

Notice of KEY Executive Decision

Notice of Key Cabinet Decision containing exempt information. This Cabinet Report contains some appendices which comprise exempt information which is not available for public inspection as they contain or relate to exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the local Government Act 1972. They are exempt because they refer to confidential information and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Subject Heading:	Land at St Andrews Road, Romford – proposed purchase of land and reprovision of Church Hall with Diocese of Chelmsford.
Decision Maker:	Neil Stubbings (Strategic Director, Place)
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Graham Williamson Lead Member for Development & Regeneration
ELT Lead:	Neil Stubbings (Strategic Director, Place)
Report Author and contact details:	Chantal Miller Development Surveyor Email: chantal.miller2@haverling.gov.uk Tel: 01708 432 346
Policy context:	• HRA Business Plan Update 2026/27 & Capital Programme 2026/27-2030/31 • Havering Local Plan 2016-2031 • Havering & Wates Regeneration LLP Business Plan & Budget Update 2026/27

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Financial summary:	The Executive Decision seeks approval to enter into an agreement for the acquisition of land at St Andrews Road, with the financial implications detailed in the Exempt Appendices. This will be funded from the existing capital budget for the 12 Estates programme.
Reason decision is Key	Expenditure in excess of £500,000
Date notice given of intended decision:	24 th December 2025
Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Committee:	Place, Overview & Scrutiny Sub Committee.
Is it an urgent decision?	N/A
Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	No

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

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well X

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy X

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council X

Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

To approve the:

1. The purchase of the land at St Andrews Road, Romford from the Diocese of Chelmsford in lieu of two one bed apartments as valued in Ardent's Addendum report in Appendix 3b.
2. The re-provision of the existing Church Hall currently located on the land at St Andrews Road, Romford, within Block 9 of Phase 1 of the Waterloo and Queen Street development, in accordance with the Reserved Matters application (Ref: P1293.25) submitted on 1 October 2025 and valued by Ardent in their report in Appendix 3.

The acquisition of the land and the re-provision of the Church Hall are required to facilitate the delivery of Block 10, which forms part of Phase 1 of the Waterloo and Queen Street development. The Church Hall will be re-provided within Block 9, also forming part of Phase 1. Approval of these actions is necessary to enable construction to proceed and to maintain the agreed development programme.

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

Cabinet approved the latest Havering and Wates Regeneration LLP Business Plan 2026/27 Update at its meeting on 28th January 2026. Within the recommendations of this report, Cabinet agreed to:

Delegate authority to the Strategic Director of Place, in consultation with the Deputy Director of Legal Services, Strategic Director of Resources and Cabinet Member for Development & Regeneration, to agree terms and acquire all outstanding property interests required for the scheme, including progression of the proposed land swap with St Andrew's Church Hall as set out in paragraph 2.3. This authority extends to acquisition by private treaty or, where necessary, through the approved Compulsory Purchase Order, and to taking all legal and procedural steps needed to secure vacant possession.

This Key Decision records the exercise of that delegation in respect of property arrangements concerning church land/assets with the Diocese of Chelmsford.

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The regeneration of the Waterloo and Queen Street Estate forms a key part of the 12 Estates' Programme, which aims to deliver over 3,500 new homes across 12 existing housing sites. This initiative focuses on delivering high-quality, sustainable homes while investing in public realm, community facilities, and designing out crime. The programme plays a vital role in addressing housing need within the borough by

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replacing outdated and poor-quality housing stock with modern, affordable homes that reflect the aspirations of both current and future residents.

Updated Approach to Delivery

To maintain momentum in the regeneration of the estate, the submission of both a Section 73 application and a Reserved Matters Application (RMA) for Blocks 9 and 10 was brought forward. In response to the Building Safety Act, and the associated viability and programme implications, the development phasing has been revised to prioritise the delivery of these blocks, both of which are below 18 metres in height. This revised approach provides greater programme certainty and efficiency while work continues on the design development and delivery strategy for the taller blocks and enables the earlier delivery of a substantial proportion of much-needed affordable housing.

Alongside the planning process, negotiations to acquire an area of land on the site owned by the Church, needed to enable construction of Block 10 (as shown at Appendix 1) were undertaken. Agreement has now been reached in principle between the parties, and this report seeks authority to proceed.

Unlocking the First Phase

Blocks 9 and 10 now form the new Phase 1 of the redevelopment and will deliver 107 affordable homes comprising 70 for rent and 37 for shared ownership. These homes will provide high-quality accommodation for residents who wish to exercise their Right to Return, as well as help meet the needs of those on the London Borough of Havering's housing waiting list.

Planning Background and Site Context

The estate has had planning permission since 2021, but progress has been delayed subsequently by a combination of economic and regulatory factors.

Key Benefits of the Proposal

The agreement to acquire the Church Hall land by private treaty will allow the Council to deliver both Blocks 9 and 10. This includes the following benefits:

- Delivery of 107 new affordable homes for local people.
- Modern and sustainable accommodation.
- Improved public realm and place making, with new amenity and play spaces.
- A new Church Hall.

Note: The temporary Church Hall unit previously proposed for Plot 3 is no longer required. The new Church Hall will now be in Block 9.

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Conclusion

To ensure timely delivery of the Waterloo and Queen Street regeneration and unlock Phase 1 benefits, it is in the Council's best interests to acquire the Church Hall land by private treaty rather than through compulsory purchase. A negotiated agreement offers the most efficient, proportionate and cost-effective route to securing the land required to deliver Blocks 9 and 10 concurrently, maintaining programme momentum and reducing financial and delivery risk.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

In developing the recommended course of action, the Council has considered a range of alternative options in relation to securing the land required to deliver Blocks 9 and 10 of the Waterloo and Queen Street redevelopment. These options are set out below.

Option 1: Do Nothing / Defer Acquisition

Rejected as it would prevent delivery of Block 10, disrupt Phase 1 phasing, and delay affordable housing.

Option 2: Deliver Block 9 Only

Rejected due to loss of build efficiencies, higher costs, programme delays, reduced value for money, and the delay of 37 affordable homes.

Option 3: Compulsory Purchase

Rejected due to time, cost and uncertainty of the CPO process, increased legal and compensation risk, and potential programme delays impacting affordable housing delivery.

Preferred Option: Private Treaty (Recommended)

Most efficient, timely and cost-effective route to deliver Blocks 9 and 10 concurrently, minimising risk and enabling early delivery of 107 affordable homes.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

Formal consultation has been undertaken with key stakeholders in relation to the proposed acquisition of the Church Hall land at St Andrews Road and reprovision of the Church Hall as part of Blocks 9 within Phase 1 of the Waterloo and Queen Street redevelopment.

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER

Name: Chantal Miller

Designation: Development Surveyor

Signature: *Chantal Miller*

Date: 26-02-26

Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The proposed decision to acquire the Church Hall land at St Andrews Road by private treaty has several legal implications and associated risks, which have been carefully considered as part of the decision-making process.

The Council has the legal power to acquire land by agreement for the purposes of housing and regeneration under relevant statutory provisions. Acquisition by private treaty represents a lawful and proportionate approach to securing the land required to deliver the Waterloo and Queen Street redevelopment and aligns with the Council's regeneration and housing objectives.

The Council is under a statutory duty pursuant to section 123(2) of the Local Government Act 1972 to obtain the best consideration reasonably obtainable when disposing of land. In practice, this is usually the price obtainable in the open market, which is why a formal valuation is obtained where the land is not being sold through an open market process. There are, however, important caveats to this duty:

- Where land has been appropriated for planning purposes, it may be disposed of in such manner and on such terms as appear expedient to secure the best use of the land or the carrying out of works needed for the proper planning of the Council's area. Where such a disposal is to be at less than the best consideration reasonably obtainable, the consent of the Secretary of State is required.
- Under the General Disposal Consent 2003, a local authority may dispose of land at below market value where the transfer promotes or improves the economic, social, or environmental well-being of the area. Such a disposal may be made without Secretary of State consent provided the undervalue does not exceed £2,000,000, making this the most straightforward route where the threshold is not exceeded.

The principal legal risk in this case relates to the failure to conclude a negotiated agreement with the Church. Without acquisition of the land, the Council would be unable to construct Block 10, resulting in delays to the revised Phase 1 programme and potential exposure to increased costs and contractual risk. Continued delay could also give rise to further legal and reputational risks associated with prolonged site inactivity.

The alternative of progressing acquisition through Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers introduces significant legal complexity, cost, and uncertainty. The CPO process is lengthy and resource-intensive, and there is no certainty that an Order would be confirmed. A failed or delayed CPO could materially impact the delivery of affordable housing and expose the Council to additional legal challenge and compensation liabilities.

Acquiring the land by private treaty also mitigates the risk of legal challenge associated with compulsory purchase, including challenges on public interest, proportionality, and human rights grounds. By securing a negotiated agreement, the

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Council reduces the risk of litigation, avoids public inquiry processes, and ensures greater certainty of outcome.

Overall, the proposed decision represents a legally robust and proportionate approach that minimises risk, supports the timely delivery of the regeneration scheme, and is consistent with the Council's statutory duties, including the requirements of s123(2) of the Local Government Act 1972, and strategic regeneration and housing objectives.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The proposed decision to acquire the Church Hall land at St Andrews Road by private treaty plus reprovision of the existing church hall has been assessed as part of the wider financial modelling for Phase 1 of the Waterloo and Queen Street redevelopment. If the reprovision is not delivered by the agreed Longstop Date, a payment in lieu of the Church Hall would be required.

The financial details of the agreement are set out in Exempt Appendix 4. With the cost being funded from the existing capital budget set aside for the scheme.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The recommendations made in this report do not appear to give rise to any identifiable HR risks or implications that would affect either the Council or its workforce.

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

An EHIA (Equality and Health Impact Assessment) has not been completed and is not required for this decision. The Council seeks to ensure equality, inclusion, and dignity for all. There are no significant health and wellbeing risks directly arising from the proposal laid out in the report, and health and wellbeing benefits will be realised when the blocks are complete and ready for occupation.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

There are no significant health and wellbeing risks directly arising from the proposal laid out in the report, and health and wellbeing benefits will be realised when the blocks are complete and ready for occupation.

Once complete, the redevelopment of Blocks 9 and 10 will have a broadly positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents by addressing social, economic, environmental, and lifestyle determinants of health. Any residual negative impacts, such as temporary construction noise or disruption, can be mitigated through established construction management plans, community engagement, and adherence to environmental health standards.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The proposed development will be new build with energy efficient materials that are resilient to climate change. The scheme has been informed by robust sustainability and overheating assessments to help meet the challenges of climate change. Measures

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such as the utilisation of Air Source Heat Pumps, Green Roofs, Sustainable Urban Drainage systems, additional urban greening and landscaping help ensure the scheme well considers the environment and climate change implications.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Business Plan 2026/27.

APPENDICES

Public Appendix 1 – Site Plan illustrating the location of the Church Hall

Public Appendix 2 – Site Plan illustrating the location of Blocks 9 and 10

Exempt Appendix 3a – Ardent Compensation Assessment Report dated 25 July 2025

Exempt Appendix 3b – Associated addendum to Compensation Report dated January 2026.

Exempt Appendix 4 – Financial Implications.

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Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Proposal agreed

Details of decision maker

Signed



Neil Stubbings
Strategic Director of Place

Date: 19th March 2026

Lodging this notice

The signed decision notice must be delivered to Committee Services, in the Town Hall.

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____