1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report invites Cabinet to authorise Officers to make Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPOs) on two empty residential properties whose owners have proved un-responsive to attempts by Officers to bring them back into residential use.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet are asked to authorise:

2.1 the making of Compulsory Purchase Orders (Orders) in respect of each of the following properties under Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 (as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004): 32 Eastbournia Avenue, N9 0RX and 91 Nags Head Road, EN3 7AA as shown on the plans (appendices 1 & 2) attached to the report;

2.2 the preparation of the Orders and supporting documentation and the taking of all necessary steps (including the conduct of a Public Inquiry if necessary) to obtain confirmation of the Orders by the Secretary of State;

2.3 i) the acquisition of the properties (compulsorily) following confirmation of the Orders, the payment of compensation and statutory interest and the instituting or defending of proceedings where necessary; or
   ii) the acquisition of the properties by agreement, with terms for the acquisition to be delegated to the Assistant Director – Council Assessments (Housing) and the Assistant Director for Finance, Resources and Customer Services (Property)

2.4 the disposal of the properties in accordance with the Council’s Property Procedure Rules.
3.0 INTRODUCTION: AN ENABLEMENT AND ENFORCEMENT APPROACH

Enfield’s Ongoing Commitment: The Borough implements its Empty Property Approach to tackle the challenge of over 3,000 privately owned properties standing empty and wasted (as of 31 March 2016 there was a total of 3,223 registered empty properties). This figure includes all categories of empty properties as recorded by Enfield’s Council Tax department. Meanwhile the number of households on the housing needs list currently stands at 3,995 (as of August 2016) of which it is estimated approximately 2,600 are not already living in social housing. The Borough has an acute housing shortage. A strategic housing market assessment completed in May 2016 forecast that the population of Enfield would rise from 312,500 (2011 census) to 341,100 by 2017. This is an increase of 28,600 representing an 8.4% rise. The same report also forecast an increase in the number of households from 122,000 in 2013 to 129,000 in 2018. An estimated 1,000 households, excluding transfers, require a three-bedroom property or larger. At current levels of Council housing supply it would take 7 years to clear this existing backlog of demand assuming no new need were to arise through this period. The Council’s strategy for dealing with private residential empty property has been renamed the Private Sector Empty Homes Approach. Implementation of this revitalised approach is one of the borough’s key priorities contained in Enfield’s Housing Strategy 2012-2027. One of the five main ambitions of Enfield’s Homelessness Strategy (2008-2013) was to ensure the private housing sector helps to meet the needs of homeless households by bringing empty private sector properties back into use. The new Homelessness Strategy (2013-2018) acknowledged that this ambition is still relevant. It also identified an increase in the lack of affordable, quality private rented homes and made a commitment to increase the number of private rented sector homes available to let as well as ensuring all properties comply with minimum safety and quality standards. According to data held by Enfield Borough Council on the condition of the stock in the borough, 35.9% failed the decent homes standard (32,743 out of 91,083 households). The Council’s 2010 Making Enfield Better manifesto also pledged to employ compulsory purchase to return empty homes that “scar the environment” to use.

3.1 National and London Context of Enfield’s Empty Property Strategy: The Government’s housing strategy document Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England launched on 21 November 2011 states: “We are committed to bringing empty homes back into use, as a sustainable way of increasing the overall supply of housing and reducing the negative impact that neglected empty homes can have on communities.” The strategy outlined five measures, including: “awarding the New Homes Bonus to empty homes brought back into use” and “investing £100 million funding to bring problematic empty homes back into use and announcing £50 million of further funding to tackle some of the worst concentrations of empty homes”.

The Mayor of London’s The London Housing Strategy published in February 2010 recognised that where encouragement measures fail to bring empty properties into use, “The Mayor encourages boroughs to use their powers of enforcement through legal sanctions, including the use of Compulsory
Purchase Orders and EDMOs (Empty Dwelling Management Orders).” The London Housing Strategy (June 2014) stated that “The Mayor is committed to maintaining the historically low level of empty homes and since 2008 around £75 million has been invested in London to enable over 6,000 empty homes to be brought back into use by 2015.” It also stated that “The Mayor is keen to see that all London homes are occupied, whether new build or existing homes, and encourages boroughs to make use of the freedoms available under the Local Government Finance Act 2012 to increase council tax on properties empty for two years or more by 50 per cent.”

The London Plan 2014 – Policy 3.14 D states that “Boroughs should promote efficient use of the existing stock by reducing the number of vacant, unfit and unsatisfactory dwellings, including through setting and monitoring targets for bringing properties back into use. In particular, boroughs should prioritise long-term empty homes, derelict empty homes and listed buildings to be brought back into residential use.”

3.2. New Homes Bonus (NHB) Grant: Introduced by the Government in 2010, the NHB rewards local authorities financially for housing growth by providing a reward equivalent to six years’ Council Tax for each net additional home from April 2011. The incentive also applies to long-term empty properties brought back into use. Each empty home brought back into occupation will generate a NHB grant award of around £1,400 per annum. Based on 40 properties per year, this will generate over £50k per annum and more than £300k over the six years of the grant’s life. Enfield was awarded a NHB grant of £527k for 2011/12. The Budget 2012/13 and Medium Term Financial Plan (General Fund) report endorsed by Cabinet on 08 February 2012 agreed that this £527k be set aside to fund the Council’s Empty Property Programme, which is an Invest to Save proposal as empty properties brought back into use will generate additional NHB in future years.

3.3. Funding Support from the North London Sub-Region (NLSR): The Greater London Authority (GLA) provided grant funding for local authorities through its 2011-2015 Empty Homes Programme. Enfield was allocated £203.1k. This money, which is being held by Islington as the lead authority, is the Borough’s share of the funding for London agreed by The Mayor with the DCLG referred to in 3.2.) This allocation funded the Borough’s Grants and Nominations Scheme (GANS) referred to in paragraph 3.5 and the innovative Keeping House Scheme (KHS), targeted at people living in care who own empty properties. A total of 16 properties were assisted through this grant allocation and all 16 properties are now used as temporary accommodation reducing the financial burden on the council of expensive nightly paid accommodation. Previously, the NLSR had awarded Enfield a total of £432k for 23 CPOs approved between 2008 and 2011. However, both these funding streams have now ceased. In anticipation of this, the Council authorised Officers on 26 January 2011 to identify and prioritise financial and staff resources in order to maintain the ongoing CPO programme (CPO V report).

3.4. Programme Delivery: Enfield’s Empty Property Approach is implemented by the Empty Property Team, comprising of the Senior Empty Property Officer (SEPO), Empty Property Officer (EPO) and the Empty Property Grant Officer
Enfield continues to work in partnership with its NLSR partners (Haringey, Islington, Camden, Barnet and Westminster) and Sub-Regional staff to tackle empty properties. Within Enfield, the SEPO and EPO oversee the day-to-day running of the approach. They work in partnership with the representatives of Environmental Health, Legal, Property Services, Finance, Council Tax, Planning and RSL Enablement. Legal and Property Services, in particular, play a significant role in processing CPOs, acquisition and disposal.

3.5. **Enablement:** The EPO, targets advice, support and grant assistance by way of the GANS and KHS targeted at owners of empty accommodation, encouraging them to bring their properties back into use.

3.6. **Enforcement:** The *Use of Compulsory Powers* report approved by Cabinet in 2003, states that where encouragement and assistance have been exhausted, enforcement action will be considered. Since 2007, 29 CPOs have been approved by Enfield. A total of 18 CPOs have been confirmed by the Secretary of State. All of the remaining cases have seen properties returned to use without the compulsory purchase process having to run its full course. Enfield has disposed of nine properties acquired by CPO. Eight of these properties have been fully renovated to the "Decent Homes Standard" and are now fully occupied. The ninth CPO property was sold at auction and the owner now resides in the property whilst he continues to renovate to a high specification. This proactive strategy has placed Enfield at the forefront of London’s campaign to reduce the blight of long term empty properties.

3.7. **Sustaining the Enforcement Climate:** There is ongoing evidence that a real threat of CPO motivates some previously intractable owners into action. Continuing the CPO programme together with ongoing publicity is expected to perpetuate this enforcement climate. Mirroring experience of CPO work elsewhere, Enfield Officers have found that when Orders are *actually* made on properties, most owners eventually belatedly offer to renovate and occupy their properties by doing works themselves or selling. To ensure that owners do not renege on 11th hour proposals, the Council uses legally enforceable cross-undertaking agreements which negate the need for public inquiries and the associated costs (see 3.10 for more information about undertakings). The upshot is that the Council does not have to take possession and disposal action in relation to *every* property subject to a confirmed CPO.

3.8. Details of the properties, including a case history, valuation, a plan and photographs, are contained in appendices 1 and 2.

3.9. A statutory notice has been (or is in the process of being) served in respect of both properties. The purpose of these notices are to require the owner to take steps to clean up the land and buildings as the condition of the property is deemed to be adversely affecting the amenity of the area. Although these works are unlikely to be carried out by the owners, after compulsory acquisition and disposal the future owner will be expected to carry out the required works.

3.10. If the registered owner or “the potential beneficiary” (see Appendix 1) belatedly starts work, CPO action will continue until such time that all works have been
fully completed (meeting the Government’s “Decent Homes Standard”) and the property returned to full continuous residential occupation to the satisfaction of the Council. In addition, the registered owner or “the potential beneficiary” has the opportunity to enter into a legally enforceable cross-undertaking agreement with the Council to achieve a mutually satisfactory outcome. This means that the Council undertakes not to implement a confirmed CPO provided that the registered owner or “the potential beneficiary” carries out the required works and returns the property to use within an agreed time period. If the owner fails to do so, then the CPO is implemented. This negates the need for a Public Local Inquiry and all the costs involved in the Inquiry process. Where the registered owner or “the potential beneficiary” enters into a cross-undertaking, they will be expected to submit proposals of the works to be done and execute all works necessary to meet the “Decent Homes Standard”.

3.11. Compulsory purchase provides the only realistic prospect of these properties being brought back into residential use in the foreseeable future. A quantitative and qualitative housing gain to the local authority will be achieved by putting the properties into auction with a reputable auctioneer or through other acceptable means of disposal. Sale contracts include Special Conditions to ensure that the properties are fully renovated and occupied within a defined timescale. The Council has a proven track record of this approach, having successfully disposed of nine confirmed CPO properties at auction since April 2010.

**Budget Implications of CPO Activity**

3.12. The total value of these two properties is estimated at £535k based on a current indicative valuation (assuming a reasonable state of repair in the case of 91 Nags Head Road but reflecting the fire damage in respect of 32 Eastbournia Avenue). Once the CPO is confirmed, title can be obtained after three months under a General Vesting Declaration (GVD). The properties will be re-valued at the time the Council takes possession. The properties will be sold at auction or through other acceptable means of disposal. The compensation payable to a dispossessed owner is based on the market value of the property. An owner could make a claim on the Council for an advance payment of up to 90% of the Council’s valuation immediately after the date of possession. This must be paid within three months of the claimant’s written request.

3.13. Full Council on 26 January 2011 (CPO V report) agreed a revenue mechanism to address any interim costs incurred in the disposal process, i.e. an outstanding mortgage or early compensation claim (see 3.13). In practice, most properties subject to CPO are sold on prior to compensation being claimed. There should be minimal delay between acquisition and disposal (particularly if the properties are sold at auction) and therefore the costs associated with this CPO are revenue since they do not provide any ongoing economic benefit to the Council. (See Financial Implications at 6.1.3.)

3.14. There is a statutory time limit of 12 years for dispossessed owners to claim compensation.
3.15. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced an entitlement for former owners to claim basic loss payments. The amount is 7.5% of the value of the person’s interest in the land, subject to a maximum of £75,000. The Act provides that the entitlement to basic loss payment is lost if the following criteria are all met at the time the CPO is confirmed:

- a specified statutory notice/order has been served on the owner;
- the statutory notice/order has effect or is operative and
- the owner has failed to comply with any requirement of the statutory notice/order.

If owners do not comply with the notices before the CPOs are confirmed, basic loss payments will not be payable. As the empty property enforcement programme progresses, it is anticipated that less properties will require the service of a statutory notice and the risk of having to make basic loss payments will consequently be higher. Basic loss payments are statutory entitlements payable to former owners for interest in land, subject to certain criteria being met and up to a maximum amount. There are currently 2 CPO cases in which there may be a liability to make such payments in the future which will be met from central contingency as required. Cabinet approved this on 13 February 2013 as recognition of this risk. To date, it has not been necessary to draw on the contingency pot, and Officers will continue to make their best endeavours to avoid having to do so. (See Financial Implications at 6.1.2.)

**Associated Non-Recoverable Revenue Costs**

3.16 **Legal Services:** The in-house legal costs for processing Orders are estimated at £4k per property. If there are objections and a Public Local Inquiry is required, a further cost of around £10k per property will be incurred.

3.17 **Property Services:** In-house property disposal costs (including inspection, valuation, insurance, liaison with legal services, negotiations with the owner / purchaser, security and maintenance) are estimated at £3,500 per property. This estimate does not allow for the possibility of a contested valuation, which could go to the Lands Tribunal. For disposal via auction, the auctioneer’s fees are estimated at approx. 1% per property inclusive.

3.18 **Total estimated Legal and Property Services costs:** The overall estimated Legal and Property Services costs per property (including possible Public Local Inquiry costs and an auction fee of around £2.5k) are £20k. It should be noted that so far only three out of the 29 approved CPOs have required a Public Local Inquiry. It should also be noted that the aforementioned costs exclude Admin expenses, Legal fees to evict unauthorised occupiers, etc.

4. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

4.1 All attempts to locate and negotiate with the owner and assist them with returning the properties back into use have been exhausted. An assessment of the most appropriate course of enforcement action was therefore carried out. All options were considered, namely, service of legal notices, enforced sale, EDMOs and compulsory acquisition. The latter was deemed the most appropriate under the circumstances and will achieve a permanent solution.
4.2 The other option the Council might pursue is to do nothing. This will avoid budgetary implications, but is not recommended in the light of Council’s priorities and pledges with regard to empty properties. By failing to take the proposed action, empty and eyesore properties remain untouched and residences remain in disrepair. Enfield’s regeneration strategy would also be impaired and the Council:

- ceases to recover any outstanding money it is owed on properties;
- will fail to meet the serious housing need in Enfield by bringing empty properties back into use;
- sends out a signal that if owners ignore the Council, it will “go away”;
- will not attract the investment on building works that accompanies this programme;
- will not be able to achieve lasting change on empty properties; and
- will not maximise future NHB funding by decreasing the number of empty properties in Enfield and offset the risk of reductions in Formula Grant funding due to national top-slicing on NHB grant.

5. **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

The compulsory purchase of the above properties, and their subsequent onward sale, will produce a quantitative and qualitative gain to the borough’s housing stock. In addition, it will assist in the achievement of the Council’s housing strategies and will turn existing eyesores into much needed homes. A CPO will address the Council’s strategic supply, regeneration and sustainability objectives, together with the Government and Mayor of London’s expectations cited above.

6. **COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS**

6.1 **Financial Implications**

6.1.1 This report seeks agreement to proceed with a Compulsory Purchase Order. The revenue cost of processing one CPO (based on using in-house Legal Services) is set at £20,000 and this will be funded from the balance of CPO funding received from the North London Sub-Region, which currently stands at £191k. The CPO expenditure details are outlined below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue implications 2016/17</th>
<th>Cost of CPO, £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-house Legal Services costs</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property Services disposal costs</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security and maintenance costs</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auctioneer’s fees (approx. 1% of property valuation)</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Local Inquiry if there are objections</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of processing CPO</td>
<td>20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funded from residue of income from Sub-Regional Funding</td>
<td>-20,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6.1.2 There is a potential cost for basic loss payments as set out in paragraph 3.15 above. The Council is liable to make “basic loss payments”. Basic loss payments are statutory entitlements payable to former owners for interest in land, subject to certain criteria being met and up to a maximum amount. If this occurs, the payments will be met from central contingency, as approved in the Budget report to Cabinet on 13 February 2013. Planning Enforcement Notices have been served on each property and if the owners fail to comply with the notice before the CPO is confirmed, no basic loss payment will apply.

6.1.3 Title can be obtained under a General Vesting Declaration. On acquisition, the property will be put into auction with a reputable auctioneer. There may be a minor time delay between acquisition and disposal. If the property market falls between these two points in time, there may be some loss of capital. The acquisition of a property and the disposal should be almost simultaneous and therefore the costs associated with CPOs in this context are revenue and would not qualify as capital since they do not provide any ongoing economic benefit to the Council. Any time difference in the cash flows to the Council will be recognised as debtors or creditors at the year end and an assessment will be made based on the circumstances prevailing at 31 March 2017 of the extent to which the Council’s costs are recoverable.

6.2 Legal Implications

The Council has the power under Section 17 of the Housing Act 1985 to compulsorily acquire land, houses or other properties for the provision of housing accommodation.

In exercising this power, the Council would need to demonstrate that the acquisition of these properties achieves a quantitative or qualitative housing gain. It would also have to confirm its proposals for the future disposal of the properties to prove that such proposals will secure the return of the properties to a habitable standard and back into use. Current practice is to dispose of such properties at auction with a contractual obligation to bring them up to a habitable standard within a defined timescale.

In order to acquire legal title to the properties to facilitate their early disposal, the General Vesting Declaration procedure is recommended as the appropriate process to be adopted following confirmation of the Order. This is simpler than the Notice to Treat procedure and avoids the need to obtain a formal transfer of ownership from the current registered owners.

Once the properties have been vested in the Council, their disposal would need to be in accordance with the Council’s Property Procedure Rules and the contracts of sale and Transfer deeds will be in a form approved by the Assistant Director (Legal Services).

In disposing of the properties, it is unlikely that the full costs of the initiation and implementation of the entire CPO process will be recouped and therefore a budget has been identified to meet these additional costs.

In respect of Human Rights, the Convention rights applicable to making of the Order are Article 1: Protection of Property, Article 6: Right to a Fair Trial and
Article 8: Right to Respect Private Life and Family. It is not anticipated that Human Rights issues will be successfully raised in relation to these proposals.

6.3 Property Implications

There is a financial risk that the capital funding for acquisition will not be recouped entirely on disposal. As stated, the costs of the CPO process will be met out of revenue and in-house costs have been estimated. However, claimants are entitled to seek payment of their own reasonable legal and surveyor’s fees as part of the compensation. It should be noted that in the event of the necessity of a referral to the Lands Tribunal to determine CPO compensation, additional costs may be claimed by the dispossessed owner.

Disposal will be in accordance with the Council’s current Property Procedure Rules, which require that: once the CPO has been confirmed by the Secretary of State and the property has vested in the Council, the Council will put the property into auction with a reputable auctioneer. The auctioneer’s fees will have to be taken into account, together with other relevant costs.

7. KEY RISKS

7.1 By taking the action proposed, the Council incurs the following risks:

- Refusal by the Secretary of State to confirm any CPO submitted.
- Although only likely to happen in the event of a sudden collapse in the property market, it is possible that a valuation may be higher than the resale value of the property. Any resulting shortfall would have to be funded from Council resources. (See Financial Implications under 6.1.3.)
- If the Council fails to deal with empty properties, it risks both a negative assessment of its strategic housing performance by Central Government and the Mayor of London and negative perception by residents of its ability to tackle the problems associated with empty properties.

8. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES

8.1 Fairness for All

The compulsory purchase of the above properties, and their subsequent onward sale, will contribute towards the Council’s strategic commitment to return empty homes that scar the environment to use to meet the needs of each area.

8.2 Growth and Sustainability

Returning empty properties to use via compulsory purchase and onward sale:

- produces a quantitative and qualitative gain to the borough’s housing stock;
- assists in the achievement of the corporate Housing Strategy. Bringing empty homes back into use is a priority in Enfield’s Housing Strategy 2012-2027, thus addressing the Council’s strategic regeneration and
supply objectives, together with the Mayor of London’s *London Housing Strategy*.

In particular, tackling empty homes impacts on the local economy by attracting investment in building works (and associated employment opportunities) and generates revenue once vacant properties are reoccupied.

### 8.3 Strong Communities

Empty properties can have a serious negative effect on the local community. In June of 2003 a survey produced by *Hometrack*, showed that empty properties devalue neighbouring properties by as much as 18%. Typical neighbourhood complaints associated with empty properties include accumulations of rubbish, rodent infestations, overgrown gardens and unsecured premises (attracting anti-social behaviour such as vandalism, drug taking and arson), all issues that mar the street scene and impact on saleability and property value. Bringing these properties back into use will inspire confidence in the locality and be a positive step in regeneration.

### 9.0 EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

#### 9.1

An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been carried out in relation to the *Enfield’s Housing Strategy 2012-2027* that shows how the Strategy will support disadvantaged groups, eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. This Strategy supports fairness for all by promoting accessible and individual housing advice, options and choices for all, and addressing housing need to tackle inequality. Furthermore, the Community Housing Services Strategic Development Team received confirmation from the Council’s Equalities Officer in October 2012 that a predictive EQIA was not required for the *Private Sector Empty Homes Approach* (referred to in paragraph 3.1) “as it is considered not to be relevant or proportionate to complete one for this document.”

### 10.0 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS OF THE CPO PROGRAMME

- Enforcement action to tackle vacant private housing where owners are unwilling or unable to return them to use contributes towards regeneration, building sustainable communities and meeting local needs.
- Properties returned to use can minimise demand for Council resources, enabling these to be focused on other priorities. For instance, there will be a reduction in service requests as empty properties attract a disproportionate number of complaints to Members and Council services such as Environmental Health.
- Sufficient resourcing together with effective corporate and partnership working are imperative to sustain the delivery of CPO activity.
11.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 As indicated above and in the appendix, empty residential properties can pose a health and safety risk to Officers, owners and the public. Therefore, all due diligence has been and will continue to be taken by Officers to uphold health and safety standards in relation to the compulsory acquisition and subsequent onward disposal of the properties the subject of this report.

12.0 PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

12.1 As pointed out in paragraph 8.3, empty residential properties typically attract neighbourhood complaints about matters such as accumulations of rubbish, rodent infestations, overgrown gardens and unsecured premises (attracting anti-social behaviour such as vandalism, drug taking and arson), all issues that can potentially impact upon the health and well-being of the public. Bringing this property back into use will help towards improving the environment and amenity of the area.

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LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD
(32 Eastbournia Avenue Edmonton N9 0RX)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2016

Section 17 Housing Act 1985 and the Acquisition of Land Act 1981

STATEMENT OF REASONS
Addressing the requirements of Guidance on Compulsory purchase process and The Crichel Down Rules (amended DCLG Circular - October 2015)

1.0 Description Of The Order Land, Summary Of History And Valuation

1.1 The Order area comprises of 32 Eastbournia Avenue, a vacant, fire damaged, two storey, end of terrace house built circa 1900 with a single storey rear extension and the associated land (shaded on the accompanying map). The property has been empty and neglected since September 2010 following the death of the original registered owner.

1.2 Following an external inspection, Property Services prepared an indicative valuation on 20 June 2016 of £185,000, reflecting the severely fire damaged state of repair.

2.0 Purpose for Seeking This Compulsory Purchase Order And Explanation Of Proposed Use

2.1 The purpose of seeking this Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) is to facilitate the return of the property to residential use, and therefore achieve a quantitative and qualitative housing gain to the local authority via onward sale by putting the property into auction. Sale will be subject to Special Conditions to ensure the property is fully renovated and occupied within a defined timescale.

2.2 The Empty Property Officer targets advice, support and limited grant assistance towards owners of empty accommodation, encouraging them to bring their properties back into use. The strategy, supplemented by the policy and methodology framework outlined in the London Borough of Enfield report entitled Use of Compulsory Powers endorsed by Cabinet on 15 October 2003, envisions that in circumstances where encouragement, facilitation and empowerment have been exhausted, enforcement action in the form of compulsory purchase will have to be considered.

2.3 On 23 January 2008 Council resolved to authorise Officers to make CPOs on three empty residential properties to pilot the policy detailed in the Use of Compulsory Powers report. Between September 2008 and April 2013, the Council resolved to authorise Officers to make CPOs on a further 26 empty residential properties. Council on 26 January 2011 authorised Officers to identify and prioritise financial and staff resources in order to maintain the ongoing CPO programme in the event that funding from the North London Sub-Region is reduced or ceases and thereafter (Empty Property Compulsory Purchase Orders [CPO V] report). Subsequently, a successful bid for New
Homes Bonus funding has ensured that dedicated resources are in place to lead this function. It is in line with aforementioned strategy, policy and resourcing framework, commitment and practice that the authority is seeking to compulsorily purchase 32 Eastbournia Avenue.

3.0 The Authority's Justification For Compulsory Purchase

3.1 The authority’s need for the provision of further housing accommodation: Enfield has a total of 99,670 private sector dwellings, of which 1,580 are vacant (this figure excludes furnished empty properties); 905 of these private empty properties have been vacant for longer than six months (Stock and empty home figures from 31 July 2013 - 31 March 2016). Currently, (as of August 2016) there are 3,995 households on the housing needs register. This includes 1,888 households living in temporary accommodation.

3.2 Justification for the compulsory acquisition of an empty property for housing use: 32 Eastbournia Avenue is a two-storey, two-bedroom, mid-terrace house built circa 1900 that has been vacant for over six years. The last occupier died in September 2010. Between mid-2011 and mid-2013 there was a history of anti-social behaviour associated with the property. In August 2013, a fire occurred causing severe damage to the structure of the property. The property continues to attract anti-social behaviour. The Council’s involvement is summarised as follows:

3.2.1 05 September 2012: The Senior Empty Property Officer (SEPO) and Empty Property Enforcement Officer (EPEO) visited 32 Eastbournia Avenue. The gardens were overgrown. There had been a recent history of squatting

3.2.2 30 October 2012: The SEPO wrote to the ‘registered owner’ outlining various approaches to assist with returning the property to housing use. No reply was received.

3.2.3 16 November 2012: The SEPO spoke with ‘the potential beneficiary’ who explained that the deceased ‘owner’ was his great uncle. Only when they were trying to tie up the estate did they find out that approximately 1yr before his great uncle’s death, the house had been ‘sold’ and the ‘buyer’ had registered his name on the Land Registry title register

3.2.4 07 December 2012: The SEPO received a telephone call from Edmonton Police stating the property had been broken into via the rear door

3.2.5 06 February 2013: The SEPO spoke with the “the potential beneficiary” who explained that a notice had also been served against the registered owner preventing him from entry or having any dealings with the property.

3.2.6 01 March 2013: The resident of a neighbouring property rang the SEPO to say that she called the police again after some people tried to break in.

3.2.7 03 May 2013: The SEPO received a telephone call from a Police Officer in Dagenham. Following an arrest, the officer had found invoices and receipts relating to 32 Eastbournia Avenue.
3.2.8 **20 May 2013:** The SEPO visited 32 Eastbournia Avenue and noticed that both the rear gate and rear door were open. Windows were broken, drug paraphernalia were found and fire ashes were seen in the front bedroom.

3.2.9 **19 June 2013:** The SEPO re-visited following complaints of up to 20 people being in the house. The SEPO noted that the house was ransacked and there was an overturned barbeque in the kitchen with burnt coals scattered around.

3.2.10 **26 July 2013:** The SEPO spoke to the Police Officer from Dagenham who confirmed that their enquiries had now expanded and her Inspector was trying to get the case transferred to the wider Metropolitan Police ‘Investigations Unit’. She did not feel that there was likely to be a conclusion to the investigations in the near future.

3.2.11 **02 August 2013:** The SEPO received an email from Council’s Building Control department which explained that the boiler had been stolen and gas was left freely issuing from the open pipe. Jagged edges of glass had been left projecting from both the rear door and window frames through which persons have been gaining entry. Rubbish, broken glass and spirit bottles were evident as was a barbeque, which had probably been used inside the building.

3.2.12 **12 August 2013:** The SEPO wrote to the both the registered owner and the “potential beneficiary” reminding them that the property remained vacant, seriously neglected and unsecured. A requisition for information questionnaire under section 16 of the *Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976* was enclosed and the owner was reminded that the Council, have an active policy to compulsorily purchase property left vacant for a significant period of time. No reply was received from the registered owner.

3.2.13 **20 August 2013:** The SEPO received a telephone call advising that at 3.00am the property had caught fire. Damage to property was so far unknown but the elderly occupier of No 30 had been hospitalised due to smoke inhalation.

3.2.14 **21 August 2013:** The Environmental Protection Team served notice under Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982 Sec 29 requiring the owner to board up all doors and windows. They were advised that if the works were not completed then the Council may carry out work and recover costs.

3.2.15 **23 August 2013:** The SEPO spoke to a Building Control officer who confirmed that the property had now been boarded up.

3.2.16 **31 October 2014:** The SEPO received notification from the Police stating that they were hoping to go to the (CPS) with an interim report expected to be submitted by January 2015.

3.2.17 **16 November 2014:** The SEPO received notification from a Building Control officer explaining that he had served a Dangerous Structure Notice on the property with concerns about flank wall and unsupported front lintels.

3.2.18 **30 January 2015:** The Environmental Protection Team served an Abatement Notice under Section 80 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The Notice
required the ‘registered owner’ to remove accumulations on the land and secure the property. The registered owner did not comply with this notice.

3.2.19 10 March 2015: Works were carried out to clear all rubbish and accumulations from the gardens of the property and later on 16 March 2015, works were carried out to board up the back door.

3.2.20 31 December 2015: The Planning Enforcement Team served a Notice under Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which took effect from 31 January 2016 with 3-months given to complete the work.

3.2.21 29 April 2016: The SEPO met with the Head of the Planning Enforcement Team who explained that there had been complaints again regarding trespass. It was alleged that 3 men had been living in the property and dealing drugs. Therefore, the Council had decided to place 3m high boarding with barbed wire around the plot at an approx. cost of £6.5k which will result in an additional registered charge against the property.

3.2.22 12 May 2016: The SEPO wrote to the registered owner, stating that it was proposed to refer this case for a recommendation that the Council resolve to make a CPO. No reply was received. A copy of this correspondence was also sent to the “potential beneficiary”. No reply was received.

3.2.23 The Property remains vacant and neglected. The registered owner and the potential beneficiary have been given ample opportunity and time to comply with the Council’s requests but have either not responded or been unable to comply. Therefore, a resolution is sought to obtain a Compulsory Purchase Order to ensure the return of the property to full continuous residential use.

4.0 Human Rights Considerations

4.1 In recommending the compulsory purchase of this property, regard has been given to the provisions of Article 1 of the First Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights, namely, no one should be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest, and Article 8 relating to the right to full and proper compensation.

5.0 Proposals For The Use Of The Land

5.1 In the event that the Order is confirmed, it is proposed that the property is vested in the Council and put into auction with a reputable auctioneer. Sale will be subject to a covenant to ensure the property is fully renovated and occupied within a defined timescale.

6.0 Statement Of Planning Position

6.1 Prior to it becoming vacant, the property was in residential use. In this instance, no change of use is anticipated. The premises, once returned to residential use, will remain in residential use.
6.2 It is inappropriate for the authority to submit a planning application prior to disposal of the premises, however the onward purchaser will be expected to make such an application as necessary.

6.3 There are no specific proposals in the Borough’s Core Strategy, adopted by the Council in November 2010, or the emerging Development Management Document, which affect this property. Core Policy 4: Housing Quality, states that “the Council will use its development management powers to prevent the loss of all homes, including affordable homes and will work with partners to seek to reduce the level of vacant homes”.

7.0 Information Required In The Light Of Government Policy Statements

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 Any Special Considerations Affecting The Order Site

8.1 None are known.

9.0 Details Of How The Acquiring Authority Seeks To Overcome Any Obstacle Or Prior Consent Needed Before The Order Scheme Can Be Implemented

9.1 No obstacle or required prior consent applicable.

10.0 Details Of How The Acquiring Authority Seeks To Overcome Any Obstacle Or Prior Consent Needed Before The Order Scheme Can Be Implemented

10.1 No obstacle or required prior consent applicable.

11.0 Details Of Any Views That May Have Been Expressed By A Government Department About The Proposed Development Of The Order Site

11.1 Not applicable.

12.0 Any Other Information That Would Be Of Interest To Persons Affected By The Order

12.1 The officer leading on this case is the Senior Empty Property Officer, Dave Carter, Health, Housing and Adult Social Care, London Borough of Enfield, PO Box 59, Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield, Middlesex, EN1 3XL; email: dave.carter@enfield.gov.uk; phone: 020 8379 4287, from whom further information can be obtained.

13.0 Details Of Any Related Order, Application Or Appeal Which May Require A Coordinated Decision When Confirming The Order

13.1 There are no current related orders, applications or appeals.

14.0 List Of Documents Likely To Be Used In An Inquiry
14.1 Enfield's *Private Sector Empty Homes Approach*.


14.3 Enfield's *Compulsory Purchase Orders* reports I-IX, agreed by Cabinet and Council between November 2007 and October 2013.


14.5 *Enfield’s Housing Strategy 2012-2027*.


14.7 *The Revised London Housing Strategy*, December 2011 (for consultation with the public).


14.11 Empty Property Officer's case file on 32 Eastbournia Avenue, including letters to the registered owner and “the potential beneficiary”, etc.

The office copies of the above documents are all available for inspection at any reasonable time at the Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield, EN1 3XL.
LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD
(32 Eastbournia Avenue Edmonton N9 0RX)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2016
Photographs of 32 Eastbournia Avenue, Edmonton, N9 0RX
1.0 Description Of The Order Land, Summary Of History And Valuation

1.1 The Order area comprises of 91 Nags Head Road, a vacant, end of terrace house built circa 1900 with a two-storey rear extension and the associated land (shaded on the accompanying map). The property has been empty and neglected since December 2012 following the death of the registered owner. Officers have been in contact with the daughter and grand-daughter of the late owner who are believed to be the only beneficiaries of the late owner’s estate. The property has been designated as a ‘dangerous structure’, has a history of squatting and anti-social behaviour and is suspected as being a source of vermin infestation.

1.2 Following an external inspection, Property Services prepared an indicative valuation on 20 June 2016 of £350,000 (no allowance has been made for the state of repair of the property and reasonable condition has been assumed).

2.0 Purpose for Seeking This Compulsory Purchase Order And Explanation Of Proposed Use

2.1 The purpose of seeking this Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) is to facilitate the return of the property to residential use, and therefore achieve a quantitative and qualitative housing gain to the local authority via onward sale by putting the property into auction. Sale will be subject to Special Conditions to ensure the property is fully renovated and occupied within a defined timescale.

2.2 The Empty Property Officer targets advice, support and limited grant assistance towards owners of empty accommodation, encouraging them to bring their properties back into use. The strategy, supplemented by the policy and methodology framework outlined in the London Borough of Enfield report entitled Use of Compulsory Powers endorsed by Cabinet on 15 October 2003, envisions that in circumstances where encouragement, facilitation and empowerment have been exhausted, enforcement action in the form of compulsory purchase will have to be considered.

2.3 On 23 January 2008 Council resolved to authorise Officers to make CPOs on three empty residential properties to pilot the policy detailed in the Use of Compulsory Powers report. Between September 2008 and April 2013, the Council resolved to authorise Officers to make CPOs on a further 26 empty residential properties. Council on 26 January 2011 authorised Officers to
identify and prioritise financial and staff resources in order to maintain the ongoing CPO programme in the event that funding from the North London Sub-Region is reduced or ceases and thereafter (Empty Property Compulsory Purchase Orders [CPO V] report). Subsequently, a successful bid for New Homes Bonus funding has ensured that dedicated resources are in place to lead this function. It is in line with aforementioned strategy, policy and resourcing framework, commitment and practice that the authority is seeking to compulsorily purchase 91 Nags Head Road.

3.0 The Authority’s Justification For Compulsory Purchase

3.1 The authority’s need for the provision of further housing accommodation: Enfield has a total of 99,670 private sector dwellings, of which 1,580 are vacant (this figure excludes furnished empty properties); 905 of these private empty properties have been vacant for longer than six months (Stock and empty home figures from 31 July 2013 - 31 March 2016). Currently, (as of August 2016) there are 3,995 households on the housing needs register. This includes 1,888 households living in temporary accommodation.

3.2 Justification for the compulsory acquisition of an empty property for housing use: 91 Nags Head Road is a two-storey, three-bedroom, mid-terrace house built circa 1900 that has been vacant for over three and a half years. The last occupier died in December 2012. There has been a history of squatting, fly tipping and anti-social behaviour associated with the property. In August 2013, a Dangerous Structure Notice was served in respect of the property. The property continues to attract anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping. The Council’s involvement is summarised as follows:

3.2.1 11 September 2014: A member of the Council Tax visiting team stated that he had visited the house on 11 September 2014 and found house to be empty and in a dangerous condition therefore reported it to Building Control. The last owner had died in December 2012 and the property was still registered in his name.

3.2.2 05 December 2014: The Senior Empty Property Officer (SEPO) and the Empty Property Officer (EPO) carried out a visit to the property and found it was enclosed by perimeter fencing at the front. Photographs of the front and rear were taken.

3.2.3 15 December 2015: The SEPO received correspondence from a Building Control officer stating that a visit had been undertaken on 17 September 2014 and it was found that slates had been falling off of the roof and several slates were laying in the front drive, therefore the officer had identified the property as being a dangerous structure.

The Building Control officer thought the best option was to enclose the garden to prevent anyone entering rather than the alternative of getting a contractor to remove more loose slates. The officer stated that he was also concerned about possible water ingress due to the obvious holes in the roof.
The officer revealed that a woman contacted him in October 2014 stating that she was the daughter of the deceased owner of the property and that she would arrange for the roof to be repaired.

3.2.4 **19 January 2015:** A telephone message and email was sent by the EPO to the late owner’s daughter. The email explained she had previously advised that she was going to arrange for roof repairs to be carried out but no such repairs had occurred. No response was received.

3.2.5 **02 February 2015:** The EPO wrote to the owner outlining various approaches to assist with returning the property to housing use. No reply was received.

3.2.6 **03 March 2015:** The EPO carried out a visit to the property following reports that the front door was ajar. Evidence was found of the front door being forced, and the rear fencing having been moved to allow access to the rear door. The Dangerous Structure Notice had been removed from the front door. A message was left for the late owner’s daughter asking her to call the EPO.

3.2.7 **04 March 2015:** The EPO contacted the late owner’s daughter. A requisition for information questionnaire under section 16 of the *Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976* was enclosed and the owner was reminded that the Council, have an active policy to compulsorily purchase property left vacant for a significant period of time. No reply was received.

3.2.8 **09 March 2015:** The SEPO received a call from a neighbour expressing concern about people trying to gain access to 91 Nags Head Road. During the last 3-4 weeks the neighbour stated they had observed people at the rear and there was now a broken pane of glass which enabled easy access.

3.2.9 **13 March 2015:** The SEPO and the EPO carried out a joint visit. The double glazed back door panel at the rear, had been broken. Two women said they occupied the house with two men. The EPO took photographs and details of the late owner were found including a contact details of an executor. A visit was made to this executor who explained he had not been in recent contact with the late owner’s daughter. He agreed to contact her again requesting she contact the Council. He also provided information regarding the solicitor.

3.2.10 **14 March 2015:** The EPO received a response from the late owner’s daughter, stating that she was “desperate for any help and assistance I can get” and she was at present “sorting money out, to do up the property, so that I could give it to Enfield Council to rent out.”

3.2.11 **26 March 2015:** The EPO sent an email to the late owner’s daughter stating that she had not heard from her since their conversation on 16 March 2015. She also reminded her that it was important that she contact her solicitor for guidance immediately.

3.2.12 **30 March 2015:** The late owner’s daughter called the EPO stating that she had organised a carpenter to board up the property and when she tried to access the property she found that it was occupied. The police were called and removed from the property. The late owner’s daughter stated that she was going to have the property boarded up and the locks changed.
3.2.13 31-March 2015: The EPO contacted the late owner’s daughter to advise that she had been notified the squatters had moved back into the property around 11pm the previous evening. The EPO advised that it was imperative that she have the property boarded up and change the locks. The EPO also attached details regarding ‘property guardians’ advising that this may provide a solution to protecting the property.

3.2.14 08 April 2015: The EPO received a telephone call from late owner’s daughter stating that there had been another attempted break in but the property was now fully boarded on ground floor.

3.2.15 09 April 2015: The EPO sent an email to late owner’s daughter providing details of who to contact re discharging debts owed to Enfield Council.

3.2.16 13 April 2015: The EPO and SEPO met late owner’s daughter at the property. The late owner’s daughter explained that probate had previously been issued but she needed to arrange for the property to be registered in the names of her and her daughter.

3.2.17 14 April 2015: The EPO sent an email to late owner’s daughter advising her that she could make regular payments to clear her father’s debts but the registered charge could not be removed, until the outstanding balance was paid in full. The EPO also advised that if she were to let the property then rent payments could be used to offset the debt. The EPO once again strongly urged her to contact the Finance department to discuss the matter further and suggested she inform her solicitor once an agreement had been reached.

3.2.18 30 April 2015: The EPO spoke with the late owner’s daughter who advised that she had not yet spoken to the Finance department.

3.2.19 10 August 2015: The EPO left a message for the late owner’s daughter asking her to provide update on progress with renovation works etc.

3.2.20 09 November 2015: The SEPO received an email from an Environmental Protection Officer advising that a complaint had been received on 05 October 2016 about rubbish / fly tipping and also a rat infestation.

3.2.21 10 November 2015: The EPO left a telephone message for the late owner’s daughter, asking her to contact her.

3.2.22 20 November 2015: The EPO called the solicitor acting for the late owner’s daughter who advised that he had been trying to get hold of owner for some time. He had written and left several messages.

3.2.23 15 December 2015: The EPO sent an email to owner with an attached letter, which was also posted to both the property and correspondence addresses. The letter reminded the late owner’s daughter that she had not responded to the letter of 04 March 2015 ((requisition for information questionnaire under section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976)). The letter also advised the late owner’s daughter that there had been complaints received regarding rubbish and rat infestation. Finally, the EPO
reminded the late owner’s daughter that both she and her solicitor had been trying to contact her without success. No response was received.

3.2.24 19 January 2016: The EPO left a voice message for the late owner’s daughter asking her to make contact.

3.2.25 19 January 2016: The EPO sent a letter to the late owner’s daughter at 91 Nags Head Road and her correspondence address. A copy of this letter was also sent to the joint executor and to the solicitor. The letter advised that it was now proposed this case should be referred to a forthcoming Cabinet meeting with a recommendation that the Council resolve to make a Compulsory Purchase Order.

3.2.26 27 January 2016: The EPO spoke with the executor. He confirmed receipt of the letter sent on 19 January 2016. He had not heard from the late owner’s daughter for some months but acknowledged that the Council must carry out its processes.

3.2.27 09 February 2016: The EPO sent a further reminder email to the late owner’s daughter together with attached photographs a recent visit

3.2.28 20 April 2016: The EPO and Empty Property Grant Officer carried out joint visit to the property. It was observed that the property had considerably deteriorated. More roof tiles were falling off and rubbish was accumulating around the front door.

3.2.29 The Property remains vacant and neglected. The late owner’s daughter has been given ample opportunity and time to comply with the Council’s requests but has not responded or complied. Therefore, a resolution is sought to obtain a Compulsory Purchase Order to ensure the return of the property to full continuous residential use.

4.0 Human Rights Considerations

4.1 In recommending the compulsory purchase of this property, regard has been given to the provisions of Article 1 of the First Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights, namely, no one should be deprived of his possessions except in the public interest, and Article 8 relating to the right to full and proper compensation.

5.0 Proposals For The Use Of The Land

5.1 In the event that the Order is confirmed, it is proposed that the property is vested in the Council and put into auction with a reputable auctioneer. Sale will be subject to a covenant to ensure the property is fully renovated and occupied within a defined timescale.

6.0 Statement Of Planning Position

6.1 Prior to it becoming vacant, the property was in residential use. In this instance, no change of use is anticipated. The premises, once returned to residential use, will remain in residential use.
6.2 It is inappropriate for the authority to submit a planning application prior to disposal of the premises, however the onward purchaser will be expected to make such an application as necessary.

6.3 There are no specific proposals in the Borough's Core Strategy, adopted by the Council in November 2010, or the emerging Development Management Document, which affect this property. Core Policy 4: Housing Quality, states that “the Council will use its development management powers to prevent the loss of all homes, including affordable homes and will work with partners to seek to reduce the level of vacant homes”.

7.0 Information Required In The Light Of Government Policy Statements

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 Any Special Considerations Affecting The Order Site

8.1 None are known.

9.0 Details Of How The Acquiring Authority Seeks To Overcome Any Obstacle Or Prior Consent Needed Before The Order Scheme Can Be Implemented

9.1 No obstacle or required prior consent applicable.

10.0 Details Of How The Acquiring Authority Seeks To Overcome Any Obstacle Or Prior Consent Needed Before The Order Scheme Can Be Implemented

10.1 No obstacle or required prior consent applicable.

11.0 Details Of Any Views That May Have Been Expressed By A Government Department About The Proposed Development Of The Order Site

11.1 Not applicable.

12.0 Any Other Information That Would Be Of Interest To Persons Affected By The Order

12.1 The officer leading on this case is the Senior Empty Property Officer, Dave Carter, Health, Housing and Adult Social Care, London Borough of Enfield, PO Box 59, Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield, Middlesex, EN1 3XL; email: dave.carter@enfield.gov.uk; phone: 020 8379 4287, from whom further information can be obtained.

13.0 Details Of Any Related Order, Application Or Appeal Which May Require A Coordinated Decision When Confirming The Order

13.1 There are no current related orders, applications or appeals.

14.0 List Of Documents Likely To Be Used In An Inquiry
14.1 Enfield's Private Sector *Empty Homes Approach*.


14.3 Enfield’s *Compulsory Purchase Orders* reports I-IX, agreed by Cabinet and Council between November 2007 and October 2013.


14.5 *Enfield’s Housing Strategy 2012-2027*.


14.7 *The Revised London Housing Strategy*, December 2011 (for consultation with the public).


14.11 Empty Property Officer’s case file on 91 Nags Head Road, Enfield EN3 7AA,

The office copies of the above documents are all available for inspection at any reasonable time at the Civic Centre, Silver Street, Enfield, EN1 3XL.
Appendix 2

LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD
(91 Nags Head Road Enfield EN3 7AA)
COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER 2016
Photographs of 91 Nags Head Road, Enfield, EN3 7AA