

APPENDIX S

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE – APRIL 2010

Title:

**PROPOSED PURCHASE OF ADDITIONAL BEDROOM FOR 1 GREEN LANE
COTTAGES, CHURT, FARNHAM**

**[Portfolio Holder: Cllr Keith Webster]
[Wards Affected: Frensham, Dockenfield and Tilford]**

Note pursuant to Section 100B (5) of the Local Government Act 1972

An annexe to this report contains exempt information by virtue of which the public is likely to be excluded during the item to which the report relates, as specified in Paragraph 3 of the revised Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, namely;-

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

Summary and purpose:

This report proposes that the Council should purchase a bedroom from a private owner and incorporate this back into the adjoining Waverley-owned property to which it originally should have belonged. By taking this course of action problems relating to sound insulation and fire safety will be overcome.

How this report relates to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

This report relates to two of the Council's Corporate Priorities namely: **Improving Lives** – Improving the quality of life for all, particularly the more vulnerable within our society; and **Subsidised affordable housing** – Working for more affordable housing to be built and managing council housing well.

Equality and Diversity Implications:

There are none arising from this report.

Resource/Value for Money implications:

There will be costs associated with the purchase of the bedroom from the neighbouring property and these are detailed in the attached (Exempt) Annexe 3. The additional bedroom will add value to the existing property. The rent will be adjusted accordingly.

Legal Implications:

The legal implications relate to the conveyancing work associated with the purchase of the bedroom.

Background and Introduction

1. No 1 Green Lane Cottages is a two-bedroom semi detached house. This adjoins No 2 Green Lane Cottages, a four-bedroom semi detached house, which was sold under the Right to Buy many years ago. A location plan is attached as Annexe 1.
2. At the time of construction it appeared that Hambledon Rural District Council intended to build two x 3-bedroom semi-detached homes. It is presumed that the Council must have decided to take the decision to make one house a two-bedroom dwelling and the other a four-bedroom dwelling during construction, probably in order to meet the particular needs of the family intending to occupy the larger home.
3. In short, the Council took a first floor bedroom from one house for the use of the other house. The design was changed to give access through the party wall to the bedroom. Unfortunately no other alterations were carried out to the design.
4. The bedroom arrangement, which is shown at Annexe 2, means that one of the bedrooms to No 2 is above the Living Room to No 1. The bedroom also adjoins the second bedroom to No 1 with only a standard partition between the rooms. The sound insulation between the bedrooms and the living room is particularly poor. The floor construction was upgraded recently to improve sound insulation and the fire resistance. Similarly the fire resistance of the roof space was also increased. It has not been possible to upgrade the sound insulation between the partitions because of the lack of space to the corridor.
5. Although improvements have been made to the sound insulation and fire resistance they still fall very short of current standards. With the current layout it is not possible to upgrade these to the current standards.
6. The bedroom to No 2 overlooks the garden to No 1 reducing privacy. Currently the fourth bedroom is rarely used but the owner is planning to sell the property in the near future, which is likely to result in increased usage.

Resource and Legal Implications

7. The private owner of No 2 has been approached to see if they would be prepared to sell the bedroom back to Waverley Borough Council. They have agreed to this in principle. A valuation of the room has been obtained and this is detailed in (Exempt) Annexe 3. Other costs associated with the purchase and alterations are also detailed in the annexe.

8. We have carried out this alteration on another pair of properties that were both in the ownership of Waverley Borough Council. This remedy was very successful. We are not aware of any further cases with this arrangement for this type of property.
9. The additional bedroom will add value to the existing property. The rent will be adjusted accordingly.

Conclusion

10. The current arrangements create an arrangement that will have ongoing management issues. The only way to remedy this situation is purchasing the bedroom from the private owner.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. The fourth bedroom be purchased from No 2 Green Lane Cottages and alterations carried out to incorporate this into to No 1 Green Lane Cottages.
2. The cost of this work as detailed in (Exempt) Annexe 3 be met from the Housing Revenue Account Capital Fund.

Background Papers

There are no background papers (as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) relating to this report.

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