

Report to Council
27 November 2012
Report of Head of city development services
Subject Provision of social housing at Pointers Field

Item

10

Purpose

To recommend the release of funding in the capital plan to enable the construction of council houses and self build houses on land at Pointers Field.

Recommendation

Council is recommended to agree to the inclusion of £800,000 in the housing capital plan, as agreed at the 21 February 2012 Council, to enable construction of 7 new council dwellings on land at Pointers Field, subject to planning consent.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority “Decent housing for all” and the service plan priority to bring forward new build housing development for the council.

Financial implications

1. The design and construction of 7 new council dwellings will require a total budget provision of approximately £800,000 from 2013/14 housing capital budget.
2. There is an existing budget of £200,000 for the site formation of new build council homes some of which will be utilised to progress this site.

Ward/s: Mile Cross

Cabinet member: Councillor McDonald – Housing

Contact officers

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Andy Watt	01603 212691

Background documents

None

Report

Background

1. The recent Housing Revenue Account (HRA) refinancing gives the council 'headroom' to consider developing new council houses for the first time since 1992 as referenced in the separate report on this agenda regarding the housing investment strategy.
2. The site being proposed for development in this report is a corner of a public open space at Pointers Field. It is adjacent to a disused residential garage court located on the north-west side of Sleaford Green on which new housing is being built. The site is 0.2 hectares in size. (see plan attached)
3. The site has been included within the council's site allocation development plan documents reference R46. The site has been subject to extensive consultation as part of the site allocations plan with no adverse comments received and one response welcoming the use of this part of Pointers Field.
4. This small part of the open space is proposed for development for housing as this would create an access to the open space from the east via Sleaford Green. This would also enable a new link in a local cycle route to be created and would increase surveillance of this part of the open space which regularly suffers from antisocial behaviour
5. The whole of Pointers Field was allocated for social housing development in the City of Norwich Local Plan 1995, however was not carried forward in the subsequent 2004 Replacement Local Plan. The neighbouring Sleaford Green garage court is being redeveloped as part of the council's strategic partnership with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). This offers the scope to access the adjoining corner of Pointers Field to enable new housing to be built to overlook the open space.

Proposal

6. It is anticipated that this site would support the development of 11 new dwellings of which 7 will be new council social rented dwellings and 4 will be promoted as self build. This mix may change subject to the funding requirements for the self-build plots.
7. Regarding the latter, on 7 July 2012, the Housing Minister launched the £30 million investment fund announced in the housing strategy to support self-build groups by offering the money they need to lay the foundations for their self-build projects and enable more community custom build projects to get off the ground. The first projects have recently been announced amounting to £1.1million. Access to this funding requires a minimum of five plots.
8. Due to a lack of internal capacity it is proposed to procure a development agent to act on behalf of the council to secure delivery of this project and to oversee the self build properties. It is expected that this will be a local Registered Provider of affordable housing as they have extensive experience and knowledge of such projects.

9. It is anticipated that in total the required council budget for this project will be in the region of £800,000 with additional funding being provided by either the Government self build fund or by the development agent to support the self build element of the project.
10. The costs relating to the construction of the new council housing can be funded through the use of RTB receipts (up to 30%), HRA borrowing against the rents from the new dwellings, receipts from the disposal of assets uneconomic to maintain or from a combination of these and additional HRA headroom.
11. As this proposal lies outside the existing capital plan and it is proposed to commence work to develop it during the current financial year it will be necessary for full council to approve the progression of this project. The construction cost will be included in next years housing capital budget.
12. At their 14 November 2012 meeting, Cabinet agreed to ask full council that funding be committed to enable the site at Pointers Field to be progressed in this financial year with a view to constructing council houses and self build houses, subject to planning consent. Cabinet's decision was informed by the report on housing investment priorities also discussed at the same meeting.

Integrated impact assessment



NORWICH
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The IIA should assess **the impact of the recommendation** being made by the report

Detailed guidance to help with completing the assessment can be found [here](#). Delete this row after completion

Report author to complete

Committee:	Cabinet and Council
Committee date:	14 and 27 November 2012
Head of service:	Andy Watt
Report subject:	Provision of social housing at Pointers Field
Date assessed:	24/10/12
Description:	To recommend to council, subject to planning consent, the construction of council houses and self build houses on land at Pointers Field

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)	☐	☒	☐	Provision of more council homes will improve overall affordability of the housing stock. The project represents a prudent use of financial resources to meet corporate priorities
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	☒	☐	☐	
ICT services	☒	☐	☐	
Economic development	☐	☒	☐	This project will provide employment opportunities, opportunities for local contractors and businesses and will generate local spending for the benefit of the wider economy. Providing more housing is important in supporting sustainable economic growth and prosperity.
Financial inclusion	☐	☒	☐	Providing additional social rented housing will advance financial inclusion by helping to improve housing affordability
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments

	Impact			
Safeguarding children and adults	☐	☒	☐	Building more council homes to meet changing needs will help provide accommodation for vulnerable adults and children.
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	☒	☐	☐	
Human Rights Act 1998	☒	☐	☐	
Health and well being	☐	☒	☐	The provision of sufficient and decent quality housing is essential to ensuring decent levels of health and well being
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	☒	☐	☐	
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	☒	☐	☐	
Advancing equality of opportunity	☒	☐	☐	
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	☒	☐	☐	
Natural and built environment	☒	☐	☐	

	Impact			
Waste minimisation & resource use	☒	☐	☐	
Pollution	☒	☐	☐	
Sustainable procurement	☒	☐	☐	
Energy and climate change	☐	☒	☐	The new council homes will be designed to a higher standard of environmental standards than building regulations require.
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Risk management	☐	☐	☒	The new homes will be subject to the Right to Buy which represents a risk to the council.

Recommendations from impact assessment

Positive

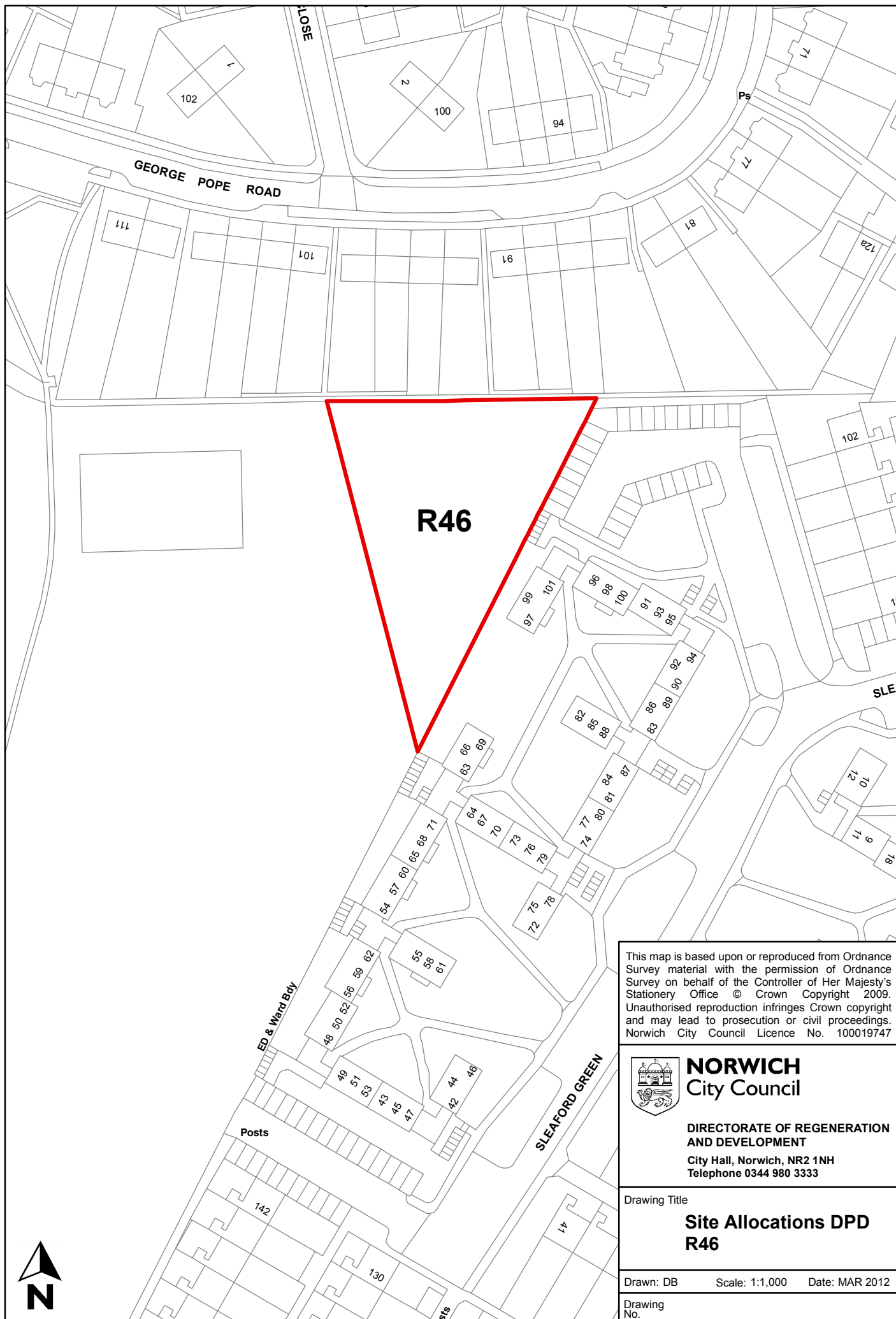
Overall the project will provide more council homes which will improve overall affordability of the housing stock. The investment priorities represent a prudent use of financial resources to meet corporate priorities and will provide local employment opportunities.

Negative

The right to buy is a risk that could be mitigated through the council considering the setting up of a special purpose vehicle.

Neutral

Issues



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NORWICH
City Council

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Drawing Title

**Site Allocations DPD
R46**

Drawn: DB Scale: 1:1,000 Date: MAR 2012

Drawing
No.