

**Cabinet Meeting Resolution**

**Executive  
Forward Plan  
Reference**

**E3392**

**Development Update: Land to rear of 89 – 123  
Englishcombe Lane, Southdown, Bath.**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	10-Nov-22
<b>The Issue</b>	Officers were tasked with investigating whether a small scheme could be developed on the site that provides local community housing whilst being sympathetic and supportive to the existing site ecology. Following concept design, option appraisal and initial business case this report proposes such a scheme for further detailed development work.
<b>The decision</b>	<p>(1) To commission further development work to advance the preferred option to planning stage, that is a development of 9 bungalows and 7 apartments for residents with learning difficulties.</p> <p>(2) To fully approve £320k capital funding from the Provisional Capital Programme for Affordable Housing to support this development work.</p> <p>(3) To delegate any future decision to submit a planning application to the Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Council House Building in consultation with Cabinet colleagues.</p>
<b>Rationale for decision</b>	<p>The site is allocated for residential development and the Council has demonstrably high local housing need and a demanding housing delivery requirement. Doing nothing is therefore not a realistic option. As such officers were tasked with investigating whether a smaller scale alternative and ecologically acceptable development was feasible.</p> <p>A strategic review of the local care and support market was undertaken by the Specialist Commissioning team last year. It identified a significant under supply of supported living provision in the district which in turn results in an over reliance on meeting people's needs through out of area residential care placements. Indeed, there are currently 130 people in residential care and 82 of these are out of area – the largest cost to the budget. In addition, there are 52 people with learning disabilities and/or autism on the Council's housing demand matrix who need a move or need supported housing.</p> <p>Following discussions with Adult Services options were developed to target the unmet accommodation needs of residents with Learning Difficulties and/or Autism. The site, which is quiet and spacious, is ideally suited to meeting the needs of this client group who benefit from a calming environment. Such a scheme would allow the Council to provide this vulnerable client group with high-</p>

	<p>quality accommodation plugging an existing service gap whilst also reducing the need for expensive out of area placements. The latter element also provides the potential for residential placement budget savings.</p>
<p><b>Other options considered</b></p>	<p>A number of other options were considered and dismissed as detailed below:</p> <p>Option 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme based upon two storey blocks providing 1bed apartments, shared ground floor communal living facility and a designated area for staff sleep in support. Based upon existing learning difficulties scheme models in the district. Schemes provides 28 apartments. This is the highest density option and officers expressed some concerns around scale of scheme; lack of housing variety; and site massing.</li> </ul> <p>Option 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme providing 10 bungalows with space for staff facilities. The low-rise nature of the scheme reduces development impact whilst the bungalows provide a positive environment for clients, particularly those with complex needs. It is the lowest density option and consequently the unit costs are high. Significantly there is lack of housing variety for Adult Services clients.</li> </ul> <p>Option 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme providing a combination of apartment block (hub) and houses (spoke). This option aims to address the lack of service flexibility provided by the above options. The development provides 6 bungalows and 11 houses. There is space for additional limited staff facilities if required. Whilst this option has merits some issues were expressed with the “house” based accommodation - in client terms similar to bungalows.</li> </ul> <p>Option 4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scheme providing 20 multi-functional general needs housing units. However, given the general nature of the accommodation this would only be suitable for low-support learning difficulty clients. Given the general needs nature of this option site utilisation and infrastructure would be greater (eg wider roads, proportionately more car parking etc.) than other options.</li> </ul> <p>Do Nothing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not considered feasible given the site is allocated for</li> </ul>

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	residential development within the Council's adopted development plan and the Council has demonstrably high local housing need and a demanding housing delivery requirement.
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**The Decision is subject to Call-In within 5 working days of publication of the decision**