



Report for:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	23rd November 2021
Part:	I
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Appointment of Principal Contractor for “Move On” Accommodation at Aragon Close, Hemel Hempstead
Contact:	<p>Cllr Margaret Griffiths, Portfolio Holder for Housing</p> <p>Mark Gaynor, Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration Fiona Williamson, Assistant Director Housing</p> <p>Nigel Howcutt, Assistant Director Finance and Resources</p> <p>David Barrett, Housing Development Group Manager</p> <p>Natasha Beresford, Strategic Housing Group Manager</p> <p>Farida Hussain, Group Manager (Legal and Corporate Services), Legal Governance Management</p> <p>Andrew Linden, Team Leader, Commissioning, Procurement & Compliance</p>
Purpose of report:	<p>To be read in conjunction with Part II.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To seek approval to appoint a Principal Contractor to supply and construct modular “Move On” accommodation homes at Aragon Close, Hemel Hempstead via a direct award through the Catalyst Housing Framework. 2. To provide delegated authority to the Council’s Assistant Director (Corporate and Contracted Services) to execute and complete all legal agreements ancillary to the JCT Minor Works Contract and/or reasonably required to complete the Project, including (but not limited to): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. all professional appointments; b. collateral warranties; and c. Agreements under <p style="text-align: center;">S.38, & S.278, of the Highways Act 1980; S.247, Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990; S.104 of the Water Industry Act 1991, and</p>

	S.50 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
Recommendations:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the contract to design, supply and install 8 No modular “Move On” accommodation homes and associated works for the Aragon Close project in Hemel Hempstead be awarded to Hill Partnerships Ltd via a direct award through the Catalyst Housing Framework. 2. That delegated authority be approved to the Council’s Assistant Director (Corporate and Contracted Services) to execute and complete all legal agreements ancillary to the JCT Minor Works Contract 2016 and/or reasonably required to complete the Project, including (but not limited to): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. all professional appointments; b. collateral warranties; and c. Agreements under S.38, & S.278, of the Highways Act 1980; S.247, Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990; S.104 of the Water Industry Act 1991, and S.50 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.
Period for post policy/project review	<p>The project is expected to be completed in June 2022. There will then be a 12-month defect liability period after practical completion.</p> <p>A 2-year review period is therefore recommended for this project.</p>
Corporate Objectives:	Delivery of Housing to provide “Move on” accommodation under the Rough Sleepers Accommodation Programme (RSAP)
Implications:	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p>The project, following contract award, will be subject to close financial monitoring with any variances agreed formally through a change control process.</p> <p>The scheme has received grant funding from Home England.</p> <p><u>Value for Money</u></p> <p>The Council’s Employers Agent has reviewed the project costs and provided a statement confirming that they represent value for money for the Council.</p>
‘Value For Money Implications’	
Risk Implications	A risk assessment is completed for this project and reviewed on a monthly basis.
Community Impact Assessment	A Community Impact assessment is not required for this project. The units that are to be delivered at Aragon Close are

	<p>to be delivered under the RSAP. These self-contained units will provide much needed move on accommodation for the Council and meet the need that has been identified for housing rough sleepers.</p> <p>There is still a high and ongoing demand for accommodation through the homelessness route and it is not anticipated that this will abate in the short to medium term.</p>
<p>Health And Safety Implications</p>	<p>This project has in place a Principal Designer and Construction Design and Management Regulations (CDM) Advisor. Contractors are required to comply with the Council's Health and Safety (H&S) policy.</p> <p>Health & Safety is identified as a key risk of the Housing Service and is reported to the Council's Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. To ensure compliance monthly site checks carried out on behalf of DBC as the client to ensure adherence to H&S procedures.</p>
<p>Deputy Monitoring Officer/S.151 Officer Comments</p>	<p>Deputy Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>The proposed contract award follows a compliant tender process which demonstrates that the Council is receiving value for money for the contract.</p> <p>Deputy S.151 Officer</p> <p>A direct contract award is proposed through the Catalyst Housing Framework. Homes England funding has been secured to support a proportion of the costs of the Aragon Close development. This funding is time limited and needs to be spent by the end of March 2022. Failure to do so may increase the net cost to the Council of this development. A supplementary budget request for the costs of the development has been made to Cabinet as part of the Q2 Financial Monitoring report. The proportion of costs not funded by grant would be met from other sources of capital financing available to the Council, including capital receipts.</p>
<p>Consultees: (including summary feedback from Scrutiny where appropriate)</p>	<p>Cllr Margaret Griffiths, Portfolio Holder for Housing</p> <p>Mark Gaynor, Corporate Director Housing and Regeneration</p> <p>Fiona Williamson, Assistant Director Housing</p> <p>Nigel Howcutt, Assistant Director Finance and Resources</p> <p>David Barrett, Group Manager, Housing Development</p> <p>Natasha Beresford, Strategic Housing Group Manager</p> <p>Farida Hussain, Group Manager (Legal and Corporate</p>

	<p>Services), Legal Governance Management</p> <p>Andrew Linden, Team Leader, Commissioning, Procurement & Compliance</p>
Background papers:	<p>Appendix 1 - Proposed Site Plan</p> <p>Appendix 2 - Manufacturers Brochure</p>
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	<p>HRA - Housing Revenue Account</p> <p>JCT - Joint Contract Tribunal</p> <p>CDM - Construction Design and Management Regulations</p> <p>H&S - Health and Safety</p> <p>RSAP - Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme</p>

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 There is a high demand for suitable “Move On” accommodation for rough sleepers that the Council has provided temporary accommodation to under the ‘everyone in’ programme in the Borough. The Aragon Close garage site has been identified as a suitable site location to demolish the existing garages and install modular type homes that are designed specifically for this type of “Move On” accommodation.
- 1.2 The Council has secured grant funding from Homes England under the Rough Sleeping Accommodation Programme (RSAP) to support this project on the understanding that the funding is drawn down before the end of this financial year.
- 1.3 The aim of this report is to seek approval to enter into contract with Hill Group Ltd to design, supply and install 8 No modular homes, along with undertaking associated works, via a direct award through the Catalyst Housing Framework.
- 1.4 The project will be subject to achieving a planning approval. A planning application has been submitted. In order to maintain programme, this approval is being sought in advance of any planning outcome so that, in the event of an approval, the project can progress within the required timescales and realise the funding opportunity.

2. Background

- 2.1 Homelessness across many of the UK’s major cities and towns is a clear and obvious problem. Despite the efforts of many, the number of people who do not have a safe and secure place to live is increasing. As a consequence, more people are being forced to seek temporary accommodation, assistance from homeless shelters or worse, including living on the street. The recent Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated this critical problem.
- 2.2 While the homelessness crisis has been growing over a number of years, it has been brought sharply into the spotlight by the Covid-19 pandemic, and the need for Local Authorities to immediately house people sleeping on the streets as part of the call for ‘Everyone In’.
- 2.3 Dacorum’s most recent street count was validated with 6 rough sleepers. Currently there are 149 households in temporary accommodation, of which 78 are single persons and an additional 44 individuals in hostel accommodation. Of these clients, 38 were accommodated under the ‘Everyone in’ directive and remain in need of suitable move on accommodation to avoid a return to homelessness or rough sleeping. There is currently 1 household in Bed & Breakfast accommodation.
- 2.4 At the current time, The Council has a total of 30 units of move on accommodation for single homeless clients with low-high support needs. Of these, 5 units were recently commissioned via Hightown Housing Association following successful grant funding in 2020/21 and the remaining 25 units are DENS owned “Move On” units. Ongoing efforts are underway via Multi- Disciplinary Team arrangements to bring the

remaining rough sleeper cohort into accommodation. However, and this aside, the above figures provide ongoing evidenced need for additional “Move On” within the single homeless pathway to enable movement through temporary accommodation and The Elms Hostel.

- 2.5 The need for affordable homes within Dacorum is greater than ever, and the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has placed renewed emphasis on the prevention of homelessness by introducing new statutory duties for Local Authorities. The new duties mean the Council must be proactive in preventing homelessness by acting sooner and developing a more personalised approach to addressing housing concerns. The Council has been successful in obtaining funding from the Government’s RSAP, which is aimed at providing “Move On” accommodation for former Rough Sleepers.

3. Proposed Site – Aragon Close

- 3.1 The Site extends to approximately 0.08 hectares (0.20 acres). It currently comprises 34 No garages, which would be demolished to accommodate these new homes.
- 3.2 The Site is broadly bounded by residential dwellings, and associated back gardens with existing trees, fronting onto Parr Crescent to the north; a grass verge with existing trees, with Shenley Road and residential dwellings beyond, to the east; blocks of flats, with associated car parking, fronting onto Shenley Road and Redbourn Road to the south; and an existing substation, and residential dwellings, and associated back gardens, fronting on Aragon Close, to the west. The predominant land use in the surrounding area is residential, with building heights at predominantly 2-storeys, with some 3-storeys to the south.
- 3.3 The Site is located in reasonable proximity to public transport nodes, with bus stops at Shenley Road to the north. A number of existing shops and facilities, including Sainsbury’s and medical centres, are located within walking distance to the north.

4. Modular Homes

- 4.1 It is proposed to install a modular unit called SoloHaus. Detailed designs have been prepared and a total of 8 No modular homes are proposed in a landscaped setting. Bicycle storage, together with the requisite energy infrastructure along with amenity space for residents will be provided. The homes are to be provided in linear form, with a communal grassed area to the south and east. A small, paved area is to be provided in front of each of the homes to provide a breakout space. Additional landscaping is proposed to ensure an attractive and legible development. The site is to be accessed through the existing car park to the south. A new pedestrian connection to Shenley Road is proposed.
- 4.2 SoloHaus is an innovative, sustainable, efficient and safe home for former Rough Sleepers. It will provide second stage transitional move on accommodation from the Elms Hostel, which is currently managed by DENS, the Hertfordshire County Council commissioned Housing Related Support Service. The modular homes will provide secure accommodation for a period of up to 2-years to allow residents to re-establish stability in

their lives, and provide them with an address, prior to moving onto more permanent general use housing.

- 4.3 The modular homes have an internal area of 24 sq. m and are a single storey in height. The design has been developed by Hill Group Ltd in close collaboration with homeless charities and specialist advisors. Each is specifically designed for single occupation and comprises a sleeping area, kitchen and living room, together with a generous shower and WC. The homes are fitted with a fridge / freezer, washing machine and other essential items such as cutlery, plates, and bed linen. The modular homes have been designed to accord with Part M4(2) of Building Regulations and have been approved by Building Control.
- 4.4 Each home is made from high quality materials, including aluminium windows and doors. The modules incorporate sustainable technology such as mechanical ventilation with heat recovery. Communal Air Source Heat Pumps provide energy to the new homes. Each unit provides a usable, light, and comfortable living space, but in a more compact form.
- 4.5 Cycle parking is proposed in the form of 4 No Sheffield Stands. Waste storage is to be provided for each modular home, with the existing communal store located to the west of the entrance of the Site being utilised. 1no car parking space is proposed given the nature of the residents and the development, although there are areas for informal parking (i.e. for use by visitors) in the surrounding area.
- 4.6 The scheme will be landscaped with a planting strategy that aims to provide seasonal colour and structure at ground level, whilst also being low maintenance. Planting has been chosen for its attractive scent, fruit and flowers. A lawn is proposed, bordered by a wildflower meadow and grassland, which will provide seasonal colour and support a number of ecological species. A number of trees are proposed to act as both a focal point and also provide colour. The hard landscaping has been designed to be robust and of a quality appropriate to both the site and proposed development. Key hard materials include, granite flag paving; block paving; gravel; and timber fencing.
- 4.7 A small, paved area is to be provided in front of each of the homes. An area of open space is also proposed in front of the modules, and to the east of the development. Supplemental planting is also to be provided. The development therefore makes good use of what is a compact site, providing a pleasant and private area to live. The layout of the development is based on the principle of a 'mini neighbourhood' with sufficient space provided to residents, whilst also providing a sense of connection and support.

5. Procurement Route

- 5.1 The Council is able to award a contract to one of the providers on the Catalyst Housing framework agreement under a direct award justification.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 The proposed development will provide much needed accommodation for some of the Borough's most vulnerable homeless people. It will provide a safe space for individuals who simply do not have a place to call home.
- 6.2 The proposed development will provide a well-designed and safe place to live within a soft landscaped area. Occupiers will also be provided with a designated support structure to assist with their transition to more permanent forms of accommodation.
- 6.3 There are very clear and tangible benefits offered by the proposed development and we conclude Hills Group Ltd should be appointed to deliver the project subject to obtaining a planning approval.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 To award the JCT Minor Works Contract to supply and install 8 No modular units at Aragon Close, Hemel Hempstead to Hill Group Ltd via a direct award through the Catalyst Housing framework.
- 7.2 To approve delegated authority to the Council's Assistant Director (Corporate and Contracted Services) to execute and complete all legal agreements ancillary to the JCT Minor Works Contract and/or reasonably required to complete the Project, including (but not limited to):
 - a. all professional appointments;
 - b. collateral warranties; and
 - c. Agreements under S.38, & S.278, of the Highways Act 1980; S.247, Part III of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990; S.104 of the Water Industry Act 1991, and S.50 of the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991.