

Report of Chief Officer of Property and Contracts

Report to Director of Environment and Housing

Date: 7th December 2016

Subject: Request to demolish temporary garages at Ganners Road, Bramley, Leeds, LS13 2PB (Plot numbers 2,5,12,13 and 14).

Are specific electoral wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of ward(s): Bramley and Stanningley	<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 5 temporary garage plots and associated structures on the Council owned temporary garage site accessed between property numbers 24 and 26 Ganners Road, Bramley, Leeds, LS13 2PB.
- 2 The majority of garages have been abandoned by the former owners and the site has been neglected for some time with no demand for the plots from local residents. There are two plots still tenanted and negotiations taking place to terminate these. Efforts to trace the previous owners of the other garages have proved unsuccessful. Tort notices have been served.
- 3 The current condition of these garages is a concern to the local community given the state of dereliction of some of them and are a potential health and safety risk.
- 4 Complaints of anti-social behaviour at the location have been received and the early removal of these structures and clearance of the site will help to address this. The area is repeatedly fly tipped and heavily overgrown.
- 5 Ward Members and local residents are supportive of demolition.
- 6 There is no demand for garage plots in this location but the site offers potential in terms of development for new social housing and Housing Growth Team have confirmed their interest in the site.

- 7 A delegated decision is required to suspend letting of the plots, remove the accounts from charge, demolish the temporary garages and remove the associated structures and debris on this site and declare it surplus to departmental requirements.

Recommendations

8. The Director of Environment and Housing is requested to approve the suspension of letting the plots (numbers 2,5,12,13 and 14), removal of the accounts from charge, full demolition of garages and associated structures and debris at Ganners Road, Bramley, Leeds LS13 2PB. The Director is also requested to declare the site surplus to departmental requirements and for the site to be taken forward by the Housing Growth Team for the development of bespoke and affordable housing provision.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Director of Environment and Housing to suspend lettings, remove from charge and demolish garages at plot numbers 2,5,12,13,and 14 Ganners Road, Bramley and declare the site surplus to requirements.

2 Background information

- 2.1 There are 5 temporary garages on this site numbered plots 2,5,12,13 and 14. (Please see appendix 1 for location plan).
- 2.2 The majority of garages have been abandoned with only two being occupied formally.
- 2.3 There is no demand for garages or plots in the given location and due to the site being secluded this contributed to general lack of demand historically. The site also attracts repeated fly tipping and general anti-social behaviour.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Demand for garage plots and garages has been in decline for several years in many areas. This site is a temporary site where the Council owns the land and provides plots on which tenants erect their own structure on the site and pay rent for the plot. The majority of the garages are now in a derelict condition with only two being formally occupied but in a poor condition.
- 3.2 The garage structures and seclusion of the site create additional management issues in the form of dealing with reports of anti-social behaviour and removal of fly tipping. Demolition of the garages and associated structures would remove the blight on the local area and reduce the incidence of anti-social behaviour at this location.
- 3.3 The local community and Ward Members have raised community safety concerns about the condition of the garages.

- 3.4 Housing Leeds Investment Strategy Team is working closely with City Development Housing Growth Team in identifying opportunities for garage sites which have been deemed no longer fit for purpose. The Housing Growth Team undertake a capacity study based on the local identified need and the size of the sites for the following housing types
- **bespoke properties** (through work with Adult Social Care and Children's Services, there is currently a list of 42 named families who require a bespoke property. Detail is held on preferred locations and property type to meet the needs of these families)
 - **Affordable Housing** – some of the smaller sites will lend themselves for the development of small infill developments for new supply affordable housing through delivery by Registered Providers or the Third Sector
 - **Self-build** – As part of the Housing & Planning Act 2016, the Council has an obligation to provide serviced plots to as many individuals and groups as possible who have signed up to the self-build register within 12 months of them expressing an interest.
- 3.5 The site in total offers approx. 3000 square metres and is accessed between property numbers 24 and 26 Ganners Road. The site has previously been reported to LEDA (September 2015) to assess for development potential. Full comments are attached at appendix 2
- 3.6 Housing Growth Team have considered this site for affordable housing and are working up more detailed proposals as to what the site could accommodate.

4 Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 Ward Members have been consulted and are in support of the demolition. They are also supportive of redevelopment and welcome the opportunity for further consultation in regard to the design of housing that the site could sustain.
- 4.1.2 Concerns have been expressed by the local community about the safety of the buildings and focus for anti-social behaviour and want to see them demolished.
- 4.1.3 Consultation is ongoing with the two owners of the structures still formally being rented and legal advice being sought in regard to terminating the tenancies. Torts have been served on the remaining garages.
- 4.1.4 The site was originally considered by LEDA on 23rd September 2015 in terms of the development potential of the site. No objections were raised in respect of demolition of the garages. There were some reservations about the number of units the site could support given the narrow access road but this is not insurmountable.
- 4.1.5 This report has been considered at the November Housing Leeds Delegated Decision Panel and the recommendation is jointly supported by the Chief Officer for Property and Contracts and Chief Officer for Housing Management.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

4.2.1 These are untenanted properties and the proposed demolition has no impact on services delivered to the community. An equality, diversity, cohesion and integration screening assessment has been completed at Appendix 3.

4.2.2 Development of affordable housing provision would provide housing for families on low incomes.

4.3 Council policies and best council plan

4.3.1 The proposals outlined within the report supports the delivery of the 2016/17 Best Council Plan priority of providing enough homes of a high standard in all sectors and contributes towards the delivery of the Best Council Plan outcome of everyone in Leeds to live in good quality, affordable homes within clean and well cared for places.

4.3.2 Delivery of new affordable housing is an integral part of the Housing Growth and High Standards in all Sectors breakthrough project.

4.3.3 The delivery of affordable and specialist housing across Leeds underpins the Council ambition for Leeds of a Strong Economy and a Compassionate City

4.3.4 The site has potential to support housing growth targets through the building of new homes.

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 will be met by the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme 2016/17. The estimated cost for demolition (including removal of all structures, rubbish, and asbestos) is £5,148.09.

4.4.2 Most of the plots have been unused for a long time with associated rental loss. Demolition will alleviate the Council of future maintenance costs associated with fly tipping at the site.

4.4.3 If the site is developed by a registered provider the Council would receive nomination rights to the new properties for people on the waiting list for housing.

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 who will be carrying out the demolition works.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 The temporary garages are currently a focus for anti-social behaviour which is a concern to the local community and Ward Members. They are an eyesore in the area; potential health and safety risk and a catalyst for fly tipping.
- 5.2 There is no demand for garage plots at this location and the size of the site makes this a prime location for new housing to be created as the site, once cleared, would be surplus to departmental requirements.
- 5.3 Demolition of the garages is recommended to address the safety and blight concerns raised.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 The Director of Environment and Housing is requested to approve the suspension of letting the plots (numbers 2,5,12,13 and 14), removal of the accounts from charge, full demolition of garages and associated structures and debris at Ganners Road, Bramley, Leeds LS13 2PB. The Director is also requested to declare the site surplus to departmental requirements and for the site to be taken forward by the Housing Growth Team for the development of bespoke and affordable housing provision.

7 Background documents¹

- 7.1 Appendix 1 – site plan to show location of garages proposed for demolition.
- 7.2 Appendix 2 – LEDA minutes
- 7.3 Appendix 3 - Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening Assessment
- 7.4 Appendix 4 – Delegated Decision Notification

¹ 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.