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**RED HALL REGENERATION PROPOSED MASTER PLAN  
AND NEIGHBOURHOOD RENEWAL STRATEGY**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member(s) – Councillor Veronica Copeland,  
Adult Social Care and Housing Portfolio, and  
Councillor Chris McEwan, Economy and Regeneration Portfolio**

**Responsible Director – Ian Williams, Director of Economic Growth  
Paul Wildsmith - Director of Neighbourhood Services & Resources**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek:
  - (a) Adoption of the Redhall Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy and Master Plan.
  - (b) To allocate £280,000 from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the works to create a park, play parks, village green within Red Hall plus the acquisition of the head leasehold interest in a current commercial property on Red Hall.
  - (c) To front fund the development of a car park for the community centre and school from the general fund initially and then to be repaid from contributions from S106 or development receipts.
  - (d) Delegated powers to agree the design and execution of the park proposals and to progress land disposals in liaison with the relevant portfolio holders.
  - (e) To agree the marketing and disposal of the sites identified for new mixed commercial and housing developments.
  - (f) Delegated powers to acquire the head leasehold interest in the existing Red Hall shop in liaison with the relevant portfolio holders.

**Summary**

2. The Council identified the Red Hall area as a focus for housing regeneration, and it is seen as an important area for housing and community investment, alongside the planned Burdon Hill residential development, the Link 66 employment opportunity and the ongoing redevelopment of Lingfield Point, all within the Eastern Growth Zone. This work has helped to underpin the recent government announcement that Darlington has been selected for a Healthy New Town

Initiative which will provide leading edge health care provision with the potential to improve access to health and wellbeing in the area.

3. The regeneration Programme is brought together by three key workstreams which come together in an integrated approach:
  - (a) Red Hall Master plan (**Appendix 2**) – which is the overarching plan for regeneration that will improve the quality of life on Red Hall and help build a sustainable community. This Master plan, along with the Housing investment plan – focuses on the Housing and the built environment element of the wider picture. This is a 10 year plan for a collection of projects. Some projects are funded and this will be subject to future funding and/or business cases.
  - (b) Red Hall Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy 2015-2017 (**Appendix 3**) - sets out a framework so that Red Hall becomes a sustainable community. This is usually, defined as a neighbourhood where, firstly, people want to live and secondly it meets the diverse needs of existing and future residents. The major aim of the strategy is to help to build a more resilient and self-reliant community. Therefore the focus of the NRS is on governance, services, the economy and social & culture elements of the wider picture. An action plan is being developed to support this high level strategy and fit in with the wider master plan. Where possible the community are being involved in its development.
  - (c) In September 2014, Cabinet agreed the programme to regenerate Red Hall and subsequently approved the release of funding from the Housing Capital Programme of £5.5million from 2014/15 to 2018/19 to support the regeneration of the housing estate at Red Hall. The HRA business plan for the refurbishment of the Council housing stock and new build programme.
4. The Red Hall Regeneration programme is a mixture of investment in the fabric of the housing through the HRA, in the wider fabric of the estate and in the community itself. A critical strand of the programme is to build resilience within the community enabling it to engage in the programme, take responsibility for it and its outcomes. The key to the success of the regeneration at Red Hall will therefore be in getting “buy in” to the vision for the future of the area. The community have been heavily involved with the establishment of the various tools of the regeneration programme including the following consultations:
  - (a) Engagement with residents of Red Hall concerning the areas regeneration commenced around July 2013, with work having commenced in January 2015.
  - (b) Red Hall Stakeholder Event took place on the 17 September 2015 to go through the emerging first draft of the Master plan for Red Hall . Following this event the plan was changed to take on Board feedback from the residents. A refreshed master plan was then produced which included extra facilities for the sports field, the school bypass road has been moved and the MUGA has been retained.
  - (c) The draft Master plan was also taken to a joint meeting of the Adults and Housing and Place Scrutiny Committees on the 26 November 2015. A number

of recommendations came out of the meeting and incorporated into the final master plan. The master plan has effectively established a programme of work and potential individual projects for delivery from 2015 to 2020 (**Appendix 4**).

## Recommendation

5. It is recommended that :-
  - (a) That the Master Plan (**Appendix 2**) and Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (**Appendix 3**) are adopted as the framework for neighbourhood regeneration at Red Hall.
  - (b) That a budget of £280,000 is allocated from the HRA account for the works to create the park, play park and village green within Red Hall plus the acquisition of the head leasehold interest in the existing red Hall Shop. Officers are negotiating a potential S106 contributions from future housing developments towards the provision of affordable homes that would replenish the HRA account.
  - (c) The car park for the community centre and school is front funded from the general fund, circa £175,000 to be paid back from contributions from S106 or receipts from development are received.
  - (d) That the Director of Neighbourhood Services and Resources be given delegated powers to agree the design and execution of the park proposals following community participation in both the design and maintenance proposals.
  - (e) That the Community and Officers continue to seek external resources for other elements of the projects identified and that those projects are executed subject to available funding.
  - (f) That Cabinet agree to the marketing and disposal of the sites identified for new mixed commercial and housing developments.
  - (g) The Director of Economic Growth is given delegated powers to progress land disposals in liaison with the relevant portfolio holders
  - (h) The Director of Economic Growth is given delegated powers to negotiate the purchase of the head leasehold of the existing retail unit at Red Hall in accordance with the terms set out in the part III report (**Appendix 1**).
6. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons:-
  - (a) To support, enable and guide the social and physical regeneration of Red Hall and the wider Eastern Growth Zone.
  - (b) To tackle multiple deprivation in line with 'One Darlington: Perfectly Placed'.

**Background Papers**

Red Hall Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy 2015-2017, Red Hall Neighbourhood  
 Renewal Strategy, Red Hall Master plan

Kirsty McGready: Extension 6314

S17 Crime and Disorder	Empty properties can be a magnet for anti-social behaviour, arson and vandalism. Therefore, reducing the number of empty properties will have a positive impact on crime and disorder. Improving the fabric and amenities of the estate within the wider development context together with stronger community resilience is likely to have a positive impact in reducing crime and disorder issues including the fear of crime and disorder.
Health and Well Being	Good housing and well-designed neighbourhoods have positive impacts on health & well-being
Carbon Impact	The delivery of energy efficiency measures through the Strategy will have a positive impact on domestic carbon emissions.
Diversity	The proposals are seen to be beneficial for all groups within the community.
Wards Affected	The proposals are seen to be beneficial for all groups within the community.
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	Some of the Priority Actions will have HRA budgetary implications whilst other projects will be subject to external funding including S106 contributions from neighbouring developments.
Key Decision	No.
Urgent Decision	No.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The draft master plan and the Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy supports the vision and outcomes of the Darlington Partnership by seeking to make sure that everyone has access to affordable, decent housing that meets their individual and family needs. Residents should be encouraged and supported to be involved and develop their skills.
Efficiency	No new implications.

## MAIN REPORT

### General Information

7. The Council identified the Red Hall area as a focus for housing regeneration, and it is seen as an important area for housing and community investment within the Eastern Growth Zone. The Eastern Growth Zone, one of three strategic areas identified within the Borough, provides a framework for delivering growth over the next 20 years, based on regenerating existing communities (Red Hall), redeveloping old industrial sites (Lingfield Point) and bringing forward major new residential and employment opportunities (Burdon Hill, Link 66).
8. The Council has successfully won the support from NHS England to develop the concept of a healthy new town and associated leading edge health care provision in the Eastern Growth Zone with the potential to improve access to health and wellbeing in the area.
9. The regeneration programme is brought together by three key workstreams which come together in an integrated approach:
  - (a) **Red Hall Master plan (Appendix 2)** – is the overarching plan for regeneration that will improve the quality of life on Red Hall and help build a sustainable community. This Master plan, along with the Housing investment plan – focuses on the Housing and the built environment element of the wider picture. The master plan seeks to consolidate the central area around the school, shop and community centre as part of an expanding wider residential area in the Eastern Growth Zone and improve the image Red Hall from the B6297. The master plan will improve connectivity in and around Red Hall and improve links to Haughton Village for shops, schools and services and integration with future bus services between the proposed Burdon Hill development and the Town Centre. Public spaces have been rationalised and re-balanced across the area providing a variety of play and leisure opportunities and a new focus in the centre of the estate will be created through the creation of a ‘Village Green’ to complement the centre of the estate
  - (b) **Red Hall Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy 2015-2017 (Appendix 3)** The NRS sets out clear aims and objectives and has regard to the estate profile and existing policy and governance .It considers the services on Red Hall; transport and connectivity, the environment, economy, housing and the built environment, social and cultural matters.This sets out a framework so that Red Hall becomes a ‘sustainable community’. This is usually, defined as a neighbourhood where, firstly, people want to live and secondly it meets the diverse needs of existing and future residents.
  - (c) The HRA business plan for the refurbishment of the Council housing stock and new build programme that was previously agreed by Cabinet. The Housing Business Plan identified £5.5 million for investment in the housing stock. Works include 56 homes being demolished, ongoing work to install external wall insulation and installation of new windows/doors. There are a number of phases of new build, the first eight flats in Deepdale Way were completed in October 2015, the Badminton Close development of flats is planned for

completion in March 2016. 20 homes will be built in the Anfield and Aintree Court area where the earlier demolition took place, in this same area there is also a pilot programme of front to back garden conversions that will be completed by March 2016. In addition to this the whole of Red Hall will benefit from the upgrade of the street lighting as a result of funding to the Highways programme for street lighting replacement across the Borough.

## Consultations

10. Initial public engagement and Public Consultation from May to July 2013 identified 7 'Draft Core Values' which have been used to form the basis of the draft Master plan for Red Hall, and identifies a number of proposed projects for delivery from 2016 onwards:
  - (a) Work with most of the existing housing stock to bring it up to 21st century standards whilst also tackling the physical appearance, public realm, parking and access issues that have been identified.
  - (b) Create high quality open space in and around the estate with greater opportunities for younger children's play, better lighting, levels of amenity and maintenance.
  - (c) Secure greater access into, around and within the estate for all modes of transport taking into consideration the need for slow traffic speeds, safety and ease of businesses and healthcare.
  - (d) Secure improved playing pitches, including practice and five-a-side football, changing rooms and other sporting facilities, for example a skate park.
  - (e) The building of new houses in and around the estate as a means of securing improvements and an increased number of residents to attract services and facilities, whilst also respecting the built and natural heritage in the area.
  - (f) Seek to improve the management and policing of key anti-social behaviour problems including fly tipping, graffiti and irresponsible dog ownership through a multi-agency approach.
11. A Red Hall Stakeholder Event was organised and held on 17th September 2015 by Groundwork North East which provided a further opportunity for the community to visit a specific stall on the Red Hall Master plan and discuss any of the proposed projects with some key members of the team of officers from the Council that were responsible for producing the draft Master plan for Red Hall.
12. The Red Hall Stakeholder event was well attended and Groundwork confirmed that the event was both well received and attended, with 234 residents in total attending the event. Residents were encouraged to discuss and comment on the draft Master plan and make suggestions and comments on the suggested projects, and in total, 92 comments were made by residents who attended the event.
13. The Red Hall Master plan was also presented to a joint meeting of the Adults and Housing and Place Scrutiny Committees on the 26 November 2015. A number of recommendations came out of the meeting and incorporated into the refreshed master plan. Two areas of feedback required further investigation from this meeting – the car park solution and location of the local centre. Updates on these can be found in **Appendices 5 and 6**.

## Response to comments and proposed projects

14. The draft master plan for Red Hall has identified a number of individual projects for potential delivery between 2016 and 2026. As this is a 10 year plan, it must be noted that the Masterplan sets out all desirable projects and that they are not all within the development stage and therefore don't all have funding secured. The master plan does however give the strategic direction of the site that will give funders confidence that each project is part of a wider picture, instilling confidence in any investment requests as recently evidenced by the Healthy New Towns bid. **Appendix 4** provides a more detailed description of all proposed projects and the potential budgets and/or sources of funding.
15. The following section of the report provides a summary of each of the projects which are to be delivered over the next 2 to 5 years and how consultation has shaped these individual projects.

### RHMP01 - New Park and Play Facilities

16. The proposed outline scope of this project will consider the delivery of a new park and play facilities for the east end of Red Hall, on the site of the demolished courts. The total project cost is estimated as being £100k, and will come out of the HRA as set out in paragraph 5b.
17. The above generated several comments from residents who attended the stakeholder event and these can be found in **Appendix 4**. In response to the comments raised on the above project area, the provision of play has been adapted accordingly to address feedback:
  - (a) Toddler Play Areas: a dedicated toddler area will be incorporated to make up for the loss of the toddler provision some years ago.
  - (b) General Play: Relocating all of the play equipment from its existing location to another location where it will sit in a friendlier environment. The new location for the play equipment would be close by, probably just across the newly landscaped green space and situated in its own landscape, more suitable and attractive for a play provision as well as well drained to allow it to be used better throughout the season.
  - (c) The MUGA: Following consultation the MUGA will stay where it is and the proposed new road by-passing the school car park has been re-aligned to avoid moving the MUGA.
  - (d) Play or Outdoor Gym: A new 'Park' to the east of the estate will be provided and will include some sort of play equipment or perhaps outdoor gym equipment.
  - (e) Natural Play: Where possible, the area in the woods to the north west, overlooking the will be a natural play facility using the trees and bankside in a creative way.
  - (f) The Park: The toddler and older areas will be close to each other on the green but in a renewed and dedicated landscape, designed for the purpose.

## **RHMP02: Village Green and SUDs**

18. This will see the improvement of the green space adjoining the local centre and 'moat' at the heart of the village. There is the possibility of including the SUDs from new development to create a village pond. The total project cost is estimated as being £100k, and will come out of the HRA as set out in paragraph 5b.
19. It is recognised that the long-term management of the green spaces in Red Hall need to be considered and the self-management of some areas is being considered as part of the NRS to foster a higher degree of ownership and control over the public spaces.
20. It has been agreed to look at the pond critically and if the need for a drainage area to help drain the field and store water becomes an essential element of the redesign of this part of the estate, then given resident's concerns over this, it is recognised that very careful thought will need to be given to either:
  - (a) finding somewhere to take the water away entirely using other means or
  - (b) designing a pond or water body that would be acceptable to the residents
21. The above comments have been noted, and any firm proposals once received on the Local Centre will help inform discussions on the pond.

## **RHMP04: Playing Field Levelling, improvements and facilities**

22. The proposed outline scope of this project is focused on the delivery of levelling and improvement works to the current playing pitch adjacent to the Red Hall Community Centre. Proposals to carry out these works was considered last year following an offer of in-kind assistance from McLaughlin and Harvey who set out some proposals to carry out some levelling works with a view to help improve the existing playing field surface. The playing fields are currently used for Sunday League Football by the local football team, Red Hall Tigers.
23. However when the scope of works proposed was considered in more detail by senior officers within the Council, it was recognised that the work proposed (albeit via the offer of in-kind assistance from MCH), would provide a better and levelled playing surface in the short term, however it carried the risk of making the existing playing field in a worse position than it is now in the in the longer term. No funding has been identified for this project yet, however it will be looked into within the next 12 months to see how it can be brought forward.
24. Taking into consideration all of the above, these works will therefore now be considered as part of the wider regeneration of Red Hall in the long term.

## **RHMP05: Changing / storage facilities for playing field (possibly temporary)**

25. As part of the project, the need for changing room facilities will be investigated further. Both for the use of playing pitch and the Community Centre. No funding has been identified for this project yet, however it will be looked into within the next 12 months to see how it can be brought forward.



## RHMP06: Local Centre

26. The proposed outline scope of this project is the delivery of an improved shopping offer in Red Hall Centre which could include c400m<sup>2</sup> of new convenience retail, small business units on ground floor, clinical space and housing above. There may be opportunities to consider enhanced health facilities under the Healthy New Town initiative.
27. Any plans for an improved Local Centre would initially need to be informed by an independent Economic Viability Report. The independent report will help inform the preferred location and retail offering for a Local Centre. This report seeks approval to agree to the marketing and disposal of the site subject to robust viability assessment.
28. Following the scrutiny meeting, officers have undertaken an options appraisal (**Appendix 5**) of the various locations for the local centre which concluded that at this stage the preferred option for the local centre is Option 3 within **Appendix 5**, with the possibility of Option 5 subject to further design development, land assembly and public consultation. Options 1, 2 and 4 are not recommended. To reflect this, the master plan was updated to reflect site 11 as a 'Further Development Site' as opposed being purely designated purely for housing.
29. The existing small convenience store on White Hart Crescent is operated by McColl's on a sub-lease with 10 years unexpired. The head leasehold interest in the site is held by a private investor on the ground lease from the Council, originally granted in the 1970's, which has 22 years unexpired. The head leaseholder has now indicated that he wishes to sell the ground lease, subject to McColl's sub-lease, and he has instructed agents to market the property. It is considered that this represents a good opportunity for the Council to acquire the head leasehold back in order to give the Council options if it wishes to avoid a conflict between the existing shop and the proposed local centre. The Part III report provides the commercial terms of this proposal (**Appendix 1**). The funding for this acquisition is included as part of the ask of HRA covered under paragraph 5b. The purchase of the head leasehold will be self-funding as a result of the income from the lease.

## RHMP11: Car park provision

30. There is a requirement for improved parking facilities for the school, community centre and local centre. At present this isn't scheduled to be in place until it is required for the school/local centre. However at the Scrutiny meeting, it was requested that this parking provision was brought forward to serve the Community Centre as lack of parking is restricting its use and business model. Officers have undertaken an initial feasibility (**Appendix 6**) looking into the 3 options of:
  - (a) Undertake car park now (estimated cost £50k)
  - (b) Undertake car park and infrastructure now (estimated cost £175k)
  - (c) Do nothing now and wait to do it as part of wider commercial offer

31. As there are current plans to also extend the existing car park at the school, the car parking for the community centre will be incorporated into this work to allow economies for scale. The work carried out in **Appendix 6**, concluded that the car park and infrastructure (Option B) is preferable now and this work is to be paid out of borrowing pending the receipt of s106 monies for the school and other housing works in the area.