

Committee(s): Environment, Enforcement and Housing	Date: 16 March 2021
Subject: Strategic Housing Delivery Plan	Wards Affected: All
Report of: Tracey Lilley, Director, Housing & Enforcement	Public/Exempt Appendix
Report Author/s: Name: Ian Winslet, Strategic Housing Consultant Telephone: 0777 0384141 E-mail: iwinslet@arkconsultancy.co.uk	For Information

Summary

This report summarises progress since the last report to Committee on 8th December 2020 on the development of a pipeline of new affordable homes through the development and regeneration of various Housing Revenue Account (HRA) owned sites. As a reminder, this Strategic Housing Delivery Programme (SHDP) is currently made up of two elements, 1) the regeneration of Brookfield Close, Hutton resulting in a planned 61 zero carbon homes and 2) the development of a range of smaller HRA sites to deliver new homes. All of these new homes will contribute to, and be managed within, the Council's HRA. In addition, this report also lays out a recommendation for the future use of 17 Crescent Road, a currently vacant double fronted Victorian villa style house in some disrepair and also held within the HRA.

The Council's Corporate Strategy 'Brentwood 2025' commits to Introducing "innovative Carbon reduction and absorption schemes", "identify opportunities for low emission and green developments" and using 'brownfield sites efficiently, such as council owned garage sites, to provide affordable homes...".

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to:

- R1. Note progress since the last meeting and particularly the emerging terms of the offer to residents affected by regeneration in Exempt Appendix A. The offer being subject to legal advice and future approval.**

Introduction and Background

- 1. Activities undertaken since the last report 8th December 2020**
2. In the last three months, since the last report, the following has been undertaken. Each is expanded upon later in this report.
 - A comprehensive resident and stakeholder one to one engagement process has been undertaken at Brookfield Close and Courage Court. This has led to

the development of a first draft 'Offer' for all residents which will support any future decant process.

- The procurement process for technical advisors has commenced for the small sites new build programme.
 - Norse Group has been commissioned to deliver the conversion and refurbishment of 17 Crescent Road. A project inception meeting has been held and initial layout plans are being developed with the aim of submitting a planning application by end March 2021.
 - The sheltered housing asset review has commenced to understand in some depth how the improvement of the sheltered housing offer might be undertaken and how best use could be made of the properties.
3. Other work streams that have been completed in the past 3 months for information include.
- The completion of a draft Housing Strategy 2021-26 complete with action plan for delivery mentioned elsewhere on the agenda.
 - The completion of draft Technical Design Standards principally aimed, in the first instant, at supporting the Brentwood Development Partnership delivery of new affordable homes. These will be developed further for the small sites programme and SHDP phase 2.
 - A Branding and Communications brief is being developed to both brand the new homes development programme and provide a structure for communicating progress. The Branding will link with the Brentwood 2025 collateral, its design and style.
4. **Brookfield Close and Courage Court** - The new homes programme at Brookfield Close is currently the subject of a planning application submitted on 23 December 2020. The programme is moving at pace, is on target and despite planning being delayed to a target of June 2021, discussion with residents about decanting and their personal circumstances will continue. Maintaining such pace is critical to supporting residents through an uncertain period for them.
5. Since the application, the delivery team have undertaken one to one telephone and MS Teams discussions, with 80% of the 34 households that occupy the homes affected by the proposed regeneration. Conversations have taken place with a wide variety of people. A number of residents work in key worker roles and have been at the frontline of the care system in the past year. Many residents have significant chronic illnesses which have not only led to them shielding but will also require significant support should the regeneration proceed. Out of interest there are 4 current and former BBC staff team members occupying homes one of which is 92 years old and was present at the opening of the Council Offices by HM Queen in 1957.
6. Most residents during discussion have identified a significant health need or other vulnerability that will require support and have expressed concern about their future and requested a speedy resolution. The delivery team has committed to keeping in touch with residents and update them on progress. Most have also expressed a desire to leave their current home as early as possible and not return

after the regeneration. A small number have indicated that they would wish to exercise their right to return.

7. The one-to-one discussions have been put in place to inform what will become the offer to residents to support decanting. A draft of the offer informed by the interaction with residents to date, is attached as Exempt Appendix A. This is for information at present, but Members views would be welcomed prior to the offer being considered by the Council's legal advisors. Once reviewed by lawyers the offer will return to this Committee for formal approval.
8. **Small Sites Programme** - An Invitation to Tender pack for the procurement of technical support has now been finalised and the procurement team are working with PfP through whose framework the opportunity will be tendered. The opportunity will open 15th March, Close 6th April with an anticipated contract commencement 10th May.
9. This technical team will work up the designs and planning proposals for submission late 2021 early 2022. There are 9 sites in total to be considered for submission which can deliver up to 85 homes according to the capacity studies undertaken.
10. **17 Crescent Road** – Following the viability assessment and E, E &H approval for the conversion in December 2020, Norse has been appointed to deliver the project through to handover. Draft layout plans are being developed following a project implementation meeting held on 25 February. The expectation is that a planning application will be submitted during April/May 2021.
11. **Sheltered Housing Asset Review** - This assessment commenced with an internal inception meeting in Mid-February and the assessment team is currently liaising with the housing team. This study will give the Director of Housing and Enforcement a scheme level assessment of the financial and quality contribution that each scheme makes to the portfolio and help assess the future redevelopment opportunities for the various sites.

Reasons for Recommendation

12. The report updates members on progress on what is a key strategic priority.

Consultation

13. Consultation has taken place with the Leader of the Council, Chair of Housing. Extensive community consultation and one to one discussions have been undertaken relating to the proposed regeneration at Brookfield Close as outlined elsewhere in this report.

References to Corporate Plan

14. The Council's Corporate Strategy 'Brentwood 2025' commits to Introducing "innovative Carbon reduction and absorption schemes", "identify opportunities for low emission and green developments" and using 'brownfield sites efficiently,

such as council owned garage sites, to provide affordable homes...”. The SHDP and specific proposals in this report contribute to all of these strategic objectives.

Implications

Financial Implications

Name/Title: Phoebe Barnes, Corporate Finance Manager

Tel/Email: 01277 312500 phoebe.barnes@brentwood.gov.uk

The HRA has undergone modelling to develop a revised Business plan that was approved at Ordinary Council 24th February 2021. This Business Plan captures a development programme of £60 million that is funded by borrowing. This programme is to be delivered over a 6-year period from 2021/22. Brookfield Close and Courage Court is a site allocated within this £60 million programme along with the Small Site Program.

The work required on Crescent Road can be financed through the existing capital programme for 2020/21 and will be brought forward as slippage as part of the Outturn report. This will be approved at Policy, Resources and Economic Development Committee in the new municipal year.

Sheltered Housing Asset Review will be funded from the Housing Revenue Account. Currently it is deemed existing budgets can fund this review. However, following the study any development opportunities will be subject to a viability assessment and business case to inform future increase to the HRA capital program and borrowing requirement, all which needs to be captured in the Council's Budget Setting timetable.

The offer as set out in Appendix A, has a financial cost. It is deemed that the decant offer as detailed within Appendix A can be capitalised as these costs are relevant in preparing the site in its existing condition for the new development. The HRA Business Plan model will be refined through the Council's budget timetable to ensure all costs are aligned to deliver the projects, ensuring the delivery remains affordable for the HRA.

Legal Implications

Name & Title: Amanda Julian, Corporate Director (Law & Governance) and Monitoring Officer

Tel & Email: 01277 312705 amanda.julian@brentwood.gov.uk

The Council must follow its statutory duties when looking to develop areas including serving the statutory notices required under Schedule 5A of the Housing Act 1985 as inserted by clause 182 of the Housing Act 2004 and amended by the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008, when undertaking this type of development.

The Council by following the statutory processes the Council will mitigate its risk of challenge. The landlord offer is part of the process that needs to be undertaken to discharge the duties.

Economic Implications

Name/Title: Phil Drane, Corporate Director of Planning and Economy

Tel/Email: 01277 312610 philip.drane@brentwood.gov.uk

It is important that the Council has a Housing Strategy that provides further detail to the Corporate Strategy and Local Plan. This will assist delivery of new homes that meet local needs in terms of overall numbers and appropriate mix/tenures. Housing delivery plays a vital role in the local economy, both in terms of short-term construction related benefits (on-site jobs and supply chains) and ensuring that the borough remains an attractive place to live, work and visit.

Background Papers

None

Appendices to this report

Exempt Appendix A: Draft Offer to Residents – Brookfield Close and Courage Court