

This Report will be made  
public on 12 February 2019.



Report Number **C/18/70**

**To:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 20 February 2019  
**Status:** Key Decision  
**Responsible officer:** John Bunnett – Commercial Services  
**Cabinet Members:** Councillors David Monk, leader of the council, Dick Pascoe –  
Property and Environmental Health

**Subject:** **Biggins Wood – Acceptance of Grant**

**SUMMARY:** This report recommends the acceptance of the grant offered by the Government under its Accelerated Construction Programme for work to the site.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The council needs to decide whether to accept the grant offered.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. To receive and note report C/18/70.
2. To accept the grant offered by the Government under its Accelerated Construction Programme for work to the site.

## **1 BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Members will recall that the Council purchased land at Bigginswood / Caesar's Way on 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016 to address the corporate plan objectives to deliver new homes and jobs. The scheme was purchased with existing planning permission for 77 homes, 54 light industrial units and one office building.
- 1.2 On 31 May 2017 Cabinet considered report C/17/06. That report, in part, stated that an application for grant funding was to be made to Homes England under the Government's Accelerated Construction Programme to support remediation and other development costs for the site.
- 1.3 This report concerns the outcome of the grant application.

## **2 GRANT APPLICATION OUTCOME**

- 2.1 The application for the grant was successful and the council has been awarded approximately one million pounds.
- 2.2 The Accelerated Construction programme is designed so that local authorities can bring forward and develop surplus and / or acquired sites which:-
  - Can begin to deliver housing starts within this Parliament, as part of a local authority's wider housing ambitions;
  - Can demonstrate clear additionality, for example by bringing forward sites that might otherwise not be sold for housing development, and in particular sites that are not currently in a local authority's Local Plan or 5 year land supply.
  - Respond to meeting housing needs locally by freeing up surplus land for housing where it is needed most;
  - Have capacity for 50 homes or more, or form part of a portfolio of smaller sites;
  - Are not, or, subject to successful application, will not be held in a Local Authority's Housing Revenue Account. However proposals for the delivery of mixed tenure sites were welcomed where they meet the Government's wider objectives as were proposals for the provision of serviced custom build plots.
- 2.3 The government were obviously satisfied that the site met the criteria. They were also satisfied that the scheme was commercially viable.
- 2.4 The offer of the grant is time limited. The council must decide whether to accept it or not. The recommendation is that it should be accepted.

## **3 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES**

- 3.1 The following risk management areas are highlighted

Risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative Action
Failure to deliver scheme on time.	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project manage scheme</li> </ul>

## 4 LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

### 4.1 Legal Officer's comments (NE):

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. The Council will need to ensure that it complies and adheres to any terms and conditions which the government may impose in relation to the grant

### 4.2 Finance Officer's Comments (CS)

The acceptance of this grant will support the delivery of this scheme, it will contribute around £1 million towards the programme of works. The grant, if accepted, will be held within Earmarked Reserves until required.

## 5 DIVERSITIES AND EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no diversity or equalities issues arising from this report.

## 6 CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officers prior to the meeting:

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The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

None