

Template for Impact Assessment Level 1: Initial screening assessment

Subject of assessment:	Review of Non-Strategic Assets – first phase disposals (residential sites)			
Coverage:	The Report is cross cutting and relates to Directors of Regeneration and Resources			
This is a decision relating to:	<input type="checkbox"/> Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy	<input type="checkbox"/> Service	<input type="checkbox"/> Function
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Process/procedure	<input type="checkbox"/> Programme	<input type="checkbox"/> Project	<input type="checkbox"/> Review
	<input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)		
It is a:	New approach:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Revision of an existing approach:	x
It is driven by:	Legislation:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local or corporate requirements:	x
Description:	<p>Insert short description, using the following as sub-headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key aims, objectives and activities - The report seeks approval for changes to the proposed method of disposal of a number of residential sites, which have been identified as non-strategic sites¹ within the Non Strategic Asset Review. Presently, disposal can be by open market sale for best consideration and, in some circumstances, disposal at less than best consideration where such disposals involve indirect benefits, which cannot be taken into account in best consideration cases. The report recommends consideration for disposal for nil consideration to Registered Providers (RPs), as a third option, where there is minimal private developer interest and identifies a number of indirect benefits from disposal at nil consideration that would allow the Council to meet its objectives. This would include realising potential monetary benefits to the Council; ease budget pressures by releasing sites that require on-going maintenance; supporting RPs for grant funding through a disposal of Council land at nil consideration; and, increasing the number of affordable housing units developed within Middlesbrough to meet housing need. • Statutory drivers – the council is required, as local housing authority, to assess and develop strategies to address local housing needs in its area. • Differences from any previous approach: the present approach is open market sale for best consideration and, in some circumstances, disposal at less than best consideration where disposal involves indirect benefits that cannot be taken into account in best consideration cases (as stated above). It also includes an opportunity to discuss joint affordable housing schemes with the RPs, prior to marketing the sites. • Key stakeholders and intended beneficiaries (internal and external as appropriate) - The Council, Registered Providers, Private Developers, residents of Middlesbrough needing affordable housing, • Intended outcomes – the Council obtains values from its asset portfolio; secures wider benefits including addressing the shortfall in affordable housing, reducing the housing waiting lists, improve the housing officer and stem population overflow and encourage opportunities for employment and training, particularly in the construction industry and related local businesses. 			
Live date:	Actions described in this report will be implemented immediately with site disposals determined by the assessment of detailed business cases following receipt of proposals from Registered Providers (RPs) or other partners described in the report.			

¹ Non strategic assets (for the purpose of the Report) are defined as land and property that the Council does not use for service delivery purposes.

Lifespan:	It is anticipated that RPs will be on site within 24 months of decision to dispose.			
Date of next review:	Three months from the date of decision to proceed with disposals.			
Screening questions	Response			Evidence
	No	Yes	Uncertain	
Human Rights Could the decision impact negatively on individual Human Rights as enshrined in UK legislation? *	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The decision would not impact negatively on human rights. The report details an alternative way to dispose of Council land that would not be incompatible with the Human Rights Act as enshrined in UK legislation. The Council completed a public consultation exercise on the disposal of the individual sites for residential development and, in response to feedback from local residents, one site was retracted from the original list. The concerns were in relation to the site's use for recreational activities, including a children's play area, as well as vehicle access, parking, additional traffic and impact on the character of the area. Two further sites were investigated following resident concerns before being confirmed as included in the disposal list.
Equality Could the decision result in adverse differential impacts on groups or individuals with characteristics protected in UK equality law? Could the decision impact differently on other commonly disadvantaged groups? *	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The decision would not have a disproportionate adverse impact on a group or individuals because they hold a protected characteristic.</p> <p>The public consultation exercise to determine any concerns in disposing of individual sites and issues coming out of that consultation were addressed (see above). Each individual site, brought forward for disposal at less than best or nil consideration, would be supported by a business case report that would confirm value for money and a clear audit trail in the decision-making process. Evidence would be provided to confirm that plans for the site would meet the Council's Intended Outcomes (see above), including meeting the need for affordable housing and opportunities for employment and training. Development would consider general needs and specialist provision, to include older persons, those with a disability and other groups in housing need. Other commonly disadvantaged groups, e.g. homeless, or vulnerable, would benefit from increased affordable housing, or a supported scheme that could be developed on a site.</p> <p>These sites are not designated as open space within the Council's Green Spaces Strategy, with the main focus for provision and investment in recreational space in the ward being the nearby Neighbourhood Park on Sandringham Road. There is sufficient open space within the area, given the close proximity of the Neighbourhood Park on Sandringham Road, to address concerns about the loss of play area space.</p>

* Consult the Impact Assessment further guidance appendix for details on the issues covered by each of these broad questions prior to completion.

<p>Community cohesion</p> <p>Could the decision impact negatively on relationships between different groups, communities of interest or neighbourhoods within the town? *</p>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The decision would not have a disproportionate adverse impact on community cohesion. The public consultation exercise to determine any concerns in disposing of individual sites and issues coming out of that consultation were addressed (see above). Evidence on meeting the Council's Intended Outcomes would be required to support future development (see Equality reference above). Consideration would be given to minority groups and different community groups to ensure that opportunities to meet general or specialist housing need are realised. Consultation on the proposed development would take place at an early stage and this would feed into the planning approval process to provide maximum feedback.</p>
<p>Sustainable Community Strategy objectives</p> <p>Could the decision impact negatively on the achievement of the vision for Middlesbrough? Does the decision impact on statutory duties associated with these key objectives? *</p>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The decision would not impact negatively. The Housing Strategy objectives are consistent with the aims of the Sustainable Community Strategy "enhancing the local economy" theme. Maximising the potential for development on these small, low or nil value sites would support Middlesbrough's vision for the town by developing housing that meets the aspirations of existing and future residents and offers quality and choice of housing. The proposal would increase affordable housing development in the area.</p> <p>Linking into the "promoting health and well-being, tackling exclusion and promoting equality" theme, some sites could support specialist housing for more vulnerable groups, e.g. homeless, those with a disability, those fleeing violence. Tackling homelessness is a statutory duty for the Council.</p> <p>These sites are not designated as open space within the Council's Green Spaces Strategy, with the main focus for provision and investment in recreational space in the ward being the nearby Neighbourhood Park on Sandringham Road. There is sufficient open space within the area, given the close proximity of the Neighbourhood Park on Sandringham Road, to address concerns about the loss of play area space.</p>
<p>Organisational management / transformation</p> <p>Could the decision impact negatively on organisational management or the transformation of the Council's services as set out in its transformation programme? *</p>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>The decision would not impact negatively. The disposal of small, low or nil value sites for developing housing supports themes within the Sustainable Community Strategy (see above). These developments would be progressed through partnership working with local RPs/developers to improve the housing offer for existing and future residents of Middlesbrough (see above). When RPs apply for grant funding to support the development to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), the HCA expects a value for money bid that includes Councils and RPs using land assets at reduced rate or nil value. The Council would expect to support the RPs in developing the sites to secure a development that draws in maximum grant and meets local housing needs. Although some disposals would be approved at low or nil value, the proposed development would provide wider benefits that meet the Council's objectives (see above - Intended outcomes). In addition, there could be potential monetary benefits linked to the development of new housing, in terms of income from Council Tax, New Homes Bonus and Affordable Housing Enhancement.</p>

Next steps:

- ➡ If the answer to all of the above screening questions is No then the process is completed.
- ➡ If the answer of any of the questions is Yes or Uncertain, then a Level 2 Full Impact Assessment must be completed.

Assessment completed by:	Lynda Harrington/Michael Quinn	Head of Service:	Sharon Thomas
Date: 13.8.12		Date:	