

**NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL  
DECISION**

DECISION OF SECTION 151 OFFICER OF THE COUNCIL,  
CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

**DECISION NO: CSD14**

**SUBJECT: LAND ADJACENT TO A371 – PART OF LOCKING HEAD FARM,  
LOCKING**

**BACKGROUND:**

Locking Head Farm, Locking is a Council owned farm comprising approximately 62 hectares leased to M.J. & S.A Ledbury & Son.

As part of the proposals for the development of the Parklands Village a North-South Link Road will be constructed between the West Wick roundabout on the A370 and the A371, part of which will run through the Council owned Locking Head Farm. In readiness for the delivery of the road, agreement was reached for approximately 26 acres of the farm to be surrendered from the lease with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015. This agreement was authorised under Decision Notice CSD66 in November 2015. The land taken back in December 2015 will also form the first phase of the development of the Council's landholding within the Parklands Village. As time progresses further land will be taken back from the tenancy subject to adjustments in the rent payable under the terms of the lease.

During the early discussions with the tenant he also indicated that he might wish to hand back 2 additional fields which are not productive as part of his operation. These 2 fields are outside of the Parklands Village area and, therefore, are not required to be taken back from the tenant to facilitate bringing forward either the road or the Council's development land but to help ensure that future discussions/negotiations with the tenant remained positive it was approved under Decision Notice CSD06 in June 2015 that the Council accepts the tenants request to surrender these 2 additional fields.

The 2 fields amount to approx. 4.62 acres in size with access being taken from the A371. As the fields are both outside of the Parklands Village area and within the Environment Agency's Flood Zone 3 they are not considered suitable for any form of development and, therefore, it is considered unnecessary to retain them once they have been taken back from the tenant. Authorisation was given under Decision Notice CSD06 in June 2015 to appoint specialist agricultural agents to deal with the surrender of the fields and advice on their disposal. The agent's report has recommended that once the fields are taken back they should be marketed for sale by way of informal tender as a whole or in two lots. Notwithstanding the current restriction against development in this area the fields would be sold subject to restrictive covenants and future overage arrangements.

**DECISION:**

1. That officers be instructed to complete the surrender of the land shown edged red on the attached plan from the current lease of Locking Head Farm, and
2. That the fields be declared surplus to Council requirements and that officers be authorised to instruct the appointed agricultural agents to dispose of them by way of informal tender

**REASONS:**

To help facilitate the ongoing negotiations with the tenant whilst realising a capital receipt from a surplus asset

**OTHER ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:**

Retaining the fields and letting them for grazing has been considered but the potential rental income from a grazing licence would be quite limited. This options is not considered to be more beneficial than the disposal of the fields to generate a capital receipt

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The surrender of the fields from the existing tenancy will result in a small reduction of the rental income but will generate a capital receipt

**IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE YEARS:**

None

Signed:  .....  
Section 151 Officer, North Somerset Council

Dated: 7 / 6 / 16 .....  
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