

Public Report with Exempt Appendices
Cabinet

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Cabinet – 12 October 2026

Report Title

Strategic Acquisitions

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Executive Director Approving Submission of the Report

Andrew Bramidge, Executive Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Boston Castle

Report Summary

This report seeks authorisation to acquire a property in Rotherham Town Centre for the purposes of future regeneration.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Approve the acquisition of the property identified in exempt Appendix 1 for future regeneration purposes.
2. Approve the use of the Capital Contingency Fund for the acquisition and associated costs, up to the maximum total financial limit set out in exempt Appendix 1.
3. Delegate authority to the Service Director for Property and Facilities Services, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and the Local Economy, the Section 151 Officer and the Monitoring Officer, to agree the acquisition terms and complete the acquisition within the due-diligence requirements and financial limits contained in exempt Appendix 1.

List of Appendices Included

- Appendix 1 Property, Acquisition and Financial Information (Exempt)
- Appendix 2 Equalities Impact Assessment (Part A)
- Appendix 3 Carbon Impact Assessment

Background Papers

[Strategic Acquisitions report to Cabinet March 2022](#)

[Strategic Acquisitions report to Cabinet September 2022](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

None

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

Yes

An exemption is sought for Appendix 1 under Paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as this report contains sensitive commercial information which could disadvantage the Council in any negotiations if the information were to be made public.

It is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption would outweigh the public interest in disclosing the information because the parties' commercial interests could be prejudiced by disclosure of commercial information.

Strategic Acquisitions

1. Background

- 1.1 Rotherham Council is delivering a programme of regeneration-led transformation in towns across the Borough.
- 1.2 This has been funded through successive investments, including from the Council's Strategic Acquisitions Fund, which has helped to unlock key sites for development.
- 1.3 As the current regeneration programme progresses, with many projects completed and on site, work is underway to shape the next phase of investment and transformation. It is envisaged that the acquisition of strategically located land and property will continue to be essential in developing a future pipeline of deliverable regeneration projects.
- 1.4 The Don Valley Corridor has been identified in South Yorkshire's Local Growth Plan as a spatial priority for growth and regeneration. It is also identified as a focus for growth in the government's Northern Growth Strategy published on 19th March 2026.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 An opportunity has arisen to acquire a key property within the Don Valley Corridor, which encompasses some of Rotherham's major regeneration projects:
 - Rotherham Gateway: A new mainline rail and tram/train station surrounded by commercial space and the potential for 300 new homes with transformational potential for connectivity and economic growth.
 - Rotherham Town Centre: Continuing regeneration opportunity following the adoption of the Town Centre Masterplan in 2017 and the Town Investment Plan. Regeneration work in the Town Centre includes Forge Island, Central Markets & Library and the Health Hub with the development of c300 new homes over the next 5 years.
 - Bassingthorpe Farm: A new community of c2,000 new homes, situated close to Rotherham Gateway and the town centre.
 - Templeborough: Building on this thriving industrial hub through works at Magna and seeking available land to continue supporting new and existing businesses.
- 2.2 The property proposed for acquisition has been the subject of previous masterplan and feasibility work, demonstrating the strategic value of the property for regeneration purposes. The property details, the estimated value and associated costs are set out in the Exempt Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The opportunity relates to a vacant property occupying a strategically important position within the Don Valley Corridor regeneration area. The

property's location means that its future ownership, condition and use could have a material bearing on the quality and delivery of surrounding regeneration proposals. Further details of the property, including its condition, proposed method of acquisition and financial information, are provided in exempt Appendix 1.

- 2.4 Acquisition would enable the Council to secure control of the property while future development options are assessed. Those options may include refurbishment, redevelopment, reuse in conjunction with adjoining Council interests, or incorporation within a wider regeneration proposal.
- 2.5 The property is vacant and understood to require significant investment. Acquisition would therefore expose the Council to immediate holding, security, insurance, compliance and maintenance costs pending agreement and funding of any future use. The financial assessment in exempt Appendix 1 includes provision for the identified acquisition costs and an initial assessment of the potential property liabilities. Exempt Appendix 1 sets out the proposed acquisition limit and makes provision for associated purchase costs and essential initial property-management measures.

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Option 1 – Take no action and allow the market to determine the property's future ownership and use. This would avoid acquisition and holding costs but would provide the Council with limited influence over the timing and coordination of any future development. It would also leave the risk of continued vacancy and deterioration. This is not the recommended option.
- 3.2 Option 2 – Not to acquire the property but to seek to work with the current or future owner to support an appropriate future use. This may avoid direct acquisition and holding costs but would depend upon the intentions, capacity and timescales of a third-party owner and would provide the Council with less direct control. This is not the recommended option.
- 3.3 Option 3 – To seek to acquire the property for future regeneration purposes. Acquisition would provide the Council with control over a strategically located asset and allow its future to be considered alongside wider regeneration activity. The acquisition would be subject to the financial limits, due-diligence requirements and delegated arrangements set out in exempt Appendix 1. This is the recommended option.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 There has not been any public consultation in relation to the acquisition, but there has been public and stakeholder engagement on previous related strategic regeneration work.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The timetable requires the Council to act within a short and externally determined period. Property, Legal, Finance, Planning and Regeneration officers will complete the legal, valuation and financial checks required before purchase, together with such property due diligence as is reasonably practicable within the available timetable and other limitations.
- 5.2 Subject to Cabinet approval, the final acquisition decision will be taken by the Service Director for Property and Facilities Services, in consultation with the Section 151 Officer, the Monitoring Officer and the relevant Cabinet Member, within the maximum financial limit set out in exempt Appendix 1.
- 5.3 The final decision, including price and satisfaction of the conditions set out in exempt Appendix 1, will be recorded through a Delegated Officer Decision.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

- 6.1 There are no direct procurement implications as a result of this Cabinet report. The Procurement Act 2023 does not apply to the acquisition of Land and Property.
- 6.2 The financial implications of acquiring the property are set out in appendix 1. The proposed funding will be taken from the Council's Capital Contingency Fund to allow progress with the proposal, although consideration will also be given to accessing external funding sources to cover the financial impact to the Council.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

- 7.1 The Council has the power to acquire land and property for the purposes of facilitating redevelopment, regeneration and the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the borough. The proposed acquisition is capable of being undertaken pursuant to sections 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (General Power of Competence), together with the Council's land acquisition functions pursuant to s120 Local Government Act 1972. The proposed redevelopment of the site is consistent with the Council's regeneration objectives.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no HR implications arising directly from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 There are no implications for children, young people and vulnerable adults arising directly from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Appendix 2 provides information on the Equalities Impact Assessment.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 Appendix 3 provides information on the Climate Impact Assessment.

12. Implications for Partners

12.1 There are no direct implications for Partners.

13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 **Acquisition price:** A competitive disposal process could result in the price exceeding the Council's assessment of value. This will be mitigated by setting a maximum price it is willing to pay, negotiating with the constraint in mind and by not exceeding that limit.

13.2 **Building condition:** The property is vacant and in poor condition, and full access has not yet been provided. There is therefore a risk of significant structural, fabric, building-services, asbestos, security or other abnormal costs. The maximum bid will reflect the limitations of the available information. If acquired, an initial allowance will be made for the security, insurance, health and safety and property-management measures considered essential pending a full condition assessment.

13.3 **Future use and viability:** No funded redevelopment project is presently being approved. There is a risk that the cost of bringing the property back into beneficial use exceeds available resources. Acquisition must therefore be justified principally by the property's strategic importance, supported by an assessment of holding costs and future options.

13.4 **Holding and compliance liabilities:** If acquired, the Council will become responsible for securing, insuring and managing the vacant property. An initial management plan and cost provision will be prepared.

13.5 **Programme and reputational risk:** Failure to acquire could result in continued vacancy, deterioration or a future use that does not support the surrounding regeneration programme. Acquisition itself would not guarantee redevelopment, so future proposals will be subject to separate appraisal, funding and approvals.

14. Accountable Officers

Simon Moss, Service Director for Planning, Regeneration and Transport
Kevin Fisher, Service Director for Property and Facilities Services

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	John Edwards	02/10/26
Executive Director of Corporate Services (S.151 Officer)	Rob Mahon	02/10/26
Service Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	01/10/26

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