

Report to: **Housing Review Board**

Date of Meeting: 28 March 2019

Public Document: Yes

Exemption: None

Review date for release None



Agenda item: 17

Subject: **Garage Task and Finish Forum Update**

Purpose of report: For information.

Recommendation: **That this report be noted by the Housing Review Board**

Reason for recommendation: At the January Housing Review Board meeting, information was requested in relation to an update on the work of the garage Task and Finish Forum.

Officer:

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Financial implications: No financial implications at this stage

Legal implications: There are no legal implications on which to comment.

Equalities impact: Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk

Links to background information: • .

Link to Council Plan: Living in this outstanding place

1. Background

- 1.1 The Garage Task and Finish Forum (Taff) was set up in 2012 to review the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) garage portfolio. It considered which garages should be retained, developed or disposed of.
- 1.2 A report was presented to the HRB on the 6 September 2012 highlighting the garages concerned. It included documents that looked at the stock condition, and provided recommendations, which were supported by the HRB.
- 1.3 A further garage update report was presented to the HRB on the 5th September 2013.

2 Garage Site Updates

- 2.1 The following garage sites have been considered as having potential to develop. They include- Elizabeth Road and Summersby Close Seaton, Courtney Drive Colyton, Plymtree, Luppit, Prestor and Millway Rise (blocks A B &C) Axminster, George Street, and Jerrards Close Honiton and Hillside Payhembury. Other sites also included garages at Charles Road Honiton and Shute. Both of which have since been dismissed following concerns about the loss of parking.
- 2.2 Due to mains services and maintaining pedestrian access to a recreational field, a single dwelling may be possible at Elizabeth Road. Summersby Close and Courtney Drive have not been advanced. Prestor was being considered as an orchard. Millway Rise (blocks A, B &C), A B was considered by planning. Development may not be appropriate due to fronting onto existing dwellings, this is likely to cause overlooking issues. Hillside Payhembury was fully considered by planning and Highways. They concluded that any access would involve a new road being created, this was considered as uneconomic to pursue.
- 2.3 Out of the aforementioned, the George Street site, following negotiation with an adjoining developer led to the garages being demolished and a two bedroom detached house being constructed with parking spaces for two vehicles. Jerrard's Close garages have been demolished and await development or sale.
- 2.4 The garages at Luppit have been sold, the garages at Plymtree are currently progressing to exchange of contracts.
- 2.5 Other garages that have been sold since 2012/13 include Farway, Coombe Orchard Axmouth, Lashbrook and Eyewell Green Seaton.
- 2.6 The remaining garages that either haven't been sold or developed have been subject to further preliminary site investigations. They have included indicative plans being drawn by the in-house architect for the Housing services, who has since left the Council. All of these sites have since stalled due to the lack of capacity and expertise. Resources have been redirected to ensure that the council spend all Right to Buy receipts in accordance with Government's guidelines and members wishes.
- 2.7 It should be noted that the original TAFF did not fully consider the impact that mains services such as gas, water and sewage has on any development proposals. These services are often found within our garages sites. This has subsequently meant that a number of sites have been dismissed due to viability and actual site restrictions imposed. For example development cannot take place within seven meters of some gas mains. This dramatically reduces the amount of developable land. Moving services on such small development sites is considered to be uneconomical.

3 Progressing Garage Sales, Development or Repair

- 3.1 Consideration is being given to possibly developing two sites in Honiton. At this stage it is dependent on securing grant funding from the Local Government Association. As presented to the January Housing Review Board meeting an application has recently been submitted. If successful it will help to explore these potential development sites further, this could include modular build.
- 3.2 To fully understand what options are now available to the council it is considered that a full stock condition report be undertaken. This will help to inform what we might do with our garage stock, whether it be to dispose, development or repair.