

Name of meeting: Cabinet
Date: 18 June 2019
Title of report: Ashbrow Housing Site - update

Purpose of report To update Cabinet on the current position with the Ashbrow Housing site

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Yes Expenditure in excess of £250k
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	Yes
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Yes
Date signed off by Strategic Director and name Is it also signed off by the Service Director - Finance? Is it also signed off by the Service Director - Legal Governance and Commissioning?	Karl Battersby - 6.06.2019 Eamonn Croston - 10.06.2019 Julie Muscroft - 6.06.2019
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Graham Turner Corporate Cllr Cathy Scott Housing and Democracy

Electoral wards affected: Ashbrow

Ward councillors consulted: Cllr Homewood, Cllr A Pinnock, Cllr Uppal

Public or private: Public Report with Private Appendix

This Appendix is recommended for consideration in private in accordance with Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 namely it contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of a third party. It is considered that disclosure of the information would adversely affect the third party and therefore the public interest in maintaining the exemption, which would protect the rights of an individual or the council, outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information and providing greater openness in the council's decision making.

GDPR

There is no personal data contained in this report.

1. Summary

The report provides an update on the current position with the Ashbrow Housing Scheme.

2. Information required to take a decision

2.1 Background

The Ashbrow site is a key site for housing delivery as part of the Council's programme of work to address the growing housing crisis in Kirklees.

In November 2014, a motion submitted to Council, noted that "this Council recognises that there is a growing housing crisis in Kirklees. There is a lack of good quality, energy efficient and affordable homes across all tenures to meet the varied needs of local people. Secure, warm and affordable homes are the greatest determinant of the health and wellbeing of our communities, which is rightly a clear and stated priority of this Council".

The council-owned site is adjacent to Ashbrow Road, approximately 3 miles from Huddersfield Town centre. This greenfield site was previously used by the former Huddersfield Technical College, for the provision of agricultural and horticultural courses. The site is 4.5 hectares, the majority of the site is allocated for housing. A plan of the site is attached at appendix 1.

In February 2017, Cabinet gave approval for officers to progress the Ashbrow Housing Scheme; to appoint the preferred development partner and delegated powers were given to enter in to all legal documents.

In September 2017, a report was brought to Cabinet confirming that the Council would be entering in to a contract, and seeking of approval to dispose of the land to its partner.

2.2 Vision for the site

The overall vision for the site was developed through discussions with elected members, senior managers and discussions between the various services involved. As a result of this work, the initial vision for development of the Ashbrow site was stated in the tender documents; "to create a desirable and sustainable high quality mixed tenure housing development of about 180 new homes to meet local housing needs, and which will include open market homes for sale and Affordable Homes. The Affordable Homes on the site will include a Council Extra Care scheme".

This overall vision reflects the Council's Housing Strategy, and will contribute to delivering the three strands of the Strategy by delivering housing growth, and addressing housing need and housing quality.

To realise the vision for the site, a delivery partner was required to design and construct the open market homes, the Council Extra Care scheme and additional Affordable Homes for rent. A detailed evaluation of the bidder's proposals commenced in early

September 2016 and was completed in January 2017. The recommendations brought to Cabinet, in February 2017, were approved and discussions with the preferred bidder commenced.

The scheme comprises of an extra care scheme, market and affordable homes. The houses are a mix of two and three bedrooms, are generously sized, and have been designed to adapt to meet people's needs throughout their lives. There will also be thirteen affordable homes on the site.

Overall, the proposed development will provide a high quality environment with a range of housing types for different people. The proposal will provide a high quality layout, focusing on an area of public open space which is at the heart of the development.

2.3 Current position

The preferred bidder secured planning permission for their proposal in June 2018. As they have progressed with the detailed design of their scheme, they have identified a number of problems, in particular relating to highways and drainage issues, which have impacted on their ability to deliver the scheme. The detail of these issues, and the proposed solution, is set out in the private appendix due to commercial confidentiality.

In order to address the issues which have arisen, some amendments are required to the scheme originally proposed in order to address the issues with deliverability. Subject to Cabinet approval and the detail in the private appendix, these changes will be the subject of a new planning application in the summer of 2019.

3. Implications for the Council

3.1 Working with People

This proposal is for the Council to work with an established and experienced partner to deliver market and affordable housing which meets local needs, alongside a Council owned Extra Care scheme. There is therefore significant benefit to Kirklees citizens in providing access to housing across a range of tenures as part of a quality development.

The Extra Care scheme is similar to existing Council schemes, with the benefit of learning from those developments. Extra care housing provides the opportunity for older people to live independently for longer.

In addition, as part of the construction process, the benefits to the local supply chain, and opportunities for apprenticeships and training will be maximised by the selected partner.

3.2 Working with Partners

To deliver the Ashbrow development, as set out above, the Council is working with a private sector partner to deliver both the construction of a Council Extra Care scheme (which will then be managed by KNH), market and affordable housing.

Taking this approach enables delivery of a range of housing without the Council having to undertake direct delivery, in particular of the Extra Care scheme, which has resource benefits for the Council.

3.3 Place Based Working

N/A

3.4 Improving Outcomes for Children

No direct impact.

3.5 Other Impacts

Legal/Financial or Human Resources

Legal and financial implications for the Council are detailed in the private appendix.

The scheme has human resource impacts for the Council in terms of managing the contract with the selected developer, and oversight of the construction of the Council Extra Care scheme. These will be managed from within existing resources.

4. Consultees and their opinions

Ward members

Ward members have been consulted and they do not have any comments.

Cabinet members

The Portfolio Holders for Resources and Housing and Democracy are supportive of the proposals for the Ashbrow site, and recognise the need to make some planning changes in order to deliver the scheme.

5. Next steps

If Cabinet is minded to support the proposal, officers will work with the development partner to revise the planning application, and will make appropriate changes to the contractual documentation to reflect this.

6. Officer recommendations and reasons

6.1 That Cabinet agrees to proceed with the Ashbrow development in accordance with the details set out in the private appendix.

6.2 That the Service Director Legal, Governance and Commissioning be authorised to enter into any contractual documentation required to reflect the changes to Ashbrow scheme.

7. Cabinet portfolio holder's recommendations

Councillor Graham Turner said "I support the proposal to use Council land for a much needed housing scheme"

Councillor Cathy Scott said "I am delighted that that this scheme will deliver a range of market, affordable and Extra care housing, and will respond to the varied needs to local people"

The Cabinet portfolio holders recommend:

- 7.1 That Cabinet agrees to proceed with the Ashbrow development in accordance with the details set out in the private appendix.
- 7.2 That the Service Director Legal, Governance and Commissioning be authorised to enter into any contractual documentation required to reflect the changes to Ashbrow scheme.

8. Contact officer

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9. Background Papers and History of Decisions

Cabinet – 2 February 2017
<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/documents/g4984/Public%20reports%20pack%2007th-Feb-2017%2016.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

Cabinet – 19 September 2017
<https://democracy.kirklees.gov.uk/documents/g5268/Public%20reports%20pack%2019th-Sep-2017%2016.00%20Cabinet.pdf?T=10>

10. Strategic Director responsible

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