

TITLE OF REPORT: Surplus Declaration – Garages at Acomb Court, Harlow Green

REPORT OF: Colin Huntington, Strategic Director, Housing, Environment and Healthy Communities

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval to (i) the property listed below being declared surplus to the Council's requirements and (ii) the future proposal for the property after being declared surplus.
 - Garages at Acomb Court, Harlow Green

Background

2. The property, which is shown edged black on the plan provided, is no longer required by the Council for service delivery for the reasons set out in the Appendix.

Proposal

3. It is proposed that the property shown edged black on the attached plan be declared surplus to the Council's requirements, demolished and the land left be marked out to provide 18 parking spaces for residents, including 3 disabled parking bays.

Recommendations

4. It is recommended that Cabinet approves that the garages at Acomb Court, Harlow Green be declared surplus to the Council's requirements to be then demolished and the land left be marked out to provide 18 parking spaces for residents, including 3 disabled parking bays.

For the following reasons:

To manage resources and rationalise the Council's assets in line with the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan.

Policy Context

1. The proposed surplus declaration supports the overall vision for Making Gateshead a Place where People Thrive. In particular, investing in our economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth
2. The proposed declaration will also accord with the provisions of the update of the Corporate Asset Strategy and Management Plan 2015 – 2020. In particular, the rationalisation of the Councils estate to reduce costs.

Background

3. Last year a structural survey of the retaining wall opposite the garages at Acomb Court was carried out and it was found to have partially collapsed and in danger of collapsing further. The remedial action required is to construct a supporting wall under part of the existing car parking spaces opposite the garages. This will however reduce the number of car parking spaces from 12 to 4 as part of the space will be used for bin storage.
4. As only 7 of the 20 garages provided are occupied, consideration has been given to demolition of the garages to provide additional car parking spaces for residents as part of the scheme. All 7 of the garage occupants have agreed to be relocated to alternative garage provision, and demolition would enable 18 further car parking spaces to be created for residents (including 3 disabled parking bays).
5. All of the land in question is held for housing purposes and demolition and use of the area to provide additional car parking spaces is considered the most appropriate course of action.
6. The cost of demolition, including resurfacing and marking out works is estimated to be £39,180 and suitable budgetary provision exists within the HRA Estate Improvement budget.

Consultation

7. In preparing this report consultations have taken place with the Leader and Deputy Leader, and the Cabinet Member for Housing. The Ward Councillors for Chowdene have also been consulted.

Alternative Options

8. The option of retaining the garages has been discounted as there is a need for replacement car parking spaces resulting from the need to reinforce the retaining wall opposite.

Implications of Recommended Option

9. Resources:

a) **Financial Implications** - The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that the cost of demolition will be met from the Housing Revenue Capital Programme 2023/24.

b) **Human Resources Implications** - There are no direct staffing implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

c) **Property Implications** – The future demolition of the garages will result in a reduction in the Council's overall property portfolio thus reducing operational costs.

10. **Risk Management Implication** - The future demolition of the garages will remove opportunities for vandalism to vulnerable properties.

11. **Equality and Diversity** - There are no implications arising from this recommendation.

12. **Crime and Disorder Implications** - The future demolition of the garages will remove opportunities for crime and disorder, especially vandalism and theft.

13. **Health Implications** - There are no implications arising from this recommendation.

14. **Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications** - The future demolition of the garages will reduce the level of the Council's operational costs, such as repairs and maintenance, which will subsequently result in a reduction in the Council's carbon footprint.

15. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no implications arising from this recommendation.

16. **Ward Implications** – Chowdene.

17. **Background Information** – None