

Report for: **Cabinet 12 October 2021**

Title: **Additional sites for consideration within the Housing Delivery Programme**

Report

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Lead Officer: **Robbie Erbmman, Assistant Director of Housing**

Ward(s) affected: **Bounds Green, Hornsey, Muswell Hill, Northumberland Park, Seven Sisters, Tottenham Green, Tottenham Hale, White Hart Lane, Woodside**

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: **Key Decision**

1. Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1. This report seeks approval to include twelve more sites of Council-owned land in the housing delivery programme in order that their feasibility and capacity for the delivery of new homes can be determined. No decision is being taken at this stage to build on any of these sites. The report notes the removal from the programme of three sites found to be unsuitable for housing delivery.
- 1.2. In the event that a site is found to be appropriate for the delivery of new homes, this report also seeks approval for designs to be developed and submitted for consideration by the Planning Authority.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

- 2.1. Three years ago, the Council promised to start a new era of Council housebuilding. We are delivering on that ambitious promise. The first twenty-five Council homes at Council rent for forty years have been built and let. 403 Council homes have already started on site, and more than one thousand will have started on site by March 2022. We will deliver 3,000 new homes by 2031.
- 2.2. Building Council homes is once again a core part of what the Council does. I'm pleased to recommend that Cabinet includes twelve new sites into the housing delivery programme so that we can investigate whether they are suitable sites on which to build some of the new Council homes that our community so desperately needs.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 3.1 Adds the twelve Council-owned sites listed in paragraph 6.6 and shown as red line boundary plans in Appendix 1 to the Council's housing development

programme in order that their feasibility and capacity for the delivery of new Council homes can be determined.

- 3.2 Agrees that where any of these sites is determined to be suitable for housing development, architectural designs for housing on the site should be developed through community engagement and then submitted to the Planning Authority for consideration.
- 3.3 Notes that the potential costs of carrying out the preparatory work up to a Planning Application for each individual site are expected to be within the delegated authority of the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Planning, although the cumulative costs of all these sites would be in excess of this.
- 3.4 Notes the removal of three sites listed in paragraph 6.16 from the housing delivery programme.

4. Reasons for decisions

- 4.1. The Council is committed to a new era of Council housebuilding in Haringey. These decisions are an essential step in achieving that aim.
- 4.2. In order to robustly assess each site listed in 6.6 for its suitability and capacity for housing development, further work now needs to be undertaken. In many cases, this will require the engagement of external surveyors and other contractors.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1. **Not to assess these sites for their development potential.** The Council has no statutory duty to develop these sites. However, the Council's top priority is the delivery of a new era of Council housebuilding. The sites in this report help to create a pipeline of new Council homes. To exclude them from the development programme would undermine the Council's capacity to deliver a new era of Council homes. With more than 11,000 Haringey households on the housing register, this option was rejected.
- 5.2. **Not to approve making planning applications where a site is appropriate for housing development.** This option was rejected as it would prevent the Council delivering new homes in a timely fashion.

6. Background information

- 6.1. The first priority of the new Borough Plan, adopted in February 2019, commits the Council to "work together to deliver the new homes Haringey needs, especially new affordable homes": "one of our very highest priorities is to start a new era of council housebuilding in the borough, particularly using our own land".
- 6.2. Cabinet has to date approved 77 sites of Council-owned land for inclusion in the Council housing delivery programme.

- 6.3. Those sites are a mixture of land on housing estates, mostly infill sites, and land not currently used for housing purposes. Most sites are held in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Some are held in the General Fund and will need to be appropriated into the HRA.
- 6.4. Infill sites in the HRA comprise underused land, generally on or around housing estates. Typically, these are garages, car parking spaces, or land between existing blocks. It is worth noting that developing any infill site means taking space for new homes that existing residents may be using for other purposes.
- 6.5. General Fund sites range from the conversion of unused shops into homes to the redevelopment of larger sites such as the former Cranwood Care Home.
- 6.6. Cabinet is now asked to add twelve sites set out in the table below to the Council's housing development programme so that their feasibility and capacity for the delivery of new Council homes can be determined. The table identifies each site's address and ward, and whether the land is currently held in the General Fund (GF) or the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). Red line drawings showing the location of each site are included in Appendix 1.

Site	Ward	Land
10 Lansdowne Road	Tottenham Hale	HRA
Portree Close	Bounds Green	HRA
Harvey House (Phase 2)	Hornsey	GF
Eade Road	Seven Sisters	HRA
Land adjacent to 16 Lynton Road	Muswell Hill	GF
Land adjacent to 1 Antill Road	Tottenham Green	HRA
Kings Road N17	Northumberland Park	HRA
Kings Road N22	Woodside	HRA
Tenby Close	Tottenham Green	HRA
Land to the rear of 622 Lordship Lane (aka 11 Acacia Rd)	Woodside	GF
Land to the rear of 163-173 The Roundway	White Hart Lane	HRA
Cunningham Road	Tottenham Green	HRA

- 6.7. No decision is being taken at this stage to build on any of these sites. Each site has been identified as a potentially suitable site on which to build new Council homes. That assessment has included site visits, the preparation of a red-line boundary of the site, and initial consultation with the Council's Arm's Length Management Organisation (Homes for Haringey), the Local Planning Authority and the Council's Strategic Property team, as well as initial legal checks to identify risks which could impact upon the design or finances of the scheme. Highly provisional capacity studies have been produced on this basis along with an initial assessment of the site's financial viability.
- 6.8. In order to assess each site's suitability further, and to determine the capacity of each site robustly, further work now needs to be undertaken in relation to each site. That work includes:

- Valuation and financial appraisal, a capacity study, and risk assessment
- Preparation of Title Register and Title Plan
- Further consultation on the site across the Council, with Ward Members, and external partners
- Further checks to identify legal risks which could impact upon the design or finances of the scheme
- Searches covering highways, railways and utilities
- Review of easements, covenants, rights of way or restrictions on title which may inhibit development
- Consultation with the Local Planning Authority to determine existing use, policy context, status of any existing consents, conservation area or listed building status
- Environmental report, including ground conditions and flood risk

6.9. In most cases, this work will require the engagement of external contractors and technical experts, such as building surveyors and architects.

6.10. If a site is found to be technically and financially viable for the delivery of new homes, the Council will engage with the community around the site's suitability and to develop high quality design proposals.

6.11. If high quality design proposals can be produced, they will be submitted to the Planning Authority for consideration.

6.12. The Planning Authority will carry out further consultation of the community before reaching a decision on whether to grant permission for the proposed designs to be built.

6.13. If planning permission is granted, Cabinet will then be asked to agree the construction of the approved scheme.

6.14. The potential costs of carrying out the feasibility and preparatory work up to a Planning Application for each individual site are expected to be within the delegated authority of the Director of Housing, Regeneration and Planning, although the cumulative costs of all these sites will be in excess of this.

6.15. In some cases, this more detailed feasibility work may determine that a site is *not* suitable for housing development. In that case, any costs incurred will not be recoverable for the Council and no grant will be available to meet those costs. It is expected that any such costs will be minimal.

6.16. Feasibility work has determined that three sites included in the programme are not suitable for housing development at this stage. As such, they have been removed from the housing delivery programme.

Site	Ward	Land
Chettle Court	Stroud Green	HRA
Blaenavon Garages	Fortis Green	HRA
Waltheof Gardens	Tottenham Green	GF

6.17. The land behind **Chettle Court** has been removed from the programme for two reasons. Firstly, the land slopes in such a way that the construction of homes on it would be prohibitively complex. Secondly, the site is a well-kept, well-used amenity space for the residents of the existing block at Chettle Court.

6.18. Proposals to include the provision of new homes alongside plans for a new adult day care facility at **Waltheof Gardens** in a phased development around an existing dentist surgery have been found not to be viable. Similarly, proposals for the redevelopment of a small garage site at **Blaenavon** were found not to be viable.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

7.1. Adding new sites to the Council's programme of housing development sites will help to enable the Council to deliver new Council homes, including supported housing. This supports the 2019-2023 Borough Plan, which has as its first priority a safe, stable, and affordable home for everyone, whatever their circumstances. Outcome 1 of that housing priority in the Borough Plan states that "*we will work together to deliver the new homes Haringey needs, especially new affordable homes*", and to "*secure the delivery of supported housing that meets the needs of older, disabled and vulnerable people in the borough*".

8. Statutory officer comments

Finance

8.1. The HRA Financial plan approved by Cabinet in February 2021 was developed with the flexibility to add/remove sites in the programme while ensuring that the HRA plan remains viable over a long time; and this is constantly reviewed.

8.2. Approval to add the 13 sites, at this stage, to the delivery programme does not guarantee progression of the sites beyond feasibility and capacity study stages.

8.3. Each site's viability within the HRA will be appraised and approval sought to progress each site if they are appraised as being viable.

8.4. The sites that are in the General Fund will need to be appropriated to the HRA before works are commenced. Thus, approval for appropriation of such sites will be sought from cabinet.

8.5. The initial cost of progressing these sites such as feasibility costs e.tc. will be accounted for as part of the cost of delivery of the units, if such sites are progressed.

8.6. It should be noted that where such sites did not progress, cost spent cannot be added to the cost of build of these units.

Legal

8.7. The Head of Legal & Governance has been consulted on the content of this report.

- 8.8. Any sites added to the programme would require a report on title and may also require section 105 Consultation should the decision be made to proceed with the redevelopment. Legal advice must be obtained where required.

Procurement

- 8.9 Strategic Procurement note the proposal set out within the paper. There are no current procurement implications.

Equalities

- 8.9. The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and those people who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

- 8.10. The three parts of the duty applies to the following protected characteristics: age disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex, and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status apply to the first part of the duty.

- 8.11. The decision to add sites to the housing delivery programme will increase the supply of homes which are genuinely affordable to local residents by delivering new build council-rented homes. This is likely to have a positive impact on individuals in temporary accommodation as well as those who are vulnerable to homelessness. Data held by the council suggests that women, young people, and BAME communities are over-represented among those living in temporary accommodation. Furthermore, individuals with these protected characteristics, as well as those who identify as LGBT+ and individuals with disabilities are known to be vulnerable to homelessness, as detailed in the Equalities Impact Assessment of the council's Draft Homelessness Strategy. As such, it is reasonable to anticipate a positive impact on residents with these protected characteristics.

- 8.12. It is noted that should these sites prove technically and financially viable for the delivery of new homes, then the Council will engage with the community around the site's suitability.

9. Use of appendices

Appendix 1 – Red Line plans of sites recommended for inclusion into the housing delivery programme

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

None