affected:** Chesterton

<b><u>Purpose of the Report</u></b>	<b><u>Key Decision</u></b> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
To seek approval to dispose of land at Apedale Business Park, Watermills Road, Chesterton for industrial development purposes	
<b><u>Recommendation</u></b>	
That Cabinet:	
<p><b>1.1 Approve the disposal of the land at Apedale Business Park, Watermills Road, Chesterton for Industrial development purposes.</b></p> <p><b>1.2 Authorise the Interim Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth, to complete the disposal of the land at Watermills Road, Chesterton.</b></p>	
<b><u>Reasons</u></b>	
To bring forward an unused area of land for industrial development.	
To bring in a capital receipt which will be used to part finance the Council’s future capital programme.	

**1. Background**

1.1 This land is the only remaining undeveloped part of Plot B Apedale Business Park, Chesterton. It is an industrial plot of land which measures 3.335 acres (1.350 hectares). The site was acquired by the Council in 1984 from G.H. Downing Limited (subsequently part of Ibstock Brick Limited). This was subsequently reclaimed by the Council and is considered suitable for a

variety of industrial uses, including B2 (general industrial) and B8 (storage and distribution).

1.2 The site has not previously been listed in the Asset Management Strategy for disposal even though it is within the industrial development envelope as it was considered it was needed for a drainage scheme. There is a spring and discharge point on the site which is thought to be due to historic mine workings. The water when it hits the atmosphere turns an ochre colour. It was originally proposed that the Council use the land for reed beds to manage the water flow. The drainage issues will become the responsibility of the purchaser.

## **2. Issues**

2.1 A local business, who is looking expand their business, has expressed an interest in acquiring this land and is prepared to deal with the drainage issues associated with this site.

2.2 To ensure the Council is complying with the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) – Section 123, the land is marketed to ensure best consideration is achieved.

2.3 In accordance with the Asset Management Strategy the general public do not need to be consulted on this disposal as it is land designated for industrial purposes.

2.4 There is a shortage of industrial development land in the Borough.

## **3. Recommendations**

3.1 Approve the disposal of the land at Apedale Business Park, Watermills Road, Chesterton for Industrial development purposes.

3.2 Authorise the Interim Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Town Centres and Growth, to complete the disposal of the land at Watermills Road, Chesterton

## **4. Reasons**

4.1 To bring forward an unused area of land for industrial development.

4.2 To bring in a capital receipt which will be used to part finance the Council's future capital programme.

## **5. Options Considered**

- 5.1 Retain the land within the Council's portfolio - If the Council retains the land there will need to resolve the drainage issues. In addition, a capital receipt will not be realised.
- 5.2 Dispose of the land - A capital receipt will be realised, no expenditure will be required to maintain and resolve the drainage issues and the release of this land will contribute to the supply of industrial development land which there is a shortage of in the Borough

## **6. Legal and Statutory Implications**

- 6.1 The Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) – Section 123 - the Council has a duty to achieve best consideration when disposing of its assets.
- 6.2 Section 2(1) of the Local Government Act 2000 permits local authorities to do anything they consider likely to promote or improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of their area.
- 6.3 The Council has a duty, both fiduciary and operationally, to utilise its Assets for the benefits of the Community.

## **7. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 7.1 No differential impact arises from the proposals contained in this report.
- 7.2 The proposals open may open up new employment opportunities in a less affluent area of the Borough

## **8. Financial and Resource Implications**

- 8.1 The disposal of this site will realise a capital receipt, no expenditure will be required to maintain and resolve the drainage issues. The receipt will be used to part finance the Council's future capital programme.

## **9. Major Risks & Mitigation**

- 9.1 Potential loss of a capital receipt to the Council

## **10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)**

- 10.1 The proposal, by achieving new industrial development in a less affluent area of the Borough, which is in existing urban setting contributes towards UNSDG 8 and 9.



**11. Key Decision Information**

11.1 N/A

**12. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 N/A

**13. List of Appendices**

13.1 Plan of the site.

**14. Background Papers**

14.1 N/A