

25th June 2019

Environment, Enforcement & Housing Committee

Housing Development Programme

Report of: *Angela Abbott, Housing Services Manager*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council owns a range of garage sites across the Borough, including those that are disused and hard to let. Members previously agreed that Officers should identify the potential redevelopment of sites that provided an immediate opportunity for new affordable housing.
- 1.2 Officers had identified two potential sites. One site is at Brookfield Close, Hutton and the second at Sir Francis Way, which is located in Brentwood, very close to the Town Centre. Both sites provide excellent potential for redevelopment.
- 1.3 At the Community, Health & Housing Committee on the 5th March 2019, delegated authority was approved for the Housing Services Manager to commission an architect to prepare a feasibility report for both sites to establish the viability of each which will outline potential on both sites, and inform in terms of quantum and tenure mix.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee formally approves delegated authority for the Housing Services Manager to submit outline planning permission for both sites at Brookfield Close, Hutton and Sir Francis Way.**
- 2.2 That the feasibility report outcomes are reported to the next appropriate Environment, Enforcement & Housing Committee.**
- 2.3 That if agreed, the proposal is referred to the Council's Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee for approval.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 Following the approval to commission an architect to undertake a feasibility exercise for the sites, Ashby Design Architects were commissioned to undertake the feasibility exercise which is currently in progress which will end in August 2019.
- 3.2 In order to commit the RTB Capital receipts within the required spend deadline for the projected cost of the development it is necessary to obtain outline planning permission.
- 3.3 The estimated project delivery timetable estimates that we would be able to submit an application for planning permission in July 2019 which is a 13-week application process.
- 3.4 The outline planning application phase will incorporate comments as appropriate and provide further detail as below, through produced drawings and supporting information;
 - Site layout at all levels
 - Dwelling numbers, occupancy and typologies
 - Vehicle and cycle parking
 - Access and Refuse Strategy
 - Indicative scale and massing

4. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 The redevelopment proposals will contribute to Housing Services Housing Strategy implementation and will create a model for future affordable housing development within the borough.
- 4.2 By implementing this approach will allow for:
 - Transparency, particularly for residents
 - Tailored service provision
 - Economic focus
 - Audit compliance
 - Provisioning for a cohesive approach to garage site redevelopment
 - Development of an economically sound affordable housing strategy

5. Reasons for Recommendation:

The mechanism proposed front-loads the procedure for allocating RTB monies to site-specific construction projects with outline planning proposals, without Committee approval at the initial stage. It will allow for a more streamlined and efficient method of retaining the RTB monies for use within the Borough.

Option 1 is recommended as the most transparent option for the Council and supports the '*Getting our House in Order*' transformation programme for Housing Services. It works towards ensuring financial stability and revenue protection.

6. Consultation

6.1 Consultation with 'Tenant Talkback' will be conducted once there are specific site-led proposals for consideration following review of the feasibility reports.

7. References to Corporate Plan

7.1 The Council's Corporate Plan aims to:

- To deliver safe and comfortable homes which are efficient and sustainable.
- Manage our stock to recognise the limited resources available and supporting those in greatest need.
- Review the future delivery of housing services to provide the best outcomes for Brentwood residents.

8. Implications

8.1 Financial Implications

Name & Title: Phoebe Barnes, Interim Financial Controller
Tel & Email: 01277 312500 / phoebe.barnes@brentwood.gov.uk

Costs for the outline planning application and feasibility studies will be met from the New Homes Build Capital program. These costs can be capitalised as long as the outline planning permissions become approved Planning Applications. Any outline applications that do not get approved, resulting in no affordable Homes being built, these costs associated with the applications would be a revenue pressure to the Housing Revenue Account.

The Council currently retains income from right to buy (RTB) disposals to fund the provision of replacement stock within 3 years of receiving the funds. This proposal allows the Council to meet the key principles of the agreement with the Secretary of State for Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) for retaining income from RTB disposals and funding replacement stock within the time frame imposed.

8.2 Legal Implications

Name & Title: Paula Harvey, Solicitor and Deputy Monitoring Officer
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The recommendations set out in this report are lawful and within the Council's powers and duties.

The Council's Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee should consider the overarching Housing Development Programme in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

8.3 Planning Implications

Name & Title: Phil Drane, Director of Strategic Planning
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Both land at Brookfield Close, Hutton; and land at Sir Francis Way, Brentwood are located within the existing urban area as defined in the Brentwood Replacement Local Plan (2005), unchanged in the emerging Brentwood Pre-Submission Local Development Plan (2019). The principle of residential redevelopment would be acceptable subject to details of any planning applications that would need to satisfy planning policies within the Council's Local Plan, including impact on surrounding areas or properties. The potential for intensification of sites to provide for more residential dwellings is likely to be acceptable given the borough's housing need and context of national policy, again subject to the proposal satisfying planning policies (both national and local). Land at Sir Francis Way is adjacent to the Green Belt boundary, which may be a consideration as part of any development proposal.

8.4 Parks Department Implications

Name & Title: Stuart Anderson, Facilities Manager
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This is a relatively small development when compared to others in the Borough and so there is little concern about the impact it will have on the surrounding open spaces, there is also no effect on open space either adjacent to or on the development site itself and so there are no objections from a parks and open spaces perspective to the principle of this proposal.

8.5 Other Implications (where significant) – i.e. Health and Safety, Asset Management, Equality and Diversity, Risk Management, Section 17 – Crime & Disorder, Sustainability, ICT.

None.

Background Papers (include their location and identify whether any are exempt or protected by copyright)

None.

Appendices to this report

None

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