

Urgent Decision
Updated Matford Community Building and GP Surgery Land
Nominations
June 2024
Part i

Purpose of Decision

To revisit and agree the nomination of a suitable organisation to take ownership of land upon which a new community building and GP surgery are to be located as part of the Matford new neighbourhood in Exminster Parish.

Officer

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Executive Member

Councillor David Palethorpe
Executive Member for Estates, Assets and Parking

Progress

- 1 Who Consulted – Devon County Council, May 2024
- 2 Discussion with Executive Member – 24 May 2024 and 3 June 2024
- 3 Consulted with– Assets Manager, S151 Officer and Head of Legal, 3 June 2024
- 4 Signed off by Chair and Deputy Chair of Council – 24 June 2024
- 5 Placed on Council/Executive Agenda for information – Date will be Full Council 30 July 2024.

Proposed Decision

- (1) To nominate Devon County Council to take ownership of land upon which a community building, GP surgery, car parking and ancillary facilities are to be constructed at Matford, Exminster, so that they can also become owners of the buildings.
- (2) To supersede the decision to nominate Exminster Parish Council and the NHS that was previously made in February 2024.

- (3) To decline any offer of the additional community building land, also known as the 'plus land'.
- (4) To delegate authority to the Head of Place and Commercial Services to implement recommendations (1) (2) and (3).

1. Background

- 1.1 Relevant background was laid out in the February 2024 report, which is appended (Decision 02-2024). Housebuilder Vistry is required to transfer land at Matford for a community building and GP surgery to Teignbridge or the Council's nominee.
- 1.2 In March, Exminster Parish Council was nominated to take ownership of the community building. The NHS was nominated to take ownership of the GP surgery. This decision accorded with an existing Parish Council resolution.
- 1.3 Since then, Exminster Parish Council resolved to defer their decision to take ownership of the community building at an 8 April 2024 extraordinary Parish Council meeting. The Parish Council resolved to review the matter again in 6 months (October 2024).
- 1.4 Devon County Council have confirmed that this delay would not leave sufficient time to procure construction of the linked community building and GP surgery within the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) funding window.
- 1.5 Instead, Devon County Council's Cabinet decided on 12 June 2024 to acquire the land to construct the buildings, with a view to transferring or leasing the GP surgery to the NHS prior to occupation and the potential to transfer/lease the community building to an appropriate management organisation at a later date.

2. Main Implications

Outcomes

- 2.1 The proposed approach will lead to delivery of the community building and GP surgery. If the £8.5m scheme is not constructed using the HIF funds available, there is a significant risk that one or both of the buildings may never come forward.

Process

- 2.2 If the recommendations contained in this report are approved, Vistry Partnerships will be due to formally offer the land to Teignbridge, or the council's nominee. At that point the Head of Place and Commercial Services will respond by nominating Devon County Council to become the owners.

Financial

- 2.3 There will be no direct financial implications for Teignbridge District Council in making this decision.

Legal

- 2.4 Legal implications should be no more significant than confirming the Council's nominees and there are no foreseen risks to making this decision.

Additional Land ('plus land')

- 2.5 The additional community building land (described in the February 2024 report) is not required to bring the community building forward. It is proposed to decline any offer of this land so that progress with the community building and adjoining local centre can be made.

3. Alternative Options

- 3.1 Alternative options were rehearsed as part of the March 2024 Portfolio Holder Decision report. At that time, transfer of the land to Devon County Council was not considered to be an option. Now that it is, this option makes for an efficient solution, particularly as it is the County Council that will be constructing the new buildings.

4. Justification

- 4.1 Nominating Devon County Council to take on the land ownership to construct the community building and GP surgery at Matford will enable the new spaces to be constructed and facilitate their long term management to the benefit of residents at Matford and the wider Exminster Parish community.
- 4.2 An urgent decision is required by mid-June 2024 so that there is sufficient time for Devon County Council to take transfer of the land in July 2024; award a contract; and enable contractors to commence works in September 2024. These tight timescales are necessitated by contractual HIF spend timeframes agreed between the County Council and Homes England.

Signed *signature redacted for publication purposes* Managing Director

Date 26 June 2024