

## **PURCHASE OF 11 GORSE CLOSE, ASHLEY, NEW MILTON, BH25 5XZ**

### **1. Introduction**

This report seeks approval from the Portfolio Holder for Housing Services to purchase the freehold interest in the above mentioned property with vacant possession.

### **2. Background**

11 Gorse Close is situated on an established predominantly Council owned residential development comprising similar dwellings. The terrace of three properties that includes 11 Gorse Close is constructed on elevated made ground.

A location plan of the property is attached.

The property is of conventional cavity wall / pitched roof construction and is of modern appearance comprising the central unit of a terrace of three. All properties in the terrace comprise two storeys and have three bedrooms to the first floor plus bathroom/w.c. and living accommodation to the ground floor with kitchen. The property has an average sized rear garden and a small open plan front garden. Unallocated car parking is available in a forecourt to the front of the property.

The property was originally constructed as a Council home but is now in the ownership of Sovereign Housing Association and is currently vacant. The adjoining two properties, at either end of the terrace are owned by the Council. No 10 Gorse Close is also currently vacant and No 12 is currently occupied by a Council tenant.

The entire terrace has been affected by subsidence and this resulted in 12 Gorse Close being underpinned several years ago. The other Council owned property (No.10) is particularly severely affected and No.11 is less severely affected but requires underpinning and refurbishment. Stabilisation work must be carried out to No's 10 and 11 Gorse Close simultaneously to bring the two units back into a fit state for occupation and ensure the structural integrity of the terrace as a whole. If it transpires that the condition of 10 Gorse Close is beyond repair then that unit may need to be demolished and re-built.

In order to carry out the works necessary to bring the properties back into use it is necessary either for the Council to work jointly with Sovereign Housing Association and share the cost of repairs, or for one party to sell their unit to the other so that the repairs can be carried out by a single party. Following discussions it is felt that the most straight forward and quickest option is for the Council to acquire 11 Gorse Close from Sovereign at a price that reflects its structural condition. This has the further advantage to the Council of then being able to consider wider housing options for these properties.

### **3. Proposal.**

The Estates & Valuations team have conducted negotiations with Sovereign Housing Association and agreed a price of £100,000 taking into account the underpinning and refurbishment required. E&V are of the opinion that this represents fair value taking all of the circumstances into account, including an estimated £60,000 of costs that would be attributable to the repair and refurbishment of 11 Gorse Close.

### **4. Consultation.**

The Council's Housing Asset Management Group has been consulted and is supportive of the proposal.

### **5. Statutory Authority**

S17 (1b) of the Housing Act 1985 provides statutory powers for the Council to acquire residential property.

### **6. Financial Implications**

The total anticipated financial cost of acquiring 11 Gorse Close is £100,000 which is a price which reflects the estimated cost of repairing the property of a further £60,000.

The cost of the purchase and future repairs will come from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

The purchase of this property will add to the Councils housing stock and will also enable the adjacent vacant Council owned property to be brought back in to use, thereby generating rental income within the HRA to be further utilised in achieving the Councils objectives. The Council will also have the opportunity to consider wider housing options for these properties.

## **7. Environmental Implications**

The underpinning works must be completed to prevent a hazard arising within the residential neighbourhood.

## **8. Crime and Disorder Implications**

Bringing the property back into use will be a deterrent to anti-social behaviour which can sometimes arise in the vicinity of vacant properties.

## **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Council acquires 11 Gorse Close, Ashley, New Milton for the sum of £100,000 freehold with vacant possession.

**I agree the recommendation**

CLLR J CLEARY

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**Councillor J Cleary**  
**Portfolio Holder for Housing Services**

**Date;**

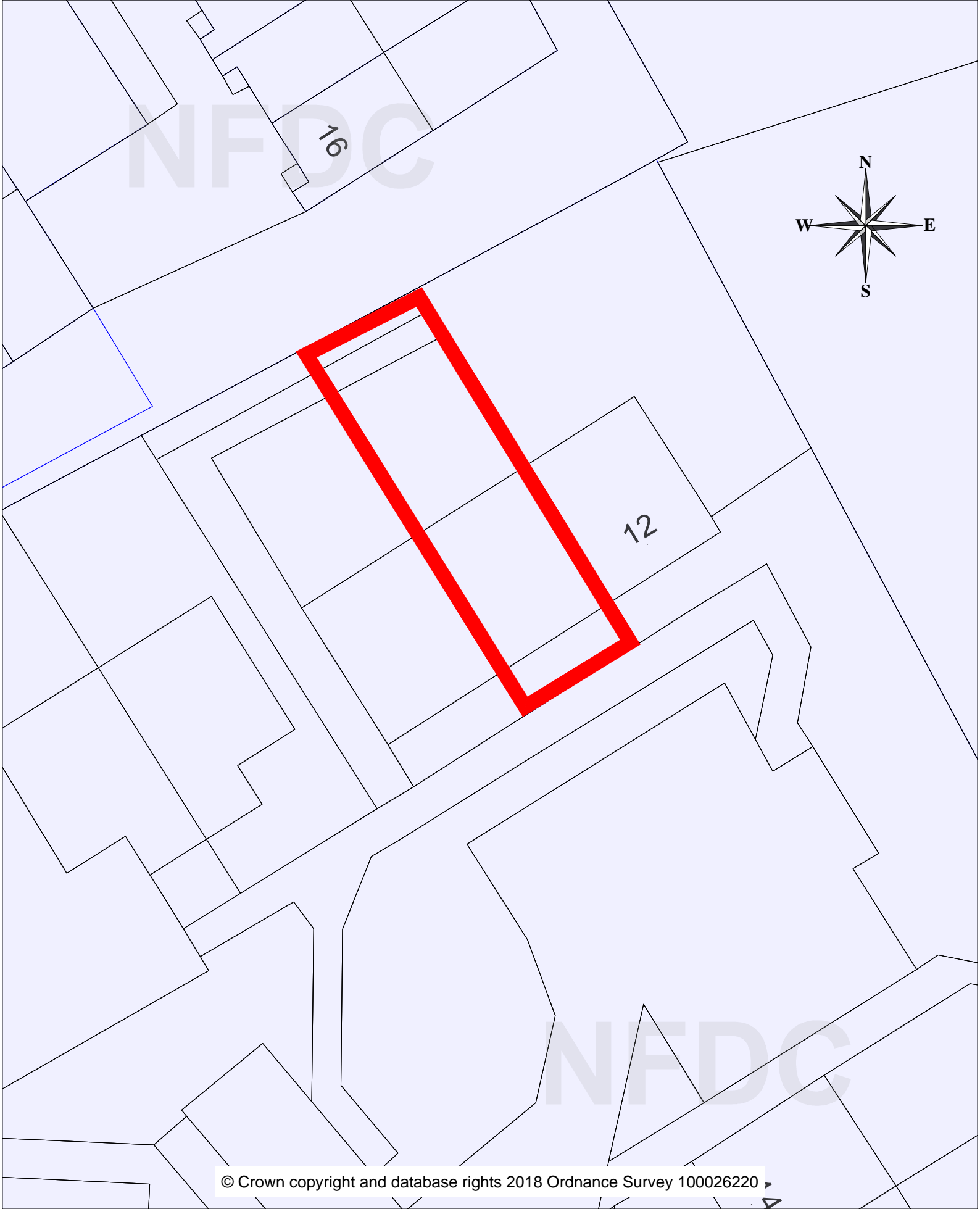
8 MARCH 2018

**Date Notice of Decision Given:**

8 MARCH 2018

**Last Date for Call In:**

15 MARCH 2018



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**New Forest**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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**Title** 11 Gorse Close  
New Milton

**Date**  
22/02/18

**Scale**  
1:250