



CABINET - 28TH OCTOBER 2015

SUBJECT: LAND AT EASTVIEW TERRACE, BARGOED

REPORT BY: ACTING DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES AND S 151 OFFICER

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval to the principle of disposing of land at Eastview Terrace, Bargoed to United Welsh Housing Association (UW) on terms to be negotiated.

2. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 2.1 The contents of this report link to the following key strategic objectives:

“Encourage the development and maintenance of high quality, well designed and efficient, sustainable homes and environments which can meet all needs.” (*Community Strategy: Living Environment – Objective 1*)

“Ensure an adequate and appropriate range of housing sites are available across the County Borough in the most suitable locations to meet the housing requirements of all sections of the population.” (*Local Development Plan – Objective 9*)

“Meet housing requirements through the provision of a range of good quality, affordable housing options.” (*Aim 5: Affordable Housing – Local Housing Strategy*)

“Provide good quality, well-managed homes in communities where people want to live, and offer people housing choices which meet their needs and aspirations.” (*Aim 6: Housing Management - Local Housing Strategy*)

“Promote sustainable and mixed communities that are located in safe and attractive environments.” (*Aim 11: Community Regeneration - Local Housing Strategy*)

There is a need to increase the number of affordable homes for purchase or rent (*Improving Lives and Communities – Homes in Wales – April 2010*).

3. THE REPORT

- 3.1 The site was acquired along with other parcels of land adjacent to the railway line at Eastview Terrace and Aeron Place and is described as wasteland; it has been let for a number of years for grazing purposes, but the tenancy has lapsed. The site has been declared surplus to requirements and is currently held by Property Services, pending disposal.
- 3.2 An operational housing requirement for the provision of affordable housing has been identified; the housing waiting list data for the Bargoed area demonstrates that there is

housing demand in this area. The 2015 Local Housing Market Assessment identifies a shortfall throughout the County Borough of 526 affordable homes per annum. It also identifies a high number of households who are living in unsuitable housing because their accommodation no longer meets their requirements arising from disabilities, medical conditions or old age.

- 3.3 There is a significant need for affordable housing across the County Borough. Policy CW11 of the Local Development Plan (LDP) sets Affordable Housing Targets throughout Caerphilly County Borough, ranging from 40% in the higher viability area around Caerphilly Basin, to 0% in the Heads of the Valleys Regeneration Area (HOVRA). Economic indicators and housing need have influenced these targets. Within the HOVRA there remain pockets of identified need.
- 3.4 Members will be aware that the Council's currently zoned housing association partners are UW, operating in the western valley and Seren, operating in the eastern valleys. As this site falls within the area zoned for UW, it is the Council's partner for this scheme.
- 3.5 UW will prepare a scheme in consultation with relevant officers to identify a mix of properties that addresses the needs identified within the Council's Housing register. Other benefits that UW can bring are the emphasis on sustainable construction including Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3+ and Targeted Recruitment and Training (TR&T).
- 3.6 The Protocol for Disposal of Property states, at paragraph 8.1(iv), that in those cases where it is possible to market a property but the Head of Property is of the opinion that this course of action may not be in the best financial or service interests of the Authority, Cabinet approval will be obtained before direct negotiations are opened with a single party, and the views of ward members will be taken into consideration.
- 3.7 In the event that UW is unable to proceed at market value (because its total cost of development, including land acquisition and build cost, is limited by Welsh Government regulations), a further report will be brought forward setting out options for members' consideration.
- 3.8 **The Planning Perspective**
 1. The site in question lies within the settlement boundary of Bargoed, as defined in the Adopted Local Development Plan (LDP). The settlement boundary defines the area within which development would normally be acceptable subject to all relevant policy considerations and all other development management considerations.
 2. Policy SP6 of the LDP requires development proposals to 'contribute to creating sustainable places by having full regard to the context of the local, natural, historic and built environment'.
 3. A shortfall in affordable housing is a significant issue facing residents in the county borough. In this context Policy SP15 seeks to deliver at least 964 affordable houses through the planning system up to 2021. The LDP identifies that the HOVRA area is one where there is a 0% Affordable Housing target. However LDP1: Affordable Housing highlights that in the HOVRA, that there are still pockets of need within this housing market area.

Open Space and Leisure requirements

4. As the site is currently open space within settlement limits, an Open Space Assessment in line with policy CW7 and LDP8: Protection of Open Space has been carried out. The purpose of the survey is to ensure that there is sufficient

informal open space remaining in the area, The survey indicated that the release of this site for development would result in only 0.15 Ha of recreational informal Open Space remaining in the area, compared to a benchmark of 1.75ha. However, given that the land is adjacent to Bargoed Country Park, there is a need to balance the demand for housing, against the loss of the open space. Consequently, there are no policy objections raised to the release of the land.

Additional Observations

5. Highways do not object to the principle of development and have commented that parking provision must comply with LDP5:Car Parking Standards, and that visibility at the junction of Eastview Terrace with Park Place will need to be confirmed for compliance with the Manual for Streets.

In summary, officers consider that the release of this site for residential development is acceptable in principle, subject to all relevant policy considerations and all other development management considerations that will be dealt with at the Planning Application stage.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's Equalities Consultation and Monitoring Guidance and no potential for unlawful discrimination and / or low level or minor negative impact have been identified, therefore a full EqIA has not been carried out.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A capital receipt will be received from the sale of this land.

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no personnel implications of the report.

7. CONSULTATIONS

- 7.1 Cllrs David Carter and Tudor Davies separately declared an interest in the matter.
- 7.2 There are no other views expressed as a result of consultation that differ from the recommendation.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That land at Eastview Terrace be sold to United Welsh Housing Association for the development of affordable housing, on terms to be negotiated.
- 8.2 Approval of the detailed terms of the disposal be delegated to the Head of Performance and Property Services in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Performance and Asset Management, for the purposes identified in the report.

9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The asset is surplus to the operational requirements of Caerphilly CBC.
- 9.2 Paragraph 8.1(iv) of the Disposal Procedure in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution states that Cabinet approval will be obtained before direct negotiations are opened with a single party where it is possible to market a property but where the Head of Performance and Property Services is of the opinion that this course of action may not be in the best financial or service interests of the Authority.
- 9.3 To deliver an affordable housing scheme that meets with the needs identified within the Council's Local Housing Market Assessment and Housing register.

10. STATUTORY POWER

- 10.1 Local Government Acts 1972 and 2000, and The Local Government Act 1972: General Disposal Consent (Wales) 2003. This is a Cabinet Function.

Author: Colin Jones, Head of Performance and Property Services

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Cllr D Hardacre, Cabinet Member for Performance and Asset Management and ward member
Cllr D Poole, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing
Cllr David Carter, Ward Member
Cllr Tudor Davies, Ward Member
Cllr Dianne Price, Ward Member
Gail Williams, Monitoring Officer

Background Papers:
Property PReMIS ID 6534 can be inspected at Tredomen House

Appendices:
Appendix 1 Plan showing the land