

COUNCIL OWNED SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT AS PART OF THE LOCAL PLAN

Head of Service:	Mark Shephard, Head of Property and Regeneration
Wards affected:	(All Wards);
Urgent Decision?(yes/no)	No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:	
Appendices (attached):	None

Summary

It is important that the Council demonstrates that all available sites for development have been considered as part of the Council's Local Plan process. This report recommends Council owned land and property assets that could be considered suitable for development are submitted through the Local Plan public process. It does in no way recommend that these sites should or will be put forward for development by the Council or be allocated in the forthcoming Local Plan.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

- (1) Authorise the Head of Property & Regeneration to submit the following Council owned sites to the Local Planning Authority for consideration as part of the Local Plan process:**
 - a) Depot Road / Upper High Street public car parks**
 - b) Hook Road Multi-Storey public car park and Rainbow Leisure Centre surface car park**
 - c) Ashley Centre Southern Extent (Global House, Ashley Centre multi-storey public car park and Epsom Playhouse)**
 - d) Town Hall and public car park**
 - e) Kiln Lane (Nonsuch) Industrial Estate**
 - f) Wells Site**
 - g) Gibraltar Crescent (land to rear)**

- h) Hook Road Arena**
- i) Clarendon Park (land encompassing South View and McKenzie Way)**
- j) Manor Park (land encompassing Horton Lane and Chertsey Lane)**

1 Reason for Recommendation

- 1.1 The recommendations set out above, if approved, will allow the Council to submit sites in its ownership for consideration as part of the emerging Local Plan, a key strategic corporate priority. This does not imply that these sites will be identified or released for development which will require approval under separate democratic processes. However, it will allow the Council to demonstrate that it has looked at all available sites for development to meet its housing requirements and to support any position that it is unable to meet targets set through the national standard methodology for future development.

2 Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 28 July 2020, Committee approved the Council's Strategic Asset Management Plan 2020-30 ("the AMP"). It set out the Council's approach to the strategic management of its land and property assets over the next ten years.
- 2.2 A key strategic theme of the new AMP is **Place Ambition** and its ability to use the Council's own property assets to support other strategic plans and policies. These include:
- *Future40 Long-Term Vision*
 - *Four Year Corporate Plan 2020-2024*
 - *Emerging Local Plan*
- 2.3 This report focuses on the emerging Local Plan and ensuring that suitable Council owned land and property assets are fully considered. This does not imply that these sites will be identified or released for development which will require approval under separate democratic processes

3 Epsom and Ewell Local Plan 2017-2037

- 3.1 Acting in its capacity as the Local Planning Authority (LPA), the Council is developing a new Local Plan to cover the period to 2037. The Local Plan is informed by a structured process of consultation and is served by a dedicated website:

<https://www.epsom-ewell-localplan.co.uk/>

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- 3.2 To assist the LPA identify the future supply of developable land for use as housing or other economic development purposes, landowners are encouraged to come forward with potential sites.
- 3.3 Submitted sites will first be technically assessed and if considered suitable for future potential development, will then form part of the formal Local Plan consultation process.
- 3.4 As part of the Local Plan process, the Council is no different to any other landowner and therefore, all suitable sites need to be submitted to the LPA if they are to be considered as part of the formal consultation. It is important that the Council through the Local Plan process can demonstrate that it has considered all available sites for development.
- 3.5 To support the Local Plan, it is therefore recommended that Council owned sites are submitted through this process. This is especially true if the Council will be arguing through the Local Plan, that its housing requirement (as established through the national standard methodology), cannot be met in the Borough.

4 Council owned land and property assets

2011 Epsom Town Centre Area Action Plan – Plan E

- 4.1 The existing 2011 Plan E considers the future development of several sites adjacent to, or including, Council owned property assets. These included the following defined opportunity sites:
 - **Depot Road and Upper High Street car parks** – Council owned surface public car parks.
 - **The Utilities Site, East Street** – as defined in Plan E, it excludes the Council's adjacent Hook Road multi-storey public car park and Rainbow leisure centre and public surface car park.
 - **Global House, Ashley Avenue** – an existing office building that forms the southern extent of the Ashley Shopping Centre. The Council is the freeholder but the Ashley Shopping Centre complex is subject to a long lease for 125 years.
 - **Town Hall and car park** – Council owned municipal building and public car park.
- 4.2 It is recommended that in addition to the existing Council owned Plan E opportunity sites detailed above, the Utilities Site definition is expanded to include the Council's Hook Road multi-storey public car park and Rainbow Leisure Centre public surface car park.

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- 4.3 It is further recommended that the southern extent of the Ashley Shopping Centre is expanded to include the full southern frontage i.e. Global House, public car park and Epsom Playhouse.
- 4.4 It is important to acknowledge that any sites allocated through the Local Plan would have to be considered together with the necessary infrastructure (transport, car parking, social, community and leisure). Any allocation that results in the loss of other land uses needs to be considered comprehensively as part of the holistic Local Plan.

Local Plan Spatial Economic Growth Strategy

- 4.5 The Spatial Economic Growth Strategy was commissioned to inform the Local Plan and identified a number of priority interventions that would improve the Borough's longer-term economic prospects.
- 4.6 The report recommended five priority interventions including; "*the Accelerated Redevelopment of the Utilities, East Street and Kiln Lane Sites*".
- 4.7 In addition to the Utilities Site, the Council has freehold interests across Kiln Lane (Nonsuch) Industrial Estate. These interests are subject to long leaseholds and therefore the Council does not have operational control of the sites.
- 4.8 However, to protect the Council's long term property interests and to demonstrate through the Local Plan process that all options for development have been taken into consideration, it is recommended that the Kiln Lane sites are included in the Local Plan consultation process.

Other proposed sites

- 4.9 It is recommended that the following Council sites are also submitted and considered as part of the Local Plan consultation:
- **Wells Site**, Spa Drive, Epsom KT18 7LR
 - **Gibraltar Crescent** (land to rear), Epsom KT19 9BU
 - **Hook Road Arena**, West Ewell KT19 8QW
 - **Clarendon Park**, Epsom – land encompassing South View and McKenzie Way
 - **Manor Park**, Epsom – land encompassing Horton Lane and Chertsey Lane
- 4.10 To re-emphasise, the recommendations in this report do in no way imply that these sites will be identified or released for development which will require full consultation and approval under separate democratic processes.

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5 Next steps

- 5.1 It is for the Local Plan itself to determine which sites or broad locations are the most suitable and deliverable for a particular use. Even when allocated in the Draft Local Plan, the outcome of the public consultation may deem sites inappropriate for future development.
- 5.2 As described in paragraph 3 of this report, the submission of sites by either the Council (acting as landowner) or a third party private landowner, simply provides the opportunity for their sites to be considered as part of the Local Plan public consultation process.
- 5.3 The Local Planning Authority's technical assessment will determine if landowner promoted sites are deemed suitable for potential allocation within the Local Plan process. The Local Plan will be subject to significant formal consultation and will need to be adopted by the Council through a separate democratic process. In addition, the release of any Council owned site for development will also require a separate process to be undertaken.
- 5.4 In view of the above, Committee is recommended to authorise officers to submit the Council owned sites to the Local Planning Authority to form part of the Local Plan public consultation. This will not only enable the Council to consider if any of its sites are deemed suitable for development but significantly, to enable the Council to demonstrate to the Local Plan Inspector, that it has been reasonable and proportionate in planning for future development within the Borough in attempting to meet government requirements for development.

6 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

6.1 Impact Assessment

6.1.1 Not applicable.

6.2 Crime & Disorder

6.2.1 Not applicable.

6.3 Safeguarding

6.3.1 Not applicable.

6.4 Dependencies

6.4.1 All submitted sites are subject to the Local Planning Authority's technical assessment, full public consultation, a Local Plan Inquiry, formal adoption of the Local Plan by the Council and release of the sites formally by the Council.

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6.5 Other

6.5.1 The Asset Management Plan's key property strategies ensure the Council maximises its land and property assets.

7 Financial Implications

7.1 The submission of the Council's own sites to the Local Planning Authority is a desktop notification exercise and does not have any financial implications. If any of the sites are formally approved by the Council for allocation in the Local Plan, there may be significant financial implications that the Council would need to consider. However, this would be subject to further consideration at this stage.

7.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments:** None arising from the content of this report.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 None arising from the content of this report.

8.2 **Legal Officer's comments:** The Council has to be seen to be following due process in relation to the submission of sites for possible allocation in the Local Plan and so this action is appropriate.

9 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

9.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged: Opportunity and Prosperity, Effective Council.

9.2 **Service Plans:** The matter is included within the current Service Delivery Plan.

9.3 **Climate & Environmental Impact of recommendations:** In trying to meet the national requirements for development, the Council has a duty to make effective use of land. The submission of Council owned sites through the Local Plan process will enable the Council to determine how best it can balance the climate change objectives with accommodating sustainable growth to meet national development requirements.

9.4 **Sustainability Policy & Community Safety Implications:** The submission of sites through the Local Plan process will enable the Council to demonstrate that it has considered all available options for future development.

9.5 **Partnerships:** A number of the sites are currently subject to long leaseholds and therefore, the Council does not have operational control of the sites. However, the submission of Council owned sites through the Local Plan process does not imply that these sites will be identified or released for development which will require approval under separate processes.

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10 Background papers

10.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- None

Other papers:

- Future40 Long-Term Vision

<https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=907>

- Four Year Corporate Plan 2020-2024

<https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=907>

- 2011 Epsom Town Centre Area Action Plan – Plan E

- Strategic Asset Management Plan to S&R Committee 28 July 2020

<https://democracy.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=132&MId=770>

- Local Plan Spatial Economic Growth Strategy for Epsom & Ewell Borough Council 18 February 2020

<https://www.epsom-ewell.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/residents/planning/planning-policy/Strategic%20Framework%20Final%2018%20February%202020.pdf>