

**Bracknell Forest Council  
Record of Decision**

<b>Work Programme Reference</b>	<b>I114754</b>
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1. **TITLE:** Depot - Surplus land

2. **SERVICE AREA:** Resources

3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To approve the initial site development plan for surplus land at the Depot site.

4 **IS KEY DECISION** Yes

5. **DECISION MADE BY:** Executive

6. **DECISION:**

**RESOLVED** that

- i. the outline Initial Site Development Plan for surplus land at the Depot site be approved.
- ii. should recommendation 2.1 be approved, detailed proposals will be developed including design, submission of a planning application and the commercial arrangements including development funding finalised in a further Settled Site Development Plan that the Council will need to approve in around 12 months' time.
- iii. the JV will engage with registered social landlords to investigate the viability of increasing the level of affordable housing in the development above the minimum policy compliant level (currently 25%) up to potentially 100%, prior to submission of Settled Site Development Plan.
- iv. the Borough Solicitor be authorised to appropriate the land at edged red on the plan attached as Annex 1 for planning purposes under Section 122(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, when a planning consent is in place.

7. **REASON FOR DECISION**

- i. The proposed ISDP is an outline proposal for development of the Council-owned Depot site. This will become surplus to the functioning of the Depot site itself once the redevelopment of the site is completed. If approved, this outline proposal will be refined during the coming months and will be subject to several conditions being fulfilled, including securing planning permission and fulfilling best consideration requirements for the land value.
- ii. The proposal uses a parcel of land which would otherwise be left vacant or sold to a third-party developer. Its proposed development via the JV allows the Council retain a high level of control over what is to be built on the site.
- iii. The development would provide c40 new houses and flats close to the town centre, with a proposed 25% policy compliant scheme as a minimum. The opportunity to

deliver an increased number of affordable units on site will be explored in the coming months, before a final proposal is brought before the Council for consideration in a Settled Site Development Plan, in around 12 months.

- iv. The proposed development links to the Bracknell Forest Housing Strategy 2023 to 2028. This strategy sets out four priorities:
  1. Prevent homelessness & increase housing options and support for households in need.
  2. Deliver new homes in sustainable communities that meet the needs of residents.
  3. Make the best use of existing homes and improve housing quality.
  4. Provide a range of housing options for people with care and support needs.

This development will align with this strategy by:

- Providing housing with varying unit sizes, including larger units suitable for family occupancy.
  - Exceeding the strategy requirements by providing 10% of housing as wheelchair adapted (strategy 5%).
  - Capping the rent for affordable homes at Local Housing Allowance rates
  - Delivering a high-quality development, indistinguishable from private for sale homes in the neighbourhood.
- v. The scheme development will be closely monitored through the detailed design, planning and construction stages and will include opportunities such as apprenticeships and work experience. Following completion this development will enhance town centre living in the centre of Bracknell, helping support an 18-hour economy by creating a lively mixed-use destination with residential and potential commercial uses close to the town centre.
  - vi. In order to ensure that the redevelopment can come forward, its benefits be realised and that the Council can meet its obligations under the JV legal agreement, it is proposed that the Council appropriates its land at the Depot site for planning purposes under S122 Local Government Act 1972 and utilises the statutory powers under s.203 Housing & Planning Act 2016 to facilitate the works without risk of injunction once planning permission has been obtained. This report seeks that this is delegated to Borough Solicitor who will ensure that all legal tests are complied with before Appropriation is undertaken.

## 8. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

The Executive could decide not to endorse the recommendations made in this report. This would mean that the Council may need to consider an alternative approach to development for the Surplus land at the Depot, including disposing of the surplus land to a third party. In that situation, the Council would achieve a guaranteed capital receipt (the level of which would depend on market interest) but would lose control over the nature and scale of development on the site. A commercial as opposed to residential development has been investigated, but was found not to be viable, as has previously been reported to the Executive.

9. **DOCUMENT CONSIDERED:** Report of the Executive Director: Resources

10. **DECLARED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST:** Councillors Bidwell and Neil declared affected interests in relation to being the Council's representatives on the Board overseeing the joint venture and would leave the meeting for the item.

<b>Date Decision Made</b>	<b>Final Day of Call-in Period</b>
19 September 2023	26 September 2023