

**Disposal of Geldeston Woodland**  
Report by Asset Officer

**Summary:** This report summarises the proposals submitted in the informal bid process in respect of the agreed disposal of the woodland.

**Recommendation:** That Members, having

- duly considered the bids received for the disposal of the woodland, and
- taking into regard both obtaining best value for the Authority and in the spirit of openness,

authorise the Chief Executive to accept on behalf of the Authority, the bid made by Mrs Dunford, the owner of the Locks Inn Public House

## **1 Background Information**

- 1.1 A large site at Geldeston Locks was originally purchased by the Great Yarmouth Port and Haven Commissioners. The public house and the majority of car park area were sold in 1980 for £18,000. The 64 metres of 24hr moorings were retained, along with approximately one acre of woodland behind the 24 hour moorings and adjacent to the Locks Inn Public House.
- 1.2 Officers identified the area of woodland at Geldeston as no longer required for any specific purpose and in addition bringing liabilities regarding the maintenance and safety issues for the public in regard to the trees.
- 1.3 Subsequent reports and decisions by the Authority have highlighted the following points which have been considered and followed in respect of the disposal of this asset:
  - (a). The woodland is to be sold by an informal bid process and applications should include the intended use for the site, both short term and long term and any monetary consideration offered for the site.
  - (b) Delay the sale from November 2013 until February 2014 to allow community groups to consider taking on responsibility for the woodland.
  - (c) When advertising, include the wording in accordance with Section 123 (2 A) of the Local Government Act 1972 for sale of a public open space and consider any objections received.

- (d) Note that the woodland has been registered on the Assets of Community Value register under the Localism Bill 2011 with South Norfolk Council and adhere to the set procedure.

- 1.4 After considering the objections received at the July 2014 meeting, members agreed to proceed with the sale of the woodland placing a restriction that allows the continuation of public access which takes into consideration the majority of objections received to the proposed sale.

## **2 Current Position**

- 2.1 The Authority has advertised the sale and invited bids to be submitted in an informal bid process taking into account the criteria set for disposal by the Broads Authority. The deadline for submissions was the 16 February 2015
- 2.2 Four bids were received (Appendix 1) and although one bid was received after the deadline it was received before any other bids were opened. Details of the bids were presented to the Navigation Committee meeting on 26 February where the Chairman agreed that all bids received should be considered.
- 2.3 The Navigation Committee members considered the bids received and considered that the best way forward would be to opt for the bid made by Mrs Dunford the owner of the Locks Inn Public House. They felt the option which included a payment of £7,777 to the Broads Authority encompassed all other aspects that had been identified as important for the future of the site: such as the continuation of public access, entering into a written agreement with the River Waveney Trust for the short/long term management of the site and the background of being an established business with public liability insurance already in place.

## **3 Conclusion**

- 3.1 Members views are sought on the preferred way forward in regards to the site taking into regard both obtaining best value for the Authority and in the spirit of openness.
- 3.2 Officers recommend that Members, having duly considered the bids received for the disposal of the woodland, and taking into regard both obtaining best value for the Authority and in the spirit of openness, authorise the Chief Executive to accept on behalf of the Authority, the bid made by Mrs Dunford, the owner of the Locks Inn Public House

Background papers: Broads Authority report May and November 2013, March 2014, July 2014

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Broads Plan Objectives: None  
Appendices: Appendix 1 – Informal bids table

# Geldeston woodland – bid offers

APPENDIX 1

Name	Offer £	Short term use	Long term plan
River Waveney Trust	<b>£1</b>	Public liability insurance, Phase 1 habitat survey and bat survey Repair footpath through the site Tree surgeon to make safe for public use Work with BA on suitable boundary and site management Recruit volunteer ranger, monitor visitor numbers Create annual work plan to include 4 work parties Interpretation signage and leaflet racks, install geocaches Project for small boat launch at east end of site	Incorporate the site management plan into Geldeston Locks Site strategy, and includes planting further trees to replace mature specimens Sign MoU with BA and Locks Inn to collaborate on joint plans Develop woodland as an accessible part of the overall Geldeston Locks complex including land owned by EA
Stephen Galley	<b>£5,750</b>	Clear dead wood and dead trees Replant with fresh stock Install a small fishing station at east end of site Continue to maintain as a small wooded area for people to enjoy	Ongoing maintenance and public access to woodland permitted
Mrs Dunford Locks Inn PH	<b>£7,777</b>	Intends to enter into a 5yr + lease/ management agreement with Waveney River Trust to ensure smooth handover for issues such as shared access, boundary disputes etc. Wish to create synergy between the essential business (Locks Inn) and the aims and objectives of the BA, leisure tourism and conservation.	Intend for such agreements to roll over continuously with opportunities for partnerships with other bodies to enhance the sustainable low impact enjoyment of the Broads
Mr & Mrs Taggart*	<b>£8,000</b>	As amenity woodland for the family and other river users to enjoy, to plant trees and grasses that befit and are indigenous to the area, tend and prune annually, post and rail fencing to secure.	Maintain as memorial woodland in perpetuity

\*Late submission agreed to be considered by CEO/ Chairman

NB all development proposals would be subject to planning permission and any other relevant consents