

**Name of meeting:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 25<sup>th</sup> February 2020  
**Title of report:** Dewsbury Riverside Development Strategy

**Purpose of report:** This report seeks:

1. Endorsement of the approach outlined in the report to bring Council owned land in the Central Gateway of the Dewsbury Riverside site forward as first phases of development.
2. Approval for the Council to acquire 11.5 hectares of land currently owned by the Leeds Diocese subject to the parameters set out in the private appendix.
3. Approval for the Council to acquire land interests within the Dewsbury Riverside site within the cap and subject to the parameters set out in the private appendix.
4. Approval of capital expenditure of up to £1,050,000 in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years to:
  - Facilitate the relocation of the Council owned Ravenshall allotments
  - Procure the preparation of a detailed and costed delivery plan for the development of Council owned land within the Dewsbury Riverside site
  - Prepare detailed designs and invite tenders for the construction of the Forge Lane junction, spine road and associated drainage.

<b>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?</b>	<b>Yes</b>  <b>If yes give the reason why</b> <b>Affects two wards and likely to result in expenditure of over £250,000</b>
<b>Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports)?</b>	<b>Key Decision – Yes</b>  <b>Private Report/Private Appendix – Yes</b> <b>Private Appendices 1 and 2</b>  The Appendices are 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 the Council and third parties. It is considered that disclosure of the information would adversely affect negotiations with third party landowners 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.
<b>The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?</b>	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Date signed off by Strategic Director</b>  <b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?</b>  <b>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?</b>	Karl Battersby - 13.02.2020  Eamonn Croston - 13.02.2020  Julie Muscroft - 17.02.2020
<b>Cabinet member <a href="#">portfolio</a></b>	<b>Councillor McBride - Regeneration</b> <b>Councillor Scott - Housing and Democracy</b> <b>Councillor Turner - Corporate</b>

**Electoral wards affected:** Dewsbury South and Mirfield

**Ward councillors consulted:** Cllr Ahmed, Cllr Asif, Cllr Dad (Dewsbury South); Cllr Bolt, Cllr Lees-Hamilton, Cllr Taylor (Mirfield)

**Public or private:** Public with private appendices  
**Has GDPR been considered?** Yes

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 Dewsbury Riverside is a key site within the North Kirklees Growth Zone which is identified as a spatial priority area for housing growth in the Leeds City Region Strategic Economic Plan. The site is allocated for housing in the recently adopted Kirklees Local Plan with capacity for up to 4000 homes, of which approximately 1869 are proposed to be developed within the Local Plan period up to 2031.
- 1.2 The vision for Dewsbury Riverside is to create a sustainable urban extension that will deliver social, environmental and economic benefits, provide a mix of high quality homes of different tenures together with community infrastructure to create a sustainable, vibrant mixed community; and to retain, expand and enhance existing green infrastructure, connecting new and existing communities to healthy lifestyle opportunities. The scale of the development is intended to be large enough to allow a degree of “market repositioning” and thereby to act as a catalyst for the regeneration of the wider area.
- 1.3 On the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019 the Council’s Cabinet:
- Endorsed a masterplan and masterplan framework for the Dewsbury Riverside site which together set out the high level ‘what and where’ for the development of the allocation.
  - Noted that the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Service Director Legal Governance & Commissioning and the appropriate Strategic Director is authorised to approve the acceptance of Grant Agreements in relation to funding bids of £4.612 million to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and £22.5 million to Homes England to provide infrastructure that will open up the central and eastern parts of the site
- 1.4 The approved masterplan (Appendix A) shows 3 points of access into the site from Ravensthorpe Road, Forge Lane and Lees Hall Road, connected via a new spine road which in turn feeds an internal access loop. Highway modelling undertaken for the local plan indicates that the site can accommodate the scale of development proposed during the plan period provided that a number of off-site interventions within the local network are delivered.
- 1.5 This report :
- Outlines progress that has been made since the March Cabinet meeting;
  - seeks approval of detailed proposals for the development of land in the Council’s ownership within the Central Gateway
  - Seeks approval for the acquisition of additional land to support the overall delivery strategy to meet Local Plan targets.

## 2. Information required to take a decision

### 2.1 *Infrastructure requirements*

#### Lees Hall Road junction (Eastern Gateway)

- 2.1.1 Following on from the March Cabinet report the Council’s Housing Growth Team has progressed a funding bid to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority for up to £4.612 million to support the Council purchasing land currently owned by the Leeds Diocese and the construction of highway and drainage infrastructure associated with the Lees Hall Road junction which will facilitate the construction of 240 homes. Good progress is being made on this proposal which is outlined in more detail in Private Appendix 2 to this report.

### Forge lane junction (Central Gateway)

- 2.1.2 As reported to the March Cabinet meeting a £22.5 million bid was submitted for investment from Homes England's Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) that focused on the construction of the following infrastructure:
- The construction of the Forge Lane roundabout junction and spine road to open up 70.76 acres of land in the Council's ownership.
  - The construction of a 2-form entry primary school and nursery.
- 2.1.3 Homes England's Housing Infrastructure team conducted extensive due diligence on the proposed scheme during the summer months. Although a decision on the bid was anticipated by December 2019, this was delayed as a result of the General Election and is now unlikely to be made until the spring of 2020. If the funding bid is successful, the investment has to be spent by the end of March 2024. If the HIF bid is unsuccessful, the Council infrastructure requirements outlined above will need to be funded from alternative sources.
- 2.1.4 The location of its current land holding shown on the plan in Appendix B offers a clear opportunity for the Council to have a lead role in delivering a critical early phase of development and shaping the overall scheme, particularly in the context of emerging proposals for adjoining Leeds Diocese land at the eastern part of the site as part of the Lees Hall Gateway.
- 2.1.5 In order to meet these aspirations and progress the delivery of the Dewsbury Riverside site the following design and feasibility work has been undertaken:
- Design of the Forge Lane junction and spine road
  - Meetings with the Ravenshall allotment holders to discuss the Council's proposals and identify options for the provision of a new site
  - Meetings with the Trustees of the owners of 555 Lees Hall Road to discuss the Dewsbury Riverside proposals.
- 2.1.6 The Council's highways team has now developed draft designs for the Forge Lane highway infrastructure. These show a roundabout junction and length of spine road that will facilitate the development of 70.76 acres (28.63 ha) of Council land for housing and education purposes, and potentially at some point in the future, other land to the south in third party ownership. It is essential that work is progressed to facilitate the development of the central part of the site which will contribute towards the 5 year land supply and Local Plan targets.
- 2.1.7 The construction of the Forge Lane junction has an impact on the Ravenshall allotment gardens and 555, Lees Hall Road (currently in use as a mosque and playgroup). These organisations and appropriate stakeholders were consulted on this principle as part of the preparation of the approved Masterplan and Masterplan Framework.
- 2.1.8 Options for the relocation of the existing Ravenshall allotment site are being explored. The Dewsbury Riverside masterplan approved by the Council's Cabinet in March 2019 proposed new allotments on a site that is currently in third party ownership. This is being investigated along with other options to provide a replacement facility on Council owned land.
- 2.1.9 There are currently 24 plots of varying sizes on the existing Ravenshall allotment site of which 3 are vacant. It is currently intended that the new site will accommodate 25 plots built to standard 200 m<sup>2</sup> sizes at an estimated cost of £750,000. The new site will be constructed in accordance with national guidance and is likely to incorporate a water supply, surfaced paths and associated car parking. Although the status of the allotment gardens is unclear due to case law, which is pending appeal, the Council is currently

treating them as Statutory and as such their proposed closure will be subject to the approval of the Secretary of State. Options for the new site are being considered, including within the first phase of development on Council owned land.

2.1.10 The approved Dewsbury Riverside Masterplan and Masterplan Framework shows the construction of a new two-form entry primary school and nursery as part of the first phases of development, although the precise location of the school will need to be finalised following the design of the highway infrastructure. The construction of the primary school forms part of the HIF bid and is scheduled for completion by the summer of 2024. The location and timing of the construction of the school is however related to the quantum and type of housing constructed on the Dewsbury Riverside site and will need to be reviewed as detailed proposals are developed.

#### Ravensthorpe Road junction (Western Gateway)

2.1.11 The third junction that is required to fully open up the whole of the Dewsbury Riverside site is in third party ownership. Discussions with the owner of this land have been limited to date.

## **2.2 Proposed Delivery Framework**

2.2.1 The Masterplan and Masterplan Framework approved by Cabinet in March 2019 showed a high level vision for the Dewsbury Riverside site that sets out the distribution of and inter-relationship between land uses across the Local Plan allocation and the main points of access into the site. A considerable amount of work has already been undertaken to design the Forge Lane junction to support the HIF bid and the next stage will be to commission external consultants to prepare a detailed delivery plan for the 70.76 acres of Council owned land within the Dewsbury Riverside site shown on the plan in Appendix B. This will:

- Accommodate the design of the Forge Lane junction and the related spine road/junctions to enable the development of the Council's land and potentially facilitate the future development of land currently owned by the Savile Trust
- Identify proposed uses for the Council's land and appropriate development parcels
- Identify appropriate highway, pedestrian and cycle links into adjacent land currently owned by third parties.
- Review high level infrastructure requirements for Dewsbury Riverside to ensure that the development of the Council's land maximises the potential of the whole site.

2.2.2 As part of this process officers will continue to engage with adjacent landowners to ensure that a coherent and comprehensive development strategy is promoted for the entire site and develop options/proposals to accelerate the delivery of the housing required to meet Local Plan targets. The proposals to purchase land within the Dewsbury Riverside site to support the delivery of housing is the most efficient and cost effective method and gives the Council the most control. Joint Venture and land equalisation have been considered however these are not recommended as they give less control to the Council and are bureaucratic and inefficient. Details of this are in the private appendix.

The overall approach to accelerating the delivery of the Dewsbury Riverside site may involve the Council acquiring other land interests, the implications of which are outlined in more detail in Private Appendix 1 of this report.

## **3 Implications for the Council**

### **Working with People**

3.1 The Dewsbury Riverside housing allocation has been through two rounds of extensive public engagement through the Local Plan process. The production of the Masterplan and Masterplan

Framework included several rounds of more localised public engagement involving leaflet drops and drop in events in Thornhill Lees and Mirfield, alongside on-going engagement with Local Members and community groups.

- 3.2 As proposals for the Central Gateway have developed, consultation meetings were held with the Ravenshall allotment holders on the 26<sup>th</sup> September and the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2019 and the Trustees of the Masjid Abu Bakr mosque in parallel with ongoing engagement with the Dewsbury South Ward members.

### **Working with Partners**

- 3.3 In addition to public, community group and member engagement other partners have also been engaged in developing proposals for the Central and Eastern Gateways. These include all relevant infrastructure providers that will have a role in delivering the site, other landowners within the site, Miller Homes as the promoter of the Lees Hall Road site and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority and Homes England as potential funding partners.

### **Place Based Working**

- 3.4 The public engagement that has been undertaken to date is the start of placed based working with local communities to realise the benefits that Dewsbury Riverside will bring to the local area. The Neighbourhoods set out in the design principles of the Masterplan Framework outline how local geography and character is being fed into the delivery of Dewsbury Riverside going forwards.
- 3.5 The first phases of the scheme will include the development of improved community facilities in the form of a new primary school, replacement allotments and the potential relocation of the Masjid Abu Bakr mosque and Lees Hall Playgroup.

### **Climate change and Air Quality**

- 3.6 The development of the Dewsbury Riverside site will make a significant contribution towards the Council's commitment to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2038. The masterplan for the site approved by the Council's Cabinet in March 2019 demonstrated an ambition to create and connect a sustainable community within 6 neighbourhood areas. These neighbourhoods will provide a wide range of local facilities and services that will include easily accessible public open spaces, allotment gardens a local centre, two primary schools and a secondary school.
- 3.7 Multi-disciplinary teams will be established to promote sustainable development that meets the requirements of the Council's approved Air Quality Strategy and recommendations of the Climate Emergency Working Party. The promotion and use of public transport will be strongly emphasised, especially through links to Ravensthorpe railway station and Dewsbury Town Centre.
- 3.8 The phased development of the site will incorporate sustainable highway and drainage infrastructure (for example through the use of on-site surface water storage, smart traffic management technology, rapid electric vehicle charging points, LED street lighting etc.), new tree planting and the promotion of cycling and walking by seeking to connect the site to footpaths, bridleways and cycle routes in the surrounding area (e.g. Route 66, Calder Valley Greenway Route 69 and Spen Valley Greenway).
- 3.9 From the outset the Council will also work with housing developers to achieve higher standards of energy efficiency for new homes through improvements to the built fabric incorporating the use of new technology such as off-site manufacturing methods, heat recovery systems, photovoltaic panels, low carbon heating systems and improvements to insulation and air-tightness.

## **Improving outcomes for children**

- 3.10 Dewsbury Riverside will provide family living accommodation within a sustainable masterplan development which will include new early years, school, recreational and sporting opportunities for new residents and the surrounding areas. If deemed appropriate in the context of safe area assessments, the provision of new bespoke Care home(s) and specialist accommodation to support young people leaving care will be considered.

## **4 Legal/Financial**

- 4.1 A Detailed Business Case has been submitted to the West Yorkshire Combined Authority for £4.612 million of funding from the Local Growth Fund to facilitate the development of 240 homes as part of the Eastern Gateway. The Council continues to have positive dialogue with the LGF team regarding this proposal and it is anticipated that a final decision on the bid will be made in June 2020. Further details about this proposal are outlined in private appendix 2 of this report.
- 4.2 As outlined above the Council has also submitted a £22.5 million funding bid to Homes England to construct infrastructure to open up the Central Gateway of the site. A decision on this bid is unlikely to be made until the spring of 2020 but in order to enable the early delivery of housing on this part of the site Members are requested to authorise capital expenditure of up to £3.6 million to enable critical design work to be progressed and facilitate the relocation of the Ravenshall allotment gardens and mosque/playgroup.
- 4.3 Capital funding has been allocated in the five year Capital Plan to support the strategy.
- 4.4 The Service Director for Legal, Governance and Commissioning has been consulted on the emerging proposals. The Council will be required to enter into a number of legal agreements with funding partners and developers to ensure compliance with grant conditions and will need to adhere to statutory guidelines relating to the relocation of the allotment site.
- 4.5 The Council has the power to acquire the land under section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972.

## **5 Consultees and their opinions**

- 5.1 During the preparation of the masterplan members of the local community were invited to attend exhibitions and public drop-in events promoted by Spawforth Associates as master-planners of the Dewsbury Riverside site. The key issues raised related to highways, drainage and the need for community infrastructure. There was also interest expressed in the type of housing that would be developed on the site and a number of people expressed an interest in purchasing a home within the Dewsbury Riverside scheme.
- 5.2 The Dewsbury South Ward members have been extensively involved in shaping the proposals for the Lees Hall and Central Gateways. They have expressed a specific desire to ensure that the first phases of the development results in benefits for the local community through on-site and off-site provision and intend to set up a Dewsbury South Riverside Community Trust to influence how these benefits are captured and managed.
- 5.3 The Ravenshall allotment holders and the Trustees of the Majid Abu Bakr mosque/Lees Hall Playgroup have been consulted on emerging proposals for the Central Gateway.
- 5.4 The Trustees of the Abu Bakr mosque and the Council's Children and Families Directorate are being consulted on the proposed relocation of their facility.

5.5 The Dewsbury Riverside project is being led by the Council's Housing Growth team with support from a number of disciplines who have been extensively involved in the submission of funding bids and developing proposals for the Lees Hall and Central Gateways, including Highways, Planning, Finance, Education, Capital Projects and Flood Management and Drainage.

## 6 Next steps and timelines

6.1 The next steps in the Dewsbury Riverside project are as follows:

Action	Target date
Cabinet endorsement of proposals for the Central and Eastern Gateways of the site	February 2020
Options for the relocation of the Ravenshall allotments finalised	March 2020
Consultants appointed to prepare detailed proposals for Council owned land within the Central Gateway area	March 2020
Draft Central Gateway proposals submitted to Cabinet for approval	July 2020
Detailed planning application submitted for the replacement allotment site	May 2020
Submission of case to close the existing Ravenshall allotments to the Secretary of State	May 2020
Start on site for the replacement allotment site (subject to Secretary of State approval)	September 2020
New allotment site operational	December 2020
Agreed approach for the relocation of the Masjid Abu Bakr mosque/lees Hall Playgroup	June 2020

## 7 Officer recommendations and reasons

- 1 Endorsement of the approach outlined in the report to bring Council owned land in the Central Gateway of the Dewsbury Riverside site forward as first phases of development.
- 2 Approval for the Council to acquire 11.5 hectares of land currently owned by the Leeds Diocese subject to the parameters set out in the private appendix.
- 3 Approval for the Council to acquire land interests within the Dewsbury Riverside within the cap and subject to the parameters set out in the private appendix.
- 4 Approval of capital expenditure of up to £1,050,000 in the 2020/21 and 2021/22 financial years to:
  - Facilitate the relocation of the Council owned Ravenshall allotments
  - Procure the preparation of a detailed and costed delivery plan for the development of Council owned land within the Dewsbury Riverside site
  - Prepare detailed designs and invite tenders for the construction of the Forge Lane junction, spine road and associated drainage.

## **8 Cabinet Portfolio Holder's recommendations**

The portfolio holder is supportive of the overall strategy for Dewsbury Riverside.

## **9 Contact officer**

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## **10 Background Papers and History of Decisions**

Cabinet approval of the Dewsbury Riverside Masterplan and Masterplan Framework, 19<sup>th</sup> March 2019

## **11 Service Director responsible**

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