

## Officer Executive Decisions

### **Action to Return a Long-Term Derelict Property into use at 6 High Street, Gillingham ME7 1BB**

#### Delegation from Leader and Cabinet and date

On 8 March 2022, the Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Director of Place and Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation the Portfolio Holder for Resources, to

- a) delegate securing of funding for the Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) to officers.
- b) take all necessary steps to secure the making, confirmation and implementation of the CPO, including the publication and service of notices and all other associated procedural steps.
- c) acquire the Property whether by voluntary agreement or compulsorily using the statutory powers set out in paragraph 8.1 of the report.
- d) once acquired, dispose of the Property by one of the two options set out in paragraph 3.3 of the report with appropriate conditions to secure its repair.
- e) suspend or abandon the CPO proceedings or withdraw an order on being satisfied that the Property will be satisfactorily renovated and re-occupied.
- f) take necessary action to deal with all matters relating to the payment of statutory compensation including, where required, instituting or defending proceedings.
- g) take all other necessary action to give effect to these recommendations.

(Decision no.: 37/2022)

The report is available from [Council's website](#).

#### Decision

Pursuant to the Cabinet's decision for the Council to make a CPO under the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 and s226(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, for the acquisition of 6 High St Gillingham, for the purposes of the provision of housing accommodation, with a potential commercial use on the ground floor (decision no. 36/2022), the legal was instructed to initiate the CPO all related costs of which are to be funded from the Regeneration Investment Fund Scheme in the current Capital Programme (decision no.: 38/2022).

#### Reasons for Decision

The property is one of a number of similar abandoned and derelict buildings across Medway, which are being assessed and considered by officers in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

The property has been derelict and empty for over 8 years, its condition has steadily deteriorated and is now proving to be detrimental to the character of the area and neighbourhood as well as being a waste of employment space and residential accommodation in an area with high housing demand.

Officers and external agencies have also been unable to locate the owner.

The property has attracted a number of complaints from local residents and therefore is having a detrimental effect on them, as it is affecting enjoyment of their properties. CPO action will allow the physical appearance of the property to be brought in line with neighbouring properties, thereby increasing the economic and social wellbeing of the area.

Works to enhance the appearance of the property will remove its current blighting effect and improve the local environment for neighbouring properties.

Re-occupation/ re-use would also reduce the likelihood of the property attracting anti-social behaviour, crime and vandalism.

The Council considers that the CPO will result in the property being brought back into use. The CPO is necessary and justified as last resort as this benefit could not be achieved by agreement.

## Date of Decision

8 March 2022

## Lead Officer

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Project & Delivery Manager

## Details of any other options considered and rejected

1. To continue to try to locate and engage with the owners of the property - This is not considered likely to bring the property back into use. Internal and external agencies have all failed to locate the owner of either the freehold or the leasehold elements of the building.
2. To do nothing - This is not acceptable, due to the property's continuing deteriorating condition and the negative impact it has on the Conservation Area and the neighbourhood. Further issues are likely to arise as the property deteriorates further and the Council may well receive further complaints from neighbours.

## Conflicts of Interest

None.