

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Toutley East Development: Strategic Masterplan And Return On Investment</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	The Executive on Thursday, 28 July 2022
<b>WARD</b>	Emmbrook;
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers
<b>LEAD MEMBER</b>	Clive Jones (Business & Economic Development) and Imogen Shepherd-Dubey (Finance)

## **PURPOSE OF REPORT (INC STRATEGIC OUTCOMES)**

This report provides an update on the Toutley East Development, namely the delivery of a new dementia care home, housing development and supporting infrastructure. The delivery of a new dementia care home in Wokingham will meet current and future care need.

The report includes the strategic masterplan for the site and the financial business case for the development. Executive is asked to note the full masterplan for the site and the financial business case for the project's delivery. Executive is also asked to note the options for the delivery mechanisms for the residential development.

The delivery model, including procurement mechanisms, for the care home and supporting infrastructure are subject to separate reports to this Executive.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Executive:

- 1) Notes this update on the delivery of the Toutley East development;
- 2) Notes the proposed strategic masterplan and land uses for the site, including a new 68-bed dementia care home and up to 130 residential units (on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022 Planning Committee resolved to grant outline planning consent for the strategic masterplan);
- 3) Notes the financial business case (Return on Investment) for the Toutley East development, including how the proposed land uses financially support each other and the net revenue benefit of £337,000 per annum rising to £700,000 per annum over an approximate 4 year time period;
- 4) Notes the delivery options for the residential development identified at this stage, which will be subject to a future business case being approved by Executive and Council;
- 5) Delegates authority to the Director of Assets and Resources, in consultation with the Executive Member for Finance, the Executive Member for Business and Economic Development and the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services, to deliver the strategic masterplan in line with the approved financial business case

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Toutley East site is located in north Wokingham, within the Emmbrook Ward. The Local Plan Update (Jan 2020) proposes the site be allocated for residential development. A comprehensive masterplan for the site has been developed, which includes a new 68-bed dementia care home, residential development (up to 130 units) and supporting infrastructure.

Adult Services is currently commissioning care within the private sector, which reduces its ability to directly influence both cost and quality. Until a new local authority owned and run care home is opened in the Borough, operated by Optalis Ltd., the Council will incur increasing revenue spend pressures to fund placements for residents with dementia care needs in private care homes. The sooner the facility is delivered, the sooner savings can be realised by accommodating the need of residents with dementia care needs within the Council's own facilities rather than in private care homes. The need to expedite delivery is also exacerbated by forthcoming reforms with Adult Social Care and increased costs within the market.

A planning application for the development has been submitted (LPA ref. 211777). On 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022 Planning Committee resolved to grant outline planning consent for the strategic masterplan.

Subject to the issuing of planning consent by the Local Planning Authority, it is anticipated that work on the site will start next year. Infrastructure works (including highways access, drainage, noise bund) will be constructed during 2023. Construction of the care home will commence at the later end of 2023 with opening scheduled for early 2025.

The residential development could be constructed by spring/summer 2026. The Council has options for how the residential development could be delivered, including through a Joint Venture model or through a disposal of the land to a private housebuilder. A separate procurement business case will be brought to Executive and Council for consideration of these options at a later date.

The construction of the care home and supporting infrastructure is estimated to cost £17.5M. The budget for the dementia care home and supporting infrastructure is approved within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. The current funding for the project will be from a combination of capital receipts (from residential land value) and borrowing.

For the purposes of identifying the Return on Investment to WBC of the whole Toutley East development a cashflow model has been developed. Utilising the income generated through the sale of residential land at Toutley East and Suffolk Lodge to pay back the Council's borrowing, the residual debt of delivering the care home and supporting infrastructure is circa £5.7million in financial year 2024/45. Income generated by the care home will be used to pay service this debt.

The cost avoidance generated by a new Council-run care home is, based on today's prices, £337,000 per annum, and is likely to rise significantly in the short term (approximately 4 years) to £700,000 per annum.

Based on today's prices, the cashflow model demonstrates a positive return within the expected 60-year life of the care home building, demonstrating a positive payback in

year 29 (2049). If values increase as expected and the increased surplus is used to pay down the debt, the payback period would be considerably shorter. Once borrowing is fully repaid the whole surplus value will be available to support the Council.

The reforms within Adults Social Care will increase the level of potential level of savings achieved from this scheme. The primary aim of the charging reforms is to redistribute the financial responsibility for paying for an individual's care between the individual and the local authority. At its simplest, the cost to the individual will reduce, and the cost to the local authority will increase. Self-funders in Wokingham currently offset costs charged to the local authority by circa 40%.

The financial business case relies on the income from the residential land value to fund part of the care home and infrastructure construction costs. The figures used for the Return on Investment, based on existing care home costs, indicate that on its own the care home would not be able to service the financing costs (interest and debt repayment) for the construction of the facility in isolation. Therefore the value generated from residential development on this site is critical to the Council's ability to fund the construction of a new care home.

The delivery model, including procurement mechanisms, for the care home and supporting infrastructure are subject to separate reports to this Executive.

## BACKGROUND

The Toutley East site is located in north Wokingham, within the Emmbrook Ward. The site is owned by Wokingham Borough Council.



Figure 1: The Site

The site is currently open grass land but sits within the Wokingham settlement boundary and is part of the North Wokingham Strategic Development Location (SDL). The site has been allocated for employment development since the adoption of the Core Strategy in 2010. Assessments over the previous three years have identified that the site is no longer suitable and/or viable to provide employment development and that residential development is the most commercially viable alternative land use option for the site. In light of this, the Local Plan Update is proposing a change to the land use designation from employment to residential. A site-specific allocation for 100 dwellings was included within the published Draft Local Plan Update (Jan 2020). Given the location with good access to local facilities the area is considered an extremely sustainable location for new development.

## BUSINESS CASE

### Strategic Masterplan

The Council has developed a comprehensive strategic masterplan for the Toutley East site (See Figure 2). The key elements of the masterplan include:

- Up to 130 dwellings, including a minimum provision of 35% affordable housing on site
- A [up to] 70 bed care home, located in the northeastern corner of the site
- Vehicular access via a priority junction from Twyford Road
- A pedestrian and cycle bridge across the Ashridge Stream to the south, linking into the local centre of the Matthews Green development
- An emergency access/egress via Toutley Depot site
- New Open Space and Landscaping

- Flood attenuation zone located to the south of the site
- A noise Barrier to the north and west of the development, to protect future residents from noise associated with the A329(M) and the adjacent depot respectively.

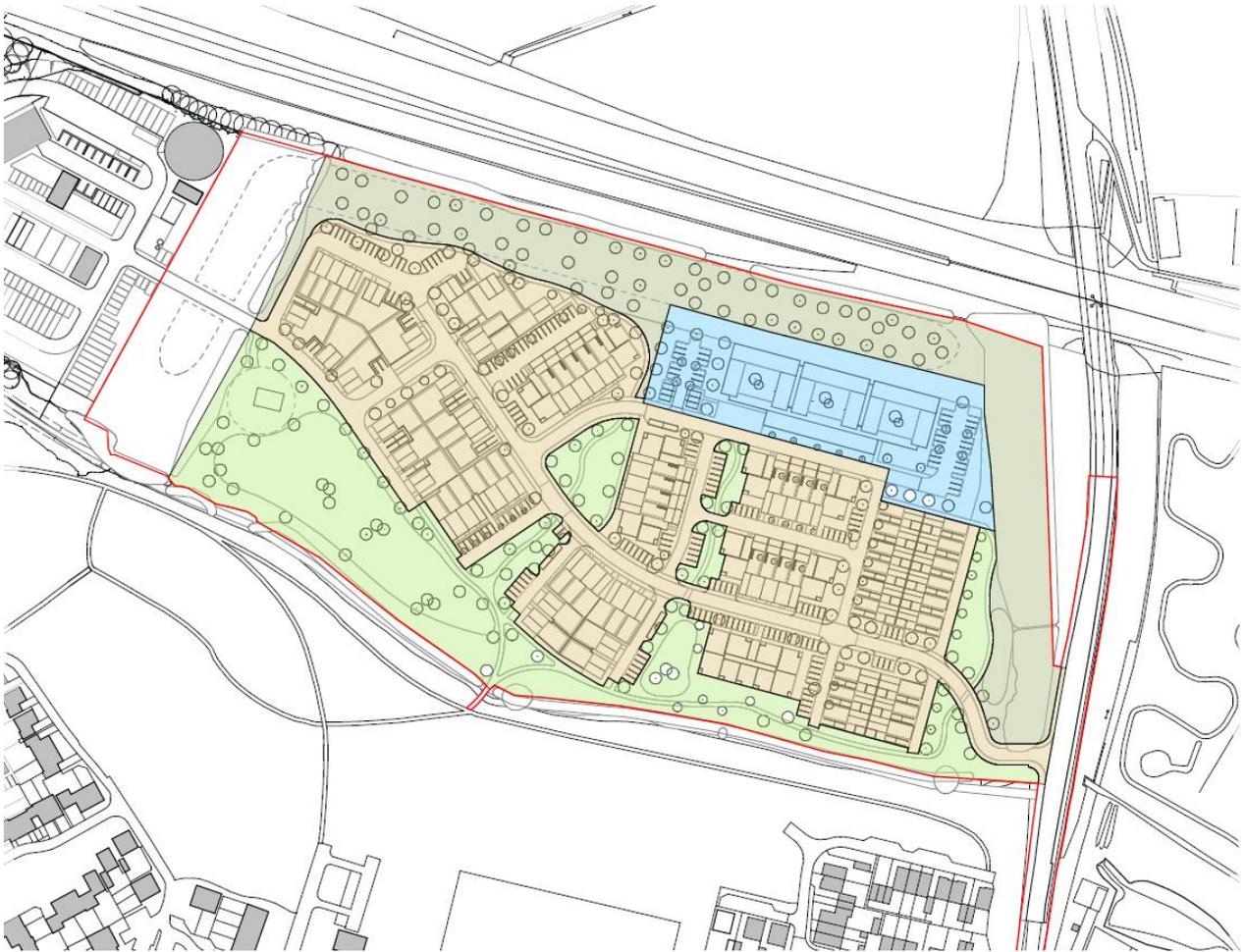


Figure 2: Strategic Masterplan

An outline planning application for the development has been submitted (LPA ref. 211777) and on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2022 Planning Committee resolved to grant outline planning consent for the strategic masterplan. Once the principle of development is established through the grant of outline consent, the detailed design of layout, appearance, landscaping and scale will need to be worked up in detail and follow in subsequent Reserved Matters planning applications.

#### *The need for a new dementia care home*

The Care Act 2014 requires the Council to fund care for older people who have an identified care need, but who lack the resources to fund this themselves and to “actively promote wellbeing and independence”. To meet part of this future need the Council has identified the need to deliver a new Dementia Care home for Wokingham. The business case for the delivery of a new Dementia Care Home for Wokingham funded and managed by the Council (via Optalis Ltd) has three primary drivers:

- The unsuitability and high cost of the existing Suffolk Lodge Care Home;
- The rising number of older people with higher levels of dementia; and

- Increasing costs of alternative residential and nursing care provision.

The care home proposed is intended to replace the existing Suffolk Lodge care home with a larger (68-bed), more flexible, purpose designed care home that can also offer dementia nursing care. The new home is intended to support personalised care, to enable residents to live healthy lives through good design (to promote walking as exercise and high standards of infection control), provide better value than current care arrangements and provide an enhanced in-borough service provision.

The Care Home project is intended to meet objectives established in both the Council's Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan.

The Community Vision establishes the need for "safe, strong communities", which requires the Council to "protect and safeguard our children, young and vulnerable people" and to "offer quality care and support, at the right time, to prevent the need for long term care". The new home will provide a safe environment for older residents with dementia. Apart from being a base for long term care, the new homes will provide hospital discharge services, to enable older residents to return to their homes after period of hospitalisation.

Until a new local authority owned and run care home is opened in the Borough, the Council will incur increasing revenue spend pressures to fund placements for residents with dementia care needs in private care homes. The sooner the facility is delivered, the sooner savings can be realised by accommodating the need of residents with dementia care needs within WBC's own facilities rather than in private care homes. The need to expedite delivery is also exacerbated by the risks envisaged with the projected increase in costs of commissioning beds and the national social care reforms.

The Council currently benefits from commissioned bed costs that are markedly below the level that private individuals (self-funders) can secure. The charge to the Council is based on marginal cost pricing and makes commercial sense to home operators, as the combination of higher individual charges and lower council charges provides a sustainable level of income. In the medium to long term however there are projected provision and demographic trends that point towards the cost per bed of alternative provision to the Council increasing.

In addition, the new health and social care reforms represent a significant risk to the Council's resources. It is currently the case that people who privately pay for their own care will often be offsetting the commissioned care of those people the Local Authority pays for. The government's reforms however will allow residents paying for their own care to access the rates paid by the local authority. The increased accessibility and fairness within the market is to be welcomed, but these reforms may well act to destabilise the market and increase the rate paid by the local authority. Very early estimates suggest that these reforms may fundamentally increase demand and rates paid within the sector. It is envisaged that a Council-owned care home will help to mitigate against this cost avoidance.

There are also a number of non-monetary additional benefits that the new care home would bring the Council. These include:

- Bespoke provision for individuals who the Council could not otherwise place in or near the borough. The Council has considerable difficulty placing individuals with poor mental health and bariatric individuals. These placements are normally

some distance from the borough and so make it more difficult for local family and friends to maintain contact.

- Close partnership working between social workers, the social care provider (Optalis Ltd.), families and residents to promote improved welfare for residents. Currently Wokingham placements are made across a number of homes run by a variety of private and charitable bodies. Having an increased number of residents placed in a setting run by Optalis Ltd, which works in close partnership with the Council's social work team can reasonably be expected to ensure care arrangements that better reflect the needs of individual residents.
- A hedge against rising private and third sector care home bed costs. Prior to the Covid pandemic the average costs of commissioned in beds were rising at a rate above the background rate of inflation. It is likely this trend will resume, once care homes are seen as safe places to live. Given the local demographic trends (rising numbers of people 85+ expected to need care home places) and a likely lag between need arising and new provision opening, providers will be able to sustain high and increasing fee levels. The Council, through Optalis, can ensure that charges relate to actual costs, and can focus provision on identified needs in a cost-efficient manner.
- The ability to tailor care home provision to meet the needs of residents, within Council budgets. The intention of the design is to minimise care costs by ensuring efficient operation, focusing on care essentials.
- To act as a local market exemplar, showing how high-quality care can be provided within constrained resources.
- To give insight into care home funding and staffing issues to better inform external commissioning. Care homes are necessarily secretive about their financial arrangements (few publish their fees on their websites, none publish their operating costs or annual income).

The Care home delivery is proposed to replace the Council's existing facility at Suffolk Lodge in Wokingham Town Centre. Suffolk Lodge has 37 beds and currently provides less than 30% of the residential care the council commissions. The building itself is over 30 years old and in the medium term it will likely be unable to offer the required standards of care in a cost-effective manner for the Council. Remodelling of the facility to bring it up to modern standards would require extensive and costly changes to the building; reducing overall capacity and with significant disturbance to the existing residents. Closure of Suffolk Lodge, without re-provision of a Council care home elsewhere in the Borough, would leave WBC entirely reliant upon commissioned in provision, during a period where rapid cost increases are anticipated. The Medium Term Financial Plan makes provision (£500,000) for the transition to the new Dementia Care Home in 2025/26, this will ensure running costs are met until optimal capacity is reached.

### *Residential*

The Draft Local Plan Update that has identified the need for a housing provision of 13,901 dwellings for the plan period 2018-2036. The promotion of the site for residential development - first within the Council's published Draft Local Plan Update (Jan 2020) and then continued through to the Revised Growth Strategy (Nov 2021) – is a clear indication that the Council anticipates that this site will contribute towards Wokingham's strategic approach to housing delivery. Failure to deliver housing on this site could undermine the Council's ability to deliver against the identified housing need for the borough.

The current masterplan proposes up to 130 dwellings on the site. It is anticipated that these units would be a mixture of residential types (houses and apartments) and residential sizes (2,3,4 bedroom).

The development will need to provide a minimum of 35% affordable housing on site and depending on the delivery mechanism chosen this provision may be significantly higher. There is a high demand across all forms of affordable housing in the Borough. The ORS Housing Needs Report completed in 2019, indicated the need for 403 affordable properties per annum. This site would help to deliver a significant proportion of affordable homes.

As part of the affordable housing provision, it is proposed that there will be 13 shared ownership self and custom-build homes for local people in housing need. This will pioneer a new delivery model for the provision of affordable housing in the borough, showcasing self and custom-build as a deliverable option. Due to site constraints, a proportion of supporting infrastructure is required to enable the delivery of these units. A successful application to the Brownfield Land Release Fund secured £494,000 to help bring forward the self-build scheme. This includes constructing these properties at net zero carbon.

#### *Residential delivery models*

The residential development at Toutley East could be delivered in a number of ways. Informed by a market engagement exercise in Summer 2021, four development delivery models have been identified, each which carry differing levels of risk exposure and potential financial return to Wokingham Borough Council. These are:

1. **Cost Plus** – WBC retain control over delivery of the proposed development by securing funding for the scheme and working alongside a contractor partner to deliver the scheme.
2. **Direct Delivery** – Follows largely the same structure as the Cost-Plus model wherein WBC funds development from borrowing, but instead of working with a partner creates its own housing types.
3. **Disposal** – Sale of the site for a capital receipt. In this scenario it is likely the site would be sold to a private house builder who would then build and sell the development themselves, taking on all risk and reward associated with housing development. There is some risk to the Council such as the loss of direct control over the development in terms of pace of delivery, number of affordable units, capital receipt, and accountability with local residents.
4. **Joint Venture** – working with a private sector developer to deliver the proposed scheme, WBC would enter into a Joint Venture agreement with costs and revenues being shared on a proportionate basis. This has approach has been successfully utilised by the Council within the Wokingham Town Centre regeneration project, with David Wilson Homes at Elms Field. The main risk to this approach would lie with the performance of the wider housing market, although this would be partially mitigated by sharing the risk under the Joint Venture.

Informed by discussions with the market last year, at this time the officer recommended delivery model would be entering into a Joint Venture with a development partner. However, discussions with the market and consultancy support are ongoing to inform

future recommendations and decisions, and officers will progress the development of a business case considering benefits and risks and identifying the preferred residential delivery model.

Given the potential costs and values associated with a development of this scale, a full business case will be prepared and considered and approved by the Executive and then at full Council ahead of offering the opportunity to the Market.

## Return on Investment

For the purposes of identifying the Return on Investment to WBC of the whole Toutley East development a cashflow model has been developed.

### *Costs of the Toutley East Development*

The table below sets out the budget associated with delivering the Toutley East development. These budgets were agreed as part of the 2022/23 Medium Term Financial Plan.

<b>Element</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Care home	£14M	The Council's policy requirements surrounding creation of new assets has been considered as part of this project. The care home cost includes sprinkler provision and provides a policy compliant build in relation to carbon reduction but it is not Net Zero Carbon.
Site wide infrastructure, including access roads, noise bund and drainage	£3.5M	Infrastructure needs to be delivered at the start of the project and delivered in time for the opening of the care home
<b>Total cost to WBC</b>	<b>£17.5M</b>	

### *Budget considerations / assumptions*

There are a number of other costs associated with a development of this scale and complexity which need to be included. These include:

- A Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) cost of £496,000 chargeable against the Care Home is required to be paid to the LPA.
- Finance charge – interest rate assumed at 3%
- Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) – based on asset life which is circa 2% per annum
- Additional inflation is included within the expected development costs. This has been reviewed and, acknowledging that we are starting from an already inflated position, is considered a prudent approach for the project.
- Contingency included at 5% for the construction of the care home

### *Funding for capital works*

The Council has approved funding for a new dementia care home and site infrastructure costs as part of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). This was most recently confirmed in the 2022/23 Capital Programme when the budget allocation was set to £17.5M.

The current funding for the project will be from a combination of capital receipts (from residential land value) and borrowing.

### *Residential build costs and land value*

For the purposes of the cash flow model, it has been assumed that the Toutley East residential land will be sold with the benefit of outline planning permission and thereafter delivered by a private housebuilder. For the purposes of this assumption, it is assumed that the outline planning permission includes a policy compliant scheme, including 35% affordable housing, no further contribution to zero carbon over and above current planning policy and no sprinkler provision. If these assumptions were to change (for example if the Council required additional affordable housing provision) this would impact on reducing the land value (the price that someone is willing to pay for the land). It is assumed that the residential land will be sold within 6 months of the completion of the infrastructure. An estimated value of the land sold for residential development is included as a receipt to the Council within the cashflow model in the year 2022/23. The sale of the residential land will put the Council in credit until the care home costs and the infrastructure costs exceed this figure.

In this scenario of disposal to a private housebuilder, costs associated with construction of the residential (estimated to be circa £30M) would be borne by the party developing the land and therefore are not included in the cash flow model.

The residential development will be liable for a CIL payment of approximately £3.7M (based on a scheme of up to 130 residential dwellings). This will be paid by the housebuilder to the Council. The cost of this levy impacts on the price that someone would be willing to pay for the land and has been included in the calculations of value of the residential land. 15% of this CIL payment will be top sliced and paid to Wokingham Town Council, in line with CIL Regulations.

Assuming the land is sold to a third party is for the purpose of this Return on Investment model and does not presuppose the decision by Executive and Council will need to take regarding the delivery mechanism for the residential development (as per the options set out earlier in this paper). Any decisions regarding the delivery of the residential development will be subject to a full business case and if different delivery model to the one assumed in this paper is chosen then the Return on Investment model will need to be updated.

The same approach has been adopted for the sale of the Suffolk Lodge site when that site becomes vacant, once the new care home at Toutley East is completed in early 2025. For the purposes of the cashflow, it is assumed it will be sold when the site becomes available with the benefit of outline planning permission and the land value generated is included as an income to the Council in the year 2025/26 (assumed sold within 3 months of completion of the care home) within the cashflow model. The formal decision to dispose of the Suffolk Lodge site will be a decision made by Council and subject to a formal business case.

The development of the Suffolk Lodge site will replace existing built form. Although the net increase in area will attract a Community Infrastructure Levy it is deemed de minimus and therefore no CIL contribution is included in the cash flow.

### *Revenue business case*

Utilising the income generated through the sale of residential land at Toutley East and Suffolk Lodge to pay back the Council's borrowing, the residual debt of delivering the care home and supporting infrastructure is circa £5.7million in financial year 2024/25. The annual capital financing cost (Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and interest rates) of this debt is £285,000 per annum.

The cost avoidance generated by a new Council-run care home is, based on current prices, a minimum of £337,000 per annum, and is likely to rise significantly in the short term (approximately 4 years) to £700,000 per annum. Therefore an annual surplus of £52,000 per annum on today's prices (£337,000-£285,000), rising to £415,000 per annum (£700,000-£285,000) based on increasing values, would be generated.

If the surplus was used to pay down the debt, this project demonstrates a positive return within the expected 60-year life of the building, demonstrating a positive payback in year 29 (2049) based on today's prices. If values increase as expected and the surplus is used to pay down the debt, the payback period would be considerably shorter. Once borrowing is fully repaid the whole surplus value will be available to support the Council.

The proposed future reforms within Adults Social Care are likely to increase the level of potential level of savings achieved from this scheme. The primary aim of the charging reforms is to redistribute the financial responsibility for paying for an individual's care between the individual and the local authority. At its simplest, the cost to the individual will reduce, and the cost to the local authority will increase. Self-funders in Wokingham currently offset costs charged to the local authority by circa 40%.

The approach above relies on the income from residential land value to fund part of the care home and infrastructure construction costs. The figures used for the Return on Investment, based on existing care home costs, indicate that on its own the care home would not be able to service the financing costs (interest and debt repayment) for the construction of the facility in isolation. Therefore the value generated from residential development on this site is critical to the Council's ability to fund the construction of a new care home.

In constructing and retaining the care home as a property asset, the Council is also generating a property asset with value which will be held in the Council's property portfolio.

### **Delivery Programme**

In order to expedite the delivery of the care home, it is intended that the Council will first deliver a package of infrastructure at the site sufficient to service the delivery of the care home; before a contractor can come onto the site and deliver the care home itself. The infrastructure package will include the site access, the main spine road, the acoustic bund and utilities provision. The procurement business case is included in a separate paper to this Executive.

In parallel, the residential site can be progressed in terms of detailed design and planning, ready for sale within 6 months of completion of the infrastructure.

Subject to the granting of outline consent in summer 2022, the table below sets out the provisional milestone delivery programme.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Summer 2022	Planning application determined
Early 2023	Infrastructure works start on site — following design, approvals, contractor appointment, etc.
Autumn 2023	Infrastructure works complete
Autumn 2023	Care Home start on site — following design, approvals, contractor appointment, completion of infrastructure works, etc.
Early 2025	Care Home completion
Spring 2024	Residential start on site — following design, approvals, completion of infrastructure works etc.
Spring/Summer 2026	Completion of Residential

The milestone programme will be refined with more certainty once outline planning permission has been secured, contractors appointed and the delivery model for the residential has been decided.

Until a new care home is opened, the Council will incur increasing revenue spend pressures to fund placements for residents with dementia care needs in private care homes. The sooner the facility is delivered, the sooner savings can be realised by accommodating the need of residents with dementia care needs within WBC's own facilities rather than in private care homes. The need to expedite delivery is also exacerbated by the risks envisaged with the projected increase in costs of commissioning beds and the national social care reforms

If the care home is not delivered at Toutley East, then delay to delivery programme will occur as the result of needing to identify and secure planning permission on an alternative site. Revenue spend pressures to fund placements will be incurred and increase during this delay period, potentially up to 2 years.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

***The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.***

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£3.5M	Yes	Capital
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	(£2.5M)	Yes	Capital
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£4.7M	Yes	Capital

### **Other Financial Information**

For revenue implications refer to Return on Investment section above which demonstrates a net benefit payback of £337,000 per annum to be realised at the opening of the scheme 2025/26, increasing to £700,000 per annum over the first four years.

### **Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation**

The proposals for residential and a care home on this site have been the subject of consultation as follows:

*January 2020 – Consultation on the Draft Local Plan Update inclusive of a site allocation at Toutley East for 100 dwellings.*

Of the 5,500 individual comments received in response, 53 related to the continued delivery of the North Wokingham Strategic Development Location whilst only 14 related specifically to the Toutley East Site designation for housing development. 9 raised concerns about the proposals, citing cumulative development impacts in the area, traffic, noise, congestion, trees and flooding.

*Feb/March 2021 – Pre-application public engagement on the planning proposals*

Post cards sent to 1,225 neighbouring property addresses inviting comments. 25 responses were received. Of those, 23 were from individuals. Additional comments were received from the Emmbrook Residents Association and the Wokingham Society. Of those, 1 recorded support against the development; 16 recorded objections to the proposals (including from the Emmbrook Residents Association and the Wokingham Society); and 8 responses expressed neither support nor objection but raised comments/questions. Details of the consultation response were summarised in the Statement of Community Involvement submitted in support of the planning application.

*May 2021 – Planning Application*

Statutory consultation on the submitted planning application. The planning application received objections from Wokingham Town Council, local Councillors, Shinfield Parish Council, the Emmbrook Residents Association, Wokingham Society and 36 residents. The objections are summarised in the officer recommendation report and therefore would have been afforded due consideration when the Planning Committee determined the application.

November 2021 – Consultation on WBC Revised Growth Strategy, inclusive of an allocation in line with the planning application for up to 130 dwellings and a care home. The response to the Revised Growth Strategy consultation is yet to be published.

**Public Sector Equality Duty**

An Equality Impact Assessment was undertaken in July 2020. The Initial Impact assessment did not identify any potentially negative impact upon persons with protected characteristics.

**Climate Emergency – This Council has declared a climate emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030**

Both the care home and residential scheme have been designed to meet all current carbon reduction and sustainable energy policy requirements.

**List of Background Papers**

None

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