

CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL	Cabinet (Resources) Panel 16 June 2020
--	--

Report title	Better Homes for All Small Sites Newbuild Council Housing	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Jacqueline Sweetman City Assets and Housing	
Key decision	YES	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	Wednesfield North, Ettingshall, Bilston North, Bilston East, Oxley, Bushbury South and Low Hill, East Park, Heath Town.	
Accountable Director	Ross Cook, Director for City Environment	
Originating service	Housing	
Accountable employee	Steve North	Contract Manager
	Tel	Tel 07791446112
	Email	Steve.north@wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk
Report to be/has been considered by	City Assets and Housing Leadership Team	20 May 2020

Recommendations for decision:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is recommended to:

1. Approve development totalling £8.0 million as part of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital programme for Small Sites for the delivery of the small site council housing newbuild programme providing an additional 56 homes across 16 sites in the City.
2. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing in consultation with the Director of City Environment to approve any variation from the identified sites for Phase Five of the small sites new build programme.
3. Declare surplus areas of land fronting Park View Road former garage site, Bilston North to improve the access and appearance of the site.

4. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Housing and Assets, in consultation with the Director of City Environment, to approve the award of a contract for the works required to construct several traditional build homes on various site across Wolverhampton City when the tender evaluation process is completed.
5. Delegate authority to the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing in consultation with the Director of City Environment and the Director of Finance, to approve agreements including deed of covenants, wayleave and easement agreements, collateral warranties, assignments and other such ancillary agreements, including capital variations as may be deemed necessary to facilitate the developments

Recommendation for noting:

The Cabinet (Resources) Panel is asked to note:

1. The success to date of the small sites newbuild Council Housing programme, which is currently delivering 39 new homes across the City through J. Harper & Sons (Leominster).

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the delivery of the Small Sites Council housing new build programme to construct new Council housing (Phase Four) by J. Harper & Sons (Leominster).
- 1.2 Following the success of the first four phases of the small site new build programme, and in light for the need to increase Council housing delivery across the City, the report seeks approval for an additional 56 properties across 16 sites to support the continued delivery of the programme.
- 1.3 In support of the next phase of the programme, approval is requested for delivery of schemes with an approved HRA capital programme budget of £8.0 million. The programme will a look to draw down Homes England Community Led Housing fund grant to support the Bushbury Hill Estate Management Board (BHEMB) sites and utilise Right to Buy 1 for 1 receipts and Section 106 affordable housing funding where possible.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The 15 December 2015 Cabinet (Resources) Panel approved the principal of an on-going programme of small site new build Council housing developments, subject to a review of available sites that provide improved value for money and further funding approvals. The sites to be approved through delegation to the Cabinet Member for City Assets and Housing, in conjunction with the Service Director City Housing.
- 2.2 Following the completion of Phase Four, the small sites programme will have delivered 99 new Council homes across 22 former garage sites and infill pockets of housing land, increasing the supply of quality homes to meet the needs and demand for housing within the City.
- 2.3 The delivery of Phase Four of the small sites programme is currently in construction with seven out of the eight sites already completed and allocated through Homes in the City. The remaining site, the former Patchbox Public House site is due to commence construction in June 2020 and complete by March 2021.

3.0 Future Small Sites Programme Sites

- 3.1 Site condition surveys have been carried out across a number of sites to establish ground conditions and the viability of future developments. As a result of the surveys and consultation with officers across the City Council, Ward Councillors and the local community a further 16 sites, detailed below and within Appendix 1, have been identified for the delivery of newbuild council housing.
- 3.2 Small sites Phase Five, delivering 56 properties from 2020-2021, are as follows:
 - Southall Road B former garage site – Wednesfield North Ward
 - Wolmer Road former garage site – Wednesfield North Ward

- Woodside B former garage site – Wednesfield North Ward
- Townson Road former garage site – Wednesfield North Ward
- Simmons Road former garage site – Wednesfield North Ward
- Land South of 97 Myatt Avenue – Ettingshall Ward
- Park View Road former garage site – Bilston North Ward
- Cavendish Road former garage site – East Park Ward
- Abingdon Road B former garage site – East Park Ward
- Batmanshill Road former garage site – Bilston East Ward
- Elmdon Close former allotment site – Oxley Ward

Bushbury Hill Community Led Housing Sites are as follows;

- Bushbury Magic Gardens – Bushbury South and Low Hill Ward
- Infill land adjacent to 129 Goodyear Avenue – Bushbury South and Low Hill Ward
- Infill land adjacent to 32 Annan Avenue – Bushbury South and Low Hill Ward
- Infill land between 48 and 50 Neve Avenue – Bushbury South and Low Hill Ward

Heath Town Community Led Housing site

- Inkerman Street – Heath Town Ward

- 3.3 The sites identified will allow for a mix of property architypes which will meet the housing need and demand for each area and will be advertised for allocation through Homes in the City, in accordance with the Councils Housing Allocations Policy.
- 3.4 The site identified on Park View Road has areas of surplus land adjacent to the frontages of the site, which is currently grassed verge, forming part of the HRA land assets in the area. This site is shown in Appendix 1 and the surplus areas highlighted in green. The inclusion of these surplus areas within the proposed residential development site boundary will improve the access to and from the site and their appearance within the existing street scene.
- 3.5 The delivery of Phase Five of the small sites new build Council Housing programme and the Community Led Housing projects at Bushbury Hill and Heath Town, will be via a competitive procurement exercise, that will mirror the delivery for Phase Three and Four and which has substantially reduced the unit cost from Phase One and Two which were delivered through the Strategic Construction partnership.

3.6 The evaluation criteria for the procurement exercise will be 70% quality and 30% price. The quality element will ensure that the required specification and standard of workmanship is achieved to satisfy Wolverhampton City Councils housing design and specification. The procurement process will be a single stage conducted on an open market design and build basis. The procurements will follow the sub-OJEU open procedure using the Due North e-procurement tool.

4.0 Evaluation of alternative options

4.1 The majority of sites have been identified and evaluated as a result of them no longer being used for their original purpose. The former garage sites have either been blighted by anti-social behaviour and fly tipping or present a better use of the land by developing. The infill land adjacent to properties provides an opportunity to develop but also assists residents who are unable to maintain large areas of land within their current boundaries which otherwise become overgrown and unsightly.

4.2 By not developing these sites will result in a continued resource responsibility for Wolverhampton Homes and will have a negative effect on the wider communities as a result of anti-social behaviour.

5.0 Reasons for decision

5.1 The decision to approve the 16 sites for development as part of the small sites new build programme will enable the continuation of the pipeline of small sites to be developed, making better use of former garage sites and infill pieces of land. The risks associated in not developing will result in a continued resource responsibility for Wolverhampton Homes and BHEMB as a result of repairs and maintenance and the potential for areas being blighted by fly-tipping, overgrown areas of land and anti-social behaviour.

6.0 Financial implications

6.1 There is currently an approved budget of £11.0 million for The Small Sites Programme in the HRA capital programme, to deliver new build Council housing. This will be decreased to £8.0 million as part of the Q1 2020-2021 Capital Monitoring Report because the budget included a sum for the acquisition and development of the former Low Hill Methodist Church Site, which is now no longer available for acquisition.

6.2 It is anticipated that we can deliver up to 56 units across the sites, with an average unit cost of £130,000, this average cost figure is taken from the current phase of the small site delivery programme. The procurement exercise for the appointment of building contractors will enable a more accurate delivery figure to be confirmed.

6.3 This programme will provide the opportunity to make use of funding available using 1 for 1 Right to Buy receipts from sales of Council housing and Section 106 funding for affordable homes.

- 6.4 The Council and Wolverhampton Homes are working closely with Bushbury Hill Estate Management Board to develop a bid to Homes England, Community Led Housing Fund grant to assist with the delivery costs for the properties considered on the Bushbury Hill estate.

[JM/05062020/L]

7.0 Legal implications

- 7.1 The sites are all within the Housing Revenue Account and are being proposed for the development of new council homes. Procurement colleagues will support the procurement of building contractors for the delivery of new homes.
- 7.2 The management of housing owned by the Council is governed by various Housing and Local Government Acts and the Local Government Act 2000. The Council will ensure that these new builds comply with all the relevant statutory provisions.

[DC/07052020/T]

8.0 Equalities implications

- 8.1 The Equality Analysis undertaken for the previous phases shows there are positive equality implications as it seeks to provide affordable housing to residents in housing need.
- 8.2 Wolverhampton Homes carry out a need's analysis on a site by site basis to ensure property type being delivered meets the current letting trends and local housing need and demand.

9.0 Climate change and environmental implications

- 9.1 The development of new build Council Housing will introduce energy efficient homes that will aim to improve on current Building Control requirements which will help reduce utility costs for residents and reducing CO2 emissions.

10.0 Human resources implications

- 10.1 There are no specific human resource implications arising from the report. Management of the proposed new build developments will be undertaken using existing resources within Wolverhampton Homes.

11.0 Corporate landlord implications

- 11.1 The properties in the small sites new build programme will remain in the ownership of the City of Wolverhampton Council. The provision of new Council Housing for the City will provide additional housing stock to the existing portfolio and appropriate provision to meet the needs of the local residents of the City.

12.0 Health and Wellbeing Implications

- 12.1 The delivery of new build housing will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents allocated the properties many of whom will be living in temporary accommodation or in a situation where their health is compromised as a result of their current housing situation.
- 12.2 By developing on sites which are blighted with anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping will improve the environment especially for those residents living close to these redundant areas.

13.0 COVID-19 Implications

- 13.1 The programme for the development of the sites will be dependent on the restrictions in place for mitigating the risk of the spread of Covid-19 amongst the Contractor delivering the works. The programme of works is likely to exceed normal construction timescales as the number of workers on site is likely to be less than under normal conditions with working practises and welfare routines likely to be impacted upon to ensure the health and safety of workers on site and those visiting sites, are not compromised.

14.0 Schedule of background papers

- 14.1 IEDN – Future small sites Council housing developments – 4 September 2018
- 14.2 Cabinet (Resources) Panel – [Purchase and development of sites within Bushbury Hill Estate Management Board area for new build Council housing](#) – 15 January 2019

15.0 Appendices

- 15.1 Appendix 1 – Park View Road surplus land areas
- 15.2 Appendix 2 – Southall Road B location plan.
- 15.3 Appendix 3 – Wolmer Road location plan
- 15.4 Appendix 4 – Woodside B location plan
- 15.5 Appendix 5 – Townson Road location plan
- 15.6 Appendix 6 – Simmons Road location plan
- 15.7 Appendix 7 – Land adj 97 Myatt Avenue location plan
- 15.8 Appendix 8 – Cavendish Road location plan
- 15.9 Appendix 9 – Abingdon Road B location plan
- 15.10 Appendix 10 – Batmanshill Road location plan
- 15.11 Appendix 11 – Magic Gardens Bushbury Hill location plan
- 15.12 Appendix 12 – Infill 129 Goodyear Avenue location plan

15.13 Appendix 13 – Infill 32 Annan Avenue location plan

15.14 Appendix 14 – Infill 48/50 Neve Avenue location plan

15.15 Appendix 15 – Former allotment site Elmdon Close location plan

15.16 Appendix 16 – Inkerman Street location plan