

## Member Report – Housing Land Offer

### 1. Introduction

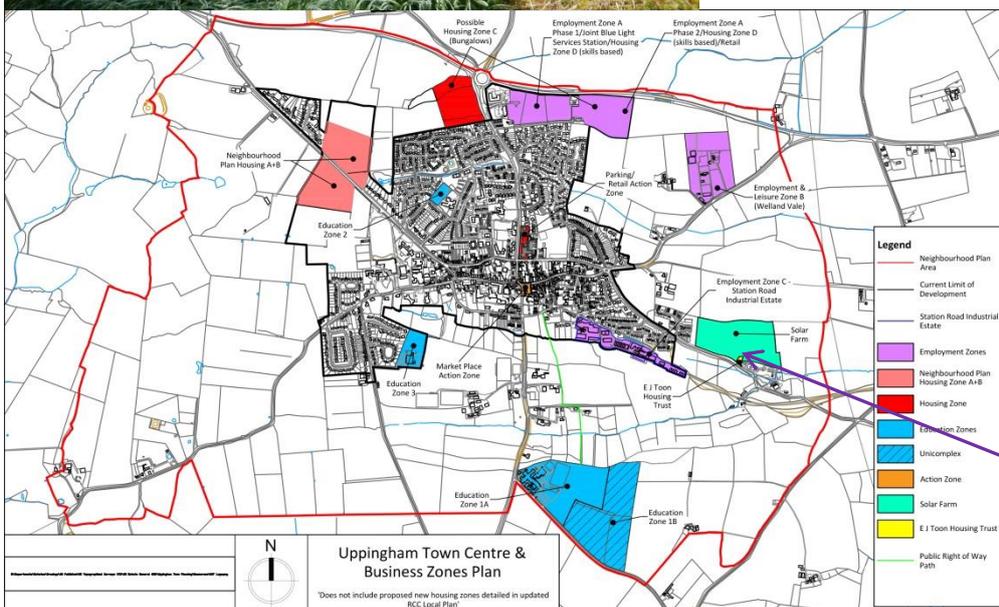
Members of the Council have been asked to meet, as empowered by the local government statutes, to consider an extraordinary offer from a local landowner and first communicated to the Uppingham First Community Partnership as part of its work on the Uppingham Town Centre & Business Zones Plan. Following public consultation on the first draft of the Plan and further consideration by the Plan's Task Group, it was agreed that there was significant public interest in the concept contained in the proposal/land offer and that it would form part of the final draft of the Plan to be published in July 2017. Following discussion with the landowner, it was agreed that while this matter will be progressed by the Partnership and the formation of a Housing Trust explored with Locality, his desire to invite the Town Council to take up initial ownership of the land be put before the council as soon as possible and prior to any detailed work beginning. It is proposed that the meeting, if invited by the Chair, waive standing orders to allow invited non-members of the council to participate in the debate (landowner and RCC Uppingham Ward Members). Any formal decisions to be reached by the council can then be agreed in the latter part of the meeting and reflected in the final draft of the UTC&BZ Plan and the council's future work programme. To assist debate and decision making, a series of questions for council members are posed at the end of the report, the answers to which will determine the next steps.

### 2. The Land



The land on offer is a now defunct orchard originally owned by the town's former undertaker E J Toon. It was bequeathed to Mr Gerald Badley as part of Mr Toon's Will. Mr Badley is local man, although he and his wife now live in Staffordshire. Mr Badley is a retired prison governor, was Mr Toon's last craft apprentice and is one of his three Executors; the others being John Garnett and Eddie Dorman. Mr Badley is now the sole owner of the land.

The location of the land is immediately adjacent to the waterworks in Seaton Road as shown on the map below.



Location of Orchard  
Southern edge of  
solar farm

RCC Planners who have viewed the proposal have indicated it currently lies outside the planned limit of development. Any agreed proposal would therefore require treatment as an exception site and/or be included in any updated Uppingham Neighbourhood Plan or Local Plan. According to developers who have viewed the site, it would be possible to create an innovative single building containing up to 9 apartments suitable for young local singles or couples. The design would need to be environmentally appropriate given its rural setting and adjacency to the water works and solar farm. A design competition may well be appropriate. Mr Badley has communicated with the water authority and has received no objection to development on the site.

### **3. The Agenda Item**

“To consider, and if appropriate progress, an offer of land within Uppingham to build a number of homes for local young people”.

### **4. The Offer**

“I Gerald Edward Ian Badley wish to gift to Uppingham Town Council all the land situated on the Seaton Road called The Orchard Garden, LE15 9EB subject to the following conditions:-

1. It shall be used to erect Housing.
2. It shall be for the use of the young people of Uppingham, and affordable.
3. One unit will be the sole property of, and owned by, the Badley family in perpetuity. This property will be made available to a newly married young couple who were born in Uppingham, and shall be available rent free for a period of three years. This will be reviewed every twelve years when the terms may be amended or changed in line with the wishes of the Badley family. At the end of the three years the property must be vacated and returned in good order for the next tenants”.

### **5. The Possibilities**

Having discussed the offer with Mr Badley and made preliminary enquiries with Locality, the experts in such matters, it would appear that if the Town Council was willing to work in partnership, it would be possible to create a self-governing housing trust that could become a community asset and not a public liability and which would enable some of the conditions that Mr Badley wishes to see introduced. Preliminary conversations with NALC and a new housing developer have explored the possibility of utilising the latest thinking in prefabricated and environmentally friendly construction with a view to creating an innovative design for the site that would accommodate its extraordinary juxta position to the new Solar Farm and the Water Authority works. Community charity Locality has expressed the view that potential beneficiaries should be identified first to enable some grant aid to be claimed by the voluntary sector to fund preliminary legal work. Members are invited to explore how the council might best progress the offer and the possible construct of an appropriate housing trust that can be wholly owned and governed in the interests of local young people. To aid discussion and participation, county council ward members and Mr Badley himself have been invited to the meeting. Uppingham First, a voting member of Locality, will also discuss the offer at its next board meeting to see how the Partnership might support such a community initiative.

The authors of this report are sure there will be many hurdles to overcome to help ensure the Badley family’s dream for the youth of Uppingham becomes a reality. However the young people of Uppingham deserve our attention. Council is therefore invited to consider the following:-

### **6. The Questions**

- a) **Is the council minded to become involved in the direct provision of affordable housing for local young people?**
- b) **Subject to further detailed investigation on the legal and financial implications, is the council minded in principle to pursue acceptance of the land offer?**
- c) **Is the council minded to work in partnership with a view to creating a local housing trust?**
- d) **Would the council be minded to retain ownership of the donated land and lease it to a Housing Trust or prefer to ultimately pass it on into Trust ownership?**
- e) **If this matter is to be pursued by council, how would members prefer to proceed? A working party reporting to council?**
- f) **Is the council willing to authorise a visit to a successful housing trust to see how others have achieved results?**