

Report of:	Councillor Janet Thompson, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board
Submitted to:	Executive, 26 September 2019.
Subject:	OSB Call In Referral of <i>Long-term Lease of Gresham Housing Site to Thirteen Housing Group</i> made by Executive on 27 August 2019.

Summary

Proposed decision(s)
That Executive consider the recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Board OSB following the Call In of 16 September 2019.

Report for:	Key decision:	Confidential:	Is the report urgent?
Decision	No	No	No

Contribution to delivery of the 2018-22 Strategic Plan		
Business Imperatives	Physical Regeneration	Social Regeneration
NA	NA	NA

Ward(s) affected
Newport Ward

What is the purpose of this report?

To provide recommendations to Executive following the OSB Call-In of 16 September 2019 and its decision to refer the decision of 27 August 2019 (Long Term Lease of Gresham Site) back to Executive. As per the Council’s Scrutiny Call-In protocol, should Executive choose not to implement the recommendations contained in this report full written reasons should be provided to OSB.

Why does this report require a Member decision?

As per the Council’s Scrutiny Call-In Protocol, the decision, once referred back, cannot be implemented until Executive have considered OSB’s recommendations.

Report Background

The Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) feels the decision taken on the 27 August 2019 by Executive needs to be reconsidered due to the reasons cited during the Call-In meeting

of 16 September 2019. As part of their referral, OSB proposed the following recommendations to assist the Executive:

1. There was insufficient evidence that formal consultation had taken place with important partners and stakeholders, namely Teesside University and MHomeS.

OSB heard that formal consultation was not required due to a lack of proper agreements being put in place. However, it also heard that informal discussions had taken place, specifically with Teesside University, but had not been evidenced in the report of the 27 August 2019.

OSB feels that as Teesside University has expressed an interest in developing a Student Village, neighbouring the Gresham site, formal consultation should be evidenced. Similarly, OSB feels that MHomeS had sufficient interest in the site to warrant formal consultation.

The inclusion of such information would make the decision making process more robust and transparent.

2. The decision deviated approved plans and policies, namely the Gresham Master Plan and Local Housing Plan as approved in 2018 and 2014, respectively.

OSB feels the decision did not adequately rely on information contained in relevant policies and plans. Because of this insufficient information was provided especially in relation to schools and infrastructure, public open spaces and the size of the development.

3. The decision of 27 August 2019 did not demonstrate a transparent process of developer choice.

OSB feels that insufficient information was provided to demonstrate what other developers, aside from Thirteen Group, were considered. While OSB recognises the site poses challenges, they feel that more effort should have been made to approach a wider range of prospective developers.

As part of this recommendation, the Board also feels that the inclusion of a cost comparison between prospective developers would be advantageous.

What decision(s) are being asked for?

That Executive consider the recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny Board OSB following the Call In of 16 September 2019.

Why is this being recommended?

Following a Call In meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Board on 16 September 2019, it was decided that the Executive decision (*Long Term Lease of the Gresham site to Thirteen Group*) should be referred back to the Executive for further consideration.

As per the Council's Scrutiny Call In protocol the Executive is required to have regard of any recommendations made as part of a Call In meeting.

Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended

Not Applicable.

Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)

The Impacts of the Executive decision of 27 August 2019 are listed in that report. If the Executive accept the recommendations above the impact these will have on the decision should be included in the amended report.

Legal

NA

Financial

NA

Policy Framework

NA

Equality and Diversity

NA

Risk

NA

Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)

NA

Appendices

NA

Background papers

No Background Papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Contact: Scott Bonner, Democratic Services Officer

Email: scott_bonner@middlesbrough.gov.uk