

## Report of the Director of Regeneration and Culture to the meeting of Executive to be held on Friday 11 November 2011.

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**Subject:**

# AH1

Option Appraisal for the Regeneration of Sites around Chain Street, Goitside

**Summary statement:**

This Option Appraisal was jointly commissioned by the Council and Incommunities to consider options for the redevelopment of a number of sites owned by both parties in the Goitside area of the City. The redevelopment of vacant properties owned by Incommunities in Goitside is the first priority identified in Bradford's Local Investment Plan 2011-2020. The redevelopment Goitside will play a key role in the regeneration of the City Centre and will assist in delivering the vision set out in the City Centre Masterplan. It is considered of strategic importance that the sites identified in the Option Appraisal are redeveloped in order to create a high quality residential environment

The Appraisal identifies Option D as the preferred option; this option identifies a variety of measures designed to provide modern attractive residential accommodation. These measures include refurbishment of one block, demolition and redevelopment of a second block and the provision of further housing on two sites that currently stand vacant.

Incommunities were successful in their bid for funding from the HCA in the 2011-2015 Affordable Housing programme. A total of £960k grant funding has been secured for the conversion of Roundhill Place (flats to houses) and the construction of new build affordable houses at Chain Street. This funding will be supplemented by a grant from the Council of an additional £100k from its Empty Properties Programme

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**Overview & Scrutiny Area:**

**Regeneration and Economy**

## 1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This Option Appraisal was jointly commissioned by the Council and Incommunities to consider options for the redevelopment of a number of sites owned by both parties in the Goitside area of the City. The redevelopment of vacant properties owned by Incommunities in Goitside is the first priority identified in Bradford's Local Investment Plan 2011-2020. The redevelopment Goitside will play a key role in the regeneration of the City Centre and will assist in delivering the vision set out in the City Centre Masterplan. It is considered of strategic importance that the sites identified in the Option Appraisal are redeveloped in order to create a high quality residential environment.
- 1.2 The Appraisal identifies Option D as the preferred option; this option identifies a variety of measures designed to provide modern attractive residential accommodation. These measures include refurbishment of one block, demolition and redevelopment of a second block and the provision of further housing on two sites that currently stand vacant.
- 1.3 Incommunities were successful in their bid for funding from the HCA in the 2011-2015 Affordable Housing programme. A total of £960k grant funding has been secured for the conversion of Roundhill Place (flats to houses) and the construction of new build affordable houses at Chain Street. This funding will be supplemented by a grant from the Council of an additional £100k from its Empty Properties Programme

## 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The report considered by the Executive on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2011 Homes and Communities 'Affordable' Housing Programme, Investment Support made recommendations relating to capital support to be provided by the Council and, included Goitside/Chain Street as a major scheme.
- 2.2 Chain Street and the surrounding area suffer from multiple problems including crime, the fear of crime, low income levels and higher than average levels of unemployment. In terms of population, the City Centre has a high proportion of younger people whilst the Chain Street area has had, historically, a large proportion of older people.
- 2.3 Issues associated with the area
- Large areas of rapidly decaying empty buildings.
  - Poor quality extensions to the rear elevation of Roundhill Place
  - An adopted road that runs through the middle of the site that creates an environment not conducive for use by families with young children
  - Empty buildings, without natural surveillance, creating a place where drug dealing and other anti social behaviours flourish
  - Existing buildings that encompass a range of bed sits and flats that do not meet the current or future needs of the community.
- 2.4 Goitside is a strategic priority for both the Council and Incommunities. The regeneration of the sites identified in the Options Appraisal are key to the wider

regeneration of the Goitside area, and in turn play a significant role in the plans for the City Centre.

- 2.5 The regeneration of Goitside would contribute to achieving the aims of the Bradford District 2020 Vision, Community Strategy 2008-2011, in creating, safer and stronger communities, a more prosperous district, and in improving the environment
- 2.6 The Appraisal considers the role of Goitside in the context of the Council's wider regeneration ambitions; the World Mile, the City Centre, Channel Urban Village, Manningham Masterplan and Neighbourhood Development Plan, emerging Area Action Plans and significant investment by higher education bodies in and near the Area.
- 2.8 When developing options for the redevelopment of Chain Street the appraisal process took the following factors into consideration:
- Existing Housing – housing is of historical importance and existing housing blocks are identified as key unlisted buildings in the Conservation Area Appraisal. The Council is anxious to ensure that any new housing in this area respects the character of the historic environment and is delivered to the highest possible design quality.
  - New Housing Provision – there is a clear and identified need for new housing in the inner city area of Bradford. The Goitside sites provide a unique opportunity to address this need on land already in the ownership of Incommunities and the Council. There is clear unmet demand for family type housing in the area from an expanding population.
  - City Centre Regeneration – the Goitside sites are located within Bradford's City Centre. The City Centre is a key regeneration area for Bradford Council and it is considered that the quality of any new housing provision at Goitside will contribute towards City Centre regeneration.
- 2.9 The recently completed Bradford Housing Local Investment Plan 2011-2015 which sets the framework for the delivery of housing led investment within the context of securing balanced, healthy, sustainable neighbourhoods, identifies the Chain Street development in Goitside as its top priority.

### **3. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 This report was considered by the Regeneration and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 October 2011. The Committee resolved – That the recommendations contained in Executive Document “AH”, which is to be presented to the Executive on Friday 11 November 2011, be supported.

### **4. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

- 4.1 Planning Implications – It is proposed this Option Appraisal become a document of material consideration, which should be taken into account when considering any planning applications for the sites identified in the Option Appraisal. Officers from Planning and Design and Conservation have been consulted on the proposals as part of the wider consultation on the study and in principle agree with the proposals. There is however an outstanding issue in the form of an application from the Victorian Society to list a number of the existing buildings Incommunities have

challenged this application and a decision from English Heritage is pending.

Other factors taken into consideration during the option appraisal process include:

- 4.2 Society of Dyers and Colourists (SDC) - The SDC who operate from Perkin House (Colour Museum) have expressed an interest in developing a Fashion and Textile Studio School using their existing building (Perkin House) and a new building to be constructed on the U Block site owned by Incommunities. The Department for Education has shown initial interest in this venture with the SDC as an industry backer and Bradford College as the key educational partner.
- 4.2.1 The agents acting on behalf of the SDC have not at this point presented any firm plans, business plans or an application for planning permission. The inclusion of such a school within the preferred option is not recommended.
- 4.3 Extra Care Facility – The provision of an extra care facility would address priorities identified in the Council’s Older People’s Housing Strategy. Officers in Adult Services are aware of the proposals for the development of an extra care facility at Goitside. A review is currently being undertaken of the provision of residential accommodation in the District and this site has been identified as a potential location for a new residential facility.
- 4.3.1 The introduction of an extra care facility on the Council owned car park was well received and welcomed by local residents. This view was expressed during consultations held with local people. An extra care facility has been included in the recommended option for redevelopment of the sites.
- 4.4 Car Parks (Upper car park Westgate Lower car park Ashton Street) - Preliminary discussions have taken place with officers from the car parking services who confirm that the car parks are currently under utilised. There are a number of plans to improve the provision of car parking in the area this include new car parking at Westgate Mosque improvements to car parks at Thornton Road and plans to redevelop John Street Market car parking. The redevelopment of the various sites identified in the Option Appraisal will include car parking provision for residents and visitors.
- 4.5 Extension of Ring Road - Highways officers had considered the potential of extending the Inner Ring Road through the development site, however they have now decided to investigate other more practical options to relieve traffic congestion around the City Centre. An alternative route for the Inner Ring Road extension has been identified and will be the subject of further feasibility studies in due course. There is no need to protect the Council’s land interests at the car parks for the purpose of extending the Inner Ring Road.
- 4.6 Consultation - Extensive consultation has been undertaken with key agencies operating and located in the area as well as various interested groups such as the Goitside Development Trust. Several consultations were also held with local community groups and Ward Councillors. Groups consulted included:
- Incommunities
  - Bradford Working Women’s Service
  - Bradford Irish Club

- Goitside Development Trust
- Local Community and Residents Groups
- West Yorkshire Police
- CBMDC – Various departments and services including Neighbourhood Services, Transportation, Planning, Economic Development, Asset Management, Environmental Protection, Environmental Enforcement, Cleansing, Children's & Young People, Adult & Community Services.
- Portfolio Holder for CHES
- Bradford West City Ward Officer Group
- Special Neighbourhood Forums attended by local residents, businesses and agencies

4.6.1 During the development of the options Council officers regularly attended the Goitside Development Trust Board meetings to present draft plans and consult with members. The Board supports the preferred option.,

4.6.2 Further consultation meetings with local residents are planned. Officers are keen to continue engagement with local people to encourage their involvement and ownership of the scheme.

## 5. OPTIONS

5.1 Five possible options for the development of the sites were identified and following a process using the 'Building for Life Assessment' criteria, Option D was agreed as the preferred option as it was considered that this option provided the highest quality development and was the option most likely to have a positive effect on the regeneration of Goitside and the City Centre more generally. Full details of the various options considered are presented in the attached report.

5.2 The preferred option (Option D) comprises the following:

Site 1 – Roundhill Place

Existing bedsits to be remodelled to provide family housing within the existing fabric (site owned by Incommunities).

Site 2 – Chain Street

Existing flats to be demolished and to be replaced with a new build mixed tenure development of 33 family houses. (site owned by Incommunities).

Site 3 – Lower Car Park (Ashton Street)

Currently vacant site to be redeveloped to provide circa 84 bed Extra Care Facility (site owned by Bradford Council)

Site 4 - Upper Car Park (Westgate)

Currently vacant site to be redeveloped to provide a mixed use development comprising commercial units with Westgate frontage with 16 apartments above and 9 family houses. (site owned by Bradford Council)

In summary Option D produces 14 new houses through conversion, 142 new build houses and 84 extra care bedspaces. In addition 524m<sup>2</sup> of commercial use accommodation will be provided on the Westgate frontage and a new linear park running from Grattan Road to Wigan Street will be created

- 5.3 Option D incorporates a new linear park that provides a green link between the City Centre and Manningham. The link comprises a landscape corridor with paths that allow circulation by pedestrians and cyclists.
- 5.4 The park will have integrated play space for the use of children living in the family houses. For community safety reasons and as a result of local demand all the proposed public spaces are well overlooked by the adjacent buildings that engage with the green space.

## **6. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL**

- 6.1 Incommunities have secured funding from the HCA, Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) 2011-2015 to develop the proposals as outlined in this Option Appraisal. A total of £960,000 has been awarded for the conversion of 16 units (flats into houses) at Roundhill Place and the construction of 10 new build affordable units at Chain Street.
- 6.2 Given the key importance of Goitside to the success of the City Centre and in order to secure grant funding from the HCA to support this redevelopment the Council have made available a grant of £100k to support the proposals from its empty homes programme. This grant funding was approved at the meeting of the Executive Committee on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2011
- 6.3 The success of Incommunities' development is dependent upon cross subsidy from the sale of open market properties at Roundhill Place and at the site they intend to redevelop for family housing once the flats on Chain Street have been demolished. This element of the proposals does not have any immediate resource implications for the Council
- 6.4 The Council and Incommunities are working together on a soft market testing exercise using the Homes and Communities Agency Developer Partner Panel to establish whether the whole development is viable given current economic and market conditions. If this exercise demonstrates that there is an effective funding gap then both the Council and Incommunities will need to consider ways in which this gap can be filled. It is expected that the market testing exercise will be completed by the end of the current calendar year and will provide information about how best to develop site 1 Roundhill Place and site 2 Chain Street. Whilst site 3 the lower car park Ashton Street and site 4 the upper car park Westgate will be part of the market testing it is anticipated that Incommunities' sites will be developed as phase one and two.
- 6.5 The proposal in Option D involves the redevelopment of the two car park sites owned by the Council. A detailed financial appraisal has been undertaken and this is currently being soft market tested; any funding that may be required to develop these sites will be the subject of detailed proposals that will be presented at a future date to the Programme Assessment Group with a view to inclusion in the Council's Capital Plan. Any proposals that would require the commitment of further capital resources from the Council would be brought back to Executive for consideration.
- 6.6 Whilst Option D provides a coherent plan for the development of the four sites owned by Incommunities and the Council it is possible to deliver this development in a phased way and it is likely that the first phase will be site 1 Roundhill Place

followed by Phase 2 Chain site then the two car park sites

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 Funding has been secured from the HCA and the Council to commence the early stages of the proposals (Chain Street and Roundhill Place) however further funding and the appointment of a suitable developer prepared to take on the whole scheme would be required.
- 7.2 If the application for the listing of some of the existing buildings is approved by English Heritage then the proposed scheme would need to be modified accordingly.
- 7.3 The Goitside sites, in particular site 1 Roundhill Place and site 2 Chain Street, currently constitute a serious risk to the successful regeneration of the City Centre as the properties that occupy these sites are vacant and in poor repair and seriously harm the reputation of the area and the City. It is essential that these buildings are replaced with a high quality residential development that will act as an asset to the City Centre

## **8. LEGAL APPRAISAL**

- 8.1 There are no specific legal implications arising out of the recommendations in this report.

## **9. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 An application has been submitted by the Victorian Society to apply Listed Building status to the three sites at Chain Street. The application has been submitted to the Government and the appraisal process is currently being undertaken by English Heritage. An initial report produced by English Heritage has been received by the land owner, Incommunities.
- 9.2 Incommunities have formally responded to the report arguing that the buildings should not be listed, as they have little architectural merit their most significant attribute being their social and historical context. Incommunities argue that listing is not the most appropriate means of acknowledging and respecting this historical context and that listing would result barriers being placed on the regeneration of these sites and the wider Goitside area.
- 9.3 It is likely that the soft market testing exercise currently being undertaken by Incommunities and the Council will confirm that it is financially uneconomic to develop the two car park site owned by the Council. If this proves to be the case it may be necessary for these sites to be disposed of at less than market value in order to secure the regeneration of Goitside and assist in the regeneration of the wider City Centre

### **9.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY**

- 9.1.1. An initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed for the Option Appraisal and this indicates that there are no adverse equal rights implications.

### **9.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.2.1 One of the three transformational priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy: The Big Plan is: Regenerating the City and major towns to create the opportunities and impetus for sustainable economic growth.’ The development of the proposed site would increase economic opportunities for local residents due to the close proximity of the site to the City Centre. Shaping quality places is also a Prosperity and Regeneration priority in ‘The Big Plan’.
- 9.2.2 The development of the proposed site promotes ‘sustainable lifestyles’ by allowing residents to work and live in close proximity thereby reducing the need to use private transport. This opportunity would also present residents with increased access to public transport.
- 9.2.3 The conversion of the two blocks on Roundhill Place would result in contributing to renewables, preserve/renew stock.
- 9.2.4 The demolition and new build proposals could be environmentally costly.
- 9.2.5 It is anticipated that the new build properties will be built to a minimum Code for Sustainable Homes level of 3 and this will mean that these properties will generate very low carbon emissions

### **9.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS**

- 9.3.1 The proposal includes the establishment of a linear park which would act as a green corridor joining the City Centre to the Manningham area. This will be a pleasant environment and will increase green space biodiversity.
- 9.3.2 The new homes will be built to new building regulations and will include thermal efficiency measures and will achieve Code for Sustainable Homes level 3 as a minimum.

### **9.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.4.1 Following consultations with the police and Neighbourhood Wardens it is felt that the development of the site would have a positive effect on the reduction of crime and fear of crime in the area. The existing anti-social issues associated with the area are likely to cease if the houses on the site were occupied.
- 9.4.2 The use of Secure by design standards on new homes and the return of underused domestic and residential buildings into use will strengthen community safety.

### **9.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT**

- 9.5.1 No implications under the Human Rights Act have been identified.

### **9.6 TRADE UNION**

- 9.6.1 No Trade Union implications have been identified.

### **9.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.7.1 The Option Appraisal supports continuing investment in the City Ward (Goitside) and suggests a preferred option for regenerating the area. Ward members have

been regularly updated and consulted on the plans and fully support the preferred option.

## **10. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS**

- 10.1 Appendix 2 Option Appraisal for the Regeneration of Sites around Chain Street, Goitside – Financial Summary. This document contains information relating to the financial affairs of the Council and Incommunities and is therefore a not for publication document in accordance with paragraph 3 of schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended

## **11. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 11.1 That the Executive endorse and adopt the ‘Option Appraisal’ Option D as identified in the report.
- 11.2 That the Executive consider the Option Appraisal to be a material consideration which can be taken into account in the consideration of any planning applications.
- 11.3 That the Executive receive a future report on the viability of any scheme to redevelop the two Council owned sites before a decision to commit Council resources is taken

## **12. APPENDICES**

- 12.1 Appendix 1 Option Appraisal for the Regeneration of Sites around Chain Street, Goitside
- 12.2 Appendix 2 Option Appraisal for the Regeneration of Sites around Chain Street, Goitside – Financial Summary (not for publication)

## **13. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

- 13.1 Bradford City Centre Masterplan
- 13.2 Bradford Economic Strategy