

**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>15 October 2014</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Rationalisation of the Property Portfolio: Asset Transfer Lease At Spen’s Field, Woodall Lane, Harthill</b> <b>Wales Ward 18</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Neighbourhoods &amp; Adult Services/Environment And Development Services</b>

### **5. Summary**

The purpose of this report is to consider a request by Harthill-with-Woodall Parish Council for an Asset Transfer Lease on land known as Spen’s Field, Woodall Lane, Harthill. As the proposals are outside of the adopted Asset Transfer Policy, then Cabinet approval is required.

### **6. Recommendations**

**Cabinet is asked to agree:**

- 1. The granting of a lease agreement under the provisions of the Council’s Asset Transfer policy for the management & maintenance of Land at Spen’s Field under the terms reported.**
- 2. Legal and Democratic Services complete the necessary documentation**

## **7. Proposals and Details**

Harthill with Woodall Parish Council occupy an area of land that extends to 10.42 acres (4.22 hectares) known as Spen's Field at Woodall Lane Harthill (the recreation ground and car park shaded red on Appendix 1) under a 20 year lease that expires on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. The current annual rent is £1,750.

The rent is reviewed on a 5 yearly basis, with the next review due 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015. The use of the land is for public open space and a recreation ground with ancillary car parking for the use and enjoyment of the District or Parish of Harthill-With-Woodall. The lease does not contain any break provisions.

Under the terms of the existing lease RMBC are responsible for the general grounds maintenance of the land including the marking out of the football pitches, along with maintenance of all trees, hedges and periodic inspections of all play equipment and its ongoing maintenance.

This work is currently carried out at the expense of EDS - Greenspaces, who receive the annual rent.

In order to secure the long term future of the recreation ground, and to seek further grant funding, the Parish Council are seeking to transfer the asset under the Asset Transfer Policy for a term of 99 years at a nominal rent of £1 per annum without any break options.

Under the terms of this proposed lease the Parish Council will be fully liable for all grounds maintenance and for the repair and maintenance of all existing and future play equipment located on the site, and as such the ownership of all such equipment will transfer to the Parish Council. The Parish Council would like the Asset Transfer lease to be in place for next financial year, commencing from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.

As granting a lease without break options for such a long period falls outside of the adopted Asset Transfer Policy, then Cabinet authority to grant the lease is required.

## **8. Finance**

The Parish Council will be responsible for the payment of the Council's surveyors and legal fees in the termination of the existing lease and granting of the proposed new Asset Transfer Lease.

All inspection/repairs of play equipment and all grounds maintenance costs currently borne by RMBC (EDS - Greenspaces) will transfer to Harthill-with-Woodall Parish Council on granting of a new lease under the Council's Asset Transfer policy.

It has been estimated that the annual costs to RMBC incurred by Greenspaces for ongoing grounds maintenance and play equipment inspections/maintenance is £4,485 per annum. The existing annual rent received by RMBC of £1,750 will cease. This therefore will result in an overall saving to RMBC as a whole of £2,735 per annum. The Parish Council have indicated that RMBC - Greenspaces will be able to tender for the ongoing grounds maintenance/inspections work to commence from the start of the proposed new lease.

## **9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Any non-compliance with the proposed lease will bring this arrangement to an end via a termination notice.

The area of land is currently designated as Green Belt under the existing UDP, and therefore in the medium term is highly unlikely to support any form of development. However in the long term with changes in planning policy and or other legislative changes this position could change during the lifespan of the proposed lease.

## **10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

This proposal helps to contribute towards and achieve three of the five priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Plan. It will reinforce Rotherham neighbourhoods and communities and ensure community cohesion. The continued provision of the recreational facility and the development of new play equipment and facilities will improve physical and sporting opportunities to the general public

The sourcing of grant funding by the Parish Council will harness resources to enhance the environment and promote a joined approach to service delivery at local level.

## **11. Background Papers and Consultation**

Asset Transfer Policy – Report on the adoption of the Transfer Policy and Framework – Cabinet 20 July 2011

26 June 2014 CSART Report - Rationalisation of the Property Portfolio: Asset Transfer Lease At Spen's Field, Woodall Lane, Harthill

Phill Gill, Leisure and Greenspaces, Environment & Development Service has been consulted on the proposals.

Tom Bell, Strategic Housing & Investment, Neighbourhoods & Adult Services has been consulted on the proposals

The Ward Member Councillors Beck, Whysall and Watson were consulted on the 16<sup>th</sup> September 2014. All three Ward Members were fully supportive of the proposals.

Services Manager, Legal & Democratic Services was consulted on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014

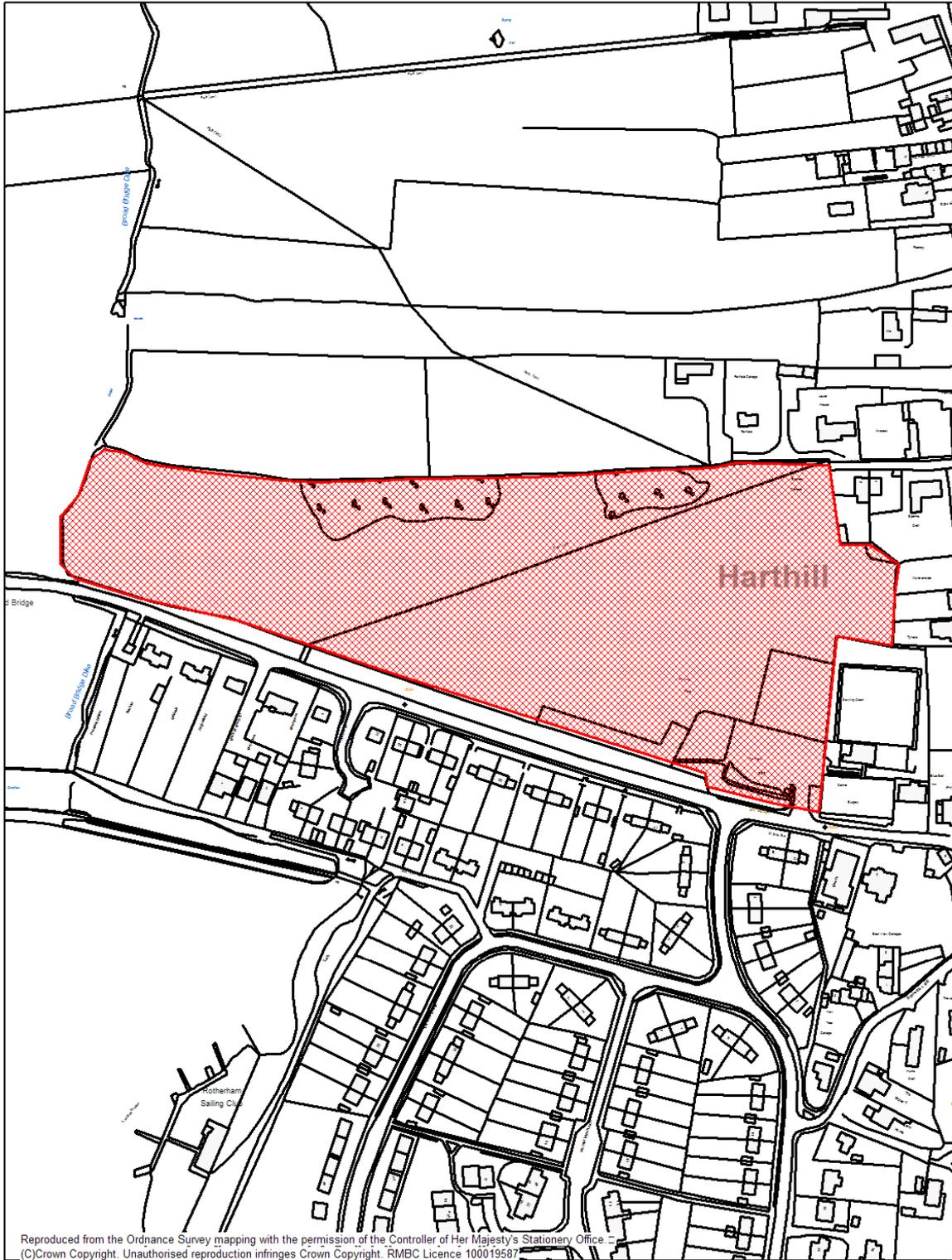
Finance Manager, Financial Services was consulted on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014

### **Contact Name:**

Jonathan Marriott, Principal Estates Surveyor, Audit and Asset Management, ext 23898,  
[jonathan.marriott@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:jonathan.marriott@rotherham.gov.uk)

Colin Earl, Director of Audit and Asset Management ext 22033  
[colin.earl@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:colin.earl@rotherham.gov.uk)

# APPENDIX 1



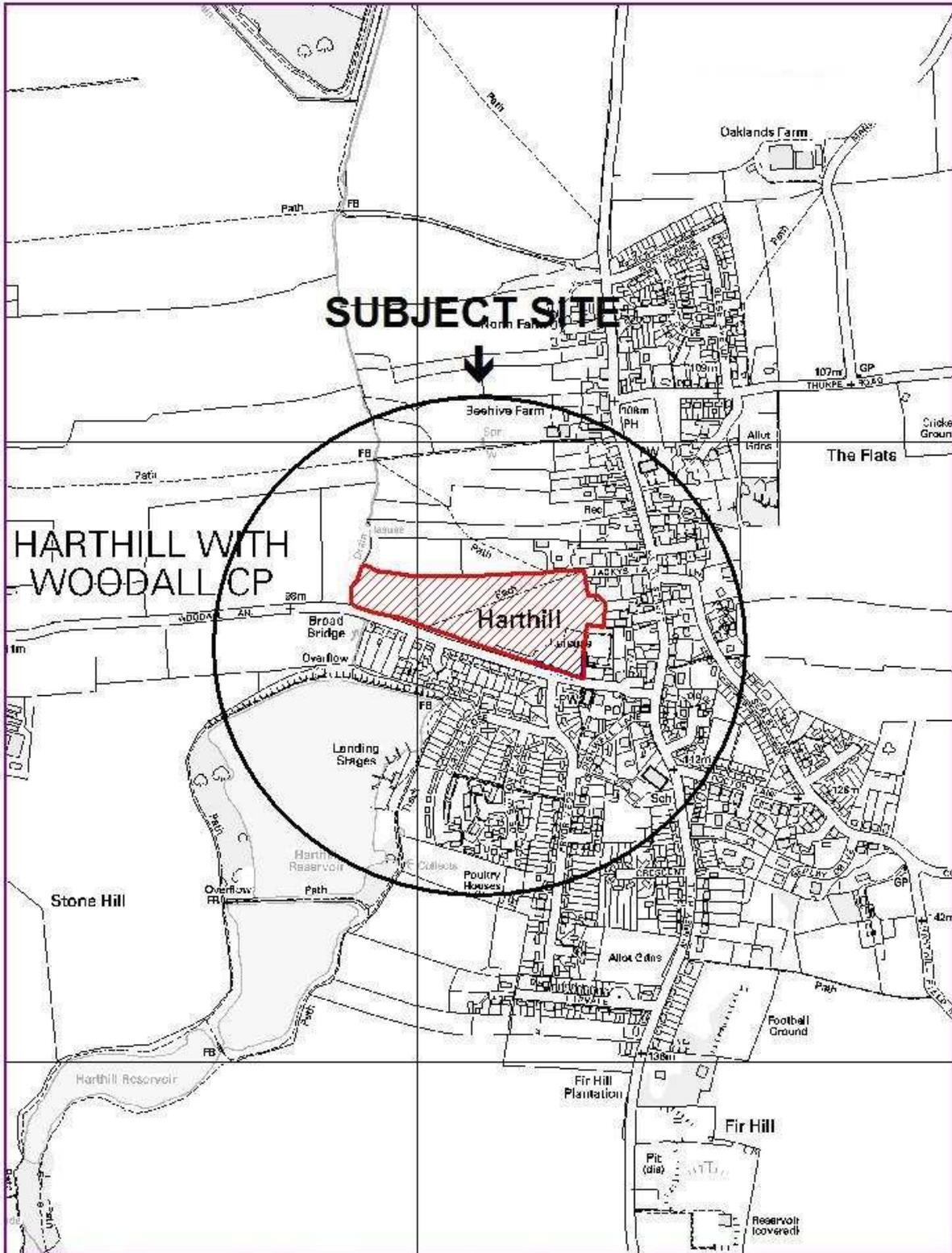
Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. (C) Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright. RMBC Licence 100019587

Scale 1:2500  
09/06/2014  
Map Centre: □  
449102,380671

Land At Spen's Field,  
Woodall Lane  
Harthill  
Rotherham

Rotherham MBC  
Env't & Dev't Services □  
Bailey House □  
Rawmarsh Road □  
Rotherham S60 1TD □





Based upon the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright.  
Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Rotherham MBC Licence No. LA076287.



SPENS FIELD  
WOODALL LANE  
HARTHILL  
ROTHERHAM

