

Report to the Council Housebuilding Cabinet Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference: CHB-003-2019/20

Date of meeting: 18 June 2019

Portfolio: Housing and Property Services

Subject: Submission of a new planning application for the Ladyfields Site, Loughton, with reduced parking / car free development to meet the requirements of the new Local Plan.

Responsible Officer: M Rudgyard (01992 562363)

Democratic Services: J Leither (01992 564756)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

(1) That a second planning application be submitted for an already approved development at Ladyfields, Loughton where the new Local Plan requires zero parking due to the developments proximity to a transport hub thereby enabling 4/5 additional affordable homes to be provided in lieu of car parking.

Executive Summary:

This report seeks approval to submit a new planning application for the Ladyfields site in Loughton, which has an existing planning approval for six 2-bed affordable homes with 23 parking spaces. Through meeting the requirements of the new Local Plan, in relation to zero parking / car free developments located within 400m of a railway station, it will be possible to increase the number of affordable homes to between 10 or 11.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The Council has an ambition to develop 300 new affordable homes for Council tenants by 2025, making use of its 1-4-1 receipts to fund the programme. The Local Plan also sets out its ambition to deliver 11,400 new homes of all tenures across the district over the life of the plan. In its Terms of Reference, the Cabinet Committee is required to approve the submission of detailed planning applications, and/or if more appropriate, outline planning applications.

Other Options for Action:

Not to progress with a second planning application and to enact the current scheme, which will deliver both new affordable homes and associated car parking, but not taking the opportunity to deliver a scheme in line with the new Local Plan Policy.

Report:

1. The Ladyfields site has a current planning approval (EPF/1758/16), which delivers 6 x 2-bed affordable homes, 23 parking spaces and associated landscaping. A site plan showing the approved development is attached at Appendix 1.

2. The site is located within 400m of Debden Station on the London Underground Central Line and as such, under the new Local Plan, the development would not comply with Policy due to the level of car parking allowed for. Under the new Local Plan Policy, this scheme would only be approved if it complied with the reduced parking / car free development requirement.

An extract from the new Local Plan that details the reduced parking / car free development requirement is attached at Appendix 2.

3. By submitting a new planning application for the site, compliant with the intentions of the new Local Plan, the Council could increase the number of affordable homes by better utilising the land to enable the delivery of between 4 and 5 additional affordable homes for applicants on the Council's waiting list. Improving the districts housing offer, through building more Council-owned Affordable Housing, is a target in the Council's Corporate Plan.

4. It is therefore recommended that a new planning application be submitted for the site at Ladyfields, Loughton in line with the Local Plan Policy requirements, thereby increasing the development opportunity for the site to between 10 and 11 affordable homes for Council tenants. It should be noted that this recommendation does not override the existing planning consent on the site.

5. It should be noted that the Council will be required to submit a Type 1 contamination survey as part of a new planning application. However, this survey will need to be undertaken regardless of the decision required by this report and should not be considered as an abortive cost if the new planning application were to be refused.

Resource Implications:

Expected expenditure for a new planning application - £10,000.00 in Consultancy fees and planning application fees

Legal and Governance Implications:

It is set out in its Terms of Reference that the Cabinet Committee will approve the submission of detailed planning applications, and/or if more appropriate outline planning applications.

Since the number of homes will exceed 10, under the Council's constitution this application would be considered a major scheme and would therefore be presented to the District Development Management Committee and not the Area Planning Committee.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

None.

Consultation Undertaken:

Consultation was undertaken on the original feasibility study considered by the Cabinet Committee where the local Ward Councillor was invited to take part in the discussion. Residents were consulted on the original scheme as part of the planning application process.

Background Papers:

Previous Cabinet Committee Report dated 24th March 2016, which considered the original

feasibility study for the site at Ladyfields, Loughton.

The previous Planning Application (EPF/1758/16) and subsequent Planning Committee decision for the site at Ladyfields, Loughton.

Risk Management:

The site already has planning permission for 6 x 2-bed homes. This decision could provide additionality to the site, thus increasing the Council's affordable housing delivery. A scheme specific risk register will be compiled as part of the detailed design process.

The risk of not obtaining planning consent is mitigated by the fact there is already consent in place for 6 x 2-bed homes on the site.

Equality Analysis:

The Equality Act 2010 requires that the Public Sector Equality Duty is actively applied in decision-making. This means that the equality information provided to accompany this report is essential reading for all members involved in the consideration of this report. The equality information is provided as an Appendix 3 to this report.

Appendix 2

3.92 As set out above there are issues around the provision of car parking in new development. The Council believes that there are opportunities to take a more locally focused approach to car parking standards across the District. It is therefore proposing to develop specific residential car parking standards for Epping Forest District. These parking standards will be developed based on:

- an understanding of differing levels of car ownership across the District;
- the different levels of current and future access to services and facilities across the District; and
- making better use of land through widening the use of 'unallocated' car parking within larger developments and looking at the need for providing on-site garage provision.

Until such time as those standards are adopted, planning applications will use Essex County Council's adopted Parking Standards as the starting point. Where practicable and within 400m of a railway station, the Council will seek reduced car parking, including car free, development.