

Waverley Borough Council

Report to: Executive

Date: 9 January 2024

Ward(s) affected: Churt

Report of Director: Place

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Report Status: Open

Housing Delivery - Churt

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Executive approval to demolish the existing property on the development site which consists of an underused Community Room with a first floor flat in Churt and garage and works associated with implementation of the planning consent. The demolition approval will be ahead of approval of a full business case to deliver a development of 4 sustainable homes to meet local housing need.

2. Recommendation to Executive

It is recommended that the Executive approves:

- i. The demolition of the existing Community Room with a First Floor Flat and garage together with works associated with implementation of the planning consent in advance of submission of a full business case for the scheme.
- ii. The allocation of an £120k budget from reserves to commission consultant services and demolition contractor to demolish the existing property and associated works to implement the planning consent. This budget allocation will be included within financial viability appraisal that will accompany the business case and full project budget request for the new build scheme when it is bought forward.
- iii. Delegate authority to the Executive Head of Legal and Democratic Services to approve the final form of any legal agreements associated the demolition of existing property and implementation of the planning permission.
- iv. Giving delegated authority to the Strategic Director (Place) to enter into any related contractual documentation relating to this stage of this project.
- v. Giving delegated authority to the Strategic Director (Place) to enter into any ancillary agreements related to the project provided that these are within the allocated budget.

3. Reason for Recommendations:

- 3.1 The existing community Room has been vacant since 2019 when the lunch club moved to Quinettes. Planning consent was obtained in September 2021 and is due to lapse in September 2024. It is envisaged the site would be developed along with an adjacent site at Crossways Close which is currently undergoing planning revisions. To avoid losing the planning approval for Parkhurst Fields under lapsed time, it is proposed to progress with demolition and early stage works to implement the consent.

- 3.2 The Waverley Corporate Strategy 2020-2025 sets out the Vision and Strategic Priorities for the Council. One of the strategic priorities is to 'provide good quality housing for all income levels.'
- 3.3 Build More, Build Better, Build for Life Affordable Homes Delivery Strategy 2022 – 2025 sets out the Council's commitment to build homes to buy or rent for households from all income levels. The strategy has been supported by evidence studies including the Waverley Housing Affordability Study 2021.
- 3.4 Demolition of the community room will keep the planning consent in force for the delivery of 4 new two bed sustainable homes in Churt with two parking bays for each property and 4 extra parking bays for visitors.

4. Exemption from publication

- 4.1 Open Report

5. Purpose of Report

- 5.1 To brief Executive on progress made with the approved planning consent to demolish the existing community room and build 4 new two bed homes with two parking bays for each property and 4 extra parking bays for visitors.
- 5.2 To provide background on and reason behind the request for approval of the allocation of a specific pre-development budget for this project to facilitate procurement of a demolition contractor to demolish the existing community room with a first floor flat.

6. Strategic Priorities

- 6.1 Affordable housing is central to community well-being. It is consistent with the Council's [Corporate Strategy 2020 – 2025](#), strategic priority to deliver 'good quality housing for all income levels and age groups' and 'effective strategic planning and development management to meet the needs of our communities.'

6.2 Whilst this report is seeking approvals which will enable commencement of pre-development works the overall project aims to increase the number of affordable homes available for those that are in housing need and registered on the Council's housing register.

7. Background

7.1 The scheme obtained planning consent in September 2021 [Planning | Waverley Borough Council](#) (WA/2021/0212). To keep the consent in force, a material start to works is required by 23 September 2024. The demolition of the existing buildings on the site and for example laying a small section of the foundation or drainage is a material start to work as agreed by planning.

7.2 It is proposed the site would be developed along with Crossways Close which is currently undergoing planning revisions.

7.3 A meeting to discuss the proposals for the Crossways Close site has been held with the current Executive Head of Planning to discuss the layout and density that can be supported on this site.

7.4 Officers will continue to work with the design team for Crossways Close to develop the scheme to the point where a business case and supporting viability appraisal will be submitted for consideration by members of Executive and Full Council ahead of submission of a full planning application. Information to inform the viability appraisal has been commissioned including provision of build cost estimates and independent valuation of the proposed scheme at feasibility stage. Due to the work required for the planning application on Crossways Close it is not known when development can start on site for Parkhurst Fields, and this requires need to keep the planning consent in place.

7.5 The Council has instructed an independent valuation of the 4 new two-bedroom properties and has obtained the build cost estimates for their construction, delivered in conjunction with the Crossway Close site which is expected to deliver 10-12 new homes.

8. Future housing scheme

- 8.1 It is proposed that following demolition of the existing property, the site will be bought forward as a 100% affordable housing scheme of 4 homes.

9. Procurement

- 9.1 Subject to the approval of recommendations made in Section 1 of the report, officers will procure an employer's agent, and a demolition contractor to demolish the existing property on site to leave a clear site ready for delivery of new affordable homes and undertake necessary works to implement the planning permission.

10. Key Risks

- 10.1 Delay in demolition of the community room will cause planning consent to lapse and as a result incur additional costs associated with submission of a new application.

11. Financial Implications

- 11.1 Demolition of the existing properties on the site removes the Council tax, business rates and utility bill liabilities. There is also a loss of rental income from the former staff accommodation which has been used under license, whilst the regeneration of the site is undertaken, and new homes are delivered.
- 11.2 The budget for the demolition of the existing properties and associated work to implement the planning consent for the development of four new homes can be met from the New Development Impact Reserve.

12. Legal Implications

- 12.1 The Council has functions to provide social housing and to build and develop these schemes. The individual projects are at various stages of the development cycle and accordingly the legal risks and

elements with these projects is kept under review to ensure the Council's position is protected and appropriate advice and support is sought.

- 12.2 The delegations included in the report enable the procurement, and appointment of an employer's agent and demolition contractor, to be managed in an effective and co-ordinated way having regard to the budget allocation up to £120k to safely demolish the existing property and undertake work associated with implementation of the planning consent.

13. Human Resource Implications

- 13.1 There are no human resource implications.

14. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 14.1 There are no direct equality, diversity, or inclusion implications in this report. Equality impact assessments are carried out, when necessary, across the council to ensure service delivery meets the requirements of the Public Service Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

15. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

- 15.1 The consultant and contractor shortlisting / tender process supports the Council's ambition of being carbon neutral by 2030. Tender criteria are used to enable the Council to take account of the qualitative, technical and sustainability aspects of the tender as well as price when evaluating and reaching a contract award decision.
- 15.2 Demolition contractors are required to operate in an environmentally responsible manner with a firm commitment to recycle and reclaim the maximum materials recovered during demolition and dismantling process.

16. Summary of Options

- 16.1 Option 1 - Do nothing at this stage and submit a planning application for a lapsed consent at an appropriate time to coincide with the Crossways Close scheme, incurring more costs and risk the Parkhurst Fields scheme to be declined. This would enable the business case for the demolition and delivery of the new affordable housing scheme to be submitted to Executive and Council in full, at the same time as the proposed developed Crossways Close scheme.
- 16.2 Option 2 (preferred option) - Demolition of the property on the site and works associated with implementation of the consent will keep the planning consent in force and will provide a site ready for delivery. Subject to approval of the full business case for the Parkhurst Fields site and Crossway Close site (subject to planning) the two sites can be delivered together by a single contractor which should provide greater value for money for the Council due to the greater scale of contract.

17. Conclusion

- 17.1 The Executive are asked to consider report, and the recommendations made to approve a budget allocation of £120k to demolish the existing property on site and works associated with implementation of the existing planning consent for Parkhurst Fields.

Please ensure the following service areas have signed off your report.
Please complete this box, and do not delete.

Service	Sign off date
Finance / S.151 Officer	30/11/23
Legal / Governance	28/11/23
HR	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Lead Councillor	28/11/23
CMB (Corporate Management Board)	28/11/23
Executive Briefing / Liaison	05/12/23
Committee Services	9/12/23