

London Borough of Enfield

Regeneration and Economic Development Scrutiny Panel

Subject: Joyce Avenue and Snell's Park Estate

Cabinet Member: Cllr Nesil Caliskan

Executive Director: Joanne Drew (Acting)

Purpose of Report

1. For consultation as recommended by the Executive Director.

Relevance to the Council Plan

2. The regeneration of the Joyce Avenue and Snell's Park estate creates opportunities for existing and new residents through the transformation of place and will contribute to addressing inequalities and inequity in one of Enfield's most deprived wards. There are 795 homes split as 50:50 council tenants and leaseholders, with some homes owned by housing associations. The Council has prepared a planning application ("masterplan") to replace the existing housing with better energy efficient homes, more green space and more homes of all tenure to meet a range of needs.
3. The estate currently suffers with high levels of anti-social behaviour partly due to its design which has hidden spaces and a lack of permeability between the two estates. The masterplan has been designed to remove crime spots and open up the estate alongside delivering over 1000 new homes for existing council tenants and additional affordable homes for more residents in housing need. Homes will be designed to be adaptable in response to the requirements of elderly residents or people with disabilities so that they can continue to live independently on the estate.
4. Widening the tenure mix across the new development will help to ensure a housing offer that supports the needs of the community. Enfield as a borough is very diverse with its character and heritage varying widely from inner city to rural within just a few miles, and this differentiates it from other London boroughs. It is important therefore that there is a feeling of connection with the rest of the borough, not just physically but also in a sense of place where equality of opportunity and aspiration is intrinsic to living in Enfield.
5. Intermediate homes will be provided in the full range of affordable products, for existing resident leaseholders and new first-time buyers, including where possible access for key workers from the adjacent schools and hospitals.
6. The shared ownership or shared equity homes will support the rehousing of resident leaseholders and assist those who wish to stay on the estate.

A shared equity product for resident leaseholders is where the equity for the new home is determined according to the market value of the existing home, with no less than 25% equity purchased.

7. The phased approach to development means that most residents will decant straight into their new homes in a single move. This is important to keeping communities together where friends, support networks and family ties can be maintained during the regeneration and beyond. To support the phased construction the Council will need to secure vacant possession of the blocks in good time and serve demolition notices to ensure no delays to works. This requires the Council to prepare a draft Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) to support delivery.
8. By leading on delivery as master developer, the Council can ensure that properties bought back are managed considerably prior to demolition, that the long-term ownership of the current Council housing number remains, while increasing the overall housing stock and rebalancing the currently ageing stock profile to boost rental streams into the future.
9. The regeneration of the estate will take place over several phases, and the size and scale of the scheme will generate c 3500 jobs over the regeneration construction cycle (11 phases) and over 490 employment and training apprenticeship opportunities for local people in the construction sector. Where deliverable, this would be supported through the Enfield Skills Academy, initiated from the Meridian Water programme

Background

10. In 2021 the Council undertook a ballot of the Joyce and Snell's residents in line with the funding requirement set by the Mayor of London. This resulted in a strong turnout of 85.5% of which 78% voted in favour of regeneration.
11. Additionally, the Council has been awarded affordable housing grant for the project which will help to unlock the first four phases of the development and kickstart the delivery of 530 homes. This grant is conditional upon the scheme achieving start on site by the end of the 2022/2023 financial year.
12. A planning application for the masterplan has been progressed and submitted at the end of September, which proposes c1900 new homes, more green spaces and parks and more social infrastructure to support the growth over the next 20 years. This is due to be considered by planning committee in December.
13. To support the regeneration and deliver on the aspiration of residents, the Council proposes to use its compulsory purchase powers to help implement the proposed scheme. A report to Cabinet will be submitted in January 2023 seeking authority to commence the process under Section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) (the Act). A local authority has a general power to make a compulsory

acquisition of any land in their area to facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement in relation to the land.

14. In order to exercise the Section 226 powers, the local authority must demonstrate that the proposed development/improvement is likely to contribute towards the promotion or improvement of economic, social or environmental wellbeing of their area.
15. A Statement of Reasons will be prepared to support the CPO and provides an evidence base to support the use of the powers. Although the Statement of Reasons is non-statutory, it is an important document and when the Order is made, it will be served on relevant parties with the required statutory notices of making of the Order. The draft Statement of Reasons will need to be prepared in accordance with Government Guidance on Compulsory Purchase (Guidance on Compulsory Purchase and the Crichel Down Rules published in February 2018 by the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (updated July 2019) and will be updated and finalised as necessary to reflect matters as at the time the Order is made, including demonstrating the compelling case for confirmation of the order and the need to achieve delivery of the redevelopment scheme.
16. The Council will be required to demonstrate that there is a compelling case in the public interest for acquiring the land compulsorily. This will be set out in the Statement of Reasons which will need to be finalised before making the CPO, to detail the full rationale and justification.
17. The making of a CPO is regarded as a last resort and should be preceded by meaningful attempts to buy the land by agreement, save for lands where land ownership is unknown or in question. The Council has the power under section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972 to buy land by agreement for the purposes of any of its functions or for the benefit, improvement or development of its area and work has already commenced to engage and negotiate homes now. Since the ballot results were published in December, the Council has bought back or will have acquired 8 homes by the end of March 2023.

Main Considerations for the Panel

18. The making of a CPO is an executive function by virtue of section 9D of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000. Pursuant to section 9E (2) of the Local Government Act 2000, the Cabinet may arrange for the discharge of an executive function by an officer of the authority.
19. The CPO process is likely to take 12-18 months and therefore the Council has already commenced and will continue to seek agreement by negotiation to acquire the homes. Although the Council is able to commence the scheme as Phase 0 is a cleared site and land in council ownership, it will require vacant possession by late 2024 to enable the demolition of the first block and subsequent blocks for the new homes to be built.

20. The cost of acquiring (including statutory compensatory amounts) properties has been assumed at £120m in the financial model for Joyce and Snell's with Cabinet approving £55m in Sept 2021 for the buybacks associated with Phases 0-3. Independent legal advice has recommended the Council should seek to acquire all homes across all phases as early as possible to limit the need to continually use CPO powers to achieve vacant possession. There is currently no budgetary authority to acquire homes outside of Phase 3 although we are aware there are willing vendors keen to leave the estate.
21. Early indications are that leaseholders and freeholders are open to selling and that this interest is not limited to the early phases. Resident leaseholders will have the option to reinvest the equity from their home in new homes built on the estate or to move off and purchase in other areas. There is strong indication resident and non-resident home owners are interested in acquiring shared ownership homes on Meridian Water.
22. To ensure any homes acquired are not left empty and attract further anti-social behaviour, a void re-letting strategy has been agreed for regeneration scheme vacant properties which was approved by Cabinet in September ("KD5511")
23. The hybrid masterplan application was submitted in September 2022 which includes detailed design for 530 homes. The masterplan also contributes towards greener routes from east to west of the ward and proposes to connect the planned cycle route from North Middlesex University Hospital to Meridian Water station. It will also act as a hub for cycle infrastructure going both north-south and east west.
24. The improved accommodation and environment for our existing residents will have wider health benefits through tackling inequalities and ensuring new retail and commercial units create a more diverse and healthier offer. The scheme will provide opportunities for exercise in and around the estate and better access to Pymmes Park and the reopening and improvement of Florence Hayes
25. The estate renewal will create a safer and more accessible place which brings together a community whilst greening and creating better links for all residents living in and around Edmonton. The Council has the relevant powers to ensure the masterplan, if approved, can be implemented and successfully delivered in line with residents' aspirations.

Conclusions

26. Joyce Avenue and Snell's Park residents were presented with a once in a lifetime opportunity for improving their own lives and future generations, through a new masterplan to deliver better and more homes and transforming the area from an urban unsafe space to a green, open active living destination. To support the mandate given by residents, the Council

will need to ensure it has all the relevant powers to secure delivery of the masterplan and proposals to use CPO powers will help to achieve this.

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