

Item

## REPORT ON STAGE ONE OPTIONS APPRAISAL – EKIN ROAD

**To:**

Councillor Gerri Bird, Executive Councillor for Housing

Housing Scrutiny Committee 19/09/2023

**Report by:**

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**Wards affected:**

Abbey

### Key Decision

#### 1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 In September 2021 HSC received a report that Ekin Road had been identified as an area where estate regeneration is being actively considered. In September 2022 a report indicated that this work was going forward and that there would be further resident consultation.
- 1.2 A survey conducted in 2022 had 63 responses from 58 households (out of 122) and 77.5% strongly agreed or agreed in favour of redevelopment. Questions were raised about whether this was a fair reflection of opinion but the contacts to date do not indicate that it was significantly out of line with the views of residents. However, this is not regarded as definitive. The point of the options appraisal is to offer a clearer assessment of the options so that all residents on the estate can consider the outcome.
- 1.3 On 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023 Jones Lang Lasalle (JLL) were appointed to develop the options appraisal (Appendix 1). The Options Appraisal work has been divided into two stages.

#### **Stage 1 (June 2023 to September 2023)**

Evaluation of seven options by assessing each one, from a high-level strategic, economic and financial perspective. Each option was assessed against 11x 'critical success factors'.

#### **Stage 2 (September 2023 to June 2024)**

Detailed analysis to establish the preferred option for the estate from the short list of options. Resident engagement to collect feedback from all households.

1.4 This report brings forward the outcome of the Stage 1 work (Appendix 1). This was published on the website on 4<sup>th</sup> September and presented at an estate Liaison Group meeting the same day. The Liaison Group is open to all residents on the estate and a letter was sent to all residents informing them of the Liaison Group meeting and of the Housing Scrutiny Committee.

1.5 Options considered in Stage 1

- Option 1 – Do Nothing
- Option 2 – Retain the buildings in existing form and undertake essential repairs and retrofitting.
- Option 3- Partial Redevelopment involving the demolition of the flats only.
- Option 4 – Partial Redevelopment involving the retention of all houses.
- Option 5- Partial Redevelopment involving the retention of most of the houses.
- Option 6 – Partial Redevelopment involving retention of houses to the south and east.
- Option 7 – Full Redevelopment

1.6 Options to be carried forward to Stage 2

- Option 2 – Retain the buildings in existing form and undertake essential repairs and retrofitting.
- Option 6 – Partial Redevelopment involving retention of houses to the south and east.
- Option 7 – Full Redevelopment

1.7 The report also outlines the consultation work that has taken place to date and the consultation programme that is planned for stage 2. The following minimum arrangements have been announced, but this programme is developing:

**Individual appointment sessions:**

Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 1pm to 4pm

Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> October 4pm to 7pm

Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 10am to 1pm

**Next Liaison Group Meetings:**

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024

1.8 The cost of the options appraisal is estimated at £300,000. Approval is sought for a budget, with this budget bid subject to approval in the forthcoming November 2023 Mid Term Financial Strategy.

## 2 Recommendations

The Executive Councillor is recommended to:

- 2.1 Note the completion of Stage 1 of the options appraisal for Ekin Road.
- 2.2 Note the proposals for further consultation with residents in the course of Stage 2.
- 2.3 Approve the progress to Stage 2 of the options appraisal on the basis of the criteria and the options set out in the Stage 1 report.
- 2.4 Approve that a revenue budget of £300,000 be identified to support this further Stage 2 options appraisal work.

## 3 Methodology

- 3.1 Jones Lang LaSalle (JLL) were instructed to undertake an options appraisal in two stages. The first stage includes an evaluation of seven options (see part 4) by assessing each from a high-level strategic, economic and financial perspective. Each option was assessed against 11 'critical success factors' (see Appendix 1)
- 3.2 As part of the strategic assessment JLL have assigned a RAG (red, amber, green) rating against each critical success factor for each option. This has also included an assessment of the carbon impacts. This methodology follows the methodology applied to the options appraisal for Hanover Court and Princess Court. The exception is the addition of a Health and Wellbeing criterion: "Assess each option's ability to improve the health and wellbeing of the residents, through providing open green spaces, accessibility, and healthy living environments, whilst also examining the impacts on the community."
- 3.3 Economic factors are considered through a cost-benefit analysis and financial factors are appraised through a high-level assessment of viability.
- 3.4 A more detailed analysis will be performed in stage 2 to establish the preferred option for the estate from the short list of options.

## 4 Configuration of estate

4.1 Current Homes:

Type	Total	Council Tenancy	Leasehold / Freehold
Flats	72	62	10

Maisonettes	8	5	3
Bungalows	10	10	0
Houses	32	22	10

#### 4.2 Layout of estate

Green = Flats  
 Pink/Yellow = Maisonettes  
 Purple = Bungalows  
 Blue = Houses (Freehold)  
 Brown = Houses (Council Tenancy)



#### 5 Options considered.

- Option 1 – Do Nothing
- Option 2 – Retain the buildings in existing form and undertake essential repairs and retrofitting.
- Option 3- Partial Redevelopment involving the demolition of the flats only.
- Option 4 – Partial Redevelopment involving the retention of all houses.
- Option 5- Partial Redevelopment involving the retention of most of the houses.

- Option 6 – Partial Redevelopment involving retention of house to the south and east.
- Option 7 – Full Redevelopment

## **6 Options to be carried forward to Stage 2**

- Option 2 – Retain the buildings in existing form and undertake essential repairs and retrofitting.
- Option 6 – Partial Redevelopment involving retention of house to the south and east.
- Option 7 – Full Redevelopment

6.1 Based on the strategic analysis of each option as set out in the Options Analysis Report, JLL concluded that Option 1 is not viable due to the high number of red flags associated with the 'critical success factors'. Option 2 also produces minimal green flags.

6.2 It is clear that as the level of redevelopment increases throughout the remaining options, so does the associated improvements and thus green flags. Therefore Options 3 and 4 have some viability but this is limited due to the number of properties undeveloped and the unchanged estate layout.

6.3 There is overall a positive transformation of the estate for Options 5, 6 and 7, Option 7 producing the highest number of green flags.

## **7 Consultation**

7.1 The Consultation has taken the form of

- Liaison Group meetings to which all residents have been invited. These have been held in December, March and July, with a most recent meeting now having been held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023.
- Attendance has been limited but letters have been sent to the whole estate and the material presented has been placed on the website and lodged at the local library.
- Contact details have been provided to residents in all correspondence as to how the Council can be contacted to discuss individual or wider concerns. Council officers have been in contact with the majority of residents as a result.
- Tenancy audits undertaken by the estate Housing Officer, each involving an in-person visit to the household. The Housing Officer has met with contacted 60+ tenants as part of this process.
- Drop-in events (started on 27<sup>th</sup> July) at a local venue (the Abbey People Hub). This was poorly attended.

- Stall with further information (attended by the project team) at the Abbey People Big Lunch community event.
- Liaison with Save Ekin Road group.

7.2 The survey conducted in 2022 had 63 responses from 58 households (out of 122) and 77.5% strongly agreed or agreed in favour of redevelopment. Questions were raised about whether this was a fair reflection of opinion but the contacts to date do not indicate that it was significantly out of line with the views of residents. However, this is not regarded as definitive. The point of the options appraisal is to offer a clearer assessment of the options so that all residents on the estate can consider the outcome.

### Planned consultation

7.3 Following the HSC, one of the first steps will be to conduct a survey of all residents to gain an understanding of their viewpoints at this stage. This will be completed by the end of the November.

7.4 A more detailed analysis will be undertaken of options 2, 6 and 7 in order to establish the preferred option for the estate. The outcome of this work will be communicated with residents and there will be further consultation before a final report is submitted to the Council's Housing Scrutiny Committee in June 2024.

7.5 Individual appointments - the open drop-in sessions will be replaced with sessions offering confidential appointments. The first of these will take place on Thursday 21st September between 10am and 1pm at The Abbey People Hub, Barnwell Road. Further sessions will be on the following dates and times:

Thursday 5th October 1pm to 4pm  
 Tuesday 24th October 4pm to 7pm  
 Tuesday 14th November 10am to 1pm

7.6 If these dates are not suitable, then we will seek to offer residents another appointment at a mutually agreeable time either in person, at their home or by telephone.

7.7 Liaison Group Meeting - the next Liaison Group meetings are scheduled to take place on the following dates. Details of these meetings will be communicated with all residents in due course:

Tuesday 5th December 2023  
 Monday 4th March 2024  
 Monday 3rd June 2024

## **8 Decant**

- 8.1 It is not proposed to introduce decanting arrangements ahead of a decision to proceed with the scheme. A small number of right-to-buy properties have been repurchased and a small number of tenants have been rehoused from the estate. These changes have been part of the activity of the Council through its existing systems and not through special measures for Ekin Road.

## **9 Sustainability**

- 9.1 Sustainability is considered within the options appraisal and, as noted above, there is a particular focus on carbon implications.

## **10 Finance**

- 10.1 The cost of the options appraisal is estimated at £300,000. Approval is sought for a budget, with this budget bid subject to approval in the forthcoming November 2023 Mid Term Financial Strategy. These fees would be abortive should a firm scheme not be confirmed and will be accounted for as such across the Council's allowance for such works as detailed within HRA budgetary processes.

## **11 Implications**

### **(a) Staffing Implications**

The Council will deliver its role in the appraisal through the Housing Development Agency with support from other housing management, maintenance and finance teams.

### **(b) Equality and Poverty Implications**

An EQIA for this investigatory phase of the options appraisal has been completed and is attached in Appendix 2. This EQIA will evolve as work progresses.

### **(c) Environmental Implications**

The options appraisal considers carbon issues for each of the options. A redevelopment scheme will be considered against the Cambridge Sustainable Housing Design Guide.

A council Climate Change Rating Assessment will be completed as part of the final proposals.

### **(d) Procurement Implications**

The options appraisal is being delivered by Jones Lang Lasalle who have been appointed through the Crown Commercial Services framework.

(e) Community Safety Implications

Options will be considered taking into account existing factors and Secured by Design guidelines as set out within the City Councils Design Brief.

(f) Consultation and communication considerations

See above, part 7

There has also been consultation with Ward Councillors about the process.

**Risks**

11.1 Below is a table setting out key risks associated with the project:

	Probability	Impact		
Challenges to the options appraisal process – legal, political and community issues	4	4	16	Employ experienced consultants; secure legal advice.
Mould and condensation creating health risk esp. next winter. Delay in maintenance due to uncertainty	3	5	15	Maintenance have created a response team and have considered insulation works. Continue responsive repairs. Review planned maintenance to identify risks from delay.
Concentration of / demand for temporary accommodation. (Currently arises through purchases and normal voids.)	4	3	12	Monitor. Consider flexibility in use of vacant flats. Continue letting vacant flats but notify prospective tenants of redevelopment proposals.
Impacts of uncertainty and delay on residents – both those hoping to see redevelopment and those wishing to remain in their current homes.	2	5	10	Clear timescale for residents. Liaison with affected individuals. Purchases and transfers where appropriate and possible.
Lack of engagement with some residents and other groups dominating meetings and staff time	3	3	9	Conduct engagement exercises outside Liaison Group. Engage external consultants with JLL to support process.

**12 Background papers**

21/48/HSC: Report on progress toward HRA estate regeneration programme.

22/46/HSC: Report on Proposed Development - East Barnwell



## **13 Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Jones Lang Lasalle Options Appraisal  
Appendix 2 - EQIA

## **14 Inspection of papers**

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on the report please contact Jim Pollard, Housing Development Agency, tel: 01223 457924, email: [jim.pollard@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:jim.pollard@cambridge.gov.uk)