

Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
Coleman, Humberstone and Hamilton

Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee

16 July 2003

Greater Humberstone SRB Programme: Mundella Site Disposal

Report of the Service Director, Regeneration

1. Purpose of Report

This report provides Members with an update on the proposal by Greater Humberstone Community Development Ltd., (the Management Board of the SRB6 Programme), to acquire part of the former Mundella College site for a range of community uses. The City Council has recently started marketing the site to prospective developers. The Strategic Planning Guidance for the site includes the proviso that any development must include the provision of community facilities, and requires interested developers to consult with the Greater Humberstone SRB6 management board on these facilities. This report includes a number of issues that the SRB6 management board would like to see addressed by the City Council.

2. Report.

The provision of community facilities on the Mundella site has been a centrepiece of the Greater Humberstone SRB programme from the beginning. Detailed plans have been prepared for the refurbishment of the former Boys School on the site to provide a range of amenities, including community learning and skills, child care, a community café, a youth centre, small business units, and general community meeting facilities. A separate project on the site proposes a sports hall and playing field. The feasibility study for the site has involved substantial consultation with local community groups and residents.

The total estimated cost of this work is estimated at £3.7 million, and funding will be sought from SRB, Objective 2, and the Sports Lottery Fund. Planning permission was obtained earlier this year.

The protracted disposal of the Mundella site has given rise to concerns that funding opportunities will be lost if the land is not sold soon and agreement obtained with the eventual site developer over community facilities.

This report makes a number of recommendations arising from a meeting between the Scrutiny Triumvirate and the SRB programme's Mundella Steering Group.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Committee make the following recommendation to Cabinet:

That the relevant Departments of the City Council assist Greater Humberstone Community Development Ltd. in its aim of acquiring part of the Mundella site for use by the community. In particular it is recommended that;

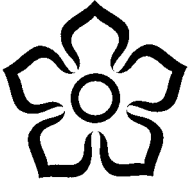
- i) A clear timetable is established for the disposal of the site to a developer;
- ii) All necessary legal and property arrangements associated with the sale of the site receive prompt attention;
- iii). Professional support is provided to the Greater Humberstone Community Development Ltd. in negotiating a Section 106 agreement with the eventual developer; and
- iv). The commitment of the Life Long Learning Division is obtained as to its Cluster/Local learning Plans and operational intentions in regard to the proposed community learning facility;

Headline Financial and Legal Implications

There are no financial implications or legal implications arising from this report. The City Council is legally obliged to obtain best value from the sale of the site for development, and proposes to sell the whole site to a developer. There will therefore be no cost to the City Council in the acquisition by GHCDL of part of the Mundella site for community use. Any additional costs that may arise from the delivery of City Council services through the community facilities on the Mundella site will be identified in due course.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Report

- 1.1 The City Council has recently started marketing the former Mundella College site to prospective developers. It is generally acknowledged that there is a shortage of community facilities in the Greater Humberstone area, and the Strategic Planning Guidance for the site includes the proviso that any development must include the provision of community facilities, and requires interested developers to consult with the Greater Humberstone SRB6 management board on these facilities. The provision of community facilities on the Mundella site was a centrepiece of the Greater Humberstone bid for Government funding through SRB. Professional advice and assistance has been paid for by the programme's managing board to prepare its plans for the site, a schedule of bids to various funding agencies, and a business plan for the operation of the facilities. The feasibility study for the site involved substantial consultation with local community groups and residents.
- 1.2. Following this consultation, detailed plans have been drawn up for the refurbishment of the former Boys School on the site to provide a range of amenities, including community learning and skills, child care, a community café, a youth centre, small business units, and general community meeting facilities. A separate project on the site proposes a sports hall and playing field. The total estimated cost of this work is estimated at £3.7 million, and funding will be sought from SRB, Objective 2, and the Sports Lottery Fund. Planning permission was obtained earlier this year.
- 1.3 The Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee discussed the Greater Humberstone Community Development Ltd. proposals for the site at its meeting on the 16th June 2003. Concerns were expressed by Members that funding opportunities for the proposed community centre and other on-site facilities might be lost if there are delays in the sale of the site to a developer. Members also wished to find out more about the longer-term income plans for the centre, and stressed the need for a contingency plan to ensure SRB outputs are met if the Mundella proposal is delayed or does not go ahead.
- 1.4 The Scrutiny Triumvirate met with the Mundella Steering Group of Greater Humberstone Community Development Ltd. on 27th June to find out more about the detailed proposals for the site, and to discuss ways in which the City Council could assist.

The Steering Group has identified the major risks to their project and the further work that needs to be carried out. The Triumvirate was asked to seek City Council assistance for the project, involving several areas of Council services. Assistance is sought from the Planning Division in negotiating a Section 106 Agreement with the appointed developer in favour of SRB6.

It was also requested that the legal processes involved in the sale are dealt with promptly to facilitate the sale of the site as soon as possible. A commitment was sought from Life Long Learning as to its Cluster/Local Learning Plans and programme resources for Mundella, similar to other service providers like Leicester College.

A definite timetable was requested as to the sale of the site to help the project to plan its work, and Property Services were requested to remove 'For Sale' boards or add further text to the board to the effect that community facility provision will be part of the site development, in order to inform local people that they will have some facilities on the site and do not misinterpret the sign.

FINANCIAL, LEGAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

1. Financial Implications

The SRB6 Mundella Steering Group is not seeking a gift of land from the City Council, or to purchase land below its market value. There are therefore no financial implications for the City Council arising from this report. It is proposed that the running costs for the centre will be met from income generated by occupants of the building. These may include some City Council services.

2. Legal Implications

Any disposal of Council land or property will be subject to (and in accordance with) the relevant statutory powers and Council policy. In particular, s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972. provides that the Council may not dispose of land otherwise than for the best consideration reasonably obtainable (except for a lease for less than 7 years) without (1) obtaining the consent of the Secretary of State to the disposal; or (2) that the disposal is in accordance with a number of General Disposal Consents in force at the present time.

3. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph Within Supporting information	References
Equal Opportunities	No		
Policy	No		
Sustainable and Environmental	No		
Crime and Disorder	No		
Human Rights Act	No		
Elderly/People on Low Income	No		

4. **Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972**

None

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5. **Consultations**

None

6. **Report Author**

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