

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL  
REPORT**

To: ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE		Subject: STRATHCLYDE COUNTRY PARK CARAVAN AND CAMPING SITE LEASE TENDER EVALUATION
From: HEAD OF LAND SERVICES		
Date: 19 AUGUST 2009	Ref: KW/JT/LP/EC	

**1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise members of the outcome of the evaluation process in respect of the invitation to tender for the operational lease and development of the Caravan & Camping Site at Bothwellhaugh within Strathclyde Country Park.

**2. BACKGROUND**

2.1 In March of this year, as part of the development strategy for Strathclyde Country Park agreed at the Community Services Committee held on 30 August 2006, tenders were received for the above-noted operational lease.

2.2 Following a marketing exercise to secure expressions of interest during the early part of this year, five organisations responded and were invited to submit formal tenders in respect of the proposed development. These were:

- Abbeyford Caravan Company (Scotland) Ltd
- The Caravan Club Ltd
- The Caravan and Camping Club
- M&D Leisure Limited
- Strathclyde Park Ahead Limited

2.3 In line with contract standing orders, the tender documentation included the required submission of a business plan, comprehensive operational proposals, financial arrangements including the ground rental offer, future development programme, business expansion plans and the submission of financial references and audited company accounts.

2.4 The closing date for receipt of formal tender offers was 6 March 2009 and 4 tenders were received by the due date and time. These were from the companies noted below. One tender offer was received late and was returned as out of time.

2.5 As part of the instructions to tenderers, companies were advised that offers would be subject to a qualitative and financial evaluation process, and the results of this evaluation process are summarised in the table below. It should be noted that one of the tenders received is deemed to be fundamentally not in accordance with the brief and/or

instructions to tenderers, but has been included in the evaluation scoring process for the sake of clarity. Further brief discussion of each of the tenders is included at section 3 following.

TENDERER	FINANCIAL VALUE OVER 5 YEARS	FINANCIAL SCORE	QUALITY SCORE	COMBINED SCORE	RANK
Abbeyford Caravan Company (Scotland) Ltd	£175,000	50	50	100	1
M&D Leisure Ltd	£45,000	13	44	57	2
The Caravan Club Ltd	£35,500	10	46	56	3
Strathclyde Park Ahead Ltd	£144,000	41	4	45	4

### **3. DISCUSSION**

- 3.1 The tender received from Abbeyford Caravan Company (Scotland) Ltd is a clear and well presented submission including their progressive business development plans and with all the required documentation completed appropriately. They are a company well experienced in the operation of residential caravan sites, and have a track record in touring site operations and in the development of the caravan and camping site industry. Their submission largely meets the project brief and the tender documentation requirements. It is felt that appropriate negotiations will clarify minor operational and financial issues.
- 3.2 The submission from M&D Leisure Limited is well presented and their business development plans for the site are clear and generally in line with the project brief. Although they demonstrate no track record in the operation of Caravan & Camping Sites, they do have local experience in the hotel and catering trade and can demonstrate detailed experience and knowledge of the local leisure industry. However, their submission is qualified by a requirement to include the securing of a lease of land within the park, outwith the site boundaries offered in the information provided to tenderers, which is not felt to be appropriate or in the best interests of the council at the present time. Their submission broadly meets the project brief and tender documentation requirements, although they fail to match the basic ground rent offer.
- 3.3 The tender received from The Caravan Club Ltd is a largely competent submission and includes clear description of their development aspirations for the site. It is somewhat hesitant in providing the detail required by the brief and by the instructions to tenderers, indicates that they would not be prepared to take on the lease of the site in the current season, and would require a period of closure to carry out relatively extensive improvements. However, a major element of their proposal is to operate almost half of the area of the lease site as a caravan storage facility, a use of the site which is not in line with the brief, and which is felt inappropriate to the Country Park location. Nevertheless their submission partially meets the project brief and tender documentation requirements.

3.4 The submission from Strathclyde Park Ahead Limited is considered to be incompetent and inappropriate, in that it does not comply with the terms of the project brief or the Instructions to Tenderers. The formal tender offer does not include the appropriate signature of a Company Director, as required at the time of submission, and it does not include commitment to the continued long term operation of a Caravan and Camping Site within the site offered at Strathclyde Country Park. Instead it refers to a diverse list of commercial and residential property developments (for rent and privately owned), which are considered to be entirely inappropriate to the country park site in question. It aspires to a lease area which far exceeds the site boundary promoted for the council's objectives for the project in hand, which is of course the maintenance and developments of the existing caravan and camping site operation. The offer is conditional on an option to purchase the site in the longer term, largely on the bidders terms. Such a purchase of land within the boundaries of the Country Park is contrary to the Council's agreed development plan for the Park.

The submission proposes substantial private residential and commercial development inside and adjacent to the site and the Park boundaries, planning applications for some of which have been previously refused by this Council. No financial accounts for the company have been included in the submission.

#### **4. CORPORATE AND FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

4.1 The requirements to seek tenders for the operational lease and development of the Caravan & Camping Site is driven by this Council's agreed development plan for Strathclyde Country Park. The initiative is also an element of the agreed efficiency savings requirements for Environmental Services.

#### **5. CONCLUSIONS**

5.1 It is considered that the proposal received from Abbeyford Caravan Company (Scotland) Ltd is the most economically advantageous for the Council, best meets the requirements of the Project Brief, the Instructions to Tenderers and the Council's aspirations for the development and operation of the Caravan & Camping Site at Strathclyde Country Park.

5.2 During the evaluation of the tenders it was noted that there may be an opportunity for further commercial development, compatible with the park location, through identifying an additional limited area of land which would be suitable for the development of a small holiday chalet complex. This would perhaps best be located in the general vicinity of the Caravan & Camping Site and the hotels in the Park.

#### **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 It is recommended that Committee agree acceptance, in principle, of the offer from Abbeyford Caravan Company (Scotland) Ltd. for the operational lease of the Caravan and Camping Site within Strathclyde Country Park for an initial period to be agreed in terms of the project brief, and subject to full negotiations and agreement of the lease conditions.

6.2 It is recommended that the Executive Director of Environmental Services, in conjunction with the Executive Director of Corporate Services be instructed to conclude negotiations on this matter in accordance with the foregoing proposals.

- 6.3 It is recommended that the Executive Directors jointly identify a suitable location for the development of a small scale holiday chalet complex within Strathclyde Country Park and move to seek tenders for the commercial development and operation of such a facility.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenneth Wilson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Kenneth Wilson**  
**HEAD OF LAND SERVICES**

Local Government Access to Information Act: Members seeking further information on this report, please contact Kenneth Wilson, Head of Land Services (0141 304 1846)