

Decision type: **Decision Specifically Delegated to Officers**

Decision date: 8 January 2026

Decision maker: Nerys Parry, Director of Housing

Decision title: To enter into a purchase agreement with West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) to purchase land, property and freehold at 21 Between Towns Road (Knights Court)

Summary	
Decision being taken:	To enter into a purchase agreement with West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) to purchase land, property and freehold at 21 Between Towns Road (Knights Court) to progress the development of affordable homes at Between Towns Road (Knights Court).
Key decision:	Yes Issue details - Delivery of Affordable Housing Oxford City Council
Source of delegation:	Cabinet, on the 17 September 2025 resolved to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delegate authority to the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Affordable Housing; the Head of Financial Services/Section 151 Officer; and the Council's Monitoring Officer, to enter into agreements for the purchase of land; build contracts and any other necessary agreements or contracts to facilitate the development within the identified budget, for the provision of additional affordable housing; and 2. Grant approval for a virement within the HRA capital budget for scheme costs of £8.9 million. The virement will be from the "Properties purchased from OCHL" (Oxford City Housing Limited) purchase line into a new scheme line to be profiled to match the build programme across the four years from 2025/26 to 2028/29;
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities

Corporate Priority: More Affordable Housing.

Policy Framework: Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023 to 2028

The Director of Housing, decides as follows:

1. **Approve, and agree to** enter into a purchase agreement with West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) to purchase land (the value set out in the confidential Appendix 1), property and freehold at 21 Between Towns Road (Knights Court) to progress the development of affordable homes at Between Towns Road (Knights Court).

Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Financial Information Knights Court	Yes This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 since it is: The information relates to the financial and business affairs of the council
Appendix 2	Planning considerations & risk	Yes This information is exempted from publication under Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 on the following basis: The information relates to the financial and business affairs of the council

Introduction and background

1. Knights Court (21 Between Towns Road) has been identified as an opportunity for the delivery of more affordable homes.

Scheme information

2. The Between Towns Road site (Knights Court) is a vacant three-story office block on Between Towns Road, Cowley. The freeholder is West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC).
3. The proposed delivery model is for HRA direct delivery, with OCHL employed as the Development Agent through a Development Services Agreement (DSA). OCC will

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purchase the land from WODC. The purchase price is set out in Appendix 1. Following acquisition there will be no sale of the OCC land. Instead, OCC will grant the OCHL rights to implement the development on the Council's land under licence. The contract between OCC and OCHL will oblige OCHL to procure the grant of this licence along with procuring and appointing a contractor.

Reasons for the decision

4. The decision to enter into a purchase agreement with West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) to purchase land, property and freehold at 21 Between Towns Road (Knights Court) will enable the development/ delivery of affordable homes to increase the supply available to help meet Oxford's housing needs.

Alternative Options Considered

5. The option of not proceeding with Knights Court as a development opportunity would mean that the site does not realise its full potential to deliver affordable housing to help meet the 1,600 homes target across the 4-year MTFP. The current programme for Knights Court targets a project completion of end of 2027 – providing an opportunity to deliver 246 homes relatively quickly, compared with other larger pipeline sites.
6. The decision to proceed with any purchase or development will be supported by a development scheme appraisal/ financial modelling to ensure that the agreed financial parameters and requirements are met.
7. The financial appraisal for Knights Court has established a proposed HRA capital budget for scheme costs of £8.9 million. A budget virement from the "Properties purchased from OCHL" purchase line into a new scheme line is required to match the build programme across the four years from 2025/26 to 2028/29, approval for which was given by the Cabinet at its meeting on 17 September 2025.

Equalities Impact

8. There are no adverse impacts in undertaking this activity, with the potential to improve provision for persons in housing need, through the provision of more affordable and accessible housing to better meet client needs.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

9. All development schemes delivered by OCC/OCHL are subject to high sustainability standards with the expectation that they exceed statutory (building) standards.

Implications of making the decision

Financial implications	This scheme is budgeted for within the HRA business plan but requires the budget virement as recommended as this is now proposed to be a direct delivery scheme.	Completed by: Jason Jones Finance Business Partner Date:
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		29/12/2025
Legal implications	<p>The terms of the purchase have been reviewed by the legal department, including the sale contract and transfer. It is considered that the terms protect the Council's position and are in line with the Council's obligations in s123 Local Government Act 1972.</p> <p>This decision has been taken in consultation with the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy.</p>	Completed by: Stephanie Green Locum Commercial Property Solicitor Date: 23 December 2025
Other implications	N/A	Completed by: Insert name and job title Date: Insert date
Member declared interests	N/A	Completed by: Insert name and job title Date: Insert date

Background Documents	
Cabinet Report Knights Court (21 Between Towns Road) .	All confidential, exempt, copyrighted and published works are EXCLUDED from this requirement.

Report author	Rebecca Dedman
Job title	Regeneration Officer
Service area or department	Economy, Regeneration & Sustainability
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Consultee checklist

Consultees	Name and job title	Date

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Senior officer e.g. the relevant service manager / Director where the decision maker is the Chief Executive or a Deputy Chief Executive.	Dave Scholes, Affordable Housing Supply Corporate Lead	23/12/2025
Group Finance Director Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	Nigel Kennedy, Group Finance Director (Section 151 Officer)	02/01/2026
Director of Law, Governance and Strategy Where required by the Constitution or conditions of the delegation	Emma Griffiths, Legal Services Manager for and on behalf of the Director of Law, Governance and Strategy (Monitoring Officer)	7 January 2026
Cabinet Member(s) Where required by the conditions of the delegation	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities	31/12/2025

Decision Maker Approval

Name and job title	Date
Nerys Parry, Director of Housing 	08.01.26

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)

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 at 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.