



## SHEFFIELD CITY COUNCIL Cabinet Report

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**Report of:** Executive Director (Communities)

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**Date:** 27 February 2013

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**Subject:** Disposal of land at Sevenairs Road, Beighton

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**Author of Report:** Dave Mason (27 34617)

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### **Summary:**

Guinness Northern Counties has secured an allocation of grant from the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) Affordable Homes Programme for 2011/15. This includes funding for supported accommodation for those experiencing mental ill health, which forms part of Sheffield's Local Investment Plan as approved by Cabinet on 24 August 2011.

A suitable site has been identified at Sevenairs Road in Beighton and the delivery of the scheme requires the Council to dispose of this land at nil consideration.

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### **Reasons for Recommendations:**

There is currently an under provision of specialist supported housing for people who experience mental ill health in Sheffield. The need has been identified for more housing with flexible support to meet the needs of a younger population with mental health problems who require short to medium term support to enable their recovery towards greater independence. This gap in provision has led to a number of people being inappropriately accommodated in expensive registered residential care. The proposed development would benefit clients across the city due to the increase in choice and dispersal of resources.

There is a particular gap in provision in the south east of the city where there are no suitable units of supported housing for this client group. Clients from this area have to relocate to central/north Sheffield for rehabilitation placements, which has removed some from their neighbourhood and family ties. The Sevenairs Road site represents the best available option within the south east of the city in terms of affordability and access to amenities.

**Recommendations:**

- R1 That the land now shown at Appendix A be declared surplus to the requirements of the City Council and subject to planning permission be disposed to Guinness Northern Counties at nil consideration for use as social housing.
- R2 That the Director of Property & Facilities Management be authorised to agree final terms for the disposal of the site to deliver the scheme set out in the report, including the variation of any boundaries as required, in consultation with the Director of Housing Enterprise and Regeneration and to instruct the Director of Legal Services to complete the necessary legal documentation.

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**Background Papers:** None

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**Category of Report:** OPEN

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## Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

<b>Financial Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Paul Schofield
<b>Legal Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Andrea Simpson
<b>Equality of Opportunity Implications</b>
YES Cleared by: Phil Reid
<b>Tackling Health Inequalities Implications</b>
NO
<b>Human rights Implications</b>
NO
<b>Environmental and Sustainability implications</b>
YES
<b>Economic impact</b>
NO
<b>Community safety implications</b>
NO
<b>Human resources implications</b>
NO
<b>Property implications</b>
YES
<b>Area(s) affected</b>
South East Sheffield
<b>Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Leader</b>
Cllr Harry Harpham – Homes & Neighbourhoods Cllr Mary Lea – Health, Care and Independent Living
<b>Relevant Scrutiny Committee if decision called in</b>
Safer and Stronger Communities
<b>Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?</b>
NO
<b>Press release</b>
NO

## **Disposal of land at Sevenairs Road, Beighton**

### **1.0 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Guinness Northern Counties has recently secured an allocation of grant from the Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) Affordable Homes Programme for 2011/15. This includes funding for supported accommodation for those experiencing mental ill health, which forms part of Sheffield's Local Investment Plan as approved by Cabinet on 24 August 2011.
- 1.2 A suitable site has been identified at Sevenairs Road in Beighton and the delivery of the scheme requires the Council to dispose of this land at nil consideration.

### **2.0 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR SHEFFIELD PEOPLE**

- 2.1 This new provision would enable fair access for Sheffield people by providing approximately 20 units of good quality supported accommodation for people with mental health problems, who need short to medium term support. Whilst these individuals may sometimes live relatively independently recovery from mental health problems is not always quick. These individuals would have continuing care planning and care coordination provided by adult community mental health services from Sheffield Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust.
- 2.2 The newly developed accommodation would be an improvement to the surrounding neighbourhood bringing a derelict garage site back into use. This particular locality is well used to providing host facilities for this client group having had a substantial inpatient hospital facility nearby for several years.
- 2.3 Current supported housing provision specifically for people with mental health needs is located in Uppertorpe, Pitsmoor, Langsett, Hillsborough, Sharrow, Abbeydale, Chapelton, Broomhill, Nether Edge, City Road and the City Centre. There is no current provision further south east than City Road. Familiarity with an area and proximity to family members and/or others for additional support or social inclusion can be important considerations for potential users of supported housing, so the lack of provision in this sector of the city does need to be addressed.

### **3.0 OUTCOME AND SUSTAINABILITY**

- 3.1 The scheme will bring a number of benefits. There is currently a shortage of supported housing provision for people who may need more than two years of support to be ready to live independently. This includes people who are using long-term hospital services (rehabilitation and recovery services), shorter-term acute hospital services, are inappropriately placed in residential care, or who are living with friends or family but want to gain more independence. There is currently a very limited number of

supported housing services in Sheffield specifically for people with mental health needs that have 24 hour staffing on site. This means that people ready to leave the settings mentioned above can feel that they are taking a larger step down in support than they are ready for; the proposed service will provide an important intermediate step in the journey towards independent living, which for some people can take several years. It should reduce the length of hospital stays, which can be detrimental to peoples' mental health if they are longer than necessary.

#### **4.0 MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN SHEFFIELD**

- 4.1 There are various community support services available for individuals with poor mental health provided by statutory and voluntary sector partnership schemes; however, there is a lack of capacity in this sector of supported housing. This can result in clients living in residential care which is unsuitable for their needs, and therefore limits the scope for reablement and a return to more independent living. The development of more suitable accommodation will enable support to be tailored to the assessed needs of individuals enabling them to learn life skills and improve self management of their mental ill health.
- 4.2 The housing related support services within the City are currently being reconfigured to ensure that the strategic needs of the City are met, this new development scheme would cater for individuals that with the right support for the right length of time would be able to live independently in the future. The Supported Accommodation Pathway will ensure a transparent and consistent route into and out of supported housing services that is fair for Sheffield people.

#### **5.0 PROPOSED SCHEME**

- 5.1 The scheme, refined in partnership with Council officers, would offer 20 self contained flats for clients. The well designed scheme would encourage positive outcomes for individuals and their families, relate well to the neighbourhood and meet the strategic needs of Sheffield. The development would consist of communal areas for life skills, staff facilities such as an office and sleep in space. There would also be outside space for activities and physical activities.

#### **6.0 PROPOSED SITE: SEVENAIRS ROAD GARAGE SITE, BEIGHTON**

- 6.1 The proposed site is currently a garage site managed by Sheffield Homes, on the fringe of the Beighton Flower estate. There were originally twenty-seven garages but fifteen have been demolished and none of the remaining twelve are tenanted.
- 6.2 The site is within easy walking distance of bus and tram routes as well as the comprehensive amenities of Crystal Peaks.
- 6.3 Vehicular access to the site is currently from Daisy Walk but a new

access would be created from Sevenairs Road if the scheme went ahead.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 During the formulation of the Local Investment Plan, the HCA made clear government's expectation that local authorities would maximise the use of their own resources to provide affordable housing. The grant rates available under the new Affordable Homes Programme for 2011/15 are significantly lower than for the previous period, and would not allow the provision of affordable housing without the addition of substantial internal subsidy from housing associations' own resources. Given the challenges inherent in delivering a viable programme under the new regime, this scheme will not move forward without the Council contributing the value of its land.
- 7.2 The Council is, like GNC, a Registered Provider of Social Housing and, in theory, could have bid for grant to deliver these schemes and thus retained the assets. However, unlike GNC, it is not possible for the Council to match HCA funding with its own borrowing against future rental income, since both sources of funding are considered public subsidy (schemes funded by 100% public subsidy are not considered by the HCA to be value for money). This means the schemes could not be self-financing for the Council, which would need to use its capital programme to fund them, diverting money from other priorities.
- 7.3 In light of the funding complications described in 7.2, the Council did not submit a bid for direct funding from the 2011/15 Affordable Homes Programme. (Instead, local partners have secured funding to deliver approximately 380 units in 2011/15). There is no prospect of grant funding being made available directly to the Council before 2015/16.
- 7.4 Disposing of the land to GNC for nil consideration would equate to a Council contribution to the scheme of £250,000, which was the estimated market value of the land as at December 2012.
- 7.5 The land is held by the Council for the purposes of Part II of the Housing Act 1985 and is accounted for within the Housing Revenue Account. No provision has been made within the Neighbourhoods Investment Programme for a capital receipt being generated from the sale of this asset, so there is no direct impact on the planned capital programme.

## **8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 Disposal of the site to GNC at nil consideration would constitute assistance in connection with privately let housing accommodation and would require consent under Section 25 Local Government Act 1988. When deciding whether to dispose of a site at a discount to its market value it must be considered whether the proposed disposal would be in the interests of the City and its inhabitants as a whole and council tax

payers and would be consistent with the effective, economic and efficient discharge of the Council's functions.

- 8.2 A general consent has been issued for financial assistance or gratuitous benefit consisting of disposal of land to registered providers of social housing for development as housing accommodation, including accommodation occupied by persons who, on account of mental illness or handicap, are receiving support from a local social services authority, or accommodation which is let by a registered provider as social housing. There is a limit on the aggregate value of assistance under this consent in any financial year. It is not thought that this limit will be exceeded as a result of this disposal but if necessary specific consent will be sought.

## **9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken which identifies the impact of the new project as positive with no disproportionate impact identified for any particular group. The new development will offer a supportive environment for people with mental health issues. Enabling them to tackle the challenges they face to better manage their mental health and gain the confidence to live independently.

## **10.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 10.1 Other sites were considered and GNC conducted a search for suitable private sector land in the south east of the city. Some sites were provisionally identified but they did not compare to Sevenairs Road in terms of affordability and access to amenities.

## **11.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

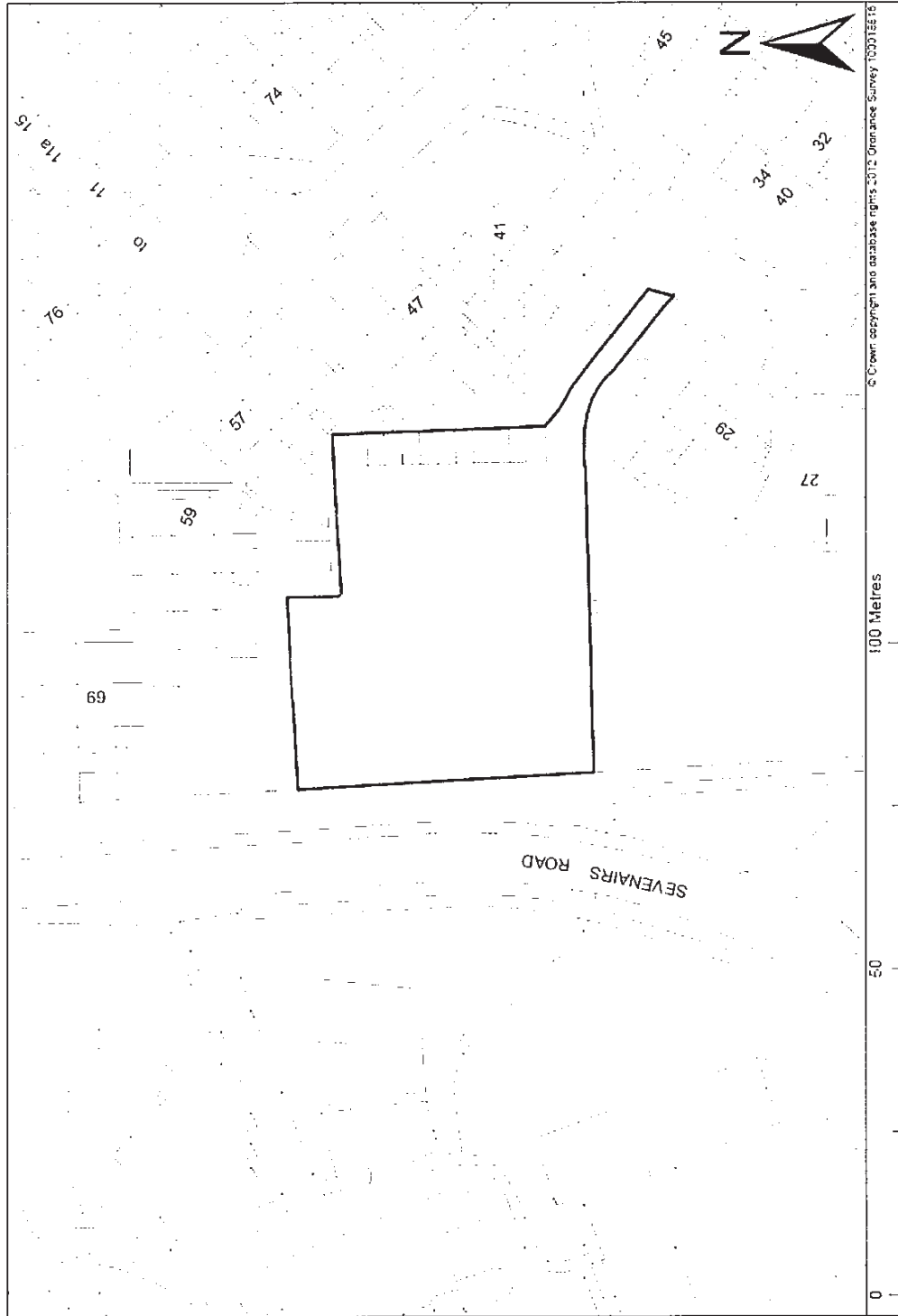
- 11.1 There is currently an under provision of specialist supported housing for people who experience mental ill health in Sheffield. The need has been identified for more housing with flexible support to meet the needs of a younger population with mental health problems who require short to medium term support to enable their recovery towards greater independence. This gap in provision has led to a number of people being inappropriately accommodated in expensive registered residential care. The proposed development would benefit clients across the city due to the increase in choice and dispersal of resources.
- 11.2 There is a particular gap in provision in the south east of the city where there are no suitable units of supported housing for this client group. Clients from this area have to relocate to central/north Sheffield for rehabilitation placements, which has removed some from their neighbourhood and family ties. The Sevenairs Road site represents the best available option within the south east of the city in terms of affordability and access to amenities.

## **12.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- R1 That the land now shown at Appendix A be declared surplus to the requirements of the City Council and subject to planning permission be disposed to Guinness Northern Counties at nil consideration for use as social housing.
  
- R2 That the Director of Property & Facilities Management be authorised to agree final terms for the disposal of the site to deliver the scheme set out in the report, including the variation of any boundaries as required, in consultation with the Director of Housing Enterprise and Regeneration and to instruct the Director of Legal Services to complete the necessary legal documentation.



Appendix A: land at Sevenairs Road, Beighton



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