



Havering

LONDON BOROUGH

This Report is part exempt and Appendix A is not available for public inspection as it contains or relates to exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972. It is exempt because it refers to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information), and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

CABINET	10 th December, 2025
Subject Heading:	Bridge Close – Proposed Making of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Order
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Graham Williamson Cabinet Member for Development and Regeneration
ELT Lead:	Neil Stubbings Strategic Director of Place
Report Author and contact details:	Nick Gyring-Nielsen Senior Regeneration Manager nick.gyring-nielsen@haverling.gov.uk
Policy context:	<p>The Council has sole ownership of a delivery vehicle, Bridge Close Regeneration LLP (BCR LLP) whose purpose is to deliver the comprehensive regeneration of Bridge Close, Romford in accord with the Council's development and investment priorities for regeneration as set out in:</p> <p>Havering Local Plan 2016-2031</p> <p>Romford Area Action Plan (2008)</p> <p>Romford Town Centre Development Framework (2015)</p> <p>The emerging Romford Masterplan.</p> <p>Bridge Close LLP Business Plan 2025/26 and Land Acquisition Strategy.</p> <p>Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Update and Capital Programme</p>

Financial Summary

The Council has made provision in the financial year 2025/2026 to provide funding for the Council to meet financial commitments arising from the operation of Bridge Close LLP (BCR LLP) in accordance with the project documents, including costs arising from the BCR LLP Land Acquisition Strategy as approved by Cabinet on 16th December, 2020 the subsequent approved BCR LLP Business Plans 2022/2023, 2023/2024, 2024/25, and 2025/26 as approved by Cabinet on the 5th February, 2025.

Is this a Key Decision?

This is a key decision because the expenditure exceeds £500,000.

When should this matter be reviewed?

December, 2026

Reviewing OSC:

Place

The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People – Things That Matter for Residents	X
Place – A Great Place to Live, Work and Enjoy	X
Resources – A Well-run Council That Delivers for People and Place	X

SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to fulfil a recommendation within the Bridge Close Regeneration LLP Business Plan Refresh 2025-26 report approved by Cabinet on the 5th February 2025.
- 1.2 That recommendation requested that Cabinet:
- “Note that the Strategic Director of Place, in consultation with the Strategic Director of Resources the and the Deputy Director of Legal and Governance, will bring forward a report providing status of the proposed making of the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) for the Bridge Close Regeneration scheme at the appropriate time in the financial year 2025-2026.”*
- 1.3 Cabinet also noted that the Council would support Bridge Close Regeneration LLP (BCR LLP) in the implementation of the land acquisition process as set out in the BCR LLP Land Acquisition Strategy through the deployment of its CPO powers to enable the acquisition of the land interests required for the regeneration development scheme and infrastructure which cannot be acquired by private treaty.
- 1.4 A hybrid planning application with reference P1765.23 was submitted and validated on 29 November 2023 for the redevelopment of land at Bridge Close, Romford (the Scheme), to provide a high quality mixed-use residential quarter delivered across three phases. On 28th August 2025, Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) resolved to grant planning permission for the Scheme.
- 1.5 This paper is brought to Cabinet setting out details on;
- The proposed CPO within the Order Plan; and
 - Requests that Cabinet approves the making of a CPO and related powers in respect of the land, interests and rights to obtain vacant possession, where necessary, to enable the delivery of the regeneration of Bridge Close where it has not been possible to acquire the land, interests and rights by agreement. The scheme, which is shown on the CPO Map of the Order Land at Appendix B, provides for the comprehensive regeneration of Bridge Close, Romford, including the following:
 - i. Up to 1,070 new homes (incl. between 35% and 50% affordable homes subject to viability)
 - ii. A 3-form entry primary school with nursery and SEND provision
 - iii. Community and cultural space
 - iv. Local health facilities
 - v. Commercial floor space, including affordable work space
 - vi. Improved east-west links, including a new pedestrian and cycle bridge
 - vii. Environmental improvements to the River Rom.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. **Agree** to the Council making Compulsory Purchase Order(s) (CPO) pursuant to the statutory powers contained in section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), and section 13 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and all other necessary powers to facilitate acquisition of all property and other proprietary interests on the land, including where appropriate new rights, located within the outline on the CPO Order Plan at Appendix B, for the purpose of securing the comprehensive regeneration of Bridge Close, Romford ("Order Land").
2. **Agree** that the Strategic Director of Place after consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Strategic Director of Resources and Deputy Director of Legal Services be authorised to;
 - a) Make the CPO to enable the acquisition of land, interest and rights within the CPO Map of the Order Land as attached to this report at Appendix B;
 - b) Appoint surveyors, barristers and any other professionals required to promote the CPO and to facilitate the vacant possession of interests located within the CPO Order Plan;
 - c) Settle the final form and content of the CPO and associated documentation to include the:
 - Draft Map of the Order Land, see Appendix B
 - Draft Schedule Freehold and Leasehold Interests, see Appendix C
 - Draft Statement of Reasons, see Appendix D
 - Draft Equalities Impact Assessment, see Appendix E
 - Draft Statement of Community Involvement, see Appendix F
 - d) Take all necessary steps to secure the making, confirmation and implementation of the CPO, including issuing notices on land owners and stakeholders with a view to obtaining information to facilitate deduction of title under section 16 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, publication and service of CPO notices, addressing any objections to the CPO, presentation of the Council's case at Public Inquiry, or Court should such representation be necessary and entering into agreements with objectors/stakeholders;
 - e) Take such actions so as to facilitate Bridge Close LLP acquiring properties and proprietary interests within the CPO Map of the Order Land by agreement, such actions to include; the relocation of businesses, residents and statutory undertakers apparatus or Communication Code Operators; and any other interests and setting out the terms for the withdrawal of objections to the CPO; and
 - f) Amend the number of properties and leasehold acquisitions within the CPO Map of the Order Land at Appendix B and including the extension and revision of the blue line, should such amendments be required to deliver the overall comprehensive regeneration of Bridge Close.

- g) Undertake any further actions and matters incidental to progressing the CPO and facilitating the acquisition of the Order Land.
- 3. **Agree** that the Strategic Director of Place after consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Strategic Director of Resources and Deputy Director Legal Services be authorised following the confirmation of the CPO by the Secretary of State to secure vacant possession of all properties and proprietary interests located within the confirmed CPO Blue Line land to include:
 - a) to take all necessary actions to secure the making and service of a General Vesting Declaration (GVD) or multiple GVD's under the Compulsory Purchase and (Vesting Declarations) Act 1981 and /or to serve Notices to Treat and Entry (if required); and
 - b) to appropriate to planning / or housing purposes any parcel of land within the CPO Order Plan; and
 - c) to; transfer, or grant a license over, all properties and proprietary interests acquired pursuant to the CPO to the relevant development or contractor partner; and
 - d) if necessary, make representation of the Council's case such as at the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) or court should such representation be necessary.
- 4. **Agree** that in the event that the Cabinet approves recommendations 2 and 3 above, and upon the Deputy Director of Legal Services being satisfied that further information and all the Equalities Impact Assessment recommendations have been considered to not require reference back to Cabinet, that the Deputy Director of Legal Services be authorised to affix the common Seal of the Council to the CPO, GVD(s), maps and elsewhere and to take all steps as necessary, such as to issue notices and sign certificates to attain the resolutions above.

REPORT DETAIL

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Bridge Close is a 3.89 hectare site currently occupied by mixed industrial, warehouse and ancillary units under multiple ownerships, an ambulance station, Islamic Cultural Centre and a number of terraced properties which front onto Waterloo Road and Oldchurch Road in Romford. There are 22 commercial properties and 37 residential properties within the site as set out in Appendix C.
- 1.2 The Council has been consistent in promoting and progressing its vision to transform Bridge Close, currently a declining, under occupied, light industrial estate with a degraded environment. It is a key regeneration site on the edge of Romford town centre with an ambitious Council regeneration objective to deliver a residential-led, mixed-use development delivering up to 1,070 new homes including genuinely affordable housing, key social infrastructure, including a new school, health facility, high quality public realm, pedestrian and cycle routes both within and connecting the new community to Romford Town Centre and public transport nodes at Romford Station including a new bridge over the River Rom along with its revitalisation as a watercourse. The development will also deliver commercial and affordable employment space.
- 1.3 On 16th September 2020, Cabinet resolved for the Council to take full and sole control of Bridge Close Regeneration LLP (BCR LLP) in order to ensure the full implementation and comprehensive regeneration of Bridge Close. Previously BCR LLP had been a 50/50 joint venture between the Council and a private sector partner. Although the joint venture had made significant progress in scheme design, consultation and land acquisitions, unforeseen events including the Covid – 19 pandemic, subsequent resetting of development markets and rising construction costs led to the withdrawal of the private sector partner; on 29th October 2020, the Council entered into a purchase agreement to acquire the interest in BCR LLP that it did not already own from the private sector partner.
- 1.4 On 16th December 2020, Cabinet approved the recommendation that the Council continue to deliver the regeneration of Bridge Close, taking sole ownership of BCR LLP and funded predominantly through the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- 1.5 The Bridge Close Regeneration LLP Business Plan 2022-2023 was approved by Cabinet on 16th February 2022 and a refreshed Business Plan for 2023-2024 was approved on the 8th February 2023. Most recently, the Business Plan 2025-2026 was approved by Cabinet on the 5th February 2025. Together, and in and of themselves, these decisions are strong statements of the Council's determination to fulfil the regeneration vision of this key site in Romford Town Centre and deliver the associated benefits, including the generation of long-term social value for people of Romford and the wider Borough of Havering.
- 1.6 The Business Plan forms part of a comprehensive suite of project documents, including the Members' Agreement, the Land Agreement, the Land Acquisition Strategy, and the Loan Note Instruments, which amongst others, set out the strategy and the terms and conditions for provision of funding by the Council as principal Member of the Joint Venture (noting that a wholly owned company of the Council acts as second member of the JV). The Business Plan also includes a budget and financial model with detailed forecasts, which provides a

management framework for delivering the vision and objectives for the regeneration of Bridge Close.

- 1.7 The key strategy document to ensure the comprehensive regeneration of Bridge Close is the BCR LLP Land Acquisition Strategy that has been adopted and approved by Cabinet as part of the annually recurring BCR LLP Business Plan approvals. It will be necessary to obtain full vacant possession, by negotiation or CPO as a last resort, of the site prior to starting any development on site.
- 1.8 The Land Acquisition Strategy provides the proposed strategy, budget and cashflow forecast for BCR LLP to acquire land interests within the development site by agreement. It identifies the agreed approach, priorities and responsibilities for BCR LLP, together with the communication protocols and external support required to successfully implement the strategy.
- 1.9 The primary objectives of the Land Acquisition Strategy are the following:
 - i. To manage the acquisition of the land required to enable the delivery of the proposed development
 - ii. To prioritise acquisition of land by agreement or using landlord and tenant powers, where appropriate
 - iii. To provide clear and accurate information and assistance to third party owners and occupiers within the site in order to mitigate the impact on residents and businesses
 - iv. To assist occupiers with relocation options, as far as this is possible
 - v. To ensure landowners and occupiers have access to good quality professional advice through the implementation of a fee reimbursement policy.
- 1.10 The Land Acquisition Strategy also sets out the principle of the deployment of the Council's Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers as a means of last resort in circumstances where private treaty discussions prove unable to conclude in agreed terms the acquisition and purchase between all parties.
- 1.11 The Land Acquisition Strategy also commits that all private treaty discussions and agreements are completed in accordance with current CPO guidance and regulatory framework to ensure appropriate support as well as disturbance and compensation payments are provided and will ensure:
 - i. BCR LLP will take reasonable steps to acquire land and rights by agreement.
 - ii. Any offers BCR LLP makes to landowners and occupiers will reflect their entitlement to compulsory purchase compensation and the 'value for money' an acquisition may provide to the project as a whole.
 - iii. BCR LLP will engage constructively with occupiers over relocation issues where relevant.
 - iv. BCR LLP will work with occupiers to mitigate the risk of loss, as far as it is able to do so.
 - v. Where disputes over compensation arise, BCR LLP will give consideration to the settlement of those disputes through the early use of Alternative Dispute Resolution.
- 1.12 Within the BCR LLP Business Plan are also two related strategy documents that set out the approach to offering relocation opportunities, if required, to business and residential occupiers. A Business Relocation Strategy and a Residential Relocation Strategy have been developed to support the relocation of businesses to enable sites to come forward for comprehensive residential development.

- 1.13 While the Council has no statutory obligation to relocate businesses, representatives of the Council and BCR LLP have been working closely with business occupiers and owners to provide advice and support as recommended by the CPO guidance. As part of its commitment to support local enterprise the Council and BCR LLP will continue to assist businesses to seek suitable alternative accommodation, and where appropriate, will try to keep quality businesses within the borough.
- 1.14 BCR LLP has also engaged with owner-occupiers of the Havering Islamic Cultural Centre to seek agreement for relocation in accordance with their requirements and pursuant to the CPO Code and Guidance¹. Given the HICC is considered community infrastructure providing community services, which requires relocation under planning policy and CPO Guidance, constructive discussions are progressing having identified a potential site for their relocation at 222-226 South Street in Romford.
- 1.15 BCR LLP has engaged extensively with London Ambulance Service. Current discussions focus on arrangements for the Romford Ambulance Station to remain on site as an integrated part of the Bridge Close Regeneration scheme. This aligns with the London Ambulance Service's objective to retain an operational presence in Romford and provides the option for continued discussions in circumstances where the London Ambulance Service may relocate to a larger site in accordance with their long-term estate strategy.
- 1.16 Meetings/interviews have and are continuing to be held with all residential owners and occupiers to ascertain their specific tenure circumstances and ensure that any solutions offered best meet their ongoing needs and accommodation requirements relocation.
- 1.17 In order to authorise the making and implementation of the CPO, section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 requires that members must be satisfied that the use of the compulsory powers will facilitate the development, redevelopment or improvement of land, and that it is likely to contribute towards the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area. Further, members must be satisfied that there is a compelling case in the public interest for making and promoting the CPO, that the use of the powers is proportionate, and that the public benefits associated with the proposed regeneration will clearly outweigh the interference with the rights of those affected. These matters are explained and considered in more detail below and in the draft Statement of Reasons at Appendix D
- 1.18 The draft Statement of Reasons is the document that sets out the basis of the Council's case and justification for making and pursuing the CPO. This will be served on all those affected by the CPO.

2.0 Progress

- 2.1 Ardent Management Limited (Ardent) continue to act as property and CPO advisor to BCR LLP to identify all parties who may be affected by the Scheme and actively negotiate with all parties with an interest located within the CPO Map of the Order Land, attached at Appendix B, with a view to acquiring their interests by agreement wherever possible, including potential options for the relocation of business interests. Ardent have compiled property cost estimates for all the acquisition sites including valuations, compensation and

¹ The Compensation Code is a collective term used for the principles set out in various Acts of Parliament, supplemented by case law, that relate to compensation for compulsory acquisition. The Guidance refers to, "Guidance on the Compulsory Purchase Process" of October 2024 by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

disturbance costs where appropriate. Ardent have regularly refreshed these to ensure that land interest information is up to date and accurate.

- 2.2 BCR LLP and the Council have sought to engage with all landowners and occupiers via the undertaking of site visits, holding meetings to explain the need for acquisitions and have held a number of public consultation events to highlight the detailed development proposals. The outcomes of the public consultation events are set out in the Statement of Community Involvement at Appendix F. Letters have been circulated to business and residential property owners respectively, to keep them informed of the regeneration proposals and acquisition process as it has progressed.
- 2.3 As such, the Council and BCR LLP continue to engage with all owners and occupiers of residential and commercial interests on Bridge Close. All residential and commercial property owners have instructed valuations and private treaty discussions are underway, noting that in a substantial number of cases, differing opinions of value serves as a source of delay in reaching agreement.
- 2.4 Significant progress has been made on land acquisition to date with the Council having acquired over 70% of the freehold/long leasehold interests within the order land including approximately 64% of commercial properties acquired and or Heads of Terms agreed. 32 out of a total of 37 residential properties, 87% by area, have been acquired. Further engagement and communication is underway with the remainder of owners and occupiers.
- 2.5 Progress is continuing to be made on private treaty discussions with owners and occupiers of both residential and commercial property. The table below sets out the interests acquired to date, exchanged or subject to contracts with a right to purchase on agreed terms.

Table 1 Indicative Property Interests Held by the Council or BCR LLP (Hectares)¹			
Interest	Total (Ha)	Held (Ha)	% Held
Residential Property	0.64	0.56	87%
Commercial Property	2.48	1.58	64%
Public & Other Unregistered Land	0.31	0.14	44%
Unregistered Land with Council as Highway Authority	0.46	0.46	100%
Total	3.89	2.74	70%

¹ Freehold interest held in hectares (ha), Ardent Management Limited, 2025. Total area of 3.89 ha corresponds to area within blue line of the Map of the Order Land in Appendix B.

Including unregistered land of 0.46 ha already held with the Council as Highway Authority, the total area acquired to date, exchanged or subject to contracts with a right to purchase on agreed terms amounts to 2.74 ha or 70% of the total area within the Bridge Close due for long-term regeneration.

- 2.6 Havering Islamic Cultural Centre ('HICC') and the London Ambulance Service (LAS) are two significant non-residential properties on the site where discussions are ongoing but where sites have not yet been acquired. Whilst discussions with the HICC focus on concluding an agreement for the relocation of the HICC to a site outside the Bridge Close boundary, discussions with the LAS centre on retaining the ambulance station on site.
- 2.7 Romford Ambulance Station**
- 2.8 The site is owned and occupied by the London Ambulance Service ("LAS"). The Scheme, as reflected in the current planning application P1765.23, retains the existing LAS building onsite during the implementation of Phase 1 save for a small sliver of the site comprising approximately 303 sqm of hardstanding immediately to the north of the ambulance building.

The sliver of land is required to facilitate the delivery of the school and an emergency fire access route to the rear of the new school.

- 2.9 Since 2016 the Council have made efforts to acquire the entire freehold interest of the LAS site. Despite LAS and the Council working closely together to identify potential relocation properties, however, a whole site acquisition and relocation to a replacement site has not proved possible, primarily owing to LAS resource constraints.
- 2.10 Accordingly, in order to deliver the Council's regeneration objectives whilst retaining the services provided by the Romford Ambulance Station, the Order Land includes the sliver of land only as set out at Appendix B. Private treaty discussions are progressing to reach agreement in advance of any potential making and confirmation of the CPO. Appropriate amendments to the town planning strategy are set out at section 3.0 below.
- 2.11 The sliver of land is presently used to park around 10 ambulance vehicles. In addition, there is a roller shutter door to the rear which, following an acquisition, would no longer function as a secondary access/egress for vehicles. To ensure the existing operational effectiveness of LAS is maintained prior to the acquisition of the sliver, properties next to the LAS site have been acquired and sufficient clear land will be made available to the LAS in perpetuity to ensure the 10 spaces lost are re-provided. Furthermore, appropriate arrangements are in place to ensure meanwhile car parking is provided during construction of the replacement parking facility. Overall, further to technical review, current uses, workflows and access and egress arrangements from the LAS building will remain substantially unaffected by the Scheme and without adverse impact on the response capability and the services provided by the Romford Ambulance Station.
- 2.12 The Council recognises the importance of the services provided by LAS to the local community and has confirmed its commitment to ensure that, with the acquisition of the sliver of land, the existing operational effectiveness of LAS is maintained in perpetuity. The Council notes the LAS estate strategy objective to locate to a larger site elsewhere in Romford in order to facilitate an increase in operational capacity. Equally, the Council's vision for delivery of the comprehensive regeneration of Bridge Close, including LAS land, remains unchanged, leaving open the possibility of entering into private treaty discussions with respect to the remaining LAS land in the fullness of time.
- 2.13 Havering Islamic Cultural Centre (HICC)**
- 2.14 The HICC occupies adjoining land and buildings at 91 Waterloo Road and 9 Bridge Close, which it uses for religious worship and other cultural and charitable purposes. Planning policy and CPO Guidance requires that accommodation housing services of the nature provided by the HICC be reinstated on an equivalent basis in circumstances where the HICC property is subject to compulsory acquisition or redevelopment.
- 2.15 The Council and Bridge Close Regeneration LLP have been in discussions with the HICC and its advisors since 2016 over the proposed compulsory acquisition of its land, compensation and its relocation from Bridge Close. These relocation requirements were complex and limited, in that it was considered vital to relocate within Romford town centre to fulfil its purpose, taking into account the importance of maintaining continuity of services provided by HICC to the community.
- 2.16 Discussions continue to be led by BCR LLP and CPO and property advisors, Ardent Management LLP, with a view to identifying a relocation solution that meets with HICC's requirements. This has included consideration of both on and off-site options, although it is recognised that HICC considers an on-site relocation to be unworkable.

- 2.17 An alternative site within Romford Town Centre, which HICC has confirmed as acceptable, has now been identified at 222-226 South Street and the Council is working with HICC to acquire this site. This includes incorporating the site within the blue line boundary of the CPO, see Appendix B, in circumstances where an acquisition could not be agreed by private treaty negotiation therefore requiring the Council to acquire the site through the use of compulsory purchase powers as a means of final resort.
- 2.18 In accordance with CPO Guidance, the Council is required to compensate the HICC for reasonable costs of relocation. Accordingly, and pursuant to professional advice, the Council has agreed to reimburse the HICC for its reasonable costs of progressing a planning application for HICC's new building. Draft heads of terms for an agreement between the Council and HICC are being progressed. The parties are in discussions on compensation for its existing land and accommodation on Bridge Close, and the arrangements for HICC funding any shortfall between its compensation and the cost of re-providing a new facility. A mechanism for substantiating HICC funding arrangements to the reasonable satisfaction of the Council is being progressed. As such, an agreement between the Council and the HICC will be entered into, setting out the terms and conditions governing the relocation of the HICC from its premises within the Order Land to new accommodation on 222-226 South Street.
- 2.19 The relocation site at 222-226 South Street is currently occupied by a number of tenants whom all hold short-term leases, or leases with break clauses, and vacant possession can be readily obtained, on the understanding that the site will be brought forward for occupation by the HICC in the short term. In accordance with the Guidance, engagement with owners and occupiers is ongoing to inform on Scheme developments and review how the Council may assist affected parties in the circumstances. Furthermore, an Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed in October 2024 and updated in October 2025 to understand and mitigate against differential impacts of the Scheme on members of the community sharing one or more Protected Characteristics.
- 2.20 HICC will only be required to move from its existing premises when the final phase of the Scheme is implemented and the Council and Ardent are working with HICC to ensure that the service it provides to the local community will not be interrupted. As such, the HICC will have the full use of its accommodation on 91 Waterloo Road during the construction of Phases 1, Phase 2 and most of Phase 3, until such time as works on the proposed new accommodation on the relocation site at South Street are complete.
- 2.21 Should HICC, against expectations, be unable to be successfully relocated elsewhere there may be a significant risk that compulsory purchase powers would not be granted, or conditions imposed, preventing the Bridge Close development continuing in the form and scale proposed, including the extensive regeneration and wellbeing benefits noted above and within the Statement of Reasons at Appendix D.
- 2.22 On balance, in relation to the HICC, with a relocation site identified, principles for compensation substantially agreed and continued constructive engagement with relevant stakeholder under way, there is reasonable prospect for successful relocation. An agreement is substantially advanced, setting out terms and conditions for implementing the relocation, including funding arrangements and payment of appropriate compensation pursuant to the CPO Guidance and Code.

3.0 Planning

- 3.1 Planning consent for the scheme is a significant consideration in undertaking a CPO, and a hybrid planning application was submitted on 29th November 2023. The hybrid planning application with reference P1765.23 has been submitted for the redevelopment of land at

Bridge Close, Romford, to provide a high quality mixed-use residential quarter delivered across three phases.

- 3.2 The hybrid planning application has been submitted in full for the initial Phase 1 to provide 383 residential units, commercial floor space, a three-form entry primary school and nursery, a pedestrian/cycle bridge, new pedestrian and vehicular arrangements and extensive new public realm works and associated infrastructure, including the revitalisation of the River Rom.
- 3.3 Outline planning permission has been submitted for the remainder of the site for to provide up to 687 residential units, a community centre, a health centre, office and flexible workspace, retail and other commercial uses as well associated public realm and infrastructure as well as other works incidental to the proposed development. The outline permission is accompanied by detailed parameter plans and a design code to inform future detailed proposals for future phases, serving to ensure design continuity and to safeguard the Council's vision and regeneration benefits of the scheme.
- 3.4 In policy terms, the application site is allocated for mixed-use redevelopment within the saved Romford Area Action Plan (2008). In addition, the Romford Town Centre Development Framework (2015) is a material planning consideration in the determination of the application, allocating the site for significant redevelopment. The Havering Local Plan (2021) also identifies the site as forming part of the Romford Strategic Development Area, which is designated to provide 5,000 new residential dwellings as well as a significant amount of new employment, retail, leisure and community uses, along with connectivity improvements throughout the town centre and to Romford Station from all areas, including Bridge Close. In accordance with the Romford Town Centre Masterplan (SPD), and through working with the Council Masterplan Team, the Scheme is co-ordinated with the overall approach for the Town Centre to ensure a joined-up approach.
- 3.5 The hybrid planning application seeks to redevelop the site in accordance with the requirements of the prevailing planning policy framework. The application proposals have been developed to provide a high density, high quality residential- led mixed use development to reflect the site allocation and the sustainable nature of the site within Romford Town Centre. The provision of residential development would assist in addressing the housing shortfall in the Borough and respond to housing needs, whilst the provision of a range of commercial and community uses would help deliver new employment and social infrastructure to meet the needs of the wider town centre communities. It is considered appropriate and accords with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 3.6 The hybrid planning application was reviewed and considered by the Council's Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) on 28th August 2025. The SPC resolved to grant planning permission for the scheme, noting discussions between the Local Planning Authority and BCR LLP as applicant are underway to seek agreement pursuant to Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
- 3.7 Following the grant of planning permission, it is anticipated that two applications may be prepared to vary the planning permission in order to reflect the Romford Ambulance Station remaining on site in substantial form as set out in paragraphs 2.7 to 2.12 above. The first application will be submitted under Section 96a of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) for non-material amendments to alter the approved description of development on the planning permission. The second application will be submitted under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) for Minor Material Amendments to the approved drawings and supporting information in order to retain the London Ambulance Service in situ. The variations to the planning permission would principally affect Phase 2 of the development, resulting in a reduction of residential units, including affordable units, loss or

reprovision of flexible health and commercial floorspace, and some loss of public open space. The development, as varied, would comprise up to 896 units in total of which 35% of the total number of habitable rooms will be affordable housing. This equates to a reduction of up to 174 residential units from the original Scheme.

4.0 Consultation

- 4.1 Details of the community engagement and consultation activity are set out in the Statement of Community Involvement Appendix F. Further public consultation was undertaken ahead of the planning application submissions being made for the Bridge Close scheme.
- 4.2 The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out a summary of the stakeholder engagement and community consultation undertaken by BCR LLP during the pre-application stage prior to the submission of the planning application. The consultation process has reflected the Council's and BCR LLP commitment to transparency with the local community and stakeholders at every stage. This has enabled stakeholders and the community to engage with the proposals at the earliest possible opportunity and meet with senior members of the project team throughout the process. The consultation process has provided an inclusive platform for discussion and debate, with over 30 hours of direct engagement with stakeholders, groups and residents.
- 4.3 To date, the consultation for the proposed redevelopment of Bridge Close has included:
- i. Individual meetings with local groups and stakeholders;
 - ii. Nine rounds of public consultation events at different venues in Romford Town Centre;
 - iii. Approximately 2,073 residents and stakeholders were engaged during a four-stage consultation from September 2018 to October 2022;
 - iv. 27 hours of community consultation events;
 - v. 38,000 invitation letters to residential and commercial properties in the surrounding area, including over 50,000 emails to publicise the events;
 - vi. A dedicated project website;
 - vii. Over 116,224 residents viewing social media posts and 11,000 questions answered by respondents online; and
 - viii. Online and paper questionnaires to encourage responses. As a result, the application has been informed by feedback from 506 questionnaire responses, 30 hours of public consultation carried out over six separate public consultation events, meetings with community groups, councillors and other stakeholders.
- 4.4 Overall, having viewed the proposals at consultation, approximately 70.9% of residents support the plans for Bridge Close, while 10.6% did not support the plans, and the remaining 18.5% are either undecided or neutral regarding the plans.

5.0 Benefits of the Scheme

- 5.1 The scheme comprises three phases of housing delivery on Bridge Close and will contribute significantly to achieving the Council's housing targets and wider vision for regeneration.
- 5.2 The area represents a significant large-scale strategic residential development opportunity in Havering. The Council's intervention through the Land Acquisition Strategy aims to act as a catalyst and encourage the bringing forward of comprehensive development within the area in order to bring about the transformational change and to achieve the identified development outputs and objectives of the Bridge Close scheme.

- 5.3 The draft Statement of Reasons at Appendix D sets out in detail the rationale and justification for the Scheme, including how the Scheme's development will contribute to the achievement of the Council's regeneration and planning objectives, and result in substantial public benefits, including social value being realised, both within the land included in the Scheme, and as varied pursuant to paragraph 3.7 above, and in the wider area. Members are requested to review the draft Statement of Reasons before reaching a decision.
- 5.4 The draft Statement of Reasons demonstrates that there is a compelling case in the public interest to make the proposed CPO. Development of the Order Land will itself contribute significantly to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area and the regeneration of the wider Romford Town Centre.
- 5.5 The CPO is to be made under the provisions of section 226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, representing the most appropriate mechanism to acquire the land given the scheme is intended to secure regeneration of Bridge Close, delivering not only new market and affordable homes but wider infrastructure including education and health provision, open space, highway improvements and public realm enhancements.
- 5.6 The Department for Levelling up, Housing and Communities' Guidance on Compulsory Purchase process and the Crichel Down Rules, published 29th October 2015 and last updated in October 2024, advise that in deciding whether or not to confirm a CPO, the Secretary of State can be expected to consider factors including the following:
- i. Whether the purpose for which the land is being acquired fits in with the adopted planning framework for the area, including, any non-statutory planning guidance where this has been consulted upon and is intended in due course to be incorporated into the development plan.
 - ii. The extent to which the proposed purpose of acquisition will contribute to the achievement of the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the area.
 - iii. The potential financial viability of the scheme for which the land is being acquired; and
 - iv. Whether the purpose for which the acquiring authority is proposing to acquire the land could be achieved by any other means.
- 5.7 Firstly, in relation to i. above, planning policy alignment, the opportunity and need to regenerate the area in and around Bridge Close has been recognised consistently by the Council as Local Planning Authority for more than a decade, dating back to the Local Plan 2005, and is referenced in the Romford Area Action Plan (2008), the Romford Town Centre Development Framework (2015), the Havering Local Plan (2020 – 2031), and the Romford Masterplan. Bridge Close is an integral part of the designation of Romford Town Centre as an Opportunity Area in the London Plan (2021). Further details are set out in the Draft Statement of Reasons attached at Appendix D.
- 5.8 Secondly, in relation to ii. above, the use of CPO powers to facilitate the regeneration and delivery of new homes (including affordable homes) on the land shown on the CPO Map of the Order Land at Appendix B will contribute towards the Council's promotion of sustainable development with the following well-being benefits:
- a) **Economic well-being** of the area
 - i. New jobs will be created during the construction phase of the housing developments and there will also be opportunities for the local supply chain to benefit.

- ii. The new housing will bring new residents to the Borough which will result in additional consumer spend in the local economy enabling local businesses to grow and create new job opportunities.
- iii. Enabling the implementation of the infrastructure improvements, inclusive of public amenity.

b) Social well-being of the area

- i. New affordable homes will be provided for the local workforce, especially lower wage earners.
- ii. The provision of new high quality, well designed homes with good daylight, good ventilation and the provision of open space will have positive health and well-being impacts for residents.
- iii. Additional Council Tax revenue will be realised by the Council enabling increased spend on local services.
- iv. There will be construction training and apprenticeship opportunities for local people.
- v. Achievement of the wider regeneration objectives including amenity and infrastructure improvements.
- vi. New education and health provision
- vii. New highway, public realm and landscape works to facilitate east-west connectivity across Romford and access to Romford Station for local residents.

c) Environmental well-being of the area

- i. The redevelopment of the land will improve the visual amenity of the area replacing low quality commercial and light industrial uses with high quality new housing developments and public realm.
- ii. The new housing will be constructed to high-energy efficiency standards resulting in reductions in energy consumption and carbon emissions.
- iii. There will be high quality open space and amenity space within the housing developments.
- iv. Enable the revitalisation and reintegration of the River Rom into the local public realm.

- 5.9 Thirdly, in relation to the viability of the scheme, Bridge Close is brought forward in accordance with the Council's regeneration objectives, including the delivery of a comprehensive and sustainable development, providing much needed housing, including affordable housing, and social infrastructure, funded predominantly from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- 5.10 BCR LLP and the Council have undertaken extensive financial modelling of the proposed development based on comprehensive assumptions, including the cost of land assembly, development costs and sales revenues. Each of these inputs has been subject to close review and it has been determined, following professional advice, that the development of land within the CPO Map of the Order Land is capable of achieving a positive return in accordance with the BCR LLP Business Plan. On this basis, it is considered that there is a reasonable prospect of the development being delivered in its entirety.
- 5.11 Viability is underpinned by provision of a funding envelope that is sufficient to deliver the entire development, taking into account all costs of development and financing, and is reviewed and approved by the Council on an annual basis. Whilst the returns on investment fall short of returns otherwise expected in the private sector developments relying on third party bank finance, the project delivers value for money on key regeneration parameters

such as the cost of affordable housing, payback and wider sustainability performance criteria. As such, the project is also viable in regeneration terms.

- 5.12 To ensure the deliverability of the scheme, the development of land within the CPO Map of the Order Land is to be taken forward by BCR LLP and the Council, utilising a dedicated project team of skilled and experienced external practitioners and contractors who have the experience and expertise to carry out the works, having regard to the mixed-use nature and specific parameters of the scheme. BCR LLP has appointed Atkins Realis and Gardiner & Theobald to advise on procurement, having regard to achieving price certainty, quality in delivery and overall value-for-money. Initial soft market testing has taken place in Quarter 3 of 2025 with tier-one contractors having the requisite expertise and track record of delivering high-quality residential development and schools. Atkins Realis have advised of significant interest in the scheme from a suitable number of qualified contractors to ensure competitive procurement and delivery.
- 5.13 Finally, in relation to whether there are alternative means of achieving the Council's purposes in acquiring the land, these could not be achieved by any alternative means or by development in other locations.
- 5.14 The aspiration for a comprehensive development of Bridge Close in accordance with planning policy has been the subject of successive failed attempts by local landowners and developers since the middle to late 1980's. By intervention of the Council through BCR LLP, assembly of the land has progressed significantly. In accordance with CPO Guidance, there have been extensive contacts and discussions with owners and occupiers in relation to the acquisition of their interests, having regard to the parties' relocation requirements, and the principles and parameters set out in policies, plans and strategies of BCR LLP. Negotiations will continue to take place and relocation opportunities will be considered. Owners and occupiers of commercial and residential premises continue to be informed.
- 5.15 Further to negotiations with owners, approximately 68% of the order land held in private freehold ownership has been acquired. Including unregistered land with the Council as Highway Authority, freehold interests within Council control increases to 70%. Offers are in place on all other interests where owners are known.
- 5.16 If the CPO is not made, the only way of acquiring the land and interests needed to deliver the development scheme would be by agreement. Whilst it is recognised that implementation of a CPO is a measure of last resort, the history of the site and discussions to date have made it apparent that, unless the CPO is made and confirmed, it is unlikely that BCR LLP would be able to assemble the land and interests in full as required to bring forward the comprehensive development of Bridge Close.

5.17 Alternative Options

- 5.18 If the CPO is not made, the only way of acquiring the land and interests needed to deliver the development scheme would be by agreement. Following initial discussions, officers consider that securing all of the required interests by negotiation is unlikely to be achieved.
- 5.19 Careful consideration has been given to the extent of the land and rights included in the CPO and whether it is necessary to include all of these interests. All of the land interests shown on the CPO Map of the Order Land at Appendix B are considered by officers as necessary to ensure delivery of the proposed Scheme and its associated benefits.

5.20 Implementation of the CPO

- 5.21 Should Cabinet approve the recommendations within this report, the CPO would be made if it continues to be the case that the required land and proprietary interests cannot be secured by agreement alone.
- 5.22 After the making of the CPO, Order documents would be submitted for confirmation to the Secretary of State for Levelling up, Housing and Communities ("SoS"). A statutory notice regarding the making of the CPO would be served on all affected parties (landowners, occupiers and other third party interests), advertised in the local press, and posted up on the site. The notices served on those affected would be accompanied by the Statement of Reasons, attached at Appendix D, which sets out the background to and justification for the Council using its CPO powers. Service and advertisement of the statutory notices would take place shortly after the CPO is made. The CPO documents would be deposited for inspection by stakeholders within the borough. Service of the appropriate notices highlights the intention to bring forward the Scheme and enables an opportunity for owners and stakeholders to make formal representations/objections to the Order.
- 5.23 Following service of the notices described above, those affected and members of the public have a period of 28 days within which to make representations, including by objecting to the CPO. The period required by law is a minimum of 21 days, but BCR LLP and the Council would seek to provide the community and those affected with ample opportunity to make representations. The prime objective would be to attain an informed and sensible dialogue and effective community engagement.
- 5.24 If no objections are received, or withdrawn prior to an Inquiry date, the SoS may either confirm the CPO or return it to the Council for confirmation by the Council. If objections are received and officers and BCR LLP are not able to negotiate the withdrawal of objections, the Secretary of State will likely arrange for a public inquiry or hearing to be arranged by the Planning Inspectorate. Any member of the public may attend and present their support, objection and cross-examine the Council's witnesses regarding the case for confirmation of the CPO.
- 5.25 Following the Inquiry, the Inspector is likely to be directed to prepare a report inclusive of a recommendation to the Secretary of State as to whether the CPO should be confirmed. The Secretary of State would then make the decision, anticipated early Quarter 1 2027. Following confirmation of the CPO, the Council has a statutory period of 3 years within which to exercise the powers and acquire the land and interests needed for the development. Start on site is currently expected in Quarter 2 of 2027.
- 5.26 As set out in the Recommendations above, this report seeks authorisation, if required, to exercise the necessary powers to obtain vacant possession in the event that the CPO is confirmed. The General Vesting Declaration establishes a process whereby an advance payment of 90% of the Council's valuation of the property may at the Council's discretion, or upon the request of the relevant owner, be paid to the landowner with the ultimate purchase price resolved in the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber).

5.27 Key CPO process risks

- 5.28 There are number of CPO process risks where management and mitigation is required.
- 5.29 Firstly, affected parties may fail to be identified in the CPO. In order to manage and mitigate risk, a specialist land referencing firm, Ardent Management LLP, have been appointed to undertake a land referencing exercise. In order to minimise risk, discussions continue to be held and properties visited by BCR LLP and external consultants, with those affected to

assist to identify all the parties with interests in the area. Pursuant to Section 16 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, Ardent Management will issue notices to all affected parties, requiring them to furnish the Council with full ownership/occupancy details.

- 5.30 Secondly, the preparation of CPO and related documents is a technical and complex area, carrying risk of challenge. Accordingly, the Council has retained experienced professional CPO and property advisors, Ardent Management LLP. In addition, where required, proposals and documentation are reviewed by leading counsel.
- 5.31 Thirdly, there is a risk that owners and occupiers will seek sums in excess of the price cost estimates for the costs of land acquisition. This risk has been mitigated through the receipt of professional valuation advice from Ardent Management LLP and the setting of appropriate budgets, which are subject to continual approval by the BCR LLP Board. In addition, the rights to compensation and methods and procedures for assessing correct amounts are derived from the Compensation Code, setting parameters, which in turn enable consistency, transparency and the ability to forecast with a higher degree of certainty.
- 5.32 Finally, further to all statutory procedures and reasonable endeavours being undertaken to demonstrate meaningful engagement with occupiers and landowners, there remains a limited risk that the Secretary of State may not confirm the Order or confirm the Order with conditions. In the event that the CPO were not confirmed or subject to onerous conditions, there is a risk that the Scheme would not be delivered as envisioned and the benefits arising from the regeneration of Bridge Close would be significantly delayed or at worst, unlikely to be realised.
- 5.33 Further risks are set out in exempt Appendix A.

REASONS AND OPTIONS

6.0 Reasons for the decision:

- 6.1 Utilisation of the Council's CPO powers supports the delivery of the Council's vision and regeneration objectives, enabling the assembly of the site to secure comprehensive residential led mixed-use development on Bridge Close, delivering much needed new housing, social infrastructure and public realm, and providing significant social, economic and environmental benefits for the local community.

6.2 Other options considered:

6.3 Not implementing CPO powers - Not Recommended.

- 6.4 Without making use of its CPO powers, the Council will be unlikely to be able to acquire the land necessary to promote comprehensive residential-led development on Bridge Close and thereby achieve the regeneration benefits, which are sought.

- 6.5 Without the intervention of a CPO, the existing commercial and residential land uses would remain in place and infrastructure would not be improved. It would also not be possible to facilitate comprehensive mixed-use development. Any development that would be brought forward would be likely to be piecemeal and potentially fall short of the aspiration of planning policy and the quality anticipated in the planning application underpinning the Scheme. There would be material risk that any potential alternative development would fail to deliver the required mix, tenures or typology necessary to meet the Council's vision and the objectives of the Bridge Close masterplan.
- 6.6 If the CPO were not made, the only way of acquiring the land and interests required to deliver the initial phases of housing development would be by agreement. Unless a CPO is made and confirmed, it is unlikely that BCR LLP would be able to assemble the land and interests required for development within a reasonable timescale or for a reasonable purchase price. The consequences of this would be that housing and social infrastructure delivery would be delayed, possibly indefinitely, including the provision of much needed affordable housing, health and education provision.
- 6.7 Careful consideration has been given to the extent of the land and rights included in the CPO and whether it is necessary to include all of these. All of the land shown on the plan at Appendix B is necessary to ensure that the Scheme is able to be delivered.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 7.1 Further to the approval of the budget underpinning the Bridge Close Regeneration LLP Business Plan 2025-2026 by Full Council on 5th February 2025, funds are in place to undertake the development in full without recourse to third party financing. Key risks relating to the CPO process are set out at paragraphs 5.27 to 5.32 above.
- 7.2 Financial implications and risks are addressed within the exempt Appendix A.

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 8.1 Section 226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004), provides that a local authority shall, on being authorised to do so by the Secretary of State, have the power to acquire compulsorily any land in their area if they are satisfied that the acquisition will facilitate the carrying out of development, redevelopment or improvement and is necessary to the achieve proper planning on or in relation to the land ...".
- 8.2 The power set out in s.226(1)(a) is subject to the limitation set out in s.226(1A) which provides that the exercise of the power under that subsection must not be exercised unless the authority thinks that the development, redevelopment, etc. "is likely to contribute to the achievement of one or more of the following objects:
- i. The promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of their area;

- ii. The promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area;
 - iii. The promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area."
- 8.3 With regard to the objects set out subsection 226(1)(a), officers set out in the report that an intended purpose of the Scheme is to secure development to enable the delivery of homes, particularly the delivery of affordable homes. As such the subject scheme, would, as a matter of principle, be capable of fulfilling all three of the specified objects, and in particular the "promotion or improvement of social well-being".
- 8.4 The Government's advice on the use of compulsory purchase powers generally, and the use specifically of the power set out in s.226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is set out in its Guidance. The Guidance represents the principal matters, which the Council, should it seek to acquire the site by use of CPO powers, will need to be in a position to demonstrate in evidence both when making and when seeking confirmation of that order.
- 8.5 In summary, the Council must be able to demonstrate, in addition to the legal requirements referred to above arising from the statutory enabling power, that:
 - i. The development sought to be achieved on that land is in accordance with an up to date development plan or, a non-statutory planning framework adopted following public consultation;
 - ii. The scheme will further social, economic and/or environmental well-being;
 - iii. There are no reliable alternative means to deliver the scheme in the time period required; this requirement in practice will include demonstrating engagement with the landowners and occupiers to being forward the required form of development;
 - iv. The acquisition of the land can be funded and the scheme can viably and physically be delivered with no impediments.
- 8.6 These matters have been addressed above.
- 8.7 The overarching principle is that the local authority, in seeking to exercise powers of compulsory acquisition, is able to demonstrate a compelling case in the public interest for the exercise of those powers. Evidence is also required to demonstrate that there is no impediment to enable the delivery of the development the proposed acquisition is intended to facilitate. These matters have been addressed above but, in summary,
 - i. Planning permission or at least a planning committee resolution to grant permission should be in place for the development before making the CPO. Whilst this is not a strict requirement prior to making the CPO under the Guidance, it makes it easy to demonstrate that there are no planning impediments to the development. As set out above, on 28th August 2025, Strategic Planning Committee resolved to grant planning permission for the scheme. Once the outline planning permission is issued, the Planning Authority could make a statement, in support the Council's case at an Inquiry that there are no obvious reasons which are likely to impede the grant of reserved matters outstanding consents.
 - ii. Financial and physical resources are available to acquire the land and to deliver the scheme. The Bridge Close Regeneration LLP is operating with governance, funding and development phasing already in place (see paragraphs 5.9 to 5.11 above and Section 10 in the Statement of Reasons);
 - iii. The context of acquisition sought to be made being that the development proposed, is grounded in a "clear strategic framework" and "planning framework", to which the development of the land proposed and for which acquisition is required will facilitate (see paragraphs 3.3 to 3.6 above and Sections 6, 7 and 8 in the Statement of Reasons);

- iv. Negotiations have been undertaken with landowners and occupiers, with business and residential relocation strategies in place. Therefore, in line with the Guidance, the CPO is being promoted as a last resort (see paragraphs 1.7, 1.10 and 2.17 above and Section 15 in the Statement of Reasons);
 - v. The regeneration of Bridge Close is a key deliverable for the Council as set out in the Local Plan, (see paragraphs 3.4 and 5.7 above and Section 6 and Section 7 in the Statement of Reasons). The scheme seeks to avoid development in a piecemeal fashion and of a scale that can make meaningful contributions towards social infrastructure;
 - vi. Through delivery of the Bridge Close scheme the housing stock will be significantly improved with an increased supply of Affordable Housing located in the administrative area of the borough (paragraphs 3.1 to 3.6 above and Section 7 in the Statement of Reasons); and
 - vii. Construction phases of the development will include training and employment opportunities for residents within the borough and contribute to social infrastructure.
- 8.8 Consideration has been given to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 including Article 8 (respect for private life and family life and home) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (right to peaceful enjoyment of possessions) as set out in paragraphs 12.4 to 12.6 in the Statement of Reasons (and addressed further below). A decision to make Compulsory Purchase Orders must strike a fair balance between public interest in the regeneration of the land and interference with private rights. Bearing in mind the provisions for compensation to be payable and the compelling case in the public interest for the acquisition of the interest, it is considered that the interference with private property rights is proportionate and strikes a fair balance between the public interest and the interests of landowners and occupiers in compliance with Article 1 of the First Protocol.
- 8.9 Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("the Act") empowers the Council to, by order, authorise the stopping up of any highway within the borough to enable development to be carried out in accordance with planning permission in this case the hybrid planning permission P1765.23, which is expected imminently. Any risks associated with the stopping up of the highway is mitigated by the existence of the Planning Permission as in the event of a referral to the Mayor of London, the planning merits of the scheme cannot be delved into. The Council will further manage risk
- 8.10 By way of conclusion, s.226 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 represents a basis available to the Council to acquire the site. The Council will need to be satisfied that the statutory tests and policy tests set out in the Guidance for the making and confirmation of CPO pursuant to that statutory power are met, including that all occupier negotiations have been undertaken or there is a clear plan to undertake such discussions in a meaningful way prior to a request for confirmation of CPO. As set out in the earlier sections of this Report, the statutory grounds are made out in full and the above contained within this report is considered to form a rational basis upon which the requested decisions can be made. If there are material changes to the circumstances affecting the basis on which Recommendations above are advanced, officers shall refer the decision back to Cabinet for determination.
- 9.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)**
- 9.1 There are no Human Resource implications of, or risks relating to, the proposed decision.
- 9.2 The Regeneration Service continues to dedicate resource to the programme management and delivery of the land assembly and compulsory purchase work stream. Current and

anticipated future resource requirements are included in the budget underpinning the BCR LLP Business Plan 2025-2026 as approved by Cabinet on 5th February 2025.

10.0 EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 10.1 The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have due regard to:
- i. the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
 - ii. the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
 - iii. foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.
- 10.2 Under the Equality Act 2010, 'Protected characteristics', are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.
- 10.3 The Equality Impact Assessment for Bridge Close, reported to Cabinet in November 2017, subsequently reviewed in September 2019, November 2021, June 2023, October 2024 and October 2025 as attached at Appendix E, flows from the Council's Equality Impact Assessments for the Havering Estate Renewal Programme and the Local Lettings Plan. To inform the Bridge Close Equality Impact Assessment, engagement with affected residents and businesses has been undertaken, alongside a review of the wider Romford Town ward to establish a demographic profile of those affected. This considered the impact of Scheme proposals on these stakeholders, within the context of the protected characteristics.
- 10.4 The Equalities Impact Assessments provide that, generally, the redevelopment of the site improves the area over the existing situation, including improving housing quality, urban realm, security, access to jobs, and education provision, all of which may mitigate against potential differential impacts on a number of protected characteristic groups.
- 10.5 At present the properties within the CPO blue line area do not reflect a mixed and balanced community, with a heavy bias towards commercial and inappropriate mainly private housing stock. The Scheme proposals seek to address this imbalance through the delivery of a range of residential tenures across the site for example, private housing, a new range of intermediate housing, affordable rent, a wider range of unit sizes across all tenures and 10% of all residential units meeting Wheelchair Standards. Equally, due regard has been taken when considering design and masterplanning principles, and that measures have been included to mitigate against potential differential impacts which may be experienced by some protected characteristic groups.
- 10.6 Overall, there may be some adverse impact from the redevelopment of Bridge Close, particularly as a result of the displacement and disruption caused to existing businesses, staff, residents and their families, and some religious groups. To reduce this impact, the Council continues to work closely with those affected, offering a full package of support, through access to dedicated advice and assistance, through the offer of financial compensation, by offering a range of options to help residents move to a new home and providing businesses and other groups with help in finding and relocating to new premises, as well as additional support to encourage business improvement and sustainability in the future.
- 10.7 The Council believes that the benefits of the Bridge Close redevelopment will outweigh some of the adverse impacts identified. The redevelopment of Bridge Close is predicted to

be largely positive, presenting far reaching benefits and opportunities for Romford, Havering and its diverse communities. This includes making a significant contribution to the provision of new and high quality mixed tenure housing, which will be well managed and sustainable, helping to reduce fuel poverty and contributing to the quality of life for people of all ages, genders, ethnicities and faiths/beliefs. Regeneration of the area will also support economic growth and prosperity across Havering, through creating new mixed workspace and community facilities, which will support business growth, enterprise and inward investment, as well as local jobs, apprenticeships and wider employment opportunities. The development will help to create a greater sense of place and platform for learning, creativity and culture, whilst also supporting education, health, leisure and recreation. The introduction of robust estate management services across the development will aid in preventing crime and social disorder, whilst the new neighbourhood will encourage social inclusion, community cohesion and equality, helping to foster positive relations amongst existing and new communities, including members of the community sharing a Protected Characteristic.

- 10.8 The EqIA of October 2025 concludes the Council has had due regard to its Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010 when considering the impact of the Scheme on residential and commercial owners and occupiers sharing a protected characteristic, and that, where possible, measures have been included to mitigate against potential differential impacts which may be experienced by some protected characteristic groups. In addition to designing and masterplanning the Scheme having regard to members of the community sharing a Protected Characteristic, the Council has sought to mitigate against any adverse impacts through a range of measures focused on engagement, rehousing and relocation assistance (for both residents and commercial units) and compensation options in order to realise the benefits associated with the redevelopment.
- 10.9 Officers consider the existing Equality Impact Assessments for Bridge Close, as updated in October 2025, continues to be of relevance to the project and for the purpose of seeking the approval by Cabinet for the delegation of powers for the making of the CPO.

11.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 11.1 The Council is committed to ensuring the health and well-being of its residents. The decision relates to the delegation of authority to make the CPO subject to appropriate consultation as set out in the Recommendations above. This decision, if approved and fully implemented by the making of the CPO, facilitates the delivery of the regeneration of Bridge Close and will have health and well-being implications for residents.
- 11.2 As such, an updated Health Impact Assessment from September 2024 concluded that the overall nature of the identified impacts is positive or neutral, including positive impacts on housing provision, mental health and wellbeing of the new residents. Opportunities for improved health and wellbeing arise from regeneration deliverables, including access to community green and open spaces, multiple and well-connected public spaces, improved infrastructure for active travel, high quality housing provision, and through associated prospects for business and employment growth. This is supported by efforts to implement design that is high quality, accessible and sustainable.
- 11.3 There may be some adverse impact from the redevelopment of Bridge Close, particularly as a result of the displacement and disruption caused to existing businesses, staff, residents and their families. This may take the form of negative mental wellbeing associated with loss of autonomy due to forced displacement, loss of social connectivity or loss of income. A framework of support and compensation is in place to mitigate these potential

impacts and a number of recommendations have been proposed or are underway as the scheme is progressed through detailed design, procurement and delivery.

- 11.4 There is also the potential for negative health and wellbeing impacts arising during the course of the construction phase. A further Health Impact Assessment would be carried out prior to the commencement of works to identify and maximise any positive impacts and to identify and highlight measures to mitigate against any negative impacts that may arise during the construction or post-contraction phases. In circumstances where construction would be commenced, management plans will be in place to reduce noise, dust and other potential sources of disruption to minimise the potential impacts on resident health and wellbeing.
- 11.5 It is anticipated that the longer term benefits outweigh the potential short term adverse impacts. More efficient use of land, high design standards, sustainable solutions and the provision of social infrastructure ensure that the proposed uses are the best uses of the land. The wider socio-economic and environmental benefits are likely to enhance the health and well-being impacts of the scheme.

12.0 ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

- 12.1 Proposals for the regeneration of Bridge Close have been developed to meet the requirements of local, regional and national policies aligned with sustainability and their associated targets. As such, the sustainability strategy for the scheme has been developed and continues to be progressed with reference to the London Plan (2021), the Greater London Authority's (GLA's) Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) (2014), as well as the Council's planning policies, including the Local Plan 2016-2031.
- 12.2 The sustainability strategy is comprehensive with proposals to meet with requirements in the following principal domains:
- i. **Resource management:** considering issues such as optimising the use of land, the energy strategy, water efficiency, environmental impacts of materials, considerate waste management, nature conservation and biodiversity;
 - ii. **Climate change adaptation:** considering increased temperature and drought risks such as overheating, providing planting and green spaces, and surface water flooding and sustainable drainage;
 - iii. **Pollution management:** considering issues such as land contamination, air quality and noise, light and water pollution; and
 - iv. **Socioeconomics:** considering the benefits the proposed Development will have on the social and economic systems.
- 12.3 The review has been comprehensive across all relevant areas and a number of studies, surveys and assessments have been completed to ensure compliance and mitigate against any potential adverse impacts. Moreover, development proposals, including the approach to master planning and individual plot designs, take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption and any wider potential environmental impacts. In relation to climate change adaptation implications and risks, the following strategies are in place and continue in development:
- i. **Energy Strategy** – proposals focus on communal centralised energy provision using air source heat pump technology and the opportunity to connect in the future to wider heating distribution networks as required. Passive design measures, including the glazing specification, shading and use of thermal mass with night-time ventilation, continue to be refined to meet with good practice recommendations to

- reduce overheating and the need for energy-intensive air conditioning to achieve thermal comfort.
- ii. **Flood Risk Assessment** – proposals mitigate against the risk of flooding by raising finished floor levels where possible, implementation of a surface water management strategy using sustainable drainage systems, increasing heat and drought resistant planting and green cover as well as naturalising of the River Rom in consultation with the Lead Local Flood Authority and the Environment Agency.
 - iii. **Climate Change and Net Zero Carbon Review** – the development is designed in line with the “Be Lean, Be Clean, Be Green” energy hierarchy to achieve net zero compliance, including reducing CO2 emissions for both domestic and non-domestic buildings to achieve at least a 35% on-site reduction against the baseline as set out in Building Regulations Part L 2013. Furthermore, the London Plan targets to achieve 10% carbon savings through demand reduction measures for residential development and 15% for non-residential development are also achieved.
- 12.4 In summary, the proposals for development support the transition to a low carbon future and have strategies in place for the best practice management of wider environmental risks and implications.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Financial Risks and Implications (Exempt)
Appendix B	Map of the Order Land (Public)
Appendix C	Draft Book of Reference (Schedule Interests) (Public)
Appendix D	Draft Statement of Reasons (Public)
Appendix E	Draft Equalities Impact Assessment (Public)
Appendix F	Draft Statement of Community Involvement (Public)