

Decision type: Decision Specifically Delegated to Officers

Decision date: 30 July 2026

Decision maker: Tom Bridgeman, Deputy Chief Executive, Place

Decision title: Approval of Long Lease Disposal to Oxfordshire Community Land Trust – Balfour Road & Pegasus Road

Summary	
Decision being taken:	Approval of Long Lease Disposal to Oxford Community Land Trust – Balfour Road & Pegasus Road
Key decision:	No
Source of delegation:	Cabinet 24 January 2024. Agenda item - Brownfield Land Release Fund: Development of Small Sites for Affordable Housing Oxford City Council <i>“7. Delegate authority to the Executive Director (Development) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Head of Law and Governance/Monitoring Officer, to agree the final terms and enter into the agreement with Oxfordshire Community Land Trust (OCLT) to dispose of the land via a long lease; along with any licences, party wall agreements, grant agreement, or other necessary agreements to enable delivery of the affordable housing at the former garage/ garage sites at Balfour Road; Harebell Road and Pegasus Road for the purpose of enabling the delivery affordable housing subject to compliance with the legal requirements of S123 of the Local Government Act 1972”</i>
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing
Corporate Priority:	More Affordable Housing and Meeting Housing Needs
Policy Framework:	Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023 to 2028

The Deputy Chief Executive, Place decides as follows:

1. To dispose of the properties known as land at Balfour Road, Oxford and Pegasus Road, Oxford to Oxfordshire Community Land Trust by long lease

for a term of 250 years for a premium of £65,000 (Balfour Road) and £50,000 (Pegasus Road) for use for Affordable Housing on the sites.

- 2 Prior to the grant of the leases to enter into an agreement for lease conditional upon Oxfordshire Community Land Trust obtaining planning permission for development of residential units on the sites.

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Equality Impact Assessment	No

Introduction and background

1. This report seeks approval to dispose of the Council's interests in land at Balfour Road, Oxford and Pegasus Road, Oxford by way of the grant of 250-year leases to Oxfordshire CLT Limited trading as Oxfordshire Community Land Trust (OCLT), subject to contract and on terms to be agreed by the Executive Director (Development) in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer) and the Group Finance Director (Section 151 Officer).
2. The Council has been working in partnership with OCLT, a locally established community-led housing organisation, to bring forward proposals for the redevelopment of the two sites at Balfour Road, Oxford and Pegasus Road, Oxford. OCLT's primary purpose is the delivery and long-term stewardship of genuinely affordable housing for local people, and it has an established track record of working collaboratively with stakeholders to deliver community-focused housing schemes.
3. The sites at Balfour Road and Pegasus Road are Council-owned assets identified as suitable for redevelopment. The proposed disposal will facilitate the delivery of social and affordable rented homes, contributing to the Council's strategic objective of increasing the supply of affordable housing and supporting community-led delivery models. The homes will be secured as affordable the leases to be granted and through appropriate legal mechanisms, including OCLT's participation in the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing (ORAH) and associated contractual provisions.
4. Under the proposed terms, the Council will grant:
 - A 250-year lease of land at Balfour Road for a premium of £65,000; and
 - A 250-year lease of land at Pegasus Road for a premium of £50,000.
5. The consideration reflects not only the land value but also the significant social, economic and community benefits associated with delivering affordable housing on these sites.
6. The leases, and the agreement for lease which will precede them, will include appropriate contractual safeguards to protect the Council's interests and ensure delivery in line with agreed objectives. These include:
 - Development obligations and agreed delivery timescales, including longstop dates in the agreements for lease;

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- Restrictions on disposal or change of use; and
 - Provisions to ensure the homes remain affordable;
 - The principal benefits of the proposed disposal are:
 - Delivery of much-needed affordable and social rented housing;
 - Support for community-led housing provision within Oxford;
 - Effective use of underutilised Council-owned land; and
 - Contribution to sustainable and inclusive neighbourhoods.
7. Key risks include the potential for delays in delivery or failure to meet agreed housing objectives. These risks will be mitigated through robust legal agreements incorporating milestone provisions, performance requirements, and reversionary or financial protections where necessary.

Reasons for the decision

8. The decision is made to enable the delivery of genuinely affordable and social rented homes on two Council-owned sites in Oxford, in line with the Council's strategic priority to increase affordable housing supply and support community-led housing initiatives. Granting 250-year leases to OCLT will secure long-term affordability, while ensuring the sites are developed and managed by an organisation with a strong local focus and proven track record. The proposed disposal represents an effective use of Council land, delivering both a financial receipt and significant social and community benefits. Appropriate legal safeguards will be included to mitigate risks and ensure timely delivery in accordance with agreed housing objectives, making this a robust and policy-aligned approach to meeting local housing need.

Alternative Options Considered

Do nothing (retain the sites in Council ownership): this option is not recommended as it would result in the sites remaining underutilised and would not contribute towards the delivery of much-needed affordable housing. It would also fail to support the Council's strategic priorities around housing delivery and community-led development. Dispose of the sites on the open market: this is not recommended as disposal on the open market would reduce the Council's ability to secure long-term affordability and community benefit outcomes aligned with its housing objectives.

Develop the sites directly through the HRA or via OX Place could deliver affordable housing: it was not preferred in this instance due to resource constraints, competing delivery priorities, and the opportunity to support a locally established community-led housing provider. Partnering with OCLT enables diversification of delivery models and supports community stewardship.

9. Dispose of the sites to an alternative Registered Provider or developer: this was considered but not recommended as OCLT brings a specific community-led approach, with a strong focus on long-term affordability and local engagement. The proposal aligns closely with the Council's objectives to support community-led housing and deliver sustainable neighbourhoods.

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Implications of Local Government Reorganisation

10. The proposed decision has been considered in the context of the Government's guidance on Financial decisions before local government reorganisation. The disposal of the sites at Balfour Road and Pegasus Road supports the Council's adopted strategic priorities, particularly the delivery of affordable housing, and represents a proportionate and policy-aligned use of Council assets rather than a significant new financial commitment or long-term liability.
11. The grant of 250-year leases at agreed premiums reflects appropriate value when taking into account the social, economic and community benefits, and includes safeguards to protect the Council's interest. The transaction is not speculative in nature and does not expose the authority to undue financial risk; instead, it facilitates the delivery of much-needed affordable housing through an established partner. On balance, the decision is consistent with the principles of the guidance, as it is necessary to maintain service delivery and meet identified housing need, and it does not unreasonably restrict the options of any successor authority.

Equalities Impact

12. The proposed disposal is expected to have a positive equalities impact. The development of affordable housing at Balfour Road and Pegasus Road will contribute towards meeting identified housing need within Oxford, particularly benefiting individuals and households who are disproportionately affected by housing affordability pressures. This includes groups with protected characteristics such as lower-income households, families with children, older people, and some minority ethnic communities who are statistically more likely to experience barriers to accessing suitable housing.
13. By working with OCLT, a community-led organisation, the scheme supports inclusive housing delivery and local engagement, helping to ensure that the homes meet the needs of the community they serve. Allocation through the Oxford Register for Affordable Housing (ORAH) will ensure fair and transparent access to the homes.
14. No adverse equalities impacts have been identified as a result of this decision. The inclusion of long-term affordability provisions will ensure that the benefits of the scheme are sustained, supporting equal access to housing over the long term.

Risks

15. There is a risk that the developments may not be delivered within the agreed timeframe or in line with the intended affordable housing objectives. This will be mitigated through robust contractual provisions, including development milestones, longstop dates, and potential reversionary or financial remedies.
16. There is a risk that, without appropriate safeguards, the homes may not remain affordable. This will be mitigated through legal restrictions, including provisions within the lease and nomination arrangements (e.g. ORAH), ensuring ongoing affordability and control over future use or disposal.

Implications of making the decision

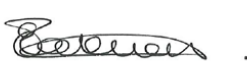
Financial implications	The proposed grant of 250-year leases at Balfour Road and Pegasus Road will generate total capital receipts of £115,000, comprising £65,000 and £50,000 respectively. The disposal does not require any additional capital expenditure by the Council and enables the delivery of affordable housing by Oxford Community Land Trust without direct HRA or General Fund development investment. Whilst the Council may be foregoing a higher capital receipt than could potentially be realised through open market disposal, the proposed terms reflect the significant social value and affordable housing benefits delivered by the scheme. Appropriate contractual protections, including development obligations, provisions and longstop dates, will mitigate financial risk and protect the Council's interests.	Completed by: Jason Jones Finance Business Partner Date: 08/07/2026
Legal implications	The forms of agreement for lease, and leases, are being finalised in consultation with legal services and it is considered they are in line with the decision taken at Cabinet on 24th January 2024. The activities set out relate to activity for the purpose of developing homes as affordable housing. This is within the Council's statutory powers. The general power of competence under the Localism Act 2011 and the Local Authorities (Land) Act 1963 enable the Council to develop land it already owns. Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires the Council not to dispose of land for a consideration that is less than the best consideration reasonably obtainable. Valuations for both leases have been obtained confirming the leases will comply.	Completed by: Kathleen Fraser, Locum Property Lawyer Date: 20/07/2026

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	IN ADDITION TO DoLG&S CONSULTATION	
Other implications	N/A	Completed by: Daniel Bond Date: 29/07/2026
Member declared interests	N/A	Completed by: Daniel Bond Date: 29/07/2026

Report author	Daniel Bond
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Consultee checklist

Consultees	Name and job title	Date
Senior officer e.g. the relevant service manager / Director where the decision maker is the Chief Executive or a Deputy Chief Executive.	Where a consultation is not required state N/A	N/A
Group Finance Director Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	Alistair Rush, Interim Group Finance Director	20 th July 2026
Director of Law, Governance and Strategy Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	 Emma-Louise Jackman, Director of Law, Governance and Strategy	21 st July 2026

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Cabinet Member(s) Where required by the conditions of the delegation	Cllr. Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities	24 th July 2026
Ward Members Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation		Not required

Decision Maker Approval

<i>Name and job title</i>	<i>Date</i>
Tom Bridgman Deputy Chief Executive, Place	29 July 2026

This form must be completed and sent to Committee and Member Services **on the date that the decision maker signs it. This must be only done once all consultees have given their approval. The decision shall be effective from the date of publication; therefore, it is important that you send to Committee and Member Services as soon as it is completed and dated by the decision maker. Please note that it is not effective until it is published and the call in period has passed.**

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NOTES

The law¹ requires the Council to record executive and non-executive decisions taken by officers under delegated powers and to publish them on the Council's website.

These requirements apply to decisions that would have been taken by Council or the Cabinet if delegated powers had not been given to an officer:

- under an express delegation granted at a meeting of Cabinet, Council or a Committee.
- in accordance with Part 4.4 of the Constitution as follows:
 - Awarding a contract where authority has been specifically delegated to officers by Cabinet or a Cabinet Member (regardless of value)
 - Acquiring or disposing of freeholds or leaseholds granting new leaseholds (excluding assignments and rent reviews) where authority has been specifically delegated to officers by Cabinet or a Cabinet Member (regardless of value)
 - Making a regulatory order which affects a number of people, for example a Public Space Protection Order or a Parking Place Order
 - Where the effect of a decision is to grant a licence or permission or it affects the rights of citizens
 - Discharging any other express delegation from Cabinet or a Cabinet Member a committee or Council.

These requirements **do not** apply to:

- planning and licencing matters where there are established arrangements for recording decisions: or
- decisions which are purely administrative or operational in nature

All other officer decisions should be recorded on an officer decision form but do not need to be published. They must though be stored so as to ensure that they are not lost should an officer leave the authority.

Exempt or Confidential information

Information relating to a delegated officer or single member decision does not have to be made public if it is exempt or confidential. Summary information from this decision sheet (excluding all exempt or confidential information) will be published on the Council's website.

¹ the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012/2089 (Regulation 13(4)) and The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014/2095 (Regulation 7)

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Key or Non Key Decision

A key decision is an executive decision which is likely to:

- Have a significant effect on people living or working in a least two wards or
- Involve spending, income, or saving a significant amount – whether an amount is significant depends on the Council's total budget for the service involved. For this Council 'significant' in budgetary terms is:
 - Expenditure, income, or savings of £750,000 or greater in the context of the medium term financial strategy,
 - Acquiring or disposing of freeholds with a consideration over £500,000 in the context of the medium term financial strategy except for disposals pursuant to right to buy legislation
 - Acquiring or disposing of leaseholds where either the rental value is in excess of £250,000 per annum and/or the premium is £750,000 except for statutory lease renewals under Part 2 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954 and disposals pursuant to right to buy legislation and disposals pursuant to right to buy legislation.
 - Acquiring or disposing of easements with a value over £750,000 and/or rental value over £250,000 each year

A key decision can only be taken and recorded here if notice of it has been published on the Forward Plan for at least 28 clear days. Key decisions taken by officers may be "called in" by any four councillors or the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee within two days of the notice of decision being published.

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