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<b>Report to:</b> Cabinet	<b>Date of Meeting:</b> 28 February 2013
<b>Subject:</b> Identification and disposal of surplus Council owned sites for housing development	
<b>Report of:</b> Director Built Environment	<b>Wards Affected:</b> All
<b>Is this a Key Decision?</b> Yes	<b>Is it included in the Forward Plan?</b> Yes
<b>Exempt/Confidential</b>	No

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### **Purpose/Summary**

To inform Cabinet of a number of surplus Council owned sites that may in principle be suitable for housing development (subject to planning permission), and to seek Cabinet endorsement to dispose of the identified sites in the short term. These sites can then be added to the Council's 5 year supply at the appropriate times. This resolution does not formally 'designate' these sites for housing development, any formal re-designation of land/ sites can only be done as part of the Local Plan.

### **Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

- (1) Agree that the identified 'less constrained' sites in Table 1 below (that are not currently subject to disposal proceedings) are in principle suitable locations for housing (subject to planning permission), and will be disposed of for housing development within two years.
- (2) Agree that the 'former Z Blocks' sites in Netherton are in principle suitable locations for housing (subject to planning permission) and will be disposed of for housing development within the next three years
- (3) Agree that the 'constrained sites' identified in Table 1 are in principle suitable locations for housing development (subject to planning permission), and that these sites should be progressed for development when circumstances allow. At that point in time, these sites may be brought into the Council's '5 year supply'.
- (4) Note the planning policy context to the identification these sites, and in particular the requirement to identify a '5 year supply' of deliverable housing sites. The sites listed in the report will be included in the Council's 5 year supply at the appropriate times.

**How does the decision contribute to the Council's Corporate Objectives?**

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community		✓	
2	Jobs and Prosperity		✓	
3	Environmental Sustainability	✓		
4	Health and Well-Being		✓	
5	Children and Young People		✓	
6	Creating Safe Communities		✓	
7	Creating Inclusive Communities		✓	
8	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening Local Democracy		✓	

**Reasons for the Recommendation:**

To seek cabinet approval to dispose of surplus Council-owned sites for housing development.

**What will it cost and how will it be financed?**

**(A) Revenue Costs**

None

**(B) Capital Costs**

None

**Implications:**

The following implications of this proposal have been considered and where there are specific implications, these are set out below:

<b>Legal</b>	
<b>Human Resources</b> None	
<b>Equality</b>	
1. No Equality Implication	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. Equality Implications identified and mitigated	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Equality Implication identified and risk remains	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Impact on Service Delivery:**

None

**What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?**

The Head of Corporate Finance & ICT has been consulted and has no comments on the report.

The Head of Corporate Legal Services have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

**Are there any other options available for consideration?**

No.

**Implementation Date for the Decision**

Following the call-in period after Cabinet on 28<sup>th</sup> February.

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**Background Papers:**

None

# Identification and disposal of Council owned sites for housing development

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report identifies a series of surplus Council owned sites that may be suitable for housing development. Many of these could be brought forward for development to help contribute to Sefton's housing land requirement.
- 1.2 The report separates the sites into two categories; less constrained sites, and constrained sites (as set out in table 1 below). The report recommends that the 'less constrained' sites are disposed of for housing development in the short term and that those identified in the 'constrained sites' section are brought forward when circumstances allow.

## 2. Planning Policy Context

- 2.1 The identification of additional housing sites is important in the context of the 'National Planning Policy Framework' (the Framework), which was published by the Government in March 2012. This provides national-level guidance, to which all local planning decisions should conform.
- 2.2 The Framework strengthens the long-standing requirement for local authorities to demonstrate a rolling '5 year supply' of housing land. Where a 5 year supply of land cannot be demonstrated, a Local Authority's housing policies are considered "out of date", triggering a "presumption in favour of sustainable development".
- 2.3 To qualify for inclusion in the Council's 5-year supply sites have to meet strict criteria and be; "suitable" for housing, "available" for development now, and be realistically "achievable" within 5 years.

## 3. Sefton's 5-year supply

- 3.1 Currently, Sefton cannot demonstrate a '5 year supply' against these criteria. In order to achieve a 5 year supply, the Council would need to identify enough land to accommodate around another 1,000 homes, all of which would need to be delivered in the 5-year period. To put this in perspective, a total of 668 houses are approved at Town Lane, Kew (currently the largest housing site in Sefton), but only a proportion of these will be built in the relevant 5 year period.
- 3.2 Sefton's Local Plan is currently being progressed which will set out a long term spatial strategy for the Borough – including the identification of suitable sites to accommodate the Government's policy requirements of meeting the Borough's housing needs. As a starting point it is necessary to ensure that we make the best use of land in Sefton's urban areas. These sites contribute to that objective.

### Ensuring sites meet the 5-year supply criteria

- 3.3 The 5-year supply tests - “suitable”, “available”, and “achievable” - are strictly applied by the Planning Inspectorate. At planning appeals elsewhere, Council-owned sites have been struck out of the 5 year supply where there is no formal indication that the site will be brought forward for development in the short-term.
- 3.4 This report has been prepared in order to ensure that appropriate surplus Council-owned sites are able to meet these criteria. If Cabinet are minded to support the recommendations set out above, the identified relevant sites would be brought into our identified ‘5 year supply’. Officers will continue to review the ‘constrained sites’ and where appropriate it may be possible to also add these into the 5 year supply.

## **4. The identified sites**

- 4.1 The table below sets out the surplus Council owned sites that could be brought forward for housing development. They have been grouped into broad categories, as follows:
1. **Less constrained sites** are those that could be progressed for disposal in the short term and brought into our 5-year supply. Three of these sites are already under offer to developers / Housing Associations and are included for information only.
  2. **Constrained sites** that are subject to development constraints or are not available in the short-term. These will meet the strict 5-year supply criteria when the constraints have been addressed.

### ‘Z Blocks’ site, Netherton

- 4.2 In addition to the sites listed below, the Council also own the former Z Blocks sites in Netherton. These three sites could potentially accommodate 100 houses. Given their size and prominence, these sites are subject to a separate recommendation.

### Constrained sites

- 4.3 We are actively exploring whether any of the ‘constrained sites’ could be brought forward for development earlier, or whether there is any interest from local Housing Associations.

**Table 1 – Surplus Council owned sites**

<b>Less Constrained Sites</b>		<b>Constrained Sites</b>	
<b>Site</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Units</b>
Land and Premises at Sterrix Lane, Netherton	50	Peoples Site, Bootle	250
Land adjacent to Barton's Close, Crossens, Southport	36	Land at Pendle Drive (inc Brook Lea Centre), Netherton	52
Kirwan House/139 Marshside Rd, Southport*	20	Ruthven Road TC / Former Beach Road School, Seaforth	27
Toad Hall, Promenade, Ainsdale	20	Land west of the railway line, Coffee House Bridge, Bootle	27
Land at Hillary Drive, Crosby	12	Former Rawson Road School, Seaforth	20
Ellesmere House, Crosby Road North*	11	Former Thomas Gray School, Bootle	20
Hornby Centre, Poulson Drive, Netherton	11	Gray Street Training Centre, Bootle	18
Fmr Sefton Resource Centre, Kilnyard Road, Crosby	10	Car park adjacent to 46 Trinity Road, Bootle	12
Former Runnells Lane Community Centre, Crosby*	6	Former Seaforth Social Club	9
124-126 Manchester Road, Southport	6	2-4 Trinity Road and adjacent car park, Bootle	7
118 Rawson Road, Seaforth	6	Land at Tattersall Road, Seaforth	4
Rear of 13–17 Larchfield Rd, Crosby	3		
Former garage court, Boyer Ave, Maghull	5		
<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>196</b>		<b>446</b>

\* sites currently under offer to developers / Housing Associations

NB the numbers of units stated are indicative only

## **5 Conclusion**

A resolution to dispose of surplus sites is required in order that these can be then included in the Council's 5 year housing supply. These sites are within the urban areas of the Borough and will help to ensure, as far as possible, that development opportunities are maximised on brownfield sites within existing built up areas. These additional sites will be added to the Council's 5 year supply – which will continue to be monitored and opportunities identified for further sites to be included when constraints are addressed.