

CABINET
4 MARCH 2025

LAND AT CONISCLIFFE ROAD, DARLINGTON

Responsible Cabinet Member –
Councillor Mandy Porter, Resources Portfolio
Councillor Chris McEwan, Economy Portfolio

Responsible Director –
Ian Williams, Chief Executive

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. Subject to planning permission being obtained for residential development on land owned by the Council, as shown at **Appendix 1**, to seek approval to acquire a house, house plot and orchard on Coniscliffe Road.
2. To seek approval to release funding so that a detailed planning application can be submitted by the Council's Joint Venture partner Homes by ESH Ltd.

Summary

3. The Council owns circa 5.7 Ha (14.12 acres) of land at Coniscliffe Road as shown on the plan at Appendix 1. Currently there is no viable access and egress to this land and acquiring the house and plot would enable the land to be considered for potential development. Subject to the proposed acquisition and subject to planning permission, the Council's Joint Venture partner could bring the land forward for residential development.
4. The owners of the house and plot have agreed to sell to the Council and provisional terms are detailed in **Part III Appendix 2** of this report.
5. The estimated business case for the acquisition is detailed in Part III Appendix 2, together with anticipated fees, so that a detailed planning application could be worked up with our Joint Venture partner Homes by ESH Ltd.
6. A further report would be submitted to Cabinet for consideration with the sale terms to Homes by ESH Ltd and seeking authority for the establishment of a new Joint Venture company. This would be accompanied by a detailed site layout plan showing the actual number of houses proposed.

Recommendations

7. It is recommended that:
 - (a) Cabinet approves the acquisition of house, house plot and orchard on Coniscliffe Road, subject to planning, together with the release of funding so that a detailed planning application can be submitted by Homes by ESH Ltd, on the terms set out in Appendix 2 Part III of this report.
 - (b) The Assistant Director for Law and Governance be authorised to complete the transfers of land; accordingly.
 - (c) The Chief Executive and/or Executive Director of Economy and Public Protection be given delegated approval to negotiate terms in line with the report.

Reasons

8. The recommendations are supported by the following reasons: -
 - (a) To secure land for future residential development;
 - (b) To give the Council control of a large area of land for future residential development.

Ian Williams
Chief Executive

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Guy Metcalfe: Extension 6725

Council Plan	This proposal will help to provide new and secure homes that meet the current and future needs of residents
Addressing inequalities	No implications
Tackling Climate Change	Improved energy efficiency of buildings through Building Control regulations.
Efficient and effective use of resources	The acquisition is expected to result in a capital receipt for the Council.
Health and Wellbeing	No implications
S17 Crime and Disorder	No implications
Wards Affected	Hummersknott
Groups Affected	None
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend a change to the Council's budget or policy framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is an Urgent Decision
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

9. The Council owns circa (5.7 Ha) 14.12 acres of land located to the north of Coniscliffe Road. It is understood that the site could be developed for a residential development under the Local Plan, but it currently has no viable access points.
10. It is proposed that feasibility work is undertaken with our Joint Venture Partner, Homes by ESH Ltd who would submit the planning application. Subject to planning permission for the Council's land being obtained, the Council would then complete the acquisition. A further report would then be submitted to Cabinet for consideration, to the proposed sale terms with the Joint Venture.
11. Currently the site with access is envisaged to accommodate a mixed residential site of approximately 70-90 new homes, and a mix of 3/4/5 bed detached homes. However, these details are subject to change as the application is considered through the planning process.

Financial Implications

12. It is proposed that funding is released from the Council's Investment Fund. A further report will be brought back to Cabinet in the future detailing the capital receipt the Council would achieve from the sale to the Joint Venture for Member's consideration.

Legal Implications

13. Reports on Title have been requested and due diligence is being undertaken.