

---

**CENTRAL PARK – SITE CLEARANCE**

---

**Responsible Cabinet Members –Councillor John Williams, Economy Portfolio  
Councillor Stephen Harker, Resources Portfolio**

**Responsible Director – Richard Alty, Assistant Chief Executive (Regeneration)**

---

**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek approval for the full site clearance of asbestos and man-made structures on the recently vacated Hundens Lane Allotments.
2. To approve fencing of site.
3. To release funding up to £75,000 for the site clearance and fencing.

**Summary**

4. On 13 July 2004, Cabinet resolved that the Council participate in the Central Park project, including the relocation of the Hundens Lane allotments to alternative sites
5. Consultations with allotment holders have taken place and construction of the 3 sites is now complete, with only some minor snagging works to resolve.
6. All costs of the proposed site clearance and fencing will be met by One North East from project funds available for the Central Park Development.
7. The ongoing maintenance costs of the land and fence would fall to the Council.

**Recommendations**

8. It is recommended that :-
  - (a) Cabinet approve the release of funding up to the value of £75,000 to progress the work for site clearance of the vacated Hundens Lane Allotments.
  - (b) Approval is given to secure the cleared site with fencing (**as shown in Appendix 1**) in advance of future development of Central Park.

## Reasons

9. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons :-

- (a) To clear the site of the vacated Hundens Lane allotments in order to progress the Central Park development.
- (b) Removal of potentially hazardous materials and reduction of further anti-social behaviour on the site.

## Background Papers

No Background papers were used in the preparation of this report

Deepak Patrai: Extension 2042

S17 Crime and Disorder	There are significant anti social behaviour issues around the allotments, which the relocation and site clearance should help to address.
Health and Well Being	The clearance will secure the removal of hazardous materials from the site.
Sustainability	This will not have any direct impact on Sustainability
Diversity	This will not have any direct impact on Diversity
Wards Affected	Bank Top & Lingfield
Groups Affected	Not Applicable
Budget and Policy Framework	The proposal's do not represent a change to the Council's Budget or Policy Framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This matter does not represent an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The development of Central Park is important in the delivering outcomes that meet the themes of Prosperous, Aspiring, Greener and Safer Darlington in the Sustainable Community Strategy.
Efficiency	The proposal's do not have any direct impact on Efficiency

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

#### Background

10. On 13 July 2004, Cabinet resolved that the Council participate in the Central Park Project as landowner, including the relocation of the Council Depot to a location off Yarm Road/Salters Lane and the relocation of the Hundens Lane allotments to alternative sites.
11. The Council have entered into a joint venture agreement for the Central Park development with Tees Valley Regeneration (TVR), English Partnerships and One NorthEast, following Cabinet Approval in April 2006.
12. On 15 February 2005, Cabinet authorised the relocation of the Hundens Lane allotments to alternative sites on Lascelles Road and Arnold Road.
13. On 20 March 2007, Cabinet agreed to undertake the relocation of Hundens Lane allotments to Arnold Road, as a Darlington Borough Council capital project on behalf of Tees Valley Regeneration (TVR), and to release the requisite funding received from the Tees Valley Partnership and/or TVR for this purpose.
14. On 12 February 2008, Cabinet gave their approval to enter into a Development Agreement with the preferred developer consortium and the Joint Venture Partners in respect of Central Park.

#### Progress

15. The work to relocate the Hundens Lane Allotments to alternative sites is now almost complete, with only some minor snagging works to resolve.
16. The Hundens Lane site covers an area of approximately 8.2 acres, which is part of the development area of the Central Park Site.
17. Following the relocation of the allotments to Arnold Road, this area now comprises of derelict allotments, sheds, buildings, asbestos and fencing in an area which is generally overgrown and in significant disrepair.
18. At the time of this Cabinet Report, all of the allotment holders (including the pigeon racers) have now moved off the Hundens Lane site, and it is expected that work to commence clearance of the vacated site can commence from March 2009.
19. The Hundens Lane Allotment Area falls within the Central Park Development.
20. In preparation of this future development and to improve the appearance and safety of the area, work is required to progress with the site clearance and fencing of the area of the vacated allotments site at Hundens Lane.

## Procurement

21. The procurements involved in this are not Strategic Procurements and fall within delegated powers.

## Securing the site following clearance

22. Following the site clearance work of the Hundens Lane Allotments, the temporary condition of the site will require consideration.
23. A key consideration underlying this work is cost, as any works on the Hundens Lane site will be a temporary and this needs to be reflected in the work carried out.
24. Consultations regarding the temporary condition of the site have taken place with One North East and other public sector stakeholders involved in Central Park, including the ward Councillor for Lingfield.
25. It is recommended that the site is secured with fencing (totalling approximately 345 linear metres) so public access is not allowed (other than those required for works).
26. The timber and wire mesh fencing similar to that previously installed to the Southern Area of the Central Park site would be the preferred option.
27. The table below sets out the pros and cons considered in both the options of securing the area with fencing and the option of allowing public access.

Option	Pros	Cons
<b>Fence off area and prevent public access</b>	No public access therefore no maintenance issues or requirement to make area safe for access;  Keep the site secure and available for development;  Manages future expectations for the site in terms of future access and uses.	Would mean the site would be disused;  Maintenance costs of fence.
<b>Allow open access to land</b>	Positive use of land pending development  Creates an open space accessible to the public;	Land would require some after treatment to make it safe and usable for public access;  Public access may raise expectations about future provision of open space;  Land would be vulnerable to incursions and fly tipping;  Maintenance costs of land

## **Funding**

28. The necessary funding of up to £75,000 has been committed to by One North East, although it is currently estimated by officers that the clearance and fencing works will cost in the region of £50,000 to £60,000, with detailed cost estimates from contractors in progress and to follow. The contract will be managed by the Council and any potential cost overruns on the site clearance works will be subject to approval of the Central Park Project Board.
29. Providing the rental income from Green Street and Union Place remain around current levels, and there are no major maintenance works required to those units then the ongoing maintenance costs of the new fencing and fencing already erected, would continue to be covered by the rental income and therefore confined to the Central Park Project Costs.

## **Outcome of Consultation**

30. Consultations regarding the options for site clearance and the proposed securing of the area have taken place with One North East and other public sector stakeholders involved in Central Park, who agree that securing the area with fencing so public access is not allowed (other than those required for works) represents the best available way of proceeding with the site clearance.