

**Report for:** Cabinet - 20 January 2026

**Item number:** 9

**Title:** Acquisition of 12 council homes at 67 Lawrence Road N15

**Report**

**authorised by:** Taryn Eves, Corporate Director of Finance and Resources.

**Lead Officer:** Jonathan Kirby, Director of Capital Projects & Property.

**Ward(s) affected:** Tottenham Central.

**Report for Key/**

**Non Key Decision:** Key Decision.

**1. Describe the issue under consideration**

1.1 This report seeks approval for the acquisition of 12 Council homes for social rent which are to be delivered as part of the redevelopment of 67 Lawrence Road, London N15 (the property). This completed scheme has been undertaken by The Vabel (Lawrence) Limited (the Developer).

**2. Cabinet Member Introduction**

2.1 The driving mission of this council is to build a fairer and greener borough. London has a housing crisis – and we are seeing more and more local residents unable to afford rents, let alone afford to buy.

2.2 To do our part in addressing this situation we – with financial support from both the Mayor of London and the government – are building at least 3,000 new council homes at council rents by 2031. We are creating more genuinely affordable homes for local people.

2.3 Numbers are essential, but we're focused as much on quality as quantity. We're building homes that will last, with great insulation standards, great interior and exterior design standards and a strong mix of family and individual homes. We make sure homes are as well-insulated and energy efficient as possible because we want homes that aren't just affordable to rent but affordable to run.

2.4 We are also buying homes where we can and letting them out as Council homes at council rents. When we buy, we make sure that the purchase price works out in the round and that quality meets a minimum standard.

2.5 At 67 Lawrence Road, we're buying 12 homes to let at council rents. Almost half of the flats (5) are two-bedroom family homes. 4 of the homes are wheelchair

accessible. Every flat has its own private balcony or terrace and there's a shared communal garden too.

2.6 We are steadily expanding the supply of genuinely affordable housing in our borough – month on month, year on year – to help more and more residents get a home at a fair rent.

### **3. Recommendations**

3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

3.1.1 Approves the acquisition of the long leasehold interest in 12 flats at the property for housing purposes, for the purchase price as set out in the Part B (Exempt) report and based on the draft Heads of Terms contained in the Part B (Exempt) report.

3.1.2 Approves the total scheme cost for the acquisition as contained in the Part B (Exempt) report.

3.1.3 Approve the payment to Estate Office Investments Ltd (Estate Office) as contained in the Part B (Exempt) report.

3.1.4 To note it is proposed that grant funding from the Greater London Authority (GLA) will be used to part fund the acquisition with the option to use additional funding from the General Fund under an approved allocation for acquisitions through the CHAP programme. The amount of grant funding is contained in the Part B (Exempt) report.

3.1.5 In the event GLA funding is not available, Cabinet approval is sought for the use of right to buy (RTB) receipts. The amount of grant funding is contained in the Exempt Part B (Exempt) report.

3.1.6 Pursuant to Recommendation 3.1.5, where RTB funding is used, to approve the grant of leases of these homes for a term not exceeding 7 years to the Haringey Community Benefit Society (HCBS) who, in turn, will let these homes at Local Housing Allowance (LHA).

3.1.7 To approve that the lettings of these homes are made in accordance with the grant funding conditions, and that the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme will not apply to these homes.

3.1.8 Grant delegated authority to the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources following consultation with the Head of Legal and Lead Member for Housing to finalise the Heads of Terms, agree the purchase price, finalise legal documentation and complete the transactions.

### **4 Reasons for decision**

4.1 The acquisition of these properties will result in 12 additional new council homes helping the council make good on its pledge to acquire and build 3,000 council homes by 2031.

4.2 The homes are expected to be of a good standard and to accord with the GLA's design standards as set out in the London Plan.

### **5 Alternative options considered**

5.1 Not to acquire the homes. This option was rejected because it would be a missed opportunity for the Council to:

- Secure 12 new Council homes.
- Purchase homes at a commercially advantageous price and payment structure.
- Assist in maintaining momentum and progress in the overall aspiration to provide affordable housing in the borough.

## 5. **Background information**

- 5.1. The Vabel Lawrence development is a residential led mixed use scheme of 71 homes and 6 commercial units.
- 5.2. The planning application (HGY/2016/1212) was approved in January 2018 and construction completed 2024.
- 5.3. The development is situated on Lawrence Road, a broad tree-lined avenue within the lively and culturally diverse neighbourhood of Seven Sisters.
- 5.4. The 12 affordable homes within the scheme are currently designated as Shared Ownership.
- 5.5. The affordable homes identified in the S106 agreement are Apartments 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 19, 20 & 21 Red House block at the Development. The apartments comprise a mix of 1 and 2 bedroom units including four suitable for wheelchair users and are interspersed between ground and 2nd floors.
- 5.6. It is expected the homes will be sold by way of a new long leasehold interest for a term of 999 years at a peppercorn ground rent.
- 5.7. Once acquired, these homes will be let to Haringey households at Social Rent.
- 5.8. As part of the acquisition terms, a deed of variation will be made to the S106 agreement to redesignate the tenure of the affordable units from Shared Ownership to Social Rent levels. The application has been made as sits with the planning team for a decision.
- 5.9. Tables 1 and 2 below set out the current and proposed affordable housing tenure and mix.

Table 1: Approved tenure and mix

Unit Type	Shared Ownership	TOTALS
1bed flat	7	7
2bed flat	5	5
TOTALS	12	12

Table 2: Proposed tenures and mix

Unit Type	Social Rent	TOTALS
1bed flat	7	7
2bed flat	5	5

<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>
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### **Description of the site and design matters**

- 5.10. The property is located on Lawrence Road, a treelined Avenue in the heart of Seven Sisters. A site location plan is contained at Appendix A.
- 5.11. The site has a PTAL of 5 and will be car free. There are excellent links to public transport being near both seven sisters underground and overground stations, Stanstead Express services run direct from nearby Tottenham Hale and further links to East and West London from South Tottenham just 15 mins walk away.
- 5.12. All the homes to be acquired have been designed to comply with the standards set out in the London Plan.
- 5.13. All homes have private amenity space, plus there is a communal garden on the ground floor and a play space suitable for children under 12 years old.
- 5.14. Car parking spaces will be made available to the designated wheelchair accessible homes. It is proposed to enter into a separate parking deed to enable up to 4 spaces to be reserved for use by residents once an accessible parking permit holder becomes resident of one of the properties. These are the 4 spaces closest to the back door of Red House block for ease. These will remain in the ownership of the estate and under the management of the block manager.
- 5.15. Floor plans of the development are contained at Appendix B.

### **Draft Heads of Terms.**

- 5.16. Contained in the Part B (Exempt) report.

### **Sale contract and analysis of the total scheme cost and purchase price**

- 5.17. Contained in the Part B (Exempt) report.
- 5.18. Contained in the Part B (Exempt) report.
- 5.19. Contained in the Part B (Exempt) report.
- 5.20. Contained in the Part B (Exempt) report.
- 5.21. Contained in the Part B (Exempt) report.
- 5.22. Contained in the Part B (Exempt) report.
- 5.23. Contained in the Part B (Exempt) report.

### **Future housing management and estate service charges**

- 5.24. Given the Council will own a leasehold interest in the properties, there will be a responsibility to pay for block and estate repairs and services through a service charge. The building will be managed by a third-party managing agent appointed by the Freeholder.

5.25. As these are newly purchased properties, the initial let would normally be let under the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme which prioritises existing Council tenants living within 250 meters of the properties or on the same estate. However, the funding conditions requires the properties to be let to homeless families.

5.26. Cabinet has the power to exclude homes from the Neighbourhood Moves Scheme and it is thus recommended that these homes are excluded from the Scheme as failure to do so would breach the funding conditions.

### **Acquisitions and Disposal Policy**

5.27. The Acquisitions and Disposal policy is contained in the Asset Management Plan February 2020 which was updated and adopted by Cabinet in February 2021. Note that whilst the Land and Property Disposal Policy has been updated and adopted by Cabinet in June 25, the acquisitions part of the 2021 policy is still relevant. The policy sets out key 'Principles' and 'Tests' that determine alignment with the Borough Plan.

5.28. The policy also states that acquisitions will be considered to acquire completed new housing units being developed on private land, former Council and other private housing acquired individually or in groups, which will increase the council's stock of homes. The Council will aim to acquire via negotiation in the first instance having carried out a RICS valuation, and having assessed the business case for acquisition, including affordability.

5.29. A Red Book Valuation (RBV) has been commissioned for the purpose of supporting the Cabinet decision. The terms of reference for the RBV are governed by the RICS.

5.30. This proposed acquisition has followed the Council's internal governance process seeking noting and recommendation from the New Homes Board.

5.31. The basis for this acquisition will be assessed and shall meet key criteria as set out in the council's Disposal and Acquisitions Policy. This is summarised in the table below:

<b>Assessment Criteria:</b>	<b>Test</b>
Business Case	Approved by Finance Department.
Deliverability	Delivery by third party developer as part of Development Agreement.
Valuations/ Development appraisal supports	Red Book Valuation for Open Market Value
Affordability	Demonstrated within the Business Case.
Legal assessment	Approval of Heads of Terms leading to documentation of transaction.

Alternative options considered	Only alternative is not acquiring the homes.
Risk assessment	Council to ensure quality of workmanship and specification standards by appointing Project Monitoring Surveyor to ensure compliance with agreed specification.
Political	Transaction has been presented to The Leader and the Lead Cabinet Member.

## 6. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2024-2026 High level Strategic outcomes

- 6.1. This acquisition, as part of the Council's broader Housing Delivery Programme will play a role in achieving the outcomes under the CDP theme: 'Homes for the Future.' In particular, the targeted outcomes to achieve 'an increase in the number and variety of high-quality and sustainable homes in the borough.'
- 6.2. The provision of these 12 homes, for letting at social rents, helps to support the council's Corporate Delivery Plan which sets out that a reduction in temporary accommodation is a key outcome within its vision to create a borough where everyone has a safe, sustainable, stable and affordable home (CDP p34, Homes for the Future).
- 6.3. The acquisition will support housing growth.

## 7. Carbon and Climate Change

- 7.1. The development was constructed in accordance with the sustainability assessment approved through the planning process. The proposals include the delivery of 825m<sup>2</sup> of green roof.

The specification of the homes includes.

- Extract ventilation system for overheating control, high performance double glazing with solar control, minimising heat loss, and control solar gain,
- Energy-efficient LED lighting, split circuit, dimmable lighting for greater lighting control and reduced usage,
- Underfloor heating for efficient and zone controlled space heating.
- The communal gas boiler system has been built for future upgrade / district heating connection.

- 8.1 As well as reducing the running costs for the tenants moving into these homes, the improvements will contribute to the council's net zero ambitions by improving the energy efficiency and sustainability of its stock.

## 9 Statutory Officers comments

### Finance

- 9.1 Finance confirms that the proposed acquisition of 12 homes at Lawrence Road can be contained within the approved Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme.
- 9.2 The scheme aligns with the Council's housing delivery objectives and will contribute to reducing reliance on temporary accommodation.
- 9.3 Funding is expected to be supported by external grant receipts, with fallback options in place if grant funding is not secured.
- 9.4 Further financial details are provided in the exempt section of this report.

#### **Procurement**

- 9.5 Strategic Procurement note the contents of this report and confirm there are no procurement related matters preventing Cabinet approving the recommendations stated in paragraph 3 above.

#### **Director of Legal & Governance**

- 9.6 The Director of Legal & Governance has been consulted in preparation of this report. The acquisition of property valued at £500,000 or above is a key decision. The Council has the power to purchase land to be held in the General Fund Account under section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Council has the power under section 120 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 for the purposes of any of its functions under that Act or any other enactment, or the benefit, improvement or development of their area, to acquire by agreement any land, whether situated inside or outside its area.
- 9.7 The Council has the power to purchase land to be held in the Housing Revenue Account under section 9 and section 17 of the Housing Act 1985. Section 9 of the Housing Act 1985 grants the Council as a local housing authority the power to provide housing accommodation (a) by erecting houses or converting buildings into houses on land acquitted by them or (b) by acquiring houses. Under s17 of the Housing Act 1985 the Council as a local housing authority may for housing purposes acquire land as a site for the erection of houses, or acquire houses, or buildings which may be made suitable as houses, together with any land occupied with the houses or buildings
- 9.8 The proposed acquisition comprises 12 leasehold flats each for a term of 999 years at a peppercorn rent. The 12 flats (being part of the property) will be acquired for housing purposes and therefore will be held in the Housing Revenue Account. Therefore, the land will be acquired by the Council using its powers to acquire land under section 9 and 17 of the Housing Act 1985.
- 9.9 Recommendation 3.1.5 asks Cabinet to approve the use of Right to Buy (RTB) receipts in the event Greater London Authority (GLA) funding is not available to part fund the acquisition at Recommendation 3.1.1. The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government confirmed in July 2024 that local authorities can use up to 100% of their retained receipts to fund replacement affordable housing for the financial year 2025-2026. Guidance published in July 2025 states it is for the local authorities to decide the percentage of retained RTB receipts they will use to fund purchases rather than new build, however local authorities are expected to "achieve the right balance between acquisitions and new builds".
- 9.10 Under section 32(2) of the Housing Act 1985 Secretary of State consent is required for disposal of land held for housing purposes except by a way of letting under a secure tenancy. General Housing Consent 2013 is available in certain circumstances to authorise the voluntary disposal of housing land and properties under section 32 of the Housing Act 2013.

9.11 Under paragraph A.3.1.1 of the General Housing Consent 2013 permits a Council subject to paragraph A.3.1.2 to dispose of land for consideration equivalent of market value. A3.1.2 states that Paragraph 3.1.1 does not apply to: (a) a disposal of land which is subject to a secure, introductory or demoted tenancy to occupy from the local authority to a landlord who is not another local authority; (b) a disposal of land that falls within Consent D (The General Consent for the Disposal of Reversionary Interests in Houses and Flats 2013); or (c) a disposal of land to a body in which the local authority owns an interest except - (i) where the local authority has no housing revenue account; or (ii) in the case of a local authority with a housing revenue account, the first 5 disposals in a financial year.

9.12 The Council will not require Secretary of State consent to dispose of 12 flats to a third party and can rely on the paragraph A3.1.1 of the General Housing Consent 2013 if it disposes of the land to the third party through one lease rather than as 12 separate units and as long as the disposal is at market value. Therefore none of the exceptions under A.3.1.2 (a), (b) and (c) will apply that would prohibit the Council using paragraph A.3.1.1.

9.13 Cabinet is being asked to approve the budget for this acquisition which must be within the budgetary framework as approved by full Council.

9.14 The main terms of the Council's proposed acquisition of the Property are set out in Part B of this report. This information is exempt as the information relates to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information) under Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

### **Equality**

9.15 The Council has a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) 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 protected characteristics and people who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

9.16 The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex, and sexual orientation.

9.17 Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty. Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

9.18 The decision in question is regarding the acquisition of 32 council homes to provide decent, safe, and well-built accommodation.

9.19 The scheme will increase the supply of council rented homes having a positive impact on individuals in housing need as well as those who are vulnerable to homelessness. Data held by the council suggests that women, young people, and people from ethnic minority backgrounds are over-represented among those living in temporary

accommodation. Furthermore, individuals with these protected characteristics, as well as those who identify as LGBTQ+ and disabled people are known to be vulnerable to homelessness.

9.20 The scheme is therefore likely to have a positive impact on equality by providing good quality rented accommodation for Haringey residents with a range of protected characteristics, including the locally adopted socio-economic characteristic.

**10. Appendices:**

Appendix A - Site location plan.

Appendix B – Schedule of Accommodation and Floor plans

Appendix C – Exempt

Appendix D – Exempt

**11. Background papers**

[Neighbourhood moves scheme](#)