



**Policy, Finance and  
Development  
Committee**

**Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup>  
October 2014**

**Matter for Decision**

**Title: Progress with Development Opportunities in the Borough**

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## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Over the course of previous meetings, Members have been updated in terms of the involvement and progress of the Council in relation to a number of different development opportunities in the Borough, including in relation to the Council's own assets, the provision of market and affordable housing and the provision of land for burials and cremations. This report seeks to provide a further update.

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 It is recommended that Members:

i) note the position with regard to the potential development opportunities in the Borough; and

ii) re-affirm the Council's commitment to use its compulsory purchase powers where this is necessary in order to assemble sites to achieve the Council's regeneration and development priorities.

## **3. Information**

### ***Strategic Review of Council's Asset Register***

3.1 A strategic review of the Council's Asset Register is currently taking place to identify and map all of the Council's land and building assets and to consider the current use and potential options for the future use of the land and buildings if there is an opportunity, and it is appropriate, to deviate from the current use. This work is currently receiving consideration by the Council's Asset Management Group after which the outcomes of this review will be reported to Place Shaping Working Group and Policy, Finance and Development Committee. It is intended that in the longer term an action plan will arise out of this work.

### ***Adopted Local Plan Development Plan Documents***

3.2 The Borough Council is in an enviable position with an adopted Core Strategy and Town Centres Area Action Plan in place as these documents provide strong support in relation to the Council's development priorities.

3.3 These documents either allocate sites for development or put in place the policy context to enable development on suitable sites that fit with the Council's strategy for the Borough. For example, Core Strategy Policy 1 focuses development in the centres of Oadby, Wigston and South Wigston. It also refers to the fact that the Council will seek to achieve the development and

redevelopment of suitable previously developed land and buildings through assembling sites where necessary, including the use of compulsory purchase powers in appropriate circumstances. For example, in relation to the South Wigston Regeneration Masterplan.

- 3.4 Proposals are currently in place to review the Local Plan in order to roll forward the end date from 2026 to 2036. Various evidence base preparation and consultation will be required as a part of this process and this will include consideration of the provision of land for burials and cremations. This will enable the matter to be considered and if necessary taken forward through the Local Plan process.

***Opportunities to bring forward land to develop affordable housing***

- 3.5 The strategic review of the Council's Asset Register will have specific regard to the provision of affordable housing, and will identify any potential opportunities to make use of Council owned land to deliver affordable housing. In addition, the Homes and Communities Agency has been invited to attend the October meeting of the Place Shaping Working Group to present the options that are available to the Council in facilitating the development of affordable housing, for example, in relation to the small plot of land in Council ownership at Bennett Way, South Wigston.
- 3.6 The developer in partnership with a Registered Provider on this development has been successful in its grant bid from the Homes and Communities Agency to deliver affordable homes. This bid was supported by the Borough Council because it meets with the Council's planning policy objectives for South Wigston in relation to delivering affordable homes. In conjunction with the advice from the Homes and Communities Agency the Council intends to seek opportunities to work with the developer to consider the best options for the area, including the adjacent land that is in the Borough Council's ownership.
- 3.7 This committee is also considering an HRA Business Plan update which includes a number of options and sets out related opportunities and risks.
- 3.8 Members will note that the Council has recently contributed £160,000 HRA funding to a Registered Provider (East Midlands Homes) to deliver one and two bedroom accommodation at 31-36 Canal Street, South Wigston. 100% nomination rights have been negotiated.

***Oadby and Wigston Town Centres Area Action Plan***

- 3.9 As previously reported, a planning application has been approved for 26 apartments at the former Belvoir Sports factory site on Paddock Street, Wigston. This forms part of the land allocated for residential development in the Town Centres Area Action Plan.
- 3.10 Good progress is being made on the European Regional Development Fund public realm schemes on Bell Street in Wigston and The Parade in Oadby with completion expected before the end of November 2014. It is intended to launch the Investor Prospectus for the Borough (which Members approved at the last meeting) during the Autumn. Together, these initiatives will provide a strong foundation for encouraging investment, regeneration and the realisation of development opportunities both in the town centres and the wider Borough.

### **Horsewell Lane Park**

- 3.11 The Playing Pitch Strategy is now complete and identifies Horsewell Lane Park as a site where the Council should focus its activities. It states that there is potential for Horsewell Lane Park to accommodate a new 3G Artificial Grass Pitch as well as other facilities. The Playing Pitch Strategy contains an appendix which relates specifically to Horsewell Lane Park. This has formed the basis for discussion with the Horsewell Lane Stakeholder Group along with one to one discussions with each of the stakeholders to understand their aspirations from any future improvements to the Park.
- 3.12 It is intended to employ the services of an architect and a quantity surveyor to develop costed options for the Park, and in particular a multi-use building that would enable improved facilities for all existing stakeholders. This will allow funding applications to be prepared by the various stakeholders in order to seek grant contributions of the necessary capital investment required to enable the delivery of the project. At the last meeting of the Stakeholder Group it was agreed to establish a smaller Project Team to progress this project.

### **41 Canal Street, South Wigston**

- 3.13 Further to this Committee's decision to seek further Expressions of Interests for an appropriate development partner which would enable the compulsory purchase of the building and subsequent refurbishment for an appropriate use at its meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2014, Expressions of Interest are currently being sought with adverts placed on the Council's website, the October edition of the Leicester Builder magazine, Property Week magazine (which has national coverage) and the Rightmove website. The closing date for Expressions of Interest is Friday 7<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

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<b>Implications</b>	
Legal	No specific implications as this is an overview report, however, there will be implications relating to each of the Opportunities/matters referred to in this report.
Financial	No specific implications as this is an overview report, however, there will be implications associated with the value or purchase of land and the provision of affordable housing.
Equalities	Equalities Impact Assessment have been or will be carried out as appropriate in relation to each of the matters referred to in this report.
Risk	A risk assessment will be undertaken where necessary in relation to the opportunities/matters referred to in this report