

HOMES & COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE
18 JANUARY 2021

YORKE DRIVE REGENERATION UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 To provide an update to the Committee on progress within the Yorke Drive Regeneration Project.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 The Yorke Drive Regeneration project emanated from the Bridge Ward Neighbourhood Study undertaken in 2012 and has the following objectives:

- Transformation of the estate and area through selective demolition and building of new mixed tenure homes for rent and sale
- To achieve a cross subsidy from the sale of market properties to support delivery of new affordable rented homes and improvements to the whole estate.
- Providing improved sports and leisure facilities for all (including a new sports pavilion).
- Improving road access and the road network in the area.
- Making the whole area a better and safer place to live
- Providing an economic stimulus to the Newark and Sherwood Economy

2.2 Outline planning permission was secured in November 2019. This was made possible through a grant of almost £1m from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Governments Estate Regeneration Scheme which allowed the council to commission consultants Campbell Tickell to undertake master planning, financial modelling and coordinate the planning submission.

2.3 The exempt report presented to Policy and Finance in September 2019, approved the maximum financial capital commitment from the council and in April 2020, the Policy and Finance Committee approved the appointment of Lovell Partnership, through their regeneration arm Compendium Living, as preferred developer to deliver the scheme.

3.0 Project Update

3.1 In September 2020 the council entered into an Enabling Agreement with Lovell to allow progression of site investigations, surveys, design and a reserved matters application whilst the detailed Development Agreement is drafted and funding finalised.

3.2 An update against key areas of the project is presented below:

Key actions	Update
Land Assembly through acquisition of privately owned properties.	<p>Fourteen privately owned properties fall within the demolition zone and the Council has begun the process liaising with owners with a view to purchasing these through an agreed voluntary sale.</p> <p>Since the September Committee update a further two properties have been purchased (bringing the total to three) with an additional four currently in the conveyance process and valuations completed on all but one property.</p> <p>A compulsory purchase order will be sought as a last resort to ensure land assembly; Weightmans Law has been appointed to support the Council through this process if necessary. A further Committee Paper for approval to submit a CPO will be brought forward in due course.</p>
Site Investigations	<p>Under the Enabling Agreement the following site investigations have been undertaken to inform the reserved matters application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground Investigations – soil depth, composition and drainage capacity • CCTV of the existing drainage system • Further ecology surveys
Reserved Matters – Design of estate, housing and sports pavilion	<p>Detailed design work is underway with HTA architects for the residential elements of the project and STRI and Langtry Langton for the football pitch and pavilion design respectively.</p> <p>On 8th and 9th December, those residents directly impacted by the project through demolition of their existing home were invited to a consultation event to consider the emerging designs. Feedback from this consultation will be fed into the design and a further consultation for a wider range of stakeholders is being planned for late January 2021.</p> <p>Emerging designs from the December consultation can be viewed here: https://bit.ly/3mdGAWD</p> <p>The current programmer targets a reserved matters application by the end of February 2021.</p>
Acquisition of 1-9 Lincoln Court from Paragon Asra Housing Association	<p>The council completed on the acquisition of 1-9 Lincoln Court on 9th November 2020 and the existing tenants have been transferred to secure council tenancies. The council secured the agreement of Homes England to permit the grant attached to the properties to be put back into the scheme or into a Recycled Capital Grants Fund.</p>
Development of Shared Equity Product	<p>As part of the Councils ‘Resident Offer’, the Council is providing the option of a shared equity purchase to owner-occupiers whose home falls within the demolition area. Working with Freeths, the project team is continuing to work on the most effective mechanism to</p>

	<p>deliver shared equity. It is anticipated that this offer will be taken up by a maximum of 6 households.</p>
<p>External funding (HE) secured</p>	<p>Since the September update, Homes England has published its new prospectus for Affordable Housing 2021-2026 and officers are liaising with Homes England to ascertain the impact of the new prospectus on opportunities for funding. Whilst these discussions progress, the team is also seeking to maximize alternative opportunities e.g. D2N2 and One Public Estate where possible and consider the capacity within the councils own Housing Revenue Account should external funding applications prove unsuccessful.</p> <p>A meeting with Homes England (HE) and the Council's Chief Executive and relevant Directors along with Project Manager took place in December and a commitment was made by HE officers to give further clarity on the Councils funding application by mid-January 2021. The situation will be updated verbally to members at the meeting if available.</p>
<p>Preparedness for decant and move of 130 households</p>	<p>The project phasing has been designed such that disruption to residents is minimized with one move only as far as is practicably possible. It is also anticipated that some households will choose to move off the Drive rather than be rehoused in the new development. The Councils Decant Policy was approved at Policy and Finance November 2019 with the Resident Compensation Guide approved in April 2020.</p> <p>To date five properties within the first six due for demolition have been decanted. In addition, natural voids (where a resident has chosen to leave of their own accord) are being held in the first phase.</p>
<p>Management of vacant properties</p>	<p>The Project Board considered the benefits and challenges of holding naturally occurring voids in Phase 1 with regards rent loss, the potential of ASB versus additional costs of statutory compensation payment and risks to the programme from delayed decant. It was agreed that naturally occurring voids in Phase 1 will be held rather than re-let. Void properties have been shuttered and made secure with additional patrols from Community Protection Officers and Tenancy Officers to manage any potential ASB and fly tipping.</p> <p>Since the last update in September, the opportunity to let some of the current void properties on a temporary basis has arisen. In support of homeless services across the council and in response to the loss of the Winter Shelter for 2020, a number of void units will be utilized as necessary. This not only supports colleagues in housing options to ensure that residents can be appropriately housed without the need for expensive Bed and Breakfast accommodation, but also maximizes rental income to the Housing Revenue Account.</p>

Community and resident involvement	<p>The project has continued to have a high level of community involvement and this is now evolving to reflect new ways of working in response to Covid-19 and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident Engagement – online one-to-one consultation with households directly impacted by the regeneration proposals 8th and 9th December • Stakeholder engagement pre- reserved matters submission planned for January 2021 • Newsletter – produced every 2 months – latest December 2021 and distributed to homes on and adjacent to the estate • Facebook – regularly updated • Direct liaison with Ward Councilors
------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

4.0 Equalities Implications

4.1 Equality implications for this regeneration scheme have been considered with an Equality Impact Assessment presented to Policy and Finance Committee November 2018.

5.0 Digital Implications

5.1 The current significant digital implications for the project is the reliance on online mechanisms for consultation and engagement. Whilst a proportion of residents continue to engage through Facebook and the use of MS Teams, a significant proportion have not engaged through these methods and therefore the distribution of the hard copy newsletter is still critical whilst Covid19 restrictions prevent face to face consultation.

5.2 Consideration is also being given to the delivery of broadband connectivity within the new development, though this will not impact on our internal services, it would support digital connectivity in this area across a whole range of services for residents.

6.0 Financial Implications (FIN20-21/1246)

6.1 The project is currently expected to remain within the approved capital budget (reported to Policy and Finance Committee on 2 April 2020) of £13.400m for HRA and £3.358m for General Fund.

6.2 Within the current approved budget there is an expectation that grant funding of £3.760m would be available from Homes England. The project has been modelled into the HRA Business Plan (BP) including the anticipated grant funding. Should the grant funding not be forthcoming, this would need to be re-modelled into the HRA BP to confirm it remains affordable.

7.0 Community Plan – Alignment to Objectives

7.1 The rationale for the project has been clearly articulated in this and previous reports, its strategic importance is reflected through its inclusion in the Council’s Community Plan. Following extensive and continued consultation with residents on the estate, the project is also supported by the overwhelming majority of residents.

7.2 The proposals directly relate to the following objectives within the Community Plan:

- *Improve the cleanliness and appearance of the local environment*
- *Reduce crime and antisocial behaviour, and increase feelings of safety in our communities*
- *Reduce levels of deprivation in target areas and remove barriers to social mobility across the district*
- *Improve the health and wellbeing of local residents, with a particular focus on narrowing the gap in healthy life expectancy and other health outcomes*
- *Increase participation with the Council and within local communities*

With the objective to

- *Accelerate the supply of new homes including associated facilities;*

With the supporting action of

Direct delivery of homes:

- Progressing implementation of Yorke Drive regeneration scheme;

8.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

That progress on the delivery of the Yorke Drive Regeneration Project is noted.

Reason for Recommendation(s)

To keep Homes and Community Committee apprised of progress.

Background Papers

Nil

For further information please contact Cara Clarkson on Ext 5923

Suzanne Shead
Director of Housing, Health and Wellbeing