

# **Report to the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee**



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

**Report reference: CHB-002-2016/17**  
**Date of meeting: 12 December 2016**

**Portfolio: Housing**

**Subject: Revised Feasibility Studies – Pentlow Way & Woollard Street**

**Responsible Officer: Paul Pledger (01992 564248)**  
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**Democratic Services: Jackie Leither (01992 564756)**

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## **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

- ) 1. That the Cabinet Committee considers the viability of each of the 2 revised feasibility studies previously approved by the Cabinet Committee, for inclusion in a future phase of the Council House-building Programme;**
  - a) Pentlow Way, Buckhurst Hill**
  - b) Woollard Street, Waltham Abbey**
  
- ) 2. That for any sites not considered viable for Council house-building, alternative uses be agreed based on the following options:**
  - a. To sell the site for social housing to a Housing Association in return for a capital receipt to fund future Council house-building and to gain nomination rights for Council housing applicants;**
  - b. To sell the site for private development, either for residential or other use in return for a capital receipt to fund future Council house-building;**
  - c. To divide up the site and sell the land to local residents to extend their private gardens in return for a capital receipt to fund future Council house-building;**
  - d. To demolish the garages, re-surface and mark out the land and to leave the site as open car parking for local residents;**
  - e. To sell the site to a Town or Parish Council for their own purposes (eg. public amenity space) in return for a capital receipt to fund future Council house-building; or**
  - f. To continue to market and rent the garages to local residents**

## **Executive Summary:**

Each of the two sites at Pentlow Way, Buckhurst Hill and Woollard Street, Waltham Abbey have previously had their feasibility study and viability approved by the Cabinet Committee. However, the designs presented were restricted by the presence of either mains sewers or a mains electricity sub-station. As discussed at the respective Cabinet Committee meetings, revised feasibility studies have been undertaken based on diverting these mains services.

## **Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

Whilst theseThe 2 sites included in this report are from the original list of 65 sites approved

by the Cabinet in 2012. Each site is presented on its own merits at this stage, and will feature in phases 5 and 6 respectively.

### **Other Options for Action:**

1. Not to progress with any of the schemes presented in this report and adopt one of the options included in recommendation 2 a-f.
2. To develop the sites with a different number of homes, or with an alternative mix of property types or parking allocation; or
3. To revert to the original feasibility study as previously agreed.

### **Report:**

1. The Cabinet Committee has already agreed feasibility studies for the sites at Pentlow Way, Buckhurst Hill and Woollard Street, Waltham Abbey. However, the designs layout options for these sites were restricted by the presence of mains sewers and/or a mains electrical sub-station on the site. Whilst these feasibility studies were agreed, it was suggested by diverting these mains services, a better design that made better use of the site may be feasible.
2. Attached to this report are the revised feasibility studies for Pentlow Way, Buckhurst Hill (Appendix 1) and Woollard Street, Waltham Abbey (Appendix 2). Each feasibility study considers the revised number and mix of units capable of being delivered on each site. It also estimates the revised total scheme cost for each site along with an estimate of how much subsidy will be required. A summary table, bringing together all of the key information from the revised feasibility reports compared to the original version already agreed can be found at appendix 3.
3. For those sites that are, for whatever reason, not considered to be viable or unsuitable for redevelopment as part of the Council's House-building Programme, then the Cabinet Committee is to consider what future use should be investigated based on the following options:
  - a. To sell the site for social housing to a Housing Association in return for a capital receipt to fund future Council house-building and to gain nomination rights for Council housing applicants;
  - b. To sell the site for private development, either for residential or other use in return for a capital receipt to fund future Council house-building;
  - c. To divide up the site and sell the land to local residents to extend their private gardens in return for a capital receipt to fund future Council house-building;
  - d. To demolish the garages, re-surface and mark out the land and to leave the site as open car parking for local residents;
  - e. To sell the site to a Town or Parish Council for their own purposes (eg. public amenity space) in return for a capital receipt to fund future Council house-building; or
  - f. To continue to market and rent the garages to local residents.

### **Resource Implications:**

The original and revised viability assessment for each of the two sites at Pentlow Way, Buckhurst Hill and Woollard Street, Waltham Abbey are set out in appendix 3 of this report

**Legal and Governance Implications:**

Within its Terms of Reference, the House-Building Cabinet Committee is expected to consider and approve any feasibility study, and where found to be unsuitable, agree the future use of each site.

**Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:**

Each of these sites will deliver affordable homes, built to Lifetime Homes standards, the latest Building Regulations, Secure By Design and the equivalent to the Code for Sustainable Homes Code 4. If not developed, the future use of under-utilised garage sites that do not have redevelopment potential, need to be considered so as to make the best possible use of the site and enhance the environment.

**Consultation Undertaken:**

Ward Councillors were consulted on the initial feasibility study.

**Background Papers:**

Previous feasibility study documents relating to each of the sites, along with minutes of the Cabinet Committee.

**Risk Management:**

That the garage sites will continue to attract anti-social behaviour while they remain under-used.

# Due Regard Record

This page shows **which groups of people are affected** by the subject of this report. It sets out **how they are affected** and how any **unlawful discrimination** they experience can be eliminated. It also includes information about how **access to the service(s)** subject to this report can be improved for the different groups of people; and how they can be assisted to **understand each other better** as a result of the subject of this report.

S149 Equality Act 2010 requires that due regard must be paid to this information when considering the subject of this report.

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Within the Housing Service Strategy, it has been identified that the target groups that are affected by the Council's house building programme are people in need of:

- Affordable Housing,
- Homelessness assistance,
- Supported housing for special needs groups,
- Owners and occupiers of poor condition housing
- Council and housing association tenants.

From that, it was identified that generally, there is an under provision of suitable accommodation for nearly all target groups. This has been reaffirmed in the most recent Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

Decision making is affected by funding and other factors, such as the availability of building land suitable for particular groups e.g. the elderly or young families.

There is no evidence of unlawful discrimination in relation to the provision of affordable housing.

This report considers the future use of existing garages that have been earmarked for possible future redevelopment. There are a high percentage of vacant garages on each of the sites. If these sites are sold, then the capital receipt will help fund other development sites on the Council house-building programme.