

Report for:
ACTION

Item Number:

Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No
Title	New Accommodation Acquisitions Framework
Responsible Officer(s)	Nicky Fiedler, Strategic Director for Housing and Environment
Author(s)	Mark Awbery, Assistant Director for Housing Demand
Portfolio(s)	Cllr Mahfouz, Cabinet member for safe and genuinely affordable homes Cllr Manro, Cabinet member for good growth and new housing
For Consideration By	Cabinet
Date to be Considered	7 February 2024
Implementation Date if Not Called In	19 February 2024
Affected Wards	All
Keywords/Index	Purchase of property for use as temporary accommodation or move on accommodation Housing Homelessness

Purpose of Report:

The private rented sector (PRS) in Ealing is reducing and is increasingly unaffordable to recipients of housing related benefits due to inflation and the cost of living crisis. This means that there are not enough properties to rent, and those that are available are unaffordable to most residents.

These factors are all increasing the demand for housing in the borough, as well as reducing the supply as more landlords exit the sector. As a result there is now a housing crisis with an increasing number of households approaching the Council for housing, limited supply for them to move into resulting in them remaining in 'temporary accommodation' for years, and an increasing number of households placed into bed and breakfast accommodation, and – more recently – into commercial hotels because of the lack of supply which is an unsustainable and inappropriate housing solution.

The purpose of the report is to obtain authority for an envelope of capital funding totalling up to £150m to acquire properties for the provision of both Temporary Accommodation and properties for move on accommodation to reduce the number of people being placed in commercial hotels and bed and breakfast accommodation, and to provide accommodation for moving households out of temporary accommodation.

1 Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet:

- 1.1 Notes the ambition for acquisition of up to 300 units.
- 1.2 Creates a new Capital Programme envelope called Accommodation Acquisition (phase 3) at a value of £150m . This envelope – when drawn down – will be funded from both prudential borrowing as well as use of any available Flexible Housing Support Grant and other capital funding that may become available in the future from the government or the GLA. Any associated revenue costs are to be covered within the existing Temporary Accommodation and Housing Benefit Subsidy shortfall revenue budgets.
- 1.3 Authorise the Strategic Director for Housing and Environment, following consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources, to approve individual acquisitions.
- 1.4 Authorise the cabinet portfolio holder for safe and genuinely affordable homes, following consultation with the Strategic Director for Housing and Environment and the Strategic Director for Resources, to approve entering into large scale acquisition arrangements (leasehold or freehold) and investments.

2 Reason for Decision and Options Considered

- 2.1 Homelessness is rising in Ealing and across the UK, as a result of the shrinking private rental market, rising rents and other financial pressures on individuals as a result of the cost-of-living crisis. At the same time and for some of the same reasons, the council's ability to respond effectively to the rise in demand has been reduced.
- 2.2 The council has historically enjoyed success in preventing and relieving homelessness and in maintaining a temporary accommodation portfolio which 2minimized costs. In the current economic climate, the council is struggling to maintain its successful record and this report sets out the challenges it faces.
- 2.3 The challenges are related to both increasing demand and reducing supply, and the reasons for proposing a third stage of an acquisition programme is to increase the resource available to the council to provide homes for those in need.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Private Rented Sector (PRS) in Ealing is reducing and is increasingly unaffordable to recipients of housing related benefits. The Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate, which determines the highest amount of rent that can be paid from benefits, has not been uplifted since April 2020.
- 3.2 Following the Autumn Statement, the LHA will be raised to a level covering the cheapest third of rents in the area 1 April 2024 but the temporary nature of the increase means that this will be only a 'pause' in the affordability issue, as private sector rents will continue to increase.

- 3.3 The fact that owner occupation in London is beyond the reach of most people means that there are prospective renters on high salaries, and there is evidence that landlords are choosing not to expose themselves to the risk of renting properties to low-income families who rely on benefits.
- 3.4 This, along with the impacts of the cost of living crisis has meant an increase in homelessness approaches and a reduction in available properties to rent for temporary accommodation.
- 3.5 Cost of living factors, asylum seekers and other displaced groups are all increasing the demand for housing in the borough, and this – combined with the reducing supply has created a housing crisis with families remaining in ‘temporary accommodation’ for years, an increasing number of households placed into bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodation, and – more recently – into commercial hotels which is an unsustainable and inappropriate housing solution.

4 Housing Supply and Demand

- 4.1 There are a range of issues which are impacting on both the supply of, and demand for housing in Ealing which are detailed below:

Economic factors

- 4.2 In the buy to let sector, there has been a 7% increase in repossessions by lenders. We are also seeing more competition for private sector leased properties and competitors include both other London boroughs as well as the Home Office. The latter are not restricted by the financial limits that London councils adhere to and are both pushing up prices and reducing availability of accommodation.
- 4.3 Private landlords are also exiting the market due to interest rate rises, increased regulation of the sector e.g. PRS licensing schemes and the potential impacts from the Private Renters Bill. These also mean that those who remain in the sector face increased costs which in turn mean increased rents.

Reduction of Available Stock

- 4.4 There has been a continual annual reduction in available social housing lets in Ealing, dropping nearly 50% from 1,112 in 2011/12 to 662 lets in 2023/24. There are number of reasons including a lack of new housing supply, right to buy of affordable housing and lower relets as residents prefer to stay longer in social housing as an affordable and stable housing tenure.
- 4.5 Generally, the years where there are increase in lets relate to development programmes with new social housing units, but due to increasing construction costs and reducing grant levels these numbers are low. The graph below shows the numbers of social lets over the last 12 years which shows an overall reducing trend.

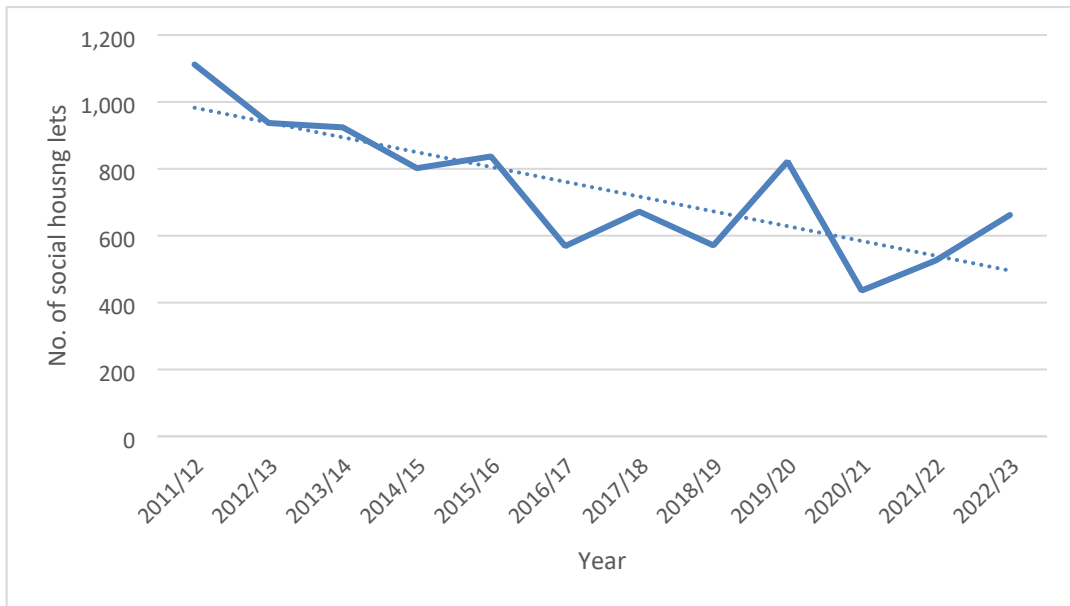


Figure 1 Number of social lets

Homelessness Demand

4.6 The reducing supply of available property, the increasing rent levels and the cost-of-living crisis are driving increasing levels of homelessness. The following graph shows the number of approaches from people at risk of homelessness, those needing further support, and where main duty has been accepted.

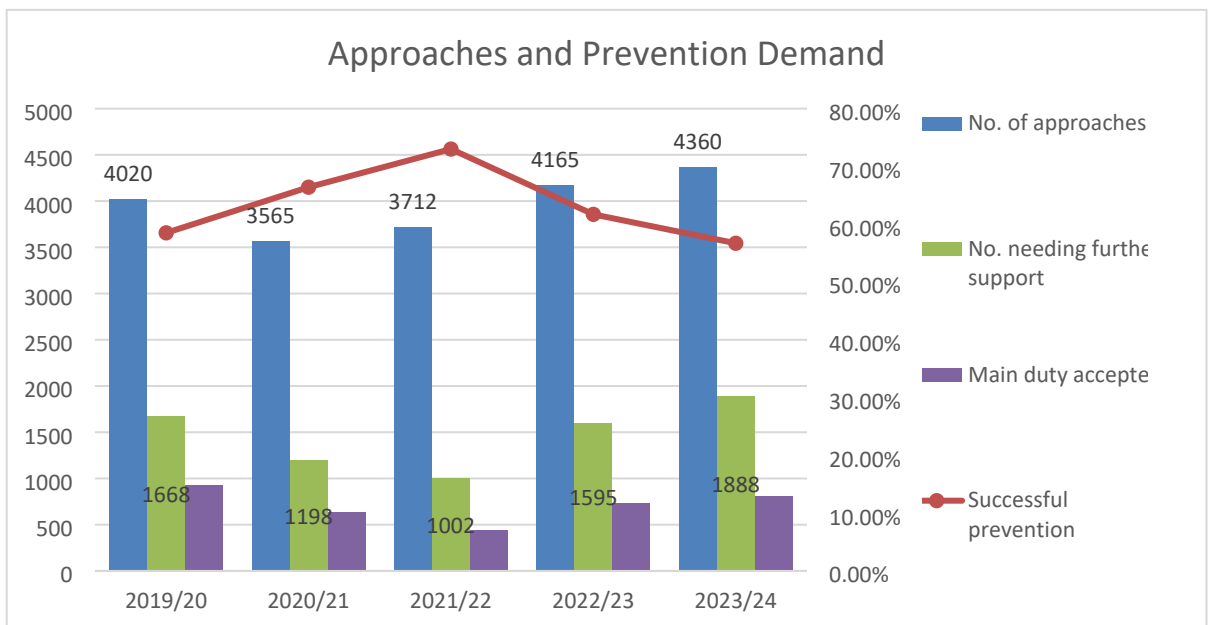


Figure 2 Number of approaches

4.7 The level of approaches reduced during Covid (2020/21) due to the suspension of evictions during the pandemic, and afterwards as the courts dealt with backlog but they are now increasing.

Prevention and Intervention

- 4.8 Ealing has a strong performance on resolving homelessness through prevention efforts shown in the graph above. A successful outcome benefits both the homeless household and the council. If the council accepts an ongoing duty to a household, they will remain in temporary accommodation, with the associated high costs, until an offer can be sourced that ends the duty.
- 4.9 The rising numbers of homeless applications and the diminished PRS supply with which to resolve the problem have led to increased homelessness acceptances in 2022/23 and in 2023/24 to date.

Temporary Accommodation

- 4.10 The council is required to provide temporary accommodation to households in accordance with the homelessness legislation duties. Between 2011 and 2019, the number of households in temporary accommodation (TA) more than doubled, primarily due to changes in the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) system which reduced the purchasing power of low-income households in Ealing's private rented sector.
- 4.11 The number of households in temporary accommodation continued to increase between 2018 and 2022, as even though the council continued strong work in prevention, the overall number of households approaching increased and this increase is shown below. There was a drop in 2021/22 due to the halt on evictions during Covid.

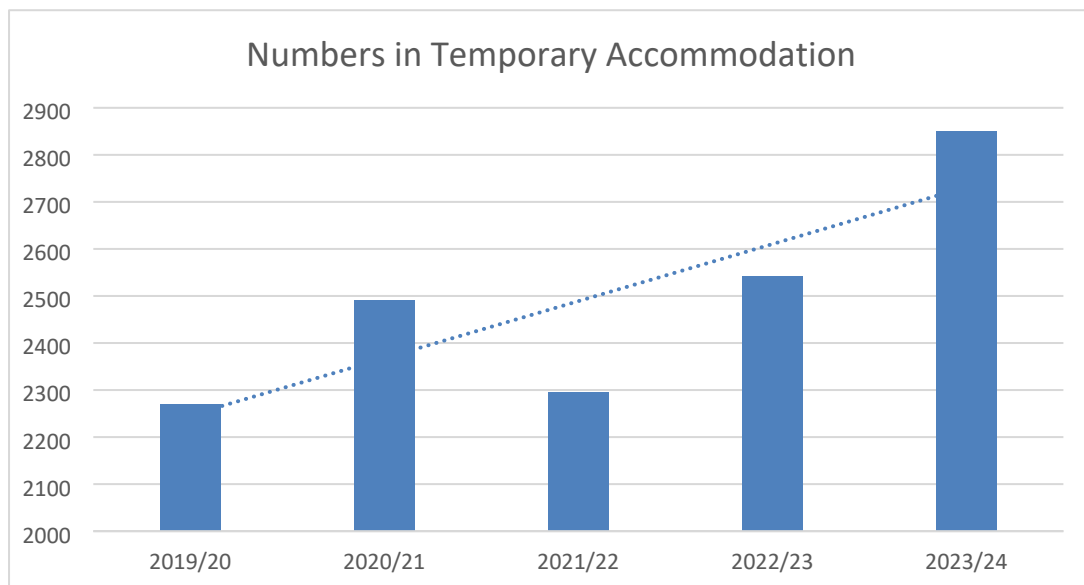


Figure 3 Numbers in TA

- 4.12 In 2023/24 there has been increased use of B&B accommodation, and use of Commercial Hotels due to the lack of supply. With some private sector landlords requesting their properties back, some households are having to move back into B&B or hotel accommodation and the graph below details the numbers forecast for the current year. 2023/24 is the first year in which

commercial hotels have needed to be used and there are now 208 families (January 2024) in hotels and 411 in B&B.

- 4.13 The time people are residing within Temporary Accommodation is increasing. One household has been in this type of accommodation since 2005 and the other oldest range from 2007 to 2012 – over 12 years.
- 4.14 Current average length of stay in B&B is over 22 weeks and Commercial Hotels is 15 weeks, when this is meant to be emergency accommodation. The reason for this is the lack of supply that people can move on to, and a proactive approach to resettlement.
- 4.15 The council already holds / uses stock outside of Ealing and a small number outside of London. Depending on the household, there are opportunities to look at rehousing out of the borough and out of London. Any out of London opportunities will be reviewed in detail and presented as an option including the benefit and opportunities this may give people as part of resettlement conversations.
- 4.16 A new resettlement team is being formed to proactively engage with people both in emergency accommodation (hotels and B&B) as well as those who have been in temporary accommodation for a lengthy period to discuss the range of options available to them. Part of this work will be supported by new stock obtained that can be used to move people on and discharge duty.

5 Budget Pressures

- 5.1 The table below shows the Temporary Accommodation budget forecast at 2023/24 Q2:

Service	Budget	Actual	Forecast before Mitigations	Mitigations (HPG)	Forecast After Mitigations	Budget Variance After Mitigations
Net Bed & Breakfast (B&B) excluding Subsidy Shortfall	(333,030)	(784,554)	(704,966)		(704,966)	(371,936)
Subsidy Shortfall B&B	334,000	748,071	1,818,000		1,818,000	1,484,000
Net Private Sector Leasing (PSL) excl. Subsidy Shortfall	(1,018,500)	2,354,669	(402,767)		(402,767)	615,733
Subsidy Shortfall PSL	5,191,000	2,651,000	6,131,000		6,131,000	940,000
Licensed Annexes	(43,810)	(140,770)	(248,926)		(248,926)	(205,116)
Commercial Hotels		1,196,774	3,500,000		3,500,000	3,500,000
Other Temporary Accommodation Budgets	4,790,420	4,473,339	6,661,430		6,661,430	1,871,010

Service	Budget	Actual	Forecast before Mitigations	Mitigations (HPG)	Forecast After Mitigations	Budget Variance After Mitigations
Use of Homelessness Prevention Grant				(5,409,691)	(5,409,691)	(5,409,691)
Total	8,920,080	10,498,530	16,753,771	(5,409,691)	11,344,080	2,424,000

- 5.2 The cost of providing temporary accommodation is an ongoing financial pressure for the council because housing benefit subsidy rates which relate to temporary accommodation have remained static at 90% of January 2011 LHA rates despite increases in the price that must be paid to secure accommodation. Additionally, the spot purchased B&B and commercial hotels due to the demand increases is also placing pressure on the budget.
- 5.3 The council must maintain a lawful service to households that it is legally required to place, finding accommodation which is becoming more expensive. This means that the rental levels being paid are significantly above the temporary accommodation subsidy rates covered by housing benefits, which means the council is incurring an increasing overspend gap, referred more commonly to as the Temporary Accommodation Subsidy Shortfall.
- 5.4 The increasing demand and reducing supply means that there is an increase in the households being placed into high cost accommodation such as B&B and commercial hotels.
- 5.5 The use of commercial hotels has almost tripled in the current year, and the actual cost of these per household is also increasing rising from £2,298 average cost per month in April 2023 to £4,202 in October 2023. The cost and use of B&B is also increasing but not as much as commercial hotels but the cost is now almost as much as a private sector leased property but more unsuitable for households who remain there due to lack of available supply. The unsuitability includes limited or no access to cooking or laundry; households spread across a number of rooms as well as the location, which may be central but could be outside the area of choice impacting on school and work commutes.
- 5.6 The table shows the number and cost of four main accommodation types in April 2023 and October 2023. These figures have changed through the year but this provides a snapshot to show the changes in each type of accommodation.

Type	April 2023	October 2023	Change in 6 months
Private Sector Leasing			
No. of tenancies	1,523	1,421	<i>Reduction of 102</i>
Average cost per tenancy per month	£1,376	£1,405	<i>Increase of 2.1%</i>
Licensed Annexes			
No. of tenancies	56	74	<i>Increase of 18</i>
Average cost per tenancy per month	£2,008	£1,583	<i>Reduction of 26%</i>

B&B			
No. of tenancies	347	389	<i>Increase of 42</i>
Average cost per tenancy per month	£1,176	£1,343	<i>Increase of 14%</i>
Commercial Hotels			
No. of tenancies	78	169	<i>Increase of 91</i>
Average cost per tenancy per month	£2,298	£4,202	<i>Increase of 83%</i>

- 5.7 The cost of commercial hotels is three times the cost of a PSL property equating to £50,400 per year in comparison to £16,800. The number of households in commercial hotels has increased by a similar amount to the reduction in the number in PSL – between 90 and 100. If this trend continues then the budgetary impacts will be significant.
- 5.8 The increases in both demand and costs are not the only budgetary impact. There is an increasing level of rent arrears which is not only a budgetary impact for the council, but the rent arrears are – in some cases – preventing rehousing options as these cannot be progressed if the household has a high level of rent arrears.
- 5.9 In addition, the decant of Meath Court and Marston Court means the 90 households who reside in these blocks will need to be moved to alternative accommodation. The focus is on using void properties where possible and B&B / Commercial hotels will only be used as a last resort.

6 The Acquisition Programme Approach

- 6.1 This report builds upon previous reports to Cabinet on Temporary Accommodation Acquisition Schemes over the period since 2013, including:
- Phase 1 (Cabinet February 2020)
 - £23.110m for 58 properties to be funded by £10.500m grant and £12.610 borrowing
 - Phase 2 (Cabinet September 2020)
 - additional £19.153m borrowing for 81 additional properties to be acquired
 - 31 Units in East Acton (Cabinet April 2022)
 - up to £5.137m for 31 units, but involves some element of Phase 2 funding, to be funded from £3.365m borrowing and £1.772m homelessness prevention grant
 - 25 Units and GLA Grant Approval (RTB fund) (Cabinet June 2022)
 - Funding of £3.250m grant to substitute previous borrowing
- 6.2 While the overarching strategy is to continue to focus on early intervention and prevention, there is a defined need for increasing the supply of properties for use as either Temporary Accommodation, or to enable the council to discharge duty and to eliminate the need to use B&B for commercial hotels (except for emergency use in the short term).

- 6.3 The solution cannot be a singular approach, but a range of approaches that can be used as levers to either increase / reduce according to the specific demands being faced at specific times.
- 6.4 This report proposes an envelope of up to £150m of capital funding is used to provide a budget for a range of solutions to be progressed. A gateway process for progressing opportunities through a rigorous appraisal process is being developed and each solution will need to have a financial appraisal, as well as property and legal appraisals that will be presented for consideration to an officer group to ensure there is strong oversight of these opportunities.
- 6.5 The financial appraisal template will be based on previous appraisals, with updated assumptions notably on interest rates, stamp duty, legal costs and lifecycle costs and each proposal would need to be accompanied with a detailed report before it can be progressed. Proposals will need to meet key metrics before being progressed with the expectation that the capital financing (MRP and borrowing costs) for any proposal are met from net rents (rental income after management and maintenance costs). This will include both capital and revenue assumptions and impacts, and also a view of return across a period ensuring any income received is also incorporated.
- 6.6 The programme approach will also provide monthly updates to the Cabinet portfolio holder, showing forecasts, actuals, risks and opportunities along with metrics on outputs being delivered.
- 6.7 The range of approaches that are to be considered are detailed below and each of these will be worked up when they become actual opportunities:

Individual Property Acquisitions

- 6.8 Within the £150m envelope, a sum of £10m per year for two years will be used to fund individual property acquisitions to meet specific needs i.e. larger multi-generational homes; adapted properties. This could also cover acquisition of small hotel blocks as well.

Bulk Acquisitions

- 6.9 Group purchases of small portfolios of properties from registered providers varying out strategic disposals, or private sector landlord exiting the market

Developer Acquisitions

- 6.10 Due to the current condition of the housing market, an increasing number of developers are looking to sell the blocks they have developed through freehold disposal.

Long Leasehold Arrangements

- 6.11 A number of developers are looking to enter into a long leasehold arrangement, or to have a dedicated arrangement of private sector leasing which the council could utilise for discharge of duty. For leases greater than 12 months there are new rules regarding accounting treatment which will likely result in the lease costs

being funded from capital rather than revenue budgets. Before entering into any such leases these matters will be considered by the Finance team with close involvement of the Strategic Property team and will be subject to the same financial appraisal processes as set out above.

Investment into a Real Estate Investment Fund

- 6.12 The council can invest in a fund to support acquisition of properties that are refurbished and managed by the fund which the council can use to end homelessness duty for households. The council would have nomination rights until the end of the fund period, and the capital financing / properties would then be returned. Any financial return is made up of annual cash yield which is used to service the borrowing, plus capital appreciated. The council would not own the properties but a proportionate share of the fund. Should this option be progressed a separate decision report will be brought back to Cabinet for approval.

Refurbishment of existing accommodation

- 6.13 These costs could relate to properties no longer held for regeneration projects, properties that have been empty for a long period as they are not suitable accommodation or conversions which could include converting office / commercial to residential. These would be General Fund properties and costs would be funded through the General Fund. Further discussions would be held to determine if HRA properties can be transferred through a lease arrangement to the General Fund.

7 Management

- 7.1 Each opportunity appraisal will also need to consider how properties will be managed and maintained. Some arrangements may involve a full management and maintenance service being delivered by the council, and there would need to be a review of the existing process and structures to ensure there was adequate resource for the properties to be effectively managed and maintained and costs factored into the appraisals. Consideration will be given to whether this could be done through an arrangement with the Housing function, or whether the maintenance element is procured separately.
- 7.2 Some arrangements will have management and maintenance delivered as part of them, and a level of due diligence will be carried out to ensure that this will be effective with regular reviews taking place to ensure this is being delivered well.

8 Legal

- 8.1 Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 imposes statutory duties on the council to provide temporary accommodation to homeless applicants in a number of situations. These include when it is assessing the homeless application of a person who it has reason to believe may be eligible for assistance, may be homeless and may be in priority need and when it has completed an assessment and concluded that an applicant is owed the full housing duty.

- 8.2 Section 206 Housing Act 1996 states that a local housing authority may discharge their housing functions under Part 7 of the Act only in the following ways—
- (a) by securing that suitable accommodation provided by them is available,
 - (b) by securing that they obtain suitable accommodation from some other person, or
 - (c) by giving them such advice and assistance as will secure that suitable 9 accommodation is available from some other person.
- 8.3 Section 208(1) Housing Act 1996 provides that so far as reasonably practicable a local housing authority shall in discharging their housing functions under Part 7 of the Act secure that accommodation is available for the occupation of the applicant in their district.
- 8.4 Section 210(1) states that in determining whether accommodation is suitable for a person, the local housing authority shall have regard to Parts 9 and 10 of the Housing Act 1985 (slum clearance and overcrowding) and Parts 1 to 4 of the Housing Act 2004 (houses in multiple occupation). The Secretary of State may, by order, specify circumstances in which accommodation is or is not to be regarded as suitable for a person, and matters to be taken into account or disregarded in determining whether accommodation is suitable for a person. The Secretary of State has done so by the following Orders: - Article 2 of Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 1996 provides that in determining whether accommodation is suitable for a person there shall be taken into account whether or not the accommodation is affordable for that person. - Articles 3 & 4 of the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2003 provide that B&B accommodation is not to be regarded as suitable for an applicant with a family except where no accommodation other than B&B accommodation is available for occupation and the applicant occupies B&B accommodation for a period, or a total of periods, which does not exceed 6 weeks
- 8.5 The Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) (England) Order 2012 states that in determining whether accommodation is suitable for a person, the local housing authority must take into account the location of the accommodation, including—
- (a) where the accommodation is situated outside the district of the local housing authority, the distance of the accommodation from the district of the authority;
 - (b) the significance of any disruption which would be caused by the location of the accommodation to the employment, caring responsibilities or education of the person or members of the person's household;
 - (c) the proximity and accessibility of the accommodation to medical facilities and other support which—
 - (i) are currently used by or provided to the person or members of the person's household; and
 - (ii) are essential to the well-being of the person or members of the person's household; and
 - (d) the proximity and accessibility of the accommodation to local services, amenities and transport.

- 8.6 The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has produced [guidance](#) on how local authorities should exercise their homelessness functions, in accordance with the Homelessness Reduction Act 2022. The combined effect of the above homelessness legislation is that accommodation provided or arranged to meet a homeless duty must be affordable for the homeless applicant. Accommodation is not affordable if the applicant would require the local authority to contribute towards the cost of the accommodation. Where affordable accommodation is not available in the borough the local authority must provide affordable accommodation out of borough.
- 8.7 The council has the power to acquire land under section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972.
- 8.8 Section 149 Equality Act provides that the council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to;
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8 Financial Implications

- 8.1 The financial implications within the report are considered within Section 5 (revenue budget pressures) and 6 (previous schemes and assumptions) of the report.
- 8.2 Overall, the £150m Temporary Accommodation capital programme is to be phased £75m in 2024/25 and £75m in 2025/26, and will be reprofiled as necessary.
- 8.3 As noted in the report (6.4 and 6.5), individual schemes within the overall allocation will be considered on a case by case basis in accordance with the agreed delegation as noted within this report and separate decision reports and financial implications will be considered and documented for each acquisition. The capital expenditure arising from the acquisition and associated costs will be financed by a combination of grants (Flexible Homelessness Support Grant/ DLUCH/GLA) and borrowing. The expectation is that for schemes to progress, the financial appraisal will be able to demonstrate that the revenue costs of borrowing (Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) and interest costs) will be met by the net rental income, after lifecycle and other associated property running costs, from within the Temporary Accommodation revenue budget.
- 8.4 As with previous phases of the Temporary Accommodation purchase programme, there is an expectation that the scheme will help to deliver cost avoidance on the housing benefit subsidy loss budget line within the Housing and Environment Directorate which currently has a pressure of £2.8m as at Q3 of 2023/24 and reduce reliance on Commercial Hotels and other more expensive accommodation.

9 Value For Money

9.1 There will be a number of pre-conditions prior to any formal decision being made to draw down funding and enter into any acquisition arrangements as detailed below:

- Prudent financial modelling showing that the borrowing costs and any other financial hurdles are likely to be met for the purchase so there is no additional revenue impact on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
- Consultation with relevant members and officers
- Appropriate due diligence and risk assessment (including evidence of good title) proportionate to the amount of capital being invested and purpose of the purchase
- Valuation advice to confirm the council is receiving value for money
- Effective assessment of the properties including safety and condition
- Compliance with the relevant council financial guidelines
- Sufficient funding being available in the capital programme and revenue budget

9.2 The opportunities will have a financial appraisal which not only considers the rate of return including the assumptions referenced at 6.5, but also the costs that have been avoided i.e. high lease costs / nightly rates to ascertain if it is financially viable. This will also include ongoing revenue costs, any future capital receipt through disposal and consideration of housing benefit subsidy loss impacts.

9.3 Assumptions underpinning the framework are being discussed with Finance, and validated externally with other local authority programmes and benchmarked against the acquisition programmes the council has already delivered (e.g. Emergency Accommodation Programmes). These will be checked and updated regularly and at a minimum – annually.

10 Sustainability Impact Appraisal

10.1 All properties will be procured with sustainability in mind. When each property is procured or brought up to standard following procurement – it will have a minimum EPC rating of 'C' and meet our Lettable Standard.

11 Risk Management

11.1 The setting up of the officer group to review and challenge the proposals being submitted for the use of this capital funding will ensure that any risks with each proposals are evaluated, and mitigations defined. This group will have financial, legal and property representatives on it so ensure that it is not 'just' a

financial assessment but one which covers both the initial acquisition, as well as the longer term management and legal implications.

11.2 The group will also consider expending of initial potentially abortive costs as part of more detailed opportunities to enable appraisals to be progressed and these costs will be monitored on a monthly basis to ensure they do not increase significantly and that any costs expended are covered from existing budgets if not captured as part of an opportunity that progresses.

12 Community Safety

12.1 Providing suitable and sustainable housing provision for homeless households is key to creating and maintaining safe, welcoming and cohesive communities.

13 Links to the 3 Key Priorities for the Borough

13.1 The council's three key priorities are:

- a. creating good jobs
- b. tackling the climate crisis, and
- c. fighting inequality

13.2 The recommendations of this report will support the priority of fighting inequality.

14 Equalities, Human Rights and Community Cohesion

14.1 Providing suitable and sustainable housing provision for homeless households is key to creating and maintaining safe, welcoming and cohesive communities.

15 Staffing/Workforce and Accommodation implications:

15.1 It may be necessary to recruit additional staff to support implementation. It is expected that the majority of these costs could be capitalised where appropriate as costs of acquisition. Where additional revenue costs may be required, an invest to save case will be made for funding.

16 Property and Assets

16.1 The New Accommodation Acquisitions Framework covers a range of options for increasing supply and discussions have been held with both Strategic Property and Housing to ensure that assumptions being made within the financial appraisals are up to date, and that Strategic Property is engaged in any General Fund acquisition approach.

17 Consultation

17.1 None.

18 Timetable for Implementation

18.1 It proposed to begin acquiring properties under this framework from the start of the 2024/25 financial year. The intention is that the programme will run for two years unless sufficient opportunities present themselves earlier.

19 Background Information

- Cabinet Report at Cabinet Meeting: April 2022 – Acquisition of Housing Units - Acton
- Cabinet Report at Cabinet Meeting: September 2020 – Temporary Accommodation Acquisitions Framework Update
- Cabinet Report at Cabinet Meeting: February 2020 – Temporary Accommodation Acquisitions Framework
- Cabinet Report at Cabinet Meeting: September 2013 - Improving the quality of temporary accommodation provision – an alternative to the use of B&B accommodation
- Cabinet Report at Cabinet Meeting: May 2016 – Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy
- Cabinet Report at Cabinet Meeting: October 2018 – Increasing the supply of private tenancies
- [DLUHC Guidance on homelessness for local authorities](#) – 12 January 2017, 30 April 2018, and 27 October 2023.

Consultation

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent to consultee	Date response received	Comments appear in paragraph:
Internal				
Nicky Fiedler	Strategic Director, Housing and Environment			
Alice Rowland	Head of Legal Commercial)	27 Dec 2023		
Russell Dyer	Head of Accountancy			
Jessica Tamayo				

19.1.1 Report History

Decision type:	Urgency item?
Key decision	No
Report no.:	Mark Awbery, Assistant Director for Housing Demand (e: awberym@ealing.gov.uk)