

BRIEFING PAPER

Tavistock Place, Brownfield Land Release Funding Round 2



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The Council has successfully secured £353,250 from the Brownfield Land Release Fund Round 2 to demolish two redundant Council owned buildings in Tavistock Place, near The Box. This briefing paper provides an overview of the work to prepare for the demolition works and future redevelopment of the site.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Tavistock Place is located in Plymouth City Centre close to the main university campus and The Box. Plymouth City Council own land in this area including a site which is currently occupied by two old, poor quality, redundant buildings which until recently have provided storage for the Museum and Gallery.
- 2.2. The redevelopment of Council owned land in Tavistock Place, as part of the regeneration of the wider area, is a long-held ambition. The area is included in the Joint Local Plan as part of Policy PLY18 and the Former Plymouth Social Club was acquired by the Council in 2017 for redevelopment along with adjacent Museum Annex.
- 2.3. In March 2023 the Council submitted an application to the Brownfield Land Release Funding Round 2 (BLRF2) for funding to demolish the Museum Annex and former Plymouth Social Club removing a significant development cost and de-risking the site. The demolition of these buildings is a critical first step to redevelopment which will further improve the area which has benefited from significant investment over the last few years and as a result has now established itself as a major destination within the city centre.

3. PROPOSED CHANGES AND REASONS

- 3.1. The Council has recently been notified that its application to the BLRF2 has been successful and is now looking to proceed with the appointment of a contractor to undertake the demolition works.
- 3.2. Whilst the details of the future redevelopment of the site are yet to be determined the aspiration is that any new development builds upon the recent investment in the area. As such future development on the site will be expected to incorporate high quality design with active ground floor uses and whilst the details are the subject of ongoing work and consultation with partners, stakeholders and local agents, the aim is to include uses which complement The Box and firmly establish the area as a vibrant cultural and leisure destination.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1. The buildings are currently vacant and in a very poor condition and the former Plymouth Social club is considered to be uninhabitable. In a 'do nothing' scenario the most likely outcome is that the buildings would remain unoccupied and would continue to deteriorate. In the best case it may be possible to re-let the Museum Annex for a low value use, such as storage but the opportunity to use the BLRF 2 funding to support a comprehensive redevelopment of the site would be lost.

- 4.2. An alternative option would be to redevelop the existing buildings for an alternative use. However, the buildings are considered obsolete, not just physically but functionally.
- 4.3. The recommend option is utilise the BLRF2 funding to demolish the existing buildings, creating the opportunity for a new development which supports the regeneration of the area.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISK

- 5.1. At this stage the main risks are those associated with the commitment and management of the BFLR2 grant and the demolition works. To mitigate these risks, the demolition contract will be competitively tendered to ensure value for money and the appointment of a specialist and competent demolition contractor.
- 5.2. The demolition of these buildings reduces the risks and holding costs associated with the ongoing management of these old, redundant buildings.

6. TIMESCALES

- 6.1. The appointment of the contractor is scheduled to conclude in December 2023 with demolition works starting early in 2024.