

**Report of** Chief Officer of Property and Contracts

**Report to** Director of Resources and Housing

**Date:** Tuesday 4th July 2017

**Subject:** Request to demolish 4 garages (G28 to G31) Weston Park View, Otley LS21 2DU

Are specific electoral wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of ward(s): Otley and Yeadon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### Summary of main issues

1. There are 35 Council owned permanent garages (G4 to G38) arranged in 5 blocks situated on Weston Park View off Weston Drive, Otley.
2. Of the 35 garages 25 are occupied. 10 Garages are void including the 4 garages requested for demolition.
3. The 35 garages are generally in a poor condition and the 4 garages requested for demolition (which are all in one block in the middle of the site) are in worst condition and currently boarded. These garages are negatively impacting on the local community and are in a prominent location situated off the main road. They are currently the focus for sustained anti-social behaviour in the area by local youths. Ward Members are supportive of having the 4 garages demolished. Repair or refurbishment of the garages would not be an effective use of Council resources given the condition of the structure.
4. A delegated decision is required to approve the suspension of lettings and demolish the 4 garages and have the area tarmacked.

### Recommendations

5. The Director of Resources and Housing is requested to approve the suspension of lettings, removal from charge and full demolition of the 4 garages (G28 to G31) at Weston Park View, Otley LS21 2DU

## 6. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Director of Resources and Housing to suspend lettings, remove from charge and demolish one block (4 garages) at Weston Park View, Otley. (location shown in Appendix 1).

## 2 Background information

- 2.1 The site comprises of 35 brick constructed garages which are in a prominent location on Weston Park View, Otley. They are arranged in a block of 5 forming a 'H' shape on the site.
- 2.2 There are currently 25 garages occupied across the site and 10 are void including the 4 garages requested for demolition (G28 to G31).
- 2.3 The subject garages are deemed to be beyond economical repair due to the extensive vandalism that they have sustained recently.
- 2.4 The 4 garages concerned restrict the visibility through the site (from Weston Park View and Weston Drive) which provides the opportunity for youths to hide in the area.
- 2.5 These 4 garages are a blight on the remaining garage area and their removal would potentially improve area. These 4 garages have been boarded but these are persistently removed and further vandalism caused to the structures. There is an abundance of broken glass bottles in and around the garages making it unsafe and a health and safety hazard.
- 2.6 Efforts are being made to identify the local youths and the local policing team and Housing Office are liaising with local residents and Members in this regard.

## 3 Main issues

- 3.1 There have been a number of complaints expressed by local residents and Ward Members over the condition of the garages. Over the course of the weekend of 1/2<sup>nd</sup> July 2017 there has been further vandalism carried out to the block of 4 garages and the safety of the structure is now seriously compromised necessitating urgent demolition to prevent any risk of injury.
- 3.2 The site will benefit from removal of these 4 garages as it will improve the visibility through the garage site. The open area visible from both sides of the road will discourage local youths and younger children gathering at the site.
- 3.3 Further consideration is to be given to the longer term sustainability of the garages however the immediate demolition of these 4 garages is the main priority. Demolition of this 'problem' block may have a stabilising effect on the remaining blocks and this will be closely monitored in the coming period. The site does potentially offer the opportunity for redevelopment which is currently being investigated further. Depending on the outcome of these investigations further consultation with Ward Members and local residents will be carried out.

## **4 Corporate considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 Joint consultation with residents and Ward Members has been carried out in June 2017 where the issue was discussed at the local Tenants and Residents Association meeting and full support of the proposed demolition of the one block of 4 garages was given.
- 4.1.2 Concerns have been expressed by the local community about the blight and safety of the buildings and current focus for anti-social behaviour. This has also been highlighted with the local Policing team to try and identify the perpetrators.
- 4.1.3 Consideration of the site has been discussed with relevant internal Council departments to determine any future development potential. This is currently being explored further.
- 4.1.4 The Chief Officer for Housing Management and Head of Strategy and Investment are supportive of the proposal to demolish the 4 garages.

### **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- 4.2.1 These 4 garages are not occupied. The proposed demolition will not have negative impact on services delivered to the community as alternative provision can be offered in close proximity in the area. An equality, diversity, cohesion and integration screening assessment has been completed at Appendix 2.

### **4.3 Council policies and best council plan**

- 4.3.1 The demolition of these buildings contributes to the Best Council Plan 2015-2020 outcomes by helping people to live within clean and well cared for areas. It also may help to reduce the number of recorded nuisance damage related incidents which is one of the 20 key indicators of performance.

### **4.4 Resources and value for money**

- 4.4.1 The demolition and clearance of the garages will be carried out by the Council's internal service provider (Leeds Building Services). The demolition costs are estimated to be £15,516.06 which includes for removal of the structures any asbestos and rubbish remaining in the garages and tarmacking the space. Total costs will be met by the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme 2017/18.
- 4.4.2 Demolition will alleviate the council of future maintenance and security costs. Current rental income on a Council garage is £9.31 per week. Demolition of the 4 garages given the existing rate of rent will result in an annual rental income loss of £1,936.48. However these garages have been vacant since 2014.

### **4.5 Legal Implications, access to information and call In**

- 4.5.1 The report does not contain any exempt or confidential information.
- 4.5.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

## **4.6 Risk management**

- 4.6.1 The demolition phase of the project is notifiable to the Health and Safety Executive under the CDM regulations. A health and safety plan will be completed by Leeds Building Services Demolition Section based at Ring Road Seacroft Depot.

## **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 The 4 garages are currently a major blight on the area and a concern to the local community and Ward Members in regard to their condition. They are a significant source for anti-social behaviour and there has been and continues to be significant vandalism to the structure.
- 5.2 There is overall reasonable demand for garages in this location and a perceived high level of car ownership across the area. The removal of these 4 garages will remove the blight from the area and will potentially have a positive effect on the other garages by improving the visibility across the remaining site contributing positively to community safety.
- 5.3 Demolition of the garages is urgently requested to address the current safety concerns and risk to the Council.

## **6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 The Director of Resources and Housing is requested to approve the suspension of lettings, removal from charge and full demolition of the 4 garages (G28 to G31) at Weston Park View, Otley, LS21 2DU.

## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – site plan to show location of garages proposed for demolition.
- 7.2 Appendix 2 - Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening Assessment
- 7.3 Appendix 3 – Delegated Decision Notification

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.