

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

16 JUNE 2021

URGENCY ITEMS - MINUTE OF DECISION

Delegation arrangements for dealing with matters of urgency

Paragraph 7.2.1 of the Council's Constitution provides that Chief Officers may take urgent decisions if they are of the opinion that circumstances exist which make it necessary for action to be taken by the Council prior to the time when such action could be approved through normal Council Procedures. They shall, where practicable, first consult with the Leader and Chairman (or in their absence the Vice-Chairman) and the Opposition Spokesperson of the appropriate committee.

Subject:

One Public Estate Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF)

Appropriate Committees:

Economic Development; Policy & Finance

Details of Item (including reason(s) for use of urgency procedure):

Members will be aware of the raft of new funding opportunities emerging which are often accompanied by very quick deadlines and requirements for projects to be sufficiently advanced to allow spend within a relatively short timeframe. One such new fund is the One Public Estate Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF).

The BLRF is offering up to £75 million (of which £25m will be allocated for self and custom-build projects) to unlock and accelerate the release of Brownfield sites. Applications will only be considered if the following 'gateway' criteria are satisfied:

- the land to which the application relates is brownfield land, fully owned by the local authority.
- the project must be undertaking capital works on local authority-owned land only
- funding must enable the release of the land for housing by end March 2024 or earlier, and must address market failure
- the works for which funding is sought are deliverable and within a timeframe that will enable the land to be released in time
- A threshold of 1.5 for Benefits Cost Ratio (BCR) + non-monetised benefits must be reached

Funding will provide upfront capital to address viability issues arising from abnormal costs of the proposed development. The types of abnormal costs requiring funding may include:

- site levelling, groundworks, demolition
- provision of small-scale infrastructure
- highways works or other access challenges
- addressing environmental constraints.

The BLRF was launched on 19 April 2021, with an initial call for sites to be concluded by 10 May via the North Midlands OPE Partnership. It was considered that only the proposal of sufficient maturity for this Council was the redevelopment at 32 Stodman Street, Newark. Members will be aware that this project is also identified for Towns Funding via the MCHLG approved Newark Town Investment Plan. 10 expressions of interest were received by the NM Partnership, 5 were in the N2 area - 3 from Nottingham City, 1 from NCC, and the Stodman Street project.

The Stodman Street bid will be formally submitted to the North Midlands OPE Partnership on 26 May 2021. It is hoped the partnership will then make the formal submission to Government on 2 June 2021.

Equalities Implications

As part of planning development process for 32 Stodman Street it is necessary to have regard to equality impacts.

Financial Implications

None.

Decision

That a BLRF bid of £284,000 be formally made to the government via the North Midlands OPE Partnership.

Reason for Decision

To enable preparation and submission of a Brownfield Land Release Fund bid for 32 Stodman Street by the OPE set deadline of 26 May 2021.

Members Consulted:

Councillor David Lloyd
Chairman (Policy & Finance Committee) and Leader of the Council (17/05/21)

Councillor Keith Girling
Chairman (Economic Development Committee) and Deputy Leader of the Council (17/05/21)

Councillor Paul Peacock
Opposition Spokesperson (17/05/21)

Signed: 

Date: 18th May 2021

Matt Lamb
Director – Planning & Growth