



# Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 19 September 2024

Report of Councillor Virginia Moran,  
Cabinet Member for Housing

## New Build and Acquisition Update

### Report Author

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### Purpose of Report

To provide the Committee with an update on the new build and acquisition pipeline.

### Recommendations

**It is recommended that the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee note this report and the ongoing work programme relating to new builds and acquisitions.**

### Decision Information

Does the report contain any exempt or confidential information not for publication? No

What are the relevant corporate priorities? Housing

Which wards are impacted? All

## 1. Implications

Taking into consideration implications relating to finance and procurement, legal and governance, risk and mitigation, health and safety, diversity and inclusion, safeguarding, staffing, community safety, mental health and wellbeing and the impact on the Council's declaration of a climate change emergency, the following implications have been identified:

### ***Finance and Procurement***

- 1.1 The 2024/25 HRA Capital Programme includes a budget allocation for Housing Development investment, this budget will also be utilised to fund strategic acquisitions. It is important that the HRA has a continual housing growth strategy that incorporates a range of interventions including acquiring properties directly from developers, new build and acquiring former Right to Buy properties that specifically meet the housing needs.

*Completed by: Richard Wyles, Deputy Chief Executive and s151 Officer*

### ***Legal and Governance***

- 1.2 Regular reporting on agreed actions and measures is to be welcomed from a governance point of view, as it provides a transparent mechanism for reporting on performance.

*Completed by: Mandy Braithwaite, Legal Executive*

### ***Risk and Mitigation***

- 1.3 No significant risks have been identified.

### ***Climate Change***

- 1.4 The contents of this report do not have a direct impact on the Council's carbon emissions or the carbon emissions of the wider district. More detailed information on carbon impact of individual projects is outlined within the relevant project documentation.

## 2. Background to the Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an update regarding the new build housing pipeline and purchases using the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF2).

2.2 The approved Corporate Plan 2024-2027 clearly sets out how South Kesteven District Council intends to meet the mission “to ensure that all residents can access housing which is safe, good quality, sustainable and suitable for their needs and future generations.”

2.3 The Corporate Plan, Priority 4 identifies ‘Housing’ as a key priority with high quality housing essential for all, and the council is committed to working with partners to provide this by:

- Facilitating a range of appropriate and sustainable housing and community facilities for future generations and the emerging needs of all our communities.
- Delivering exemplary and high-quality services for housing and homelessness.
- Increasing the supply of sustainable and high-quality Council-provided housing.
- Working with developers and private landlords to ensure sustainable, affordable, and high-quality housing is facilitated.

2.4 There are many schemes within the district that are at various stages of the pipeline, an update on each one is as follows: -

### **Swinegate, Grantham**

2.5 The scheme is progressing well and is on target for completion by July 2025.

2.6 Monthly contract meetings are held with Lindums and the wider project team and updates will continue be provided to the committee regarding the progress of the scheme.

2.7 The progress photographs below show that scaffolding has been erected to allow the brick and blockwork to progress. The exterior brickwork along Swinegate Road consists of classic weathered orange handmade facing bricks, to match the original shopfront. Openings have been created for a door and window, which will feature timber prestige hardwood to match the existing frontage. A wind post has been installed in the foundation to support the brick and blockwork, with one-way wind post ties. Openings for dry risers have also been created.



Figure 1- General View of site



Figure 2- Scaffolding to allow brick and blockwork



Figure 3 - exterior brickwork to Swinegate

### **Elizabeth Rd, Stamford**

- 2.8 Cabinet approved the award for the £665,000 scheme to D Brown Construction Ltd with work commencing in January 2024 and the site was completed and handed over to the Council on the 23 August 2024.
- 2.9 The two downstairs units are fully adapted with wet rooms and level access throughout and the two upstairs units have already been let.



Figure 4- Elizabeth Road arial shot

### **Larch Close, Grantham**

- 2.10 The 21-unit scheme was granted permission at the Planning Committee meeting on 8 November 2023.
- 2.11 On 9 July 2024 Cabinet approved the contract award to Mercer Building Solutions to build 19 units at Larch Close. The original scheme also included 2 x 4 bedroom houses but due to the higher build costs and rental income associated with these properties the decision was made to submit a new planning application to replace these houses with 4 x 2 bedroom properties.
- 2.12 Mercer Building Solutions are currently working on discharging the planning conditions and will be submitting a new planning application in November for the change of properties.
- 2.13 Work on site is planned to commence in November 24.

### **Wellington Way, Market Deeping**

- 2.14 Following feedback from the public consultation the proposed scheme has been reduced from 14 units to 11 units.
- 2.15 The planning application is due to be submitted in September 2024 and it is hoped that a contractor can commence in spring 2025.

### **Gorse Rise, Grantham**

- 2.16 This is a former garage site that was demolished in February 2020.

- 2.17 A pre-application has been submitted to the Local Planning Authority and comments received for 6 units on the parcel of land. Some design amendments have been made following comments from the Planning Authority.
- 2.18 Once the designs have been finalised the scheme will be submitted for planning (October 2024).

### **Kesteven Road, Stamford**

- 2.19 The site consists of an irregular parcel of land of approximately 1.3 acres in size and includes a combination of a garage block, car parking area and open space.
- 2.20 Feasibility has been ongoing for some time but has now identified the best option and layout for the site with an approximate 11 unit scheme being explored due to the biodiversity net gain requirements. This has been reduced from 18 units to enable more green space to be retained.
- 2.21 Early engagement will commence before a pre-planning application is submitted.

### **Bourne End Road Estate, Colsterworth**

- 2.22 Due to structural issues within the timber frame and thermally poor performance there are opportunities on this estate to demolish some of the existing stock and rebuild with more units due to large plot sizes.
- 2.26 Pre-Application feedback has been received from the Local Planning Authority with alterations being explored on the 9-unit scheme prior to submitting the full planning application in October 2024.

### **3. Key Considerations**

- 3.1 In order to achieve the numbers of houses that the Council has a requirement to deliver each year there will be a hybrid approach to new builds to work closely with developers on planning schemes which need to include a number of affordable units, the Council will discuss purchasing these (similar to a Registered Provider) and also purchasing properties offered back to the Council via the Right to Buy scheme. The first phase of the affordable housing units acquired in Corby Glen is progressing well and visits to the site to check progress have been undertaken.
- 3.2 The Council is seeking to acquire 12 one-bedroom apartments in Grantham subject to searches, surveys and legal enquiries. Information regarding this acquisition will be made available once completed.
- 3.3 Local Authority Housing Fund 2 – the Council has accepted the second stage of the funding which is to deliver a further eight properties, seven ‘main element’ 2/3 bed properties and one ‘bridging element’ 4 bed+ property.
- 3.4 The Council has met this 8-unit need with all houses being on various new build schemes in and around the Bourne area. These were all offered by the deadline of the funding and are progressing with legal services currently.

3.5 The Council has purchased a bungalow in the Market Deeping area which will be fully adapted using S106 money. There are a number of people requiring specific types of properties (particularly fully adapted) and the team are looking at acquiring properties using this funding stream to meet the needs as a matter of urgency.

#### **Right To Buy**

3.6 The Council is approached regularly to purchase back properties that have been acquired through the Right to Buy process as the covenants are in place for a number of years. These properties are independently valued and visited by a member of the repairs team to access any works required to ensure that they meet the void standard prior to assessing if they should be acquired. A two bedroom flat in Stamford was purchased in August where the Council own the rest of the block.

#### **4. Reasons for the Recommendations**

4.1 This is a regular report for noting where Members are invited to scrutinise and comment on performance.