

Part I

SUBJECT:	Land to the west of Denham Road Iver Heath South Bucks
REPORT OF:	Officer Management Team - Director of Services Prepared by - Head of Environment

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to discuss the area of land adjacent to Denham Road, A 412, Iver Heath and the M25.

2. Links to Council Policy Objectives

- 2.1 This report relates to the Council's Asset Management Plan and the Council's management principle to use resources prudently.

3. Background

- 3.1 Attached at Appendix A is a site plan showing the area of land owned by South Bucks District Council edged in black. It is immediately adjacent to the land subject to the recent project pinewood proposals. The land was purchased by the Council in April 1996 which granted a simultaneous lease to Iver Parish Council. The area of land is 16.19ha (40 acres).
- 3.2 The lease was renewed with Iver Parish Council on the 20 December 2004 for a period of 7 years and therefore the lease expired on the 19 December 2011 - the parish are holding over under the terms of the lease. The Parish do not have an automatic right to renew their lease.
- 3.3 The lease was granted at a peppercorn rent and the Parish Council is responsible for maintenance of the land and to ensure that the land is-used for the enjoyment of the public. Typically the area is currently used by dog walkers, with a number of public footpaths crossing the land.

4 Discussion

4.1 Option 1

The parish council would like to renew the lease on the same terms as the previous tenancy for a further 7 years, to include full maintenance responsibilities and associated liabilities.

- 4.2 The land is green belt and therefore any redevelopment potential would be highly constrained and limited to uses appropriate for a greenbelt setting. The granting of a lease to the Parish Council would secure continued public access to the land

4.3 Option 2

The other uses that the land could possibly be put to in the short term would be for grazing of cattle or the keeping of horses. However it should be noted that neither would be ideal given the fact that vehicular access to the land is difficult and Public footpaths also cross the land and would require careful consideration

Cattle grazing land could create an income of approximately £4,000 per annum although a water supply and fencing, would need to be provided and there would be likely costs associated with finding a tenant. Planning permission would not be required. There would be an estimated capital cost incurred of £10,000 with the loss of revenue of £300 per annum at 3% to set up and the income up to £4000 per annum. Payback of capital achieved in 2.5 years.

An alternative would be to form horse paddocks which will require water supply and fencing; if four paddocks of 2 acre were formed the approximate income of up to £1,000 per paddock may be achieved. Planning permission would be required for the keeping of horses on the land, if food was predominantly brought onto the site rather than the horses just grazing on the grass. There would be a estimated capital cost incurred of £10,000 with the loss of revenue of £300 per annum at 3% to set up and the income up to £4000 per annum. Payback of capital achieved in 2.5 years.

Members may consider that the current arrangement with the Parish Council in the short term who manage the land for public amenity may be a better solution than trying to let the land as grazing/paddocks.

It should be noted that the District Council will incur ongoing landlord costs as not all areas of the land would fall under the maintenance responsibilities of the tenants i.e. woodland etc.

4.4 Option 3

Members may like to consider granting a new lease with a break clause at every 2nd year. This would allow officers to review this matter periodically, consider and report to Members whether there may be other emerging potential uses that maybe beneficial and could possibly attract funding and produce a meaningful income. Some form of sporting use for example maybe a future possibility and could meet a local need.

Iver Parish Council have concerns as it would make it very difficult for the Parish to have a long-term management plan for the public amenity and would be detrimental to seeking funds as long-term ownership is usually required as part of the conditions from fund providers.

5. Resource and Wider Policy Implications

5.1 The table below summarising the financial effects of the 3 options.

Option	Estimated Income	Estimated Capital Cost Incurred	Loss of Revenue	SBDC Estimated maintenance Cost	Financial Risk
1. Renew Lease	Peppercorn	Nil	Nil	Nil	Low -
2. Form Grazing or Horse Paddocks	£4,000	£10,000	£300pa @ 3%	£5,000 > £10,000	High - SBDC incur maintenance cost of land which would not be included in a tenancy ie woodland etc. Public Access limited.

3. Renew Lease with break clause	Peppercorn	Nil	Nil	Nil	High - Parish Council do not agree to break clause
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- 5.2 Option 1 and 2 there would be no resource implications other than officers time to prepare the new lease. Option 2 would incur Officers time to manage the land and the council will incur ongoing maintenance costs.
- 5.3 Should it be decided to pursue an option which required public access to or use of the land to be limited, it should be noted that there may be a risk of receiving local objections.

6. Summary

- 6.1 Members of the PAG are therefore are asked to note the contents of this report and to advise the Portfolio Holder as to which of the options detailed in the report should be pursued

This matter requires Cabinet / Council agreement.

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Background Papers:	Services working file