

Title of Report:	Enabling Land Transactions Associated with the Shaw House Project.	Item 13
Report to be considered by:	Executive	
Forward Plan Ref:	EX0815	

Corporate Plan Priority:	CP4: Maintaining high standards of educational achievement across all our schools. CP9: Improving environmental resource management.
The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Corporate Plan priority by:	
(a)	<i>Providing improved sports facilities at Trinity School. The school will gain a new four court sports hall, with a secondary gym/examination facility together with four new changing rooms, a multi-use all weather pitch and other ancillary facilities. The facilities will reduce educational time lost in travelling between changing facilities and teaching areas. The improvements will also consolidate tennis and netball teaching. The replacement of the schools gym, which is currently situated in a fairly dilapidated structure, will also benefit the school.</i>
(b)	<i>The Fir Tree rationalisation will eliminate the need for non-essential visitors to access the school grounds thus improving pupil safety. The improvements together with other investment in the sports facilities at the school (provision of a MUGA) will result in self-contained sports facilities being available for additional community use.</i>
(c)	<i>The removal of the sports facilities from the grounds of Shaw House will considerably help improve the setting of the important listed building and be of vital assistance in securing external heritage lottery funding for the project.</i>

Purpose of Report:

To seek the necessary approval to acquire and to dispose of land interests adjacent to Trinity School and to rationalise land at Fir Tree Lane Primary School.

Recommended Action:

To seek approval to:-

- 1) appoint agents to market land identified for disposal.**
- 2) enter into a conditional agreement to purchase land for the site of the new sports hall.**

Reason for decision to be taken:

- The recommended action will support and enhance the Shaw House restoration proposals.
- The strategy will enhance the quality of the sports provision and education at Trinity School.
- The action will improve the layout of Fir Tree Lane Primary School.

List of other options considered:

- To not move the Trinity Sports facilities.
- To rebuild the replacement sports facilities on the playing field land in Love Lane that it is proposed to sell.
- To fund the build from the capital programme and not to sell the Fir Tree Land.

Key background documentation:

- Corporate Board Paper relating to Shaw House at this meeting
- Planning applications 03/02336/FUL, 03/02328/LBC, 04/01308/FULMAJ, 04/00622/OUTMAJ
- Executive paper dated October 23rd 2003

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Implications

- Policy:** The objectives and strategy for the restoration of Shaw House has previously been considered by Executive. Further details on progress is before this meeting and further approval will be sought in September and is in the Forward Plan.
- Financial:** This report seeks approval to finalise the financial details of land transactions that will enable the Shaw House Project to proceed. Final authority to exchange contracts will be sought at the September meeting of the Executive when a detailed financial analysis will be presented. The appointment of agents to market the sites proposed for disposal will allow greater financial certainty within that analysis.
- Personnel:** The personnel issues associated with this proposal are generally associated with the Education Centre move which has already been approved in principle and are therefore more directly related to the Shaw House paper that is also being considered again at this meeting.
- Legal:** The Head of Legal Services is aware of the intended strategy and raises no objections to the recommendations in this paper.

Property:

The disposal of the Fir Tree land will secure a valuable capital receipt and provide valuable additional housing including key worker housing. The land to be sold at Fir Tree (or at least an equivalent area) is not used for sport or direct teaching purposes and would otherwise be surplus to requirements.

The Love Lane disposals and acquisitions will have no net effect on the amount of land available for sports purposes at Trinity School. Additionally because the capital receipt received from the disposals exceeds the cost of the acquisition the transactions are cash flow positive. The consolidation of the school grounds is in the interests of good estate management.

Risk Management:

- Should the disposals and acquisitions programme not proceed, then abortive costs of around £30,000 will have been incurred. This will add to the overall costs of the Stage 2 bid which is being met from the Berkshire County Council legacy funding.
- A full risk assessment is being prepared by the Amey/West Berkshire Risk Manager and will form a part of the report to the September meeting of the Executive.

1. Background

1.1 When Shaw House is restored the Education Centre will vacate its site at Fir Tree School. The land it occupies will be surplus to requirements and should be sold. It would be more sensible for various education and financial reasons to retain the land currently occupied by the Centre and to sell an equivalent area of land further away from the school. Sport England as well as the Head and Governors agree with this recommendation.

1.2 The existing sports hall and gymnasium of Trinity School are situated in the grounds of Shaw House, which adversely affects the restoration proposals and would jeopardise the Heritage Lottery bid. The existing location of the sports halls disrupts teaching by increasing time spent by pupils moving to and from lessons. Relocating these facilities closer to the school will improve the efficiency of lessons. The replacement facilities will be of better quality and broaden the range of sports facilities available. Sport England agrees with this recommendation.

1.3 The replacement sports facilities will vastly improve the amount and quality of all weather facilities at the School. They will improve the potential usage of the sports provision consequently the proposals will more than off set the loss of the non sports pitch playing field that it is suggested should be sold to fund the re-provision. Sport England accepts the wisdom of the strategy and support the need to sell the area of playing field.

1.4 Applications for the developments (see references in background reading) on the sites will come before the Council in July and August. The proceeds from the disposal of the residential sites will be used to meet the cost of acquiring the land and the cost building of the replacement facilities. The exact net cost/surplus will not be known until the land is tendered.

2. Issues

2.1 The paper should be read along side the accompanying Shaw House Paper for its contextual relevance and detail

2.2 Terms have been agreed with The Church of Latter Day Saints (Mormons) to acquire their interest in the site that needs to be bought for the sports hall proposals. The other non-WBC land ownership in the site is that of Scottish and Southern Electricity (SSE) who have agreed in principle to sell to WBC and broad agreement about the level of price has been reached. SSE however needs to find a relocation site and it is this issue that remains under negotiation. They wish to satisfy themselves on the cost of the relocation before agreeing to sell their existing site to WBC. Approval is sought to acquire both the land interests in a conditional agreement that can be exercised once the whole project is confirmed.

2.3 The acquisitions would be conditional upon gaining planning on the site for sports use, the contractual right to buy all the needed land and obtaining adequate funding and also the legal, financial, and practical ability to build the replacement facilities.

2.4 Agent's advice on the proceeds anticipated from the proposed land disposals has been provided to WBC from both a formal valuation and also from obtaining agents advice for marketing purposes. The actual receipt will not be known until tenders are opened some variation should be anticipated. Agents advise that they have adopted a cautious approach to providing their advice.

2.5 A cost estimate for the sports hall and the tennis courts has been received from advising Quantity Surveyors. The actual cost is subject to the agreement of final design issues but it is deemed to be a reliable estimate. The build costs have been properly considered and have resulted from a greater than normal amount of design input than would normally be available at this stage in a project in preparing budget figures.

Consultation Responses

- Local Stakeholders:** The head and governors of Trinity School and the head and governors Fir Tree School have been regularly consulted on these proposals. The most recent meeting with the latter involved the three ward members.
- The proposals for the sports relocations associated with Shaw House have been discussed at the Shaw House Project Board which includes representatives of Trinity School, St Mary's Church, Shaw Cum Donnington Parish Council, the WBC Ward Member and the Deputy Leader of the Council. This board has recommended the business case and plan for Shaw House that has consistently envisaged these relocations.
- Officers Consulted:** Head of Legal Services
Representatives of planning and transport strategy. (T. Slayney / G. Rayner)
Representatives of Highways and engineering. (D. Crouch)
Corporate Director Children and Young People.
- Trade Union:** No formal consultation at this stage