
Land Transfer at The Centre, Newington

To: **Cabinet – 20 June 2013**

By: **Lauren Hemsley – Strategic Housing Manager**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **Newington**

Summary: **To approve the transfer of land at The Centre, Newington to Orbit Group Limited to enable the delivery of 19 additional affordable homes.**

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Orbit Group Limited is the Housing Association currently redeveloping The Centre in Newington to deliver 60 new affordable homes. The land associated with this delivery has already been agreed under the Property Sale Agreement of 30th March 2011.
- 1.2 Orbit has now secured further funding from the Homes and Communities Agency to deliver additional units at the site, but this will require the transfer of land outside of the original agreement.
- 1.3 There are two sections of Thanet District Council owned land which will enable the delivery of 19 additional homes in total. The first is a small section of land in the middle of the site which was originally intended for a Gateway building with parking. As funding has not been available to deliver this building planning consent has now been granted for 4 new houses (land marked 'a' on the attached plan) in order to progress the regeneration of the whole site. The second section of land is the former Flowing Bowl pub site, also know as the Cherry Orchard. This site will enable 15 new houses to be built and planning consent has also been granted for these units (land marked 'b' on the attached plan).

2.0 The Current Situation

- 2.1 Orbit is progressing well on site with the redevelopment. To date 12 affordable houses and 6 flats have been completed and let to households on the housing register and 4 shared ownership houses have also been delivered.
- 2.2 The transfer of these two plots of land will enable the delivery of 19 new affordable houses, which will be allocated to households on the housing register and will be subject to a Local Lettings Plan.
- 2.3 The council has progressed land transfers to Orbit as part of the original Property Sale Agreement for the site. As the two sections of land (identified in 1.3) fall outside of this agreement, a Cabinet decision is required to approve the transfer.

- 2.4 Orbit will continue to follow the legal procedures as set out in the Property Sale Agreement dated 30th March 2011 for the transfer of the remaining land at The Centre.

3.0 Options

- 3.1 For Cabinet to agree the disposal of land as identified in Annex 1 to Orbit Housing Association to enable the provision of further affordable homes.

4.0 Next Steps

- 4.1 Dependent on Cabinet's decision, to progress the transfer of both sections of land to Orbit. The contractor can then remain on site and move straight onto the next phase of the redevelopment. The transfer of the remaining sections of land, which form part of the Property Sale Agreement, will continue to progress as set out within the legal document.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 Financial and VAT

- 5.1.1 The sites have been independently valued at £46,750 for the Gateway land and £157,500 for the Flowing Bowl site. This is a total of £204,250 for both pieces of land and Orbit have agreed to purchase the land from us at this price.

5.2 Legal

- 5.2.1 These sites were not contained within the original Property Sale Agreement because at that stage one of the sites was intended for the provision of a Gateway building and funding from the HCA had not been secured to redevelop the Flowing Bowl site. External solicitors will be instructed to progress the transfer on behalf of the council due to the timescales required to complete the transfers. Orbit has agreed to cover these legal costs. The transfer will ensure any liability for the land as per the Highways Agreement, Sewer Agreement and Deed of Grant of Easement are removed and transferred to Orbit.
- 5.2.2 Valuations of the sites have been obtained to ensure that we are achieving social housing market value for these sites.

5.3 Corporate

- 5.3.1 The transfer of land has strong links with the ethos and priorities of the Corporate Plan as it will enable new affordable homes to be delivered. It links directly to Priority 7: "We will plan for the right type and number of homes in the right place to create sustainable communities in the future". The transfer of the land at The Centre will also work towards increasing the availability of housing association provision, contribute to the delivery of the Housing Strategy and positively encourage the development of the right mix and type of homes to meet local needs.

5.4 Equity and Equalities

- 5.4.1 The transfer of land does not negatively impact on any residents of the district and will enable the provision of 19 new affordable homes.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 For Cabinet to approve the transfer of two pieces of land at The Centre, Newington as identified in Annex 1 as land 'a' and 'b' and described as the Gateway land and Flowing Bowl land to Orbit Housing Association for the sum of £204,250.

7.0 Decision Making Process

- 7.1 A non-key decision for Cabinet decision.

Contact Officer:	<i>Lauren Hemsley, Strategic Housing Manager</i>
Reporting to:	<i>Madeline Homer, Director of Community Services</i>

Annex List

<i>Annex 1</i>	<i>Plan of land to be transferred</i>
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Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
<i>None</i>	

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	<i>Sarah Martin – Financial Services Manager</i>
Legal	<i>Harvey Patterson – Corporate and Regulatory Services Manager</i>
Communications	<i>Hannah Thorpe – Corporate Communications Officer</i>