

Slough Borough Council

Lavender Farm, Nursery Lane

Asset Disposal Recommendation

13.10.2022

Appendix 1

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For and on behalf of Avison Young (UK) Limited

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The property is located to the north of Slough within Buckinghamshire and is bordered to the north by woodland, to the east by Nursery Lane/Middlegreen Road, to the south by the Grand Union Canal and to the west by Orchid Cottage and associated land and buildings.
- 1.2 The property extends to approximately 6.46 acres (2.62 hectares), bisected by Nursery Lane with 4.64 acres (1.88 hectares) of pastureland, buildings and yard to the north of the lane and a 1.82 acre (0.74 hectares) triangle of pastureland to the south of the lane.
- 1.3 The property lies within the administration area of Buckinghamshire Council, South Bucks Area (immediately adjoining the boundary with Slough Borough Council). The property falls within the Greenbelt.
- 1.4 The property is vacant, but the adjacent landowner has an informal agreement with SBC. We understand the adjacent landowner, Mr Simpson, receives a small payment from SBC to manage, maintain and keep the site secure. To secure the site, Mr Simpson has placed a mobile home and security guard on site which we understand has ensured no trespassers have gained access to the site. We understand that the location is prone to trespassers and therefore some form of security presence on site is essential.
- 1.5 The site is non income producing but could yield a capital receipt and as such it as agreed this should be brought to market as a priority to help alleviate Slough Borough Council's ("the Council") current financial burden.
- 1.6 We were instructed to undertake a comprehensive marketing campaign that was co-ordinated by the Land & Development team at Avison Young ("AY"). Owing to likely level of interest within the site and the need for a transparent and whole market process we recommended that the Council brought the site forward by way of an informal tender process.
- 1.7 An informal tender would also allow further bid stages to encourage competition between bidders, which should lead to the most attractive financial offers and terms received.
- 1.8 In preparation for marketing, we collated and prepared a detailed marketing pack that would allow bidders to make sensible assumptions within their financial appraisals and ensure robust offers were received.
- 1.9 We considered that this opportunity would appeal to a range of purchasers and a Planning Appraisal was produced to outline the development parameters for the site, which was reviewed and accepted by the Council estates team.

2. Marketing Process

- 2.1 The asset was marketed with the benefit of technical pack that included EPC and title report as well as a description of each of the buildings and a bespoke AY Planning Report. The Property was formally launched to the market on Saturday 16th July 2022 with a half page, colour advert in the Estates Gazette (EG). The Estates Gazette is an industry trusted source of real estate intelligence with 16,500 paying subscribers and a readership of approximately 120,000 people. The opportunity has also been published on the Estates Gazette Property Link website, which benefits from approximately 400,000 monthly visitors.

Avison Young

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- 2.2 On Thursday 28th July 2022 an electronic mailshot was sent to 1,795 developers, investors and agents active in Berkshire, Greater London and Southeast London. To date, 953 unique parties viewed and interacted with the mailshot.
- 2.3 A bespoke marketing brochure was produced and circulated to all parties upon request, as well as individuals and organisations who had previously indicated an interest in properties of a similar nature and those, we have had informal conversations with regarding the opportunity prior to launch.
- 2.4 AY recorded 152 parties expressing an initial interest in the opportunity and had requested a copy of the brochure and access to the data room.
- 2.5 AY arranged three open style viewing mornings on Tuesday 9th August 2022, Tuesday 16th August 2022 and Tuesday 30th August 2022. Across the three days, a total of 25 parties booked to attend, however, a number of other parties turned up on the day to view.
- 2.6 We understand that some parties also viewed the opportunity externally.
- 2.7 The asset was received well by the market with many credible parties engaging with the AY Land & Development team and requesting more information with regard to the sale.
- 2.8 Interest was predominantly received from residential, industrial and storage uses.

3. Bidding Process

- 3.1 After an extensive marketing campaign and upon agreement with the Council, an initial bid deadline was set for 12 noon Tuesday 13th September 2022. This was clearly communicated to all parties who enquired about the Property.
- 3.2 As expected, offers were received from a range of bidding parties comprising residential, industrial and storage users/developers.
- 3.3 AY hosted a call with the estates team at the Council to discuss the bids received and set out our recommendations. Within the meeting we reviewed each bid in detail focussing on price, timescales, conditionality of offer and track record.
- 3.4 AY and the Council concluded to shortlist parties and invite them to a best bids stage. This would allow parties the opportunity to improve their financial offer, terms, conditionality and also answer clarifications noted by AY at the initial bid stage.
- 3.5 Shortlisted parties were invited to submit a best and final offer by 12 noon, Thursday 22nd September 2022.
- 3.6 The best bids were reviewed by AY and a recommendation to select the preferred purchaser was provided, which was in accordance with the Councils objectives and the Best Consideration requirements of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 3.7 A preferred purchaser was subsequently selected and Heads of Terms negotiated and agreed.