



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Development Committee
Subject:	Estates Management – Markets
Date:	14 May 2008
Reporting Officer:	Marie Thérèse McGivern Director of Development ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Shirley McCay Head of Economic Initiatives ext 3459 <u>Ian Carmichael Markets Development Officer ext 3522</u>

Relevant Background Information

Unit Lettings at Smithfield Market

The Development Committee at its meeting on 22 September 1999 granted the authority for the Director of Development, in consultation with the Chairman of the Development Department, to approve the terms of future lettings, subject to those terms being reported retrospectively, to the Development Committee.

Trader/Customer Vehicle Parking at St George's Market

Belfast City Council along with certain Members of Council have held regular meetings with DRD Road Service, Police and Market Traders since the refurbishment of St George's Market in 1999 to discuss trader and customer car parking issues at the Market.

The Markets Development Officer/s has over the last 9 years has been able to obtain use of adjacent lands for trader vehicle parking. Most recently traders are enjoying free car/vehicle parking at the North Fringe gasworks site (Friday traders) and Council staff car park (Raphael Street for Saturday traders).

Key Issues

Unit lettings at Smithfield Market

The Committee is asked to note the letting of a unit in Smithfield Market agreed under

Document Number: 86202

Document Number: 81148

the delegated authority of the Director of Development, in consultation with the Chairman of the Development Department:

Units 3 – Smithfield Market

Sale of Computer parts; computer games and second hand related products

Tenant: Mr Jim Kyle, (Previously a tenant in Unit 20)
19 Clonbeg Drive,
Rathcoole,
Newtownabbey

Unit Size: 136 Sq Ft Ground Floor

Terms: £153.00 per Month

~~Units 3 – Smithfield Market – Sale of Computer parts; computer games and 2nd hand related products~~

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Trader/Customer Vehicle Car Parking at S George's Market

After the closure of Plot 2 (site outside the Waterfront Hall) the Markets Development Officer was able to secure the Northern Fringe at the Gasworks as a free car park for the Friday traders and Raphael Street BCC staff car park as a free car park for the Saturday traders.

Recently a St George's Market Saturday trader wrote to Lord Mayor and copied the letter to Chair of the Development Committee, **(See Appendix A)**. A signed ~~part~~ition was also received from ~~28 some~~ Saturday traders (~~28~~) and ~~100~~ customers (~~100~~) with regards to the parking issue. ~~Part of the contents in the letter requested~~ that Belfast City Council buy a plot of land adjacent to St George's Market with the request for it to be used as a trader/customer car park. Committee is asked to respond to this request.

Proposed Response

This land is at the corner of East Bridge Street and Cromac Street ~~((see Appendix B))~~ and is owed by Northern Ireland Housing Executive. It is leased out to DRD Road Service who sub lease it ~~out~~ to be operated as a 'pay and display' car park. ~~The (s)Site~~ is presently closed due to major sewage works being carried out in the area and is due to re-open in September 2008).

Document Number: 86202

Document Number: 81148

On initial investigation it seemed that Housing Executive were to sell this land off but could give no valuation to date, as NIHE hold their valuations for 6 months only. The DRD have now renewed the lease on this land for another 4 year until April 2009. Road Service has also indicated to NIHE that part of that site has been identified for road alignment involving a strip of land 2 metres in depth from the kerb, (**See Appendix C**). However the Stormont Assembly has requested more information on the funding for road alignment proposals.

A new privately operated car park has recently opened on the waste ground site on the corner of East Bridge Street / Stewart Street, beside Central Station. It opened Monday 7th April 08 and opens Monday to Saturday from 6.00am to 7.00pm @ £3.00 per car per day. Markets Officers and NMTF representatives are presently trying to negotiate a deal on costs for shorter parking times for any customers shopping at St George's Market. This site is only a temporary car park as it is earmarked for building works. It was also the site BCC officers had been in negotiations over with the land owners to see if the site could have been used as a temporary trader vehicle car park on Market days.

Discussions to look at a long term solution for trader and customer car parking closer to St George's Market will continue between BBC Markets Officers and certain Members, DRD Road Service and NMTF Representatives.

In the interim period the new temporary site opening in Stewart Street should assist the present problem. As should the introduction of the extra pay and display parking bays in Vernor Street and proposal of extra pay and display parking bays in Oxford Street and East Bridge Street, as per February 2008 Committee Report.

It is recommended that Committee respond to the letter and petition as outlined above, stating that purchase of the proposed site is not an option to pursue at present.

Recommendations

- To note the terms of the lettings, set out above.
- To agree the response to the letter as outlined above, i.e. purchase of a site for parking at St. George's Market.~~note the contents of this report in response to the letter and up date on~~
- ~~trader / customer car parking at and around St George's Market.~~

Key to Abbreviations

DRD – Department of Regional Development – Road Services
NIHE – Northern Ireland Housing Executive
BCC – Belfast City Council
NMTF – National Market Traders Federation

Documents Attached

Document Number: 86202

Document Number: 81148

Appendix [1A](#) – Letter from Trader

Appendix [2B](#) – [Letter from NIHE Land & Property Manager](#)~~Cromac Street Car park~~

Appendix [3C](#) – ~~Cromac Street car park~~[Letter from NIHE Land & Property Manager](#)

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Document Number: 86202

Document Number: 81148

APPENDIX 1

Document Number: 86202

Document Number: 81148

Document Number: 86202

Document Number: 81148



Tel. 02891 872 337.

Councillor J. Rodgers
Lord Mayor
Belfast City Council

Millview Farm
33, Ballydrain Rd
Comber
BT23 5SS



26th Feb '08

Re; Cromac Street Car Park

Dear Lord Mayor.

As traders at St George's Market on Saturday we have seen our businesses grow as customer numbers have increased over the past few years. Payments to the City Council have also increased as new stall holders have joined and others have taken on extra stalls. The market is valued by both locals and tourists. A modern city centre can seem bleak, but the market adds a cheerful character.

Sadly we have seen many good quality stalls fail due to insufficient customers. We used to see traditionally smoked salmon, Southern Indian Idli Dosa, home made pavlova bases and beautiful hanging baskets; none of which sold enough to be viable. The problem is always the same, lack of parking for customers. We are constantly fighting for new customers to replace those exhausted by carrying heavy bags, angered by a parking ticket or counting the cost of expensive parking meters. Only some people are in a position to use public transport and carry their potatoes, fish, flowers, etc.

In late 2006, when a survey was undertaken, more than half the shoppers at the Saturday market came by car, and of those, 40% used the Cromac Street car park. When that car park closed many customers were never seen again. We also suffer whenever the continental market comes to the City Hall. It is not surprising that many stall holders drop out.

We have heard that the Department of the Environment is selling the Cromac Street car park and hope that Belfast City Council will buy it and keep charges at a reasonable level. The charges of a private operator could be so high that only the rich would use it. With the severe shortage of parking in this part of the city a private operator may know that it will be possible to charge extortionately, and will offer a high price for the site. But it was Belfast City Council's sale of many sites for development which exacerbated the problem, so we feel it is now the Council's responsibility, and opportunity, to ease the situation by purchasing this car park.

I will ask the stall holders around me at the market, and my customers, if they would like to sign this letter. We all face the same problem, but many are too busy working to have time for writing letters.

Yours sincerely,

A Stone
Anne Stone

cc Cllr. M. Brown, Chairman, Development Dept.

Document Number: 86202

Document Number: 81148

APPENDIX 2

Document Number: 86202

Document Number: 81148

Document Number: 86202

Document Number: 81148

Housing Executive

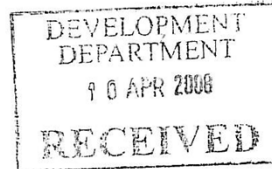
Northern Ireland Housing Executive
Belfast Area Office
32/36 Great Victoria Street
Belfast BT2 7BA

Telephone: 028 9031 7000 : Fax 028 9023 1117
Textphone: 0845 6504381
www.nihe.gov.uk



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Pamela Davison,
Estates Surveyor, Development Division,
Belfast City Council,
The Cecil Ward Building,
4-10 Linenhall Street,
Belfast
BT2 8BP



Your Ref: 84207
Our Ref: L&P/IV/Gen

8th April 2008

Dear Pamela,

Car Park ,Cromac Street

I refer to your letter dated 27th February 2008 and our subsequent telephone conversation.

This car park has been let to Roads Service for a further year from the 1st April 2008 to the 31st March 2009 and I have received confirmation from them that they still require a strip of land along the frontage of the entire Cromac Street site for future road provision. They have also requested a meeting with me to discuss and agree future car parking provision on Housing Executive owned sites and funding arrangements for site acquisition for the financial year 2008/09.

The lands are not surplus and perhaps the outcome of the proposed meetings with Roads Service will help clarify future provision.

Yours faithfully,

Ivan Vallyelly
Land & Property Manager, Belfast Area

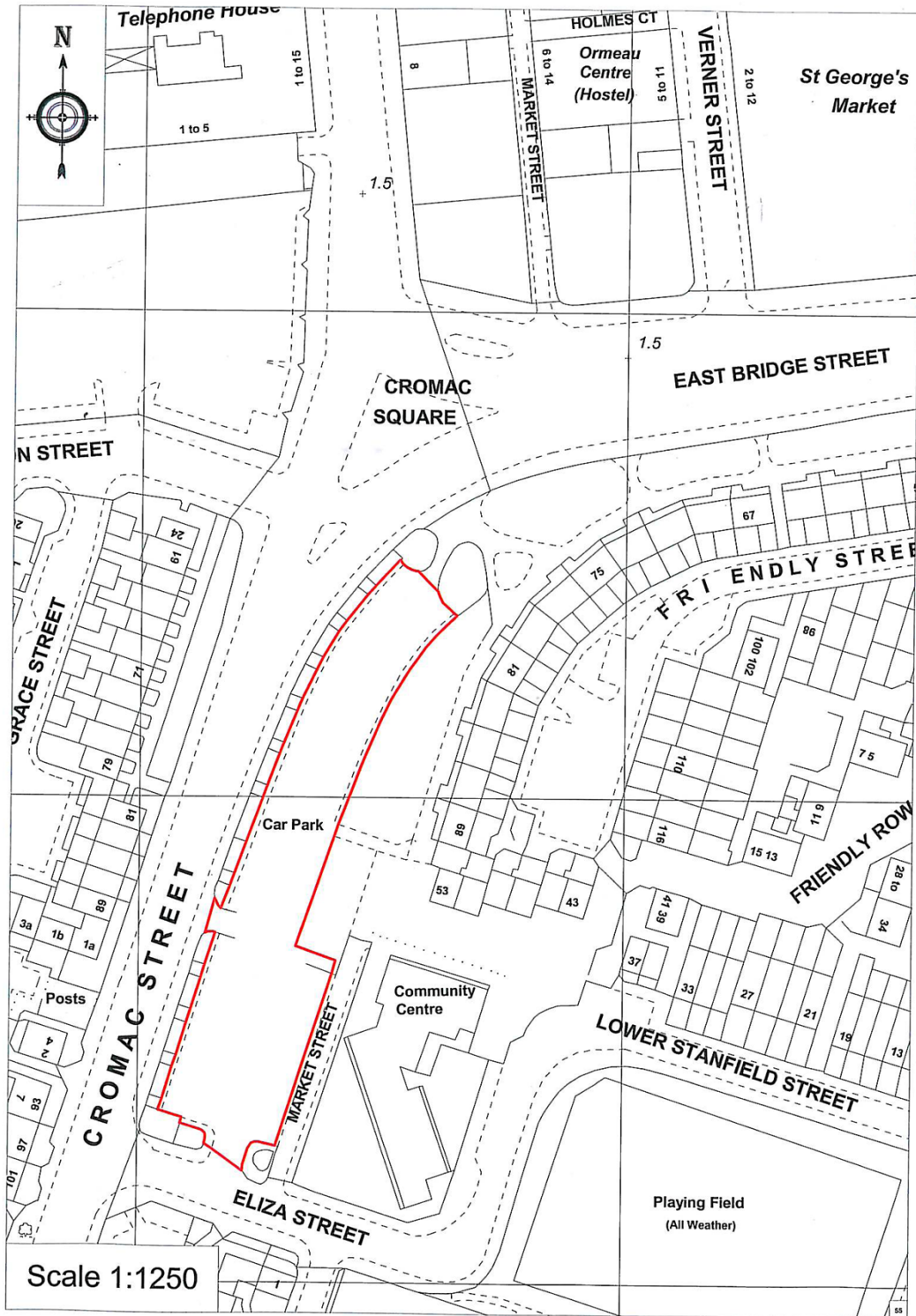
Document Number: 86202

Document Number: 81148

APPENDIX 3

Document Number: 86202

Document Number: 81148



Document Number: 86202

Document Number: 81148