

	<p align="center">Cabinet 8th April 2024</p>
	<p align="center">Report from the Interim Corporate Director of Communities & Regeneration</p>
	<p align="center">Lead Member – Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning & Growth (Councillor Tatler)</p>
<p align="center">SCIL request for a new Publicly Accessible Courtyard and new Community Centre in Wembley</p>	
Wards Affected:	Wembley Hill
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
List of Appendices:	One Appendix 1: Wembley Housing Zone SCIL Images
Background Papers:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	Jonathan Kay, Head of Regeneration 020 8937 2348 Jonathan.Kay@brent.gov.uk

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1. This report seeks Cabinet approval for up to £11.23m Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy capital funding to deliver a new publicly accessible courtyard garden and new fully fitted out community centre, including a contribution towards lifetime maintenance costs, as part of the Council's Wembley Housing Zone regeneration.
- 1.2. Cabinet should note that the Wembley Housing Zone development at Cecil Avenue is itself estimated to generate £5.267m Brent Community Infrastructure Levy receipts. Therefore the net additional Community Infrastructure Levy ask to the Council to fund the infrastructure elements of the scheme is up to £5.96m.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That Cabinet approve up to £11.23m Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy to deliver a new publicly accessible courtyard garden and new fully fitted out community centre, including a contribution towards lifetime maintenance costs, as part of the Council's Wembley Housing Zone regeneration.

3.0 Detail

3.1 Cabinet Member Foreword

- 3.1.1 Working in partnership with Wates Construction and the Mayor of London, Brent Council is delivering on its longstanding commitment to revitalise the eastern stretch of Wembley High Road. This report sets out how we will embed community use at the heart of our regeneration plans for the Wembley Housing Zone, with a landmark £11.23m investment into a publicly accessible courtyard garden, alongside new community facilities. A Labour pledge met to continue using public assets for public good – balancing regeneration projects in the interests of the many in search of a new home, not the few that decry change.
- 3.1.2 The economic regeneration of Wembley is clear for all to see, from the world-class Stadium to the re-developed public realm – thousands more Londoners now also call the area home, and the area is attracting more inward investment than ever before. This has been made possible thanks to long-term public and private partnership, leveraging resources, expertise and crucially, investment. Through the Wembley Housing Zone we have another opportunity to create another powerhouse, driving positive change along Wembley High Road.
- 3.1.3 The housing crisis did not begin yesterday, and it will not finish tomorrow. It is therefore vital that we create plans which respond to the economic drivers as they are not as we wish them to be. We have a moral imperative to do all in our power to build more housing and communities that last long into the future. The regeneration that underpins the Wembley Housing Zone, is exactly that – an effort to build a better Brent, a place where home ownership is a reality, not just a dream. Supply of housing, of all tenures is vital to this, after all in the United Kingdom we have some of the lowest ratios in Europe for housing stock to people. Taken together with the toxic headwinds of inflation, prices are being pushed everywhere and house prices are now at their most unaffordable, relative to earnings since 1876.
- 3.1.4 The successful mixed use regeneration of Cecil Avenue and Ujima House will unlock the link between Wembley Central town centre and the regeneration at Wembley Park. High quality housing led development will deliver new homes, including affordable and larger family homes, workspace for new business and employment growth, highways and public realm improvements.
- 3.1.5 Where new residents arrive, we have a golden opportunity to create truly accessible spaces that allow communities to flourish in the long-term. You will see within the indicative schematics in Appendix A, proposals for public gardens, a public plaza and for children’s play facilities too. Redevelopment can equate to public good, delivering vital new social infrastructure that benefits local residents, businesses and the wider the community.
- 3.1.6 A new public courtyard garden will increase access to open space for local people and visitors to the area, supporting community wellbeing and quality of life, as well as provide new play spaces for children of all ages and abilities. A

new fully fitted out community centre will offer local people and community groups' access to space and facilities for community events and activities, supporting social interaction, and sustainable and liveable communities.

- 3.1.7. There will be £5.267m generated in Brent Community Infrastructure Levy receipts from the scheme and therefore the net Community Infrastructure Levy request is up to £5.96m for delivery of vital infrastructure on this priority Council regeneration scheme, including a contribution towards lifetime maintenance costs, to revitalise the eastern stretch of Wembley High Road for the benefit of local residents, businesses and communities.

3.2 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

- 3.2.1 Delivery and provision of the proposed infrastructure will directly contribute to Borough Plan strategic priorities as follows:

Thriving Communities: The new community centre will deliver a new facility with public access for local people and community groups for events and activities, located in an area of rapid population growth and identified needs.

A Healthier Brent: The new publicly accessible courtyard will provide new open space in an area of deficiency, supporting community wellbeing and quality of life, with play spaces for children of all ages and abilities.

A Cleaner, Greener Future: The new publicly accessible courtyard will deliver new planting and trees, increasing the urban greening factor and reducing carbon emissions and the urban heat island effect in the local town centre.

- 3.2.2 Wembley is the borough's largest growth area and a designated Greater London Authority (GLA) Housing Zone, which is accommodating a significant amount of new development. 6,000 new homes have been delivered in the past 5 years, and 15,000 new homes are expected by 2034. Rapid population growth is generating increased need for social infrastructure, at the same time as pressure on existing infrastructure has increased.

- 3.2.3 The Cecil Avenue scheme is located within Wembley Town Centre and an area of open space deficiency. It will support Brent Local Plan Policy BG11 by providing for the lifetime of the redevelopment a new publicly accessible garden courtyard, with spaces for gatherings, recreation and play for children of all ages and abilities. Planting and trees will increase urban greening and help reduce carbon emissions and the effect of extreme heat in the summer. The courtyard garden will be open to the public, but closed at night and on Wembley Stadium event days. Appendix 1 (p1-9) details plans and illustrations of the location and design of the different spaces that will make up the new publicly accessible garden courtyard.

- 3.2.4. Brent's Local Plan also recognises that community spaces are essential to create sustainable and liveable neighbourhoods. Brent Local Plan Policy BSI1 recommends new community facilities be located in town centres and growth areas. Given the scale of development coming forward, Brent's Infrastructure

Delivery Plan identifies the need for 5 new multi-use community facilities in Wembley. The Cecil Avenue scheme has capacity to provide 1 or 2 new community centres, which would open out on to the publicly accessible courtyard. Arrangements for local community groups' access and use of the space will be set out in an approved management plan. Appendix 1 (p10-12) show the location of the potential community spaces outlined in red. Option#1 provides for either the east or west space as community space; Option#2 provides for both the east and west space as community space. More detailed layout and design work for the community space is ongoing.

- 3.2.5 Key strategic policies in Brent's Climate & Ecological Emergency Strategy 2021-2030 and Inclusive Growth Strategy 2019-2040 will also be furthered by the delivery and provision of the proposed infrastructure.

3.3 Background

3.3.1. Brent Council in partnership with Wates Construction and the GLA is delivering the Wembley Housing Zone regeneration of council-owned land at Cecil Avenue and Ujima House. Brent's Local Plan allocates these two key sites for mixed use redevelopment, which will unlock the vision to revitalise the eastern stretch of Wembley High Road. Commercial and community uses will create active frontage and link Wembley Central town centre with the regeneration at Wembley Park. High quality housing-led development will deliver 291 new homes, including affordable and larger family homes, and boost town centre footfall and spend. Workspace for business and employment, a new publicly accessible courtyard garden, new community space, highways and public realm improvements, will complete the regeneration. Early works for the approved scheme are underway, which moves forward into construction and delivery.

3.3.2 New infrastructure provision underpins the Wembley Housing Zone (WHZ) vision. New infrastructure will ensure that the redevelopment is sustainable and benefits local residents, businesses and communities through the provision of:

- Cecil Avenue publicly accessible courtyard construction and external works
- Cecil Avenue community centre construction to shell and core
- Cecil Avenue community centre fit out

SCIL is sought to pay for the capital costs to design and construct this new infrastructure, together with a maintenance costs allowance for its upkeep.

3.3.3 As reported to Cabinet in August 2021, the Council can retain and lease the commercial and community space on the WHZ scheme, or dispose of it for a one-off capital receipt. Requested costs at Appendix 1 present two options, both of which would deliver the publicly accessible courtyard. Option #1 at £7.87m would also designate one flexible community and commercial space for the new community centre. Option #2 at £11.23m would however designate both flexible community and commercial spaces for a larger new community centre. Marketing of the commercial and community spaces will determine the

range of occupiers interested in the WHZ scheme, and on what terms. Whether or not it is in the Council's best interest to pursue Option 1 or Option 2 will depend on market demand and the balance of socioeconomic and financial outputs that can be delivered.

3.3.4 WHZ will also provide the following S278 highways and public realm infrastructure works, to be funded from redevelopment and not from SCIL:

- Access road to adoptable standard transferred to LBB Highways ownership.
- Re-instatement of existing redundant crossover on Cecil Avenue.
- Widening of Wembley High Road transferred to LBB Highways ownership.
- Resurfacing of Wembley High Road and Cecil Avenue footways.
- Planting of 5 street trees on Wembley High Road.
- Provision of bench seating on Wembley High Road.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

4.1 Cabinet approved the preferred delivery option for the Wembley Housing Zone regeneration in August 2021. The Lead Member for Regeneration, Planning & Growth has been briefed on the proposed allocation of SCIL to deliver the infrastructure elements of the scheme.

4.2 Consultation events were held with residents and local stakeholders, including ward members and local schools, to inform designs for the two planning schemes, which were also subject to statutory planning consultation. A presentation focusing on the publicly accessible areas of the Wembley Housing Zone scheme was given to the Brent Disability Forum March 2024.

5.0 Financial Considerations

5.1 As outlined in paragraph 3.3.4 the total estimated cost for the new publicly accessible courtyard and new fully fitted out community centre is up to £11.23m. This report seeks approval for an allocation of SCIL of up to £11.23m to fund this spend. Up to £9.03m will be used to cover the capital investment and up to up to £2.2m will be used to provide a contribution towards lifetime maintenance costs of the publically accessible courtyard and community centre. A summary cost breakdown is provided below. The capital costs will be covered within the existing budget for the Wembley Housing Zones development.

Capital Investment Costs	
Publicly Accessible Courtyard	£3,020,159
Community Centre Option #1	£3,309,513
Community Centre Option #2	£6,012,416
Maintenance Costs	
Publicly Accessible Courtyard	£733,820
Community Centre Option #1	£804,126
Community Centre Option #2	£1,460,859
Total Costs	
Publicly Accessible Courtyard	£3,753,979
Community Centre Option #1	£4,113,639
Community Centre Option #2	£7,473,275
Grand Total Costs	
Option #1	£7,867,618
Option #2	£11,227,254

- 5.2 The proposed capital contribution of up to £11.23m SCIL is necessary to deliver the infrastructure elements of the scheme. The Wembley Housing Zone development is itself estimated to generate £5.267m Brent CIL receipts and Wates are liable to pay this sum. Therefore the net additional SCIL ask to the Council to fund the infrastructure elements of the scheme for Option#1 is £2.6m and for Option#2 is £5.96m. The Council has sufficient Strategic CIL reserves to meet this request.

6.0 Legal Considerations

- 6.1 The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area. It is an important tool for local authorities to use to help them deliver the infrastructure needed to support development in their area. Section 216 of the Planning Act 2008 it to be applied, to supporting development by funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure. The Act provides that “infrastructure” includes—

- (a) roads and other transport facilities,
- (b) flood defences,
- (c) schools and other educational facilities,
- (d) medical facilities,
- (e) sporting and recreational facilities and
- (f) open spaces

- 6.2 The Wembley Housing Zone provision of a new publicly accessible courtyard and a new community centre meets the definition of infrastructure under the Act, and is eligible to be funded from Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 7.1 The WHZ proposals and planning application assessments have been subject to an equalities impact assessment and paid due regard to the Public Sector

Equality Duty. A new publicly accessible courtyard and community centre are integral to the WHZ vision for regeneration and place-making, and will provide social infrastructure to support growth and development in the local area.

- 7.2 Wates Construction are committed to deliver a social value package commensurate with at least 10% of the contract value, including construction supply chain spend with Brent-based SMEs, and training, apprenticeship and employment opportunities for local people from BAME backgrounds.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 8.1 The proposals will contribute to the Council's environmental objectives and climate emergency strategy. The new publicly accessible courtyard will increase the urban greening factor through new planting and trees, reducing carbon emissions and the urban heat island effect in the local town centre. The community centre must achieve an excellent rating under the Building Research Establishment Assessment Method certification for non-domestic buildings, to ensure high standards of sustainable design and construction.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

- 9.1 Leasing and/or disposal and management arrangements for the retained commercial and community space will need to be agreed moving forward.

10.0 Communication Considerations

- 10.1 The Council and Wates will issue communications reporting the progress of the WHZ scheme, including scheduled construction works in the local area.

Report sign off:

ALICE LESTER

Interim Corporate Director of Communities & Regeneration