

Report to the Council House Building Cabinet Committee



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Report reference: CHB-009-2019/20
Date of meeting: 12 March 2020

Portfolio: Housing and Property Services – Councillor H Whitbread

Subject: Council House Building Progress Report – Phases 4 to 6

Responsible Officer: Deborah Fenton (01992 564221)
Service Manager

Democratic Services: J Leither (01992 564756)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the contents of this Progress Report on Phases 4 to 6 of the Council House Building Programme be noted and presented to the Cabinet in line with the Terms of Reference of the Council House Building Cabinet Committee.

Executive Summary:

The report sets out the progress that has been made across phase 4 of the Housebuilding programme that has either completed, are on-site and are currently being procured. An update on outstanding units from previous phases has also been provided. Fourteen units (package 4.1) have been tendered and were approved at CHBCC on 19th December 2019. Twenty-two units (package 4.2) are now being tendered and will be reported to the CHBCC meeting in June 2020. Forty-nine units (package 4.3 – previously 31 units) have been reviewed, resulting in some additional potential units being identified. The proposals are being progressed for planning submission, tender and reporting to the CHBCC. Five units (package 4.4 are being technically progressed). An update on our approach to phases 5 and 6 will be provided within this report.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

Set out in its Terms of Reference, the Council House Building Cabinet Committee is to monitor and report to the Council on an annual basis progress and expenditure concerning the Council House Building Programme. This report sets out the progress made over the last 12 months.

Other Options for Action:

This report is on the progress made over the last 12 months and is for noting purposes only. There are no other options for action.

The Report:

Work has begun on phase 4 of our programme. An update on these and a brief update on our outstanding properties from early phases can be found below:

Phases 2 & 3

Burton Road has six units which are completed however, challenges over the located of a gas pipe is still outstanding. A resolution is close to being reached. A further update will be provided at the next CHBCC. Queens Rd, which has had a delayed start due to contamination is on target to be completed in August, this is in line with the revised target date.

Phase 4 – package 4.1

The first group of sites within package 4.1 were competitively tendered and presented for approval at the 19th December 2019 CHBCC meeting, relating to sites at Chequers Road (Site A) (3 x Properties) and Bushfeilds (2 x Properties), Loughton; Package 2 – Chester Road (3 x Properties), Loughton; and Package 3 – Queensway (4 x Properties) and Millfield (2 x Properties), Ongar; delivering the first 14 properties.

A pre-start meeting has been held, and contracts have now been issued for signing. Currently, post-tender and client changes are being priced to enable the Contractor to take possession imminently.

Phase 4 – package 4.2

The second group of 6 sites, 4.2 are currently out for tender to deliver 22 properties, comprising Hornbeam Close (B) – 3 x units, Hornbeam House – 2 units, Bourne House – 2 units, Etheridge Road – 3 units, Denny Avenue – 3 units and Beechfield Walk – 5 units together with Kirby Close – 4 x units.

The role of the 'Principal Architect' and their involvement in the procurement of the sub-consultants, surveys and the associated scope of works has been reviewed and amended following which, it is anticipated this may result in c £150k to c£200k of savings in the fees going forward.

Phase 4 – package 4.3

4.3 sites comprise of Lower Alderton Hall Lane – 2 x units, Inclusion of Lower Alderton Hall Lane is pending. This site is currently awaiting planning consent to be released pending the resolution with regards to the Local Plan and Natural England.

Pick Hill, Waltham Abbey – 2 x units are progressing now potential drainage outfalls have been identified. We have reviewed the potential scope of the site at Ladyfields, Loughton, which previously had approval for six units is now being re-planned to deliver c 17 units. Woollard Street, Waltham Abbey, has been redesigned as the consented scheme was undeliverable as the ridge height exceeded the permissible height. Pentlow Way, Buckhurst Hill – 7 units and Chequers Road (B) – 5 units, have been delayed pending agreement with Thames Water to permit build over contracts which have only recently been confirmed. Chequers Road (B) was consented for five units however it is being reviewed as it may be possible to deliver c 12 units totalling c 49 units (previously approved 31 units), These schemes will now progress to tender in March/April.

Phase 4 – package 4.4

4.4 sites comprise of Thatcher's Close, Loughton – 1 unit, Broomfield Court, Waltham Abbey – 1 unit, Shingle Court, Waltham Abbey, - 1 x unit, Stoneyshtotts, Waltham Abbey – 1 x unit and Wrangley Court, Waltham Abbey, totalling five units, these are now being technically assessed with the aim of them being tendered in c June/ July 2020.

Phase 5 & 6

Work to identify sites for the above phases is due to be completed by mid-March, following this officers will begin to hold briefings with members to start the consultation process. Reports will be presented to the next CHBCC

Sales

Whitehills site is to be sold at auction in March 2020.

Rights of Way issues

The Rights of Way/Access issues stemming from the Appropriation process are being addressed in line with the phased programme. A policy is being developed to ensure a fair and consistent approach is being taken.

Financial update

Officers continue to work with colleagues in the Finance department to develop a more robust reporting system, particularly around cash flow. The outcome of this will be reported at the next CHBCC.

A financial update is available in appendix 1

Resource Implications:

There is currently a Housing Development Officer role vacant, and this position will be reviewed going forward.

Legal and Governance Implications:

There are no current anticipated Legal and Governance implications of merit at the time of writing this report.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

The continued delivery of the development housing programme will help address the antisocial behaviour issues associated with these garage sites and will reduce the opportunity for fly-tipping and thereby contribute to a Greener environment.

Consultation Undertaken:

Interdepartmental involvement has and will continue to be engaged.

Background Papers:

The Executive Report is attached to this report (appendix 1).

Risk Management:

The Risks associated with the delivery of the current housing development programme is identified within the Executive Report attached.

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 consideration of this report. The equality information is provided as an Appendix to this report.