



EXECUTIVE MEMBER DELEGATED POWERS DECISION NOTICE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000 SECTION 9E

1 DETAILS OF EXECUTIVE MEMBER TAKING THE DECISION

Cllr Nick Pace, Executive Member for Housing and Communities

2 TITLE OF REPORT

THE REDEVELOPMENT OF 1-8 LUDWICK GREEN, WELWYN GARDEN CITY AS PART OF THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEME

3 DECISION TAKEN

- 3.1 To note progress and the intention to submit a planning application.
- 3.2 Subject to planning approval, to proceed with the selection of a construction partner, in accordance with the council's procurement rules. The procurement would be overseen by the Affordable Housing Programme Member Procurement Board.

4 IF URGENT, REASONS FOR URGENCY

5 DETAILS OF OTHER EXECUTIVE MEMBER(S) CONSULTED

Name _____

Councillor [insert name]

Signature _____

- 5.1 I, Cllr Nick Pace Executive Member for Housing and Communities, confirm that as a Cabinet Member, I have exercised my individual delegated power, and have done so in the form of the completed Delegated Powers Decision Notice

Date this decision was taken 30th June 2020

Date of circulation/publication of this decision _____

6 EXPLANATION/BACKGROUND

- 6.1 Eight one-bedroom flats at Ludwick Green, Welwyn Garden City, owned by the council have been highlighted as suitable for redevelopment due to costs

associated with remedying significant structural problems identified with the existing block.

6.2 All eight tenants within the block have been consulted on the proposals and all but two tenants have now successfully moved into more suitable accommodation. The Neighbourhood Housing Manager is working with the two remaining tenants to identify alternative suitable accommodation. Both tenants are keen to move but due to the recent COVID 19 pandemic moves of this nature have been delayed.

6.3 Officers have been working with appointed architects Rock Townsend and structural engineers to prepare plans and find engineering solutions suitable for a planning submission for the site. Favourable pre application advice has been received for fourteen new one bedroom flats across 2 and 3 storeys. A planning application is currently being prepared and, subject to delays associated with the COVID 19 pandemic, a submission is expected shortly.

6.4 Prior to planning submission a pre planning consultation event will be held with local neighbours and stakeholders to discuss and seek views on the proposals. Due to the recent COVID 19 pandemic the consultation may take the form of a virtual consultation depending on when restrictions in terms of public meetings are lifted.

6.5 Legal Implications:

The council is required to consider housing needs within its area, including the needs of homeless households, to whom the local authority have a statutory duty to provide assistance.

Further to section 11(6) of the Local Government Act 2003, the council entered into an agreement with the Secretary of State to use capital receipts from right to buy sales under the terms of the agreement. This purchase would comply with the terms of the agreement with the Secretary of State.

The procurement process to select a partner would need to be carried out in accordance with the European Procurement Rules as well as the Council's own Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules

In carrying out its functions, the Council is required to comply with its public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act 2010.

6.6 Financial Implications:

The proposed new development, which will be owned and managed by the council, will be delivered as part of the AHP and funded through the use the allowed amounts of Right to Buy receipts and borrowing from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

A revised financial viability assessment has been carried out, which shows the repayment of debt and payback period for the scheme within the term of the council's HRA Business Plan. The estimated cost for the redevelopment at this stage, which includes the costs of decanting, is £2.5m.

The total budget approved at this stage is £2.7m for the scheme, which runs through to 2022/23.

6.7 Risk Implications:

Financial: Failure to provide additional affordable homes has an impact on the council's ability to meet its statutory housing responsibilities and cost for the use of accommodation such as bed and breakfast. Impact: High – Likelihood: Medium. Mitigation: The use of a range of methods to deliver affordable homes through the AHP including direct construction.

Financial: Failure to use the required amounts of the retained Right to Buy Receipts will incur a financial penalty. Impact: High – Likelihood: Medium. Mitigation: The AHP Governance structure is in place to regularly monitor costs and expenditure and Ludwick Green is part of the programme.

Officers regularly update and monitor risks associated with the redevelopment on a detailed risk register associated with the scheme.

6.8 Other Implications

Terrorism: There are no specific security and terrorism implications arising from this report.

Procurement: The procurement of a construction partner will be overseen by the AHP Member Procurement Board and appointed within procurement regulations.

Climate Change: Modern methods of construction will be used in delivering the new homes, which will have very high standards of insulation and additional features if necessary, and therefore reduce carbon emissions and ease fuel poverty.

Human Resources: There are no human resources implications at this time.

Health & Wellbeing: All of the existing tenants are moving into more suitable accommodation and some have indicated they would like to move back to the new accommodation once it has been constructed. Good quality housing is linked to positive health and well-being.

Communications: A Communications Plan is in place for the AHP. A specific engagement strategy was used for consultation with the existing tenants. Further engagement will be carried out with local neighbours and stakeholders to seek views prior to planning submission.

Equality: An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed on 18th November 2019 and no negative impact was identified on any of the protected groups under Equalities legislation.

6.9 Alternative options considered and reasons for their rejection (if any):

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS USED TO INFORM THE DECISION

Cabinet Report 4th June 2019

8 DETAILS OF ANY MEMBERS OR OFFICERS WHO HAVE DECLARED AN INTEREST IN THIS MATTER AND NATURE OF ANY SUCH INTEREST AND ANY DISPENSATIONS GRANTED

8.1

9 ADDITIONAL CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION CONSIDERED

9.1 [Yes or No. If yes, confidential or exempt information should be included for the consideration of the Executive Member in taking their decision, in a separate Part 2 report]

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