

Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 09 September 2026
Subject:	Disposal of Pyramid Park and Q-Park – Part A	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth Cabinet Member for Housing Services	

Summary

1. This paper outlines proposals to dispose of council-owned, disused brownfield sites at Pyramid Park and Q-Park, and to bring forward high-quality, sustainable residential development. Situated on the edge of Bury town centre, Pyramid Park and Q-Park have long been identified as key strategic regeneration opportunity sites and are highlighted in the Bury Town Centre Masterplan (2022) as suited for residential development at scale.
2. To further our ambitious plans to deliver hundreds of new homes across the borough over the coming years, in late-2023, the council was successful in securing £1.73 million in grant funding for the Pyramid Park site from the Government's Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF2) programme.
3. The BLRF2 grant funding has enabled a package of land remediation and de-risking works to be delivered at the Pyramid Park site, thereby improving viability and readying it for future redevelopment. These land remediation works are currently underway and are being undertaken by the scheme contractor, Conlon Construction Limited ("Conlon"), with completion anticipated in autumn 2026. The appointment of Conlon was subject to a previous, separate report, approved by Cabinet at its meeting on 8th July 2026.
4. In line with the agreed BLRF2 grant funding milestones, upon achieving practical completion of the remediation works, Pyramid Park must be disposed of to a developer by 31st March 2027, who will be able to bring forward and realise the residential scheme at the site. The prospective developer would then be required to complete the new homes by 31st March 2029, at the latest.
5. Both Pyramid Park and Q-Park hold potential as highly sustainable, brownfield town centre sites, well suited to deliver a new, mixed typology, inter-generational housing development. This future residential scheme would be able to realise a significant element of the borough's identified housing shortfall, helping a range of cohorts to live independently in a sustainable

location, meeting a range of housing needs, and complementing the wider town centre regeneration that is taking place.

6. In its current form, Pyramid Park stands as a long-term, council-owned, vacant 7.4-acre brownfield opportunity site which has lain derelict and overgrown for over 15 years and regularly attracts anti-social behaviour, which is exacerbated due to poor visibility and a lack of natural surveillance. The site sits at a sunken level compared to its surroundings and there is limited access for pedestrians into Pyramid Park from the surrounding town centre.
7. Similarly, Q-Park is a council-owned, 1-acre brownfield site, which is highly visible, situated immediately opposite Bury Town Hall on Knowsley Street in the town centre. The three-storey Q-Park structure was designed to accommodate the future construction and loading of an additional six-storey structure atop the completed slab level, which has been confirmed by structural engineers. The undercroft car park space is in use via a long-lease agreement between the council and Q-Park Limited, whilst the airspace above has remained undeveloped and vacant since construction to slab level was completed in 2009 and its appearance is currently detrimental to the wider street scene.
8. In addition, whilst the Council is the immediate landlord of Q-Park Limited, the lease of the site was originally granted by Ask Townside (No.1) Limited. There also two additional occupational leases affecting parts of the property, with the current tenants being NHS Property Services Limited and Six Town Housing Limited. As such, the council will facilitate dialogue between the prospective developer and the aforesaid parties to ensure any obligations/rights can be accommodated and/or renegotiated as needed.
9. To accelerate housing delivery at both of these long-term vacant sites, in April 2026, the council commenced a Competitive Flexible Procedure (CFP), advertised via the Find a Tender service, the government's official platform for public sector procurement and high-value contract notices. In accordance with the Procurement Act 2023, the council has led an exercise to identify a suitable development partner who would be able to deliver the residential scheme at Pyramid Park and Q-Park.
10. Through this procurement process, Watson Construction Ltd ("Watson") (Company number 08621624) has been selected as the council's preferred bidder. Watson Construction Ltd is part of a group structure and an organogram detailing this company group structure can be found in Part B of this report along with an assessment of financial standing undertaken. A Parent Company guarantee will be sought with Watson Construction (Holdings) Ltd.

11. The preferred bidder was selected against specific award criteria and were assessed on a 65% quality and 35% price scoring basis. The proposal for both Pyramid Park and Q-Park aligns with the council's masterplan for a high-quality town centre mixed-residential scheme, which blends apartments and townhouses with a provision of extra-care, dementia, later living, and care leaver accommodation. The proposal seeks to deliver c.138 mix of units and mixed tenures on Pyramid Park and c.77 apartment units on Q-Park with exact numbers to be determined as part of the forthcoming planning process. Watson proposed a high standard of design and public realm, with improved connectivity provided through the site and across to Bury Interchange, ultimately fostering a new, mixed intergenerational town centre community at both the Pyramid Park and Q-Park sites.

Recommendation(s)

It is recommended that Cabinet:

12. Approves the plans for disposal of the sites at Pyramid Park and Q-Park, to Watson Construction Ltd (Company number 08621624) as the Development Partner.
13. Delegate the award of all contractual documents for example a Development Agreement (if applicable), lease agreements, licence and other ancillary contracts) that relate to the appointment of Watson Construction Ltd (Company number 08621624), to the Executive Director of Place and Executive Director of Finance, and the council Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth.
14. Delegate the disposal of Pyramid Park and Q-Park, including commercial terms (including Best Value Consideration if applicable) and eventual capital receipt, to the Executive Director of Place and Executive Director of Finance, and the council Leader and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Growth.

Reasons for recommendation(s)

15. The disposal of the Pyramid Park site to a developer, and the delivery of new housing, is required by the 31st March 2027 and 31st March 2029, respectively, as per the agreed BLRF2 grant funding milestones.
16. The appointment of Watson, who have a strong track record of delivery of mixed tenure residential led developments across Greater Manchester, will enable the realisation of much needed new, sustainable homes and accommodation, across a range of tenures and typologies, at Pyramid Park and Q-Park, and in line with the council's brownfield first approach to housing.
17. The disposal of Pyramid Park and Q-Park will generate a capital receipt for the council, and will also reduce the revenue costs of holding, maintaining and securing these long-term vacant, town centre opportunity sites, which in their

current state, are detrimental to the street scene and regularly attract anti-social behaviour.

Alternative options considered and rejected

18. *Do nothing:* If no action is taken to bring forward the Pyramid Park and Q-Park sites for residential, the comprehensive regeneration of this strategic town centre area, in line with the council's vision and masterplan, will not take place and the sites will remain vacant and likely subject to further anti-social behaviour and physical deterioration. The opportunity cost of not facilitating development at these sites will be a significant setback to the council's wider town centre regeneration ambitions. Furthermore, by failing to realise the development of Pyramid Park in the short-term, it is highly likely that the BLRF2 Grant Funding Agreement (GFA) delivery milestones, namely the requirement to have completed disposal by 31st March 2027 and have delivered the new homes by 31st March 2029, would become unachievable. This risks a full grant claw back of the £1.73 million brownfield funding provided by One Public Estate (OPE) and would also jeopardise the anticipated capital receipt that would be yielded from the disposal of the sites. If this BLRF2 grant clawback was to materialise, Pyramid Park would continue to remain a significantly unviable and potentially void site for years, if not decades, as it cannot be brought forward without public sector intervention to address technical site constraints and abnormalities.

Failure to realise development at Pyramid Park and Q-Park would also erode confidence in the council's ability to bring forward these two key strategic, brownfield priority sites, which is critical in supporting the delivery of a number of major corporate strategies including the Bury Housing Strategy, the Bury Economic Strategy, and the Bury Town Centre Masterplan. The proposed future residential scheme across both sites holds potential in delivering a significant element of the identified housing shortfall and would help a range of cohorts to live independently in a sustainable location, thus improving outcomes, and complementing wider town centre regeneration activity. These beneficial outcomes would be forfeited by not facilitating development at the sites.

It would also affect the forthcoming redevelopment of Bury Interchange, which will see the construction of a new pedestrian footbridge, spanning the tram lines across from Pyramid Park to Townside at Knowsley Place. This is because the ongoing, grant-funded, remediation scheme at Pyramid Park (planning ref: 70903) has several interlinked planning conditions with the Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) interchange southern access works (ref: 71834). The realisation of the wider economic, social and environmental benefits that the future residential scheme would bring, including the generation of new council tax revenue, would also be put at risk.

19. *Dispose of the sites on the open market:* Although this route is likely to ensure the swift disposal of both sites, generate a capital receipt, and free the council of any liabilities tied to the ownership of both plots, the council would be placed in a precarious position as it requires the prospective developer to be able to bring forward housing delivery at Pyramid Park as per the BLRF2 GFA milestones, as outlined earlier. There would be a material risk that the prospective developer, appointed through this open market sale route, could 'land-bank' and not undertake any meaningful development, or realise a residential scheme in line with the council's wider regeneration and strategic vision, with no guarantee to the council on delivery or quality of the scheme.

Moreover, if the current procurement process, which commenced in April 2026, was to be terminated at this stage and a new open market disposal process initiated, it again would increase the likelihood of the Pyramid Park GFA milestones becoming unachievable due to the sheer amount of time it would take, thereby risking the full grant claw back. Further internal staff resource would also be required, and additional fees would be incurred through the council's external consultant team, needed to support the new procurement, marketing and sale process.

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Background

Pyramid Park

20. At its meeting on 15th March 2023, Cabinet authorised the disposal of the long-term disused, council-owned, Pyramid Park brownfield site and approved the pursuance of external grant funding to remediate and de-risk the site. This approval was required in order to apply for BLRF2 programme, evidencing to the funder (OPE) that the site was surplus to the council's requirements and was designated for future residential use, thereby increasing the chances of a successful capital grant funding bid award.
21. In October 2023, the council was notified by the government of its successful BLRF2 grant funding award for Pyramid Park, totalling £1.73 million, to support planning and technical design work, land remediation and associated

enabling works needed to create a suitable platform for future residential development, at what is currently an unviable, constrained and long-term, vacant site.

22. Pyramid Park is a 7.4-acre (3 hectare) council-owned, disused brownfield site, situated off Market Street (B6218), to the south of Angouleme Way (A58), in a prominent location on the edge of Bury town centre. The Pyramid Park site is enclosed by major transport infrastructure, with the Metrolink tram line spanning the western boundary, and East Lancashire Railway bordering the southern perimeter. The Market Street arched road bridge also passes through the easterly part of the site at a raised level.
23. The site formerly housed the Knowsley Street railway station and associated goods yard, which originally operated as part of Lancashire and Yorkshire Railways (L&YR).
24. Following the closure of the railway line and station by British Rail in 1970, the site was reclaimed and remodelled as 'Townside Fields' during the 1970s for use as an informal public open space. In recent years however, owing to low usage and issues with anti-social behaviour, exacerbated due poor visibility within and across the site, and the lack of an at-grade access from the surrounding area, it was decided to decommission this informal urban parkland in circa 2010.
25. Today, the current condition of the site is poor; it has become overgrown with vegetation, is strewn with litter and debris and continues to attract anti-social behaviour.

Q-Park

26. The council-owned, Q-Park site on Knowsley Street, currently comprises of a vacant 1-acre fenced plot at ground level, and a three-storey, 404-space, basement car park. Similar to Pyramid Park, Q-Park is largely bounded by transport infrastructure, with the Metrolink line spanning the eastern boundary and the East Lancashire Railway extending along the southern perimeter.
27. Back in 2008, as part of phase one of the Townside development scheme between the council and Ask Developments, which saw the construction of the Townside Primary Care Centre, 3 and 6 Knowsley Place, and the 115-room, Premier Inn hotel, a new three-storey, undercroft car park structure was also built to serve the adjacent mixed-use development and wider town centre parking demand. This multi-storey car park is currently on a long lease agreement to Q-Park Ltd, who have managed and operated the car park since it opened.
28. The three-storey Q-Park structure was designed and structurally loaded to accommodate the future construction and weighting of an additional six-storey

residential structure atop the completed slab level and columns. This has been indicatively validated by structural engineers through an assessment of original building records and to the council's preferred masterplan for the site, however exact methods of construction to withstand the proposed apartment scheme will be undertaken by the incoming developer. Phase two of the original Townside development scheme had intended for a large apartment building to be erected atop Q-Park (circa 2009-10), however, this scheme was never brought forward due to the prolonged economic and viability challenges in the years following the recession. Like Pyramid Park, the site has remained undeveloped since the undercroft Q-Park structure was completed, and the appearance of the enclosed slab level plot is detrimental to the wider streetscape, especially given its prominent location opposite Bury Town Hall.

Regeneration Vision

29. Pyramid Park and Q-Park have both long been identified as key strategic regeneration opportunity, gateway sites, especially given their sustainable town-centre locations, adjacent to Bury Interchange, Bury College, and Bury Town Hall, and being only a short walk away from town centre amenities, such as Bury Market and its new food and events hall, Casewell's, the Mill Gate Shopping Centre, and The Rock.
30. Both sites are designated within the 'Zone H – Southern Gateway' area in the Bury Town Centre Masterplan (2022) and as suited for high quality, high density residential development to meet a range of needs, including family housing, apartments, extra care / specialist accommodation and housing for older people. The principle of residential development is also strongly supported by the planning policy framework (e.g., PfE, Bury UDP and the Bury Local Plan) and given further weight due the accessible town centre situation and brownfield status of both sites.
31. The realisation of residential development at Pyramid Park and Q-Park is a key objective for the council, aligning with ambitious plans to deliver new, affordable and sustainable homes across the borough, whilst supporting town centre regeneration, economic growth and place making objectives.
32. The first stage of the £85m redevelopment of Bury Interchange, immediately adjacent to both sites, will see new access improvements delivered by TfGM to the existing Metrolink platforms and the installation of a new pedestrian footbridge, spanning the tram lines across from Pyramid Park to Townside at Knowsley Place, which incorporates the Q-Park site.
33. This new Metrolink footbridge will serve as a second, permanent and step-free access route into Bury Interchange and enable permeability from Q-Park, across and through to the Pyramid Park residential site and beyond, thereby improving pedestrian access to and from both sites to local amenities, services and attractions. Construction of the new footbridge and platform

improvement works are due to commence in autumn 2026, lasting through until early 2028, before the main redevelopment work at the interchange begins.

34. It should also be noted that a non-definitive Public Right of Way (PRoW) exists through the Pyramid Park site from Town Fields Close, which in consultation with the council's PRoW officer, has been temporarily closed until the remediation scheme works are fully completed in late-2026. The incoming developer will be required to uphold this PRoW, incorporating this right of access into the future residential scheme layout.
35. In accordance with section 123 (2A) of the Local Government Act 1972, a Public Open Space (POS) notice informing of the council's intention to dispose of the Pyramid Park site, was issued and advertised during 2023 as per the council's statutory protocols.
36. As part of the council's vision for Bury 2030, we are working collaboratively with our communities across the borough to achieve faster growth and reducing levels of deprivation as compared to the national average. Our 'Let's Do It!' strategy focuses on building a better future for our children and young people, promoting inclusion, improving our environment, and delivering improvements in prosperity and quality of life.
37. With this in mind, some residential provision at Pyramid Park will be made for care leavers, reflecting the council's commitment to early planning, prioritised access to housing and the delivery of high-quality accommodation for this cohort. The council's approach to redevelopment, with a strong focus on creating modern apartment accommodation for care leavers, has recently received recognition as best practice from the Local Government Association.
38. Additionally, in order to attract young families to Bury and enhance play provision in the town centre, the Pyramid Park residential scheme will accommodate recreation, opportunities for outdoor play, with a strong public realm woven into the scheme designs alongside landscaped areas with seating to encourage dwell time. This responds to stakeholder feedback received from Bury College, located next to the site, who have an interest given that, in the future, students will navigate through Pyramid Park across to Bury Interchange via the new Metrolink footbridge. The forthcoming development will also celebrate and enhance the ecology of the area, with new structures designed with nesting bricks to encourage and foster bird wildlife in the area.
39. In May 2026, the council also launched its Extra Care Housing Strategy 2026-36, which has a target of delivering accommodation across five key site areas over the next ten years. The future residential scheme at Q-Park will enable the council to deliver one site in an area deemed highly suitable, with its

sustainable location and proximity to NHS services provided at Townside Primary Care Centre, as well as other local amenities, to those who have additional supported housing needs.

40. Over the emerging Local Plan period 2022-2043 and based on local housing need calculations, it is a statutory target, in line with PfE, for the borough to deliver of an average of 450 new dwellings per annum.
41. The comprehensive redevelopment and regeneration of Pyramid Park and Q-Park aligns fully with the council's Bury 2030 vision, which highlights the need to deliver more, high-quality, low-carbon and affordable homes across the borough, and as part of our 'Building houses that are homes' strategic ambition.
42. A detailed concept masterplanning study for the Pyramid Park and Q-Park sites has been undertaken by the council's external urban designers. This established the framework and principles for a planning compliant, future residential scheme and mix of units across a range of tenures at Pyramid Park and Q-Park. Proposed unit numbers are circa 140 and circa 80 at the respective sites, however exact numbers will of course be verified through the future planning application submitted by the successful developer. This may also be affected by the changes to building regulations following the Grenfell Fire in 2017, with the Building Safety Act 2022 mandating that new, seven-storey structures, or those over 18 metres, undergo an enhanced regulatory assurance process during the design and construction phase.
43. These development principles which have emerged from the masterplan, have shaped the direction of the future residential scheme which will blend modern apartments and family townhouses with a provision of extra-care, dementia, later living, and care leaver accommodation, all delivered to a high standard of design, character and access, and ultimately fostering a new cohesive community identity across both sites.
44. Following approval of the appointment of Conlon to undertake land remediation and de-risking works at Pyramid Park approved by Cabinet in July 2026, and to dovetail the completion of these works with the requirement to dispose of the site to a developer by 31st March 2027, this report seeks approval to dispose of Pyramid Park and Q-Park and appoint and enter in contract with Watson to realise housing delivery at both sites.

Procurement Process

45. In order to ensure housing delivery is made at pace, and to tie this in with the completion of the remediation works, the council launched a robust Competitive Flexible Procedure via the Find a Tender service back in April 2026, in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023 (which supersedes the Public Contracts Regulations 2015), to identify and select a suitable

development partner who would be able to deliver the residential scheme at Pyramid Park and Q-Park.

46. Due to the value and complexity of the envisaged scheme, it was decided that a full tender exercise would be necessary as this would allow the track record, suitability and proposals of prospective bidders to be fully evaluated.

Table 1 – Stages of the Competitive Flexible Procedure
Stage 1 – Conditions of Participation • Bidders assessed on exclusion grounds, financial standing, legal compliance, technical ability, deliverability, and social value
Stage 2 – Invitation to Tender • Shortlisted suppliers submit initial tenders • Successful bidders are selected with only small number of bidders remaining in the process
Stage 3 – Dialogue & Final Tenders • Competitive dialogue process with remaining bidders • Final tenders submitted by bidders
Stage 4 – Contract Award • Best scoring final tender selected, subject to council approvals and standstill period

47. Given the extensive requirements of the council across the two sites, including the preferred housing mix, specification and design quality, various infrastructure works and access requirements, a bespoke four-stage flexible CFP procedure was initiated. The stages of this CFP process are outlined in table 1 above.
48. Important conditions and the council's extensive requirements were understood, discussed and addressed by prospective suppliers through the CFP process. The award criteria that were set, which covered measures of quality, social value, and price, included:
- How tenderers would secure and maintain high standards of design quality and public realm, including the methods, and key considerations that would shape their approach.
 - How development would be delivered at both sites, with the constraints, access rights, and / or easements of the operational Q-Park car park, existing Market Street bridge structure, East Lancashire Railway, TfGM interchange works, Metrolink operations and access requirements, and Bury College construction health and safety requirements in mind.
 - How risks and issues would be mitigated, given the need to undertake complex highway infrastructure, geotechnical / foundational and utility work, and considering extant planning consents (incl. the requirement to secure Biodiversity Net Gain uplift).

- How bidders would ensure the development is delivered to the council's required timescales, including outlining programme, planning, highways, site constraints, procurement, risk management and any key assumptions underpinning delivery.
 - How prospective suppliers would work with the council and their chosen registered provider to deliver extra care housing, a specialist dementia unit, sheltered accommodation and care leaver units, whilst ensuring key design standards are achieved (e.g., building to Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS), M4(2), M4(3) accessibility requirements and to HAPPI design principles).
 - How bidders would incorporate the council and its partners' social value priorities (incl. working with Bury Council and Bury College to maximise worklessness, education and skills outcomes).
 - How tenderers would realise a scheme that delivers maximum land value across both sites and evidencing this with a corresponding appraisal.
49. Four eligible bids were received at Stage 1 – Conditions of Participation, however only three tenderers met the minimum scoring thresholds to be able to proceed to stage two. Following two rounds of dialogue with the shortlisted bidders and the invitation to submit a tender, only two final tenders were received.
50. Thorough evaluation of the two bids was undertaken and a moderation session held to collectively agree the scores and the agreed rationale for the moderated scores, based on a 65% quality and 35% price scoring measure. Following the conclusion of the competitive dialogue process and the selection of the best scoring final tender, Watson were ranked first and therefore identified as the council's preferred bidder for the disposal and delivery of housing development at the Pyramid Park and Q-Park sites.
51. A full list of bidders, award criteria, and the outcome of the evaluation process breakdown of the scoring process can be found in the Evaluation section in Part B of this report.
52. It is likely the future residential planning application will require additional ecological enhancements to be delivered through both on and off-site compensation measures, in line with Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) legislation requirements. These may have commercial implications which are outlined in Part B and will be determined through the planning process.
53. It should be noted that the eventual land offer is likely to be impacted by Section 106 contributions obligated through the planning approval process. In view of the latter and the strict BLRF2 grant funding delivery timeframes affecting the Pyramid Park site, it is recommended that the final approval of

the disposal and eventual capital receipt is delegated to the Executive Director of Place and Executive Director of Finance.

54. Under Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, local authorities must not sell or dispose of land for less than the "best consideration reasonably obtainable" unless they have specific consent or qualify under general disposal exceptions for local community well-being.

Red Book Valuation

55. In order to ensure compliance with this legislation, the council has undertaken independent RICS red book valuations on both sites. The outcome of the valuation exercise can be found in Part B of this report.
56. The airspace above Q-Park has remained unoccupied since it was constructed and given that physical connectivity is being improved between both sites, strengthened by the new TfGM pedestrian bridge, consultation with developers and registered providers has determined that the two sites could be jointly developed together as part of a single scheme.
57. It should be noted that an existing long-term lease exists between the council and the car park operator, Q-Park Ltd, so the developer will need to work with the council and occupying tenant (who will remain in occupation throughout the development process) to facilitate below slab level construction works such as drainage.
58. It is understood that there are six leases affecting the site, including three apparent occupational leases. Given the wider leasehold structure, a title review will be undertaken as soon as possible and anything of note including the extent of third-party interests will be included as conditions in the aforementioned heads of terms to ensure any implications are fully understood and navigated ahead of the proposed development.
59. It is expected a service charge for Q-Park will be payable covering maintenance arrangements where applicable and this will be captured in a long lease arrangement with Watson. Given the intention is for the leasehold interest to transfer to a Registered Provider, any maintenance arrangements will be dealt with by assignment of the lease/transfer of the registered leasehold title (or a direct grant to the Registered Provider), subject to the lease terms and any required consents. This will be captured in the heads of terms.

Construction Programme and Stakeholder Management

60. The Pyramid Park enabling and land remediation main works are currently in progress following approval from Cabinet at its meeting on 8th July 2026. The duration of the works programme is around 15-weeks, with enabling and site preparatory works beginning first, followed by the main remediation works

which will progress from west to east across the site, concluding with demobilisation and handover works in autumn 2026. This will also allow the linked planning conditions to be discharged and enable progression of the TfGM interchange southern access scheme works, which subject to TfGM internal approvals, is due to commence in late-autumn 2026.

61. Through this period, Watson will be progressing with the planning application for the residential scheme, targeting approval in 2027 and a start on site later that year (subject to planning timeframes and approvals).
62. The sequencing and programme of the future residential scheme construction works will be informed by site conditions and technical constraints but will be aimed to be delivered as efficiently as possible. The council's comprehensive health and safety requirements, given the both sites proximity to Bury College and through ongoing engagement with college estates staff, will also been embedded within Watson's construction logistics methodology plan in due course.
63. The council and Watson will ensure that the future residential works align with TfGM's ongoing redevelopment works at Bury Interchange. A partnership approach with TfGM and Bury Council was endorsed in 2023 during the initial BLRF2 funding bid stage, via a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). This MoU has facilitated ongoing collaboration between both schemes, to date, ensuring that:
 - The scope, programme, sequencing and phasing of the ongoing remediation works at Pyramid Park, and future housing development are effective and align optimally with TfGM's redevelopment plans and construction programme at Bury Interchange.
 - Any site constraints are shared and reviewed between parties in order to enable continued scheme deliverability.
 - The planning, design and access requirements between both schemes are mutually baselined and agreed upon, (e.g., the new Metrolink pedestrian footbridge which lands directly in the Pyramid Park site).
 - The future residential scheme construction works are carefully planned and coordinated with TfGM to guarantee unhindered access for Metrolink servicing vehicles which use the existing Pyramid Park spur road.
 - Effective construction management, engaging closely with Bury College and Bury Highways team to ensure optimal safety in and around the Market Street junction at key times.
64. There will be ongoing, regular communications and engagement between the council's project team, Watson and TfGM, as the residential scheme plans progress

Social Value

65. Watson have committed to delivering a comprehensive programme of social value initiatives aligned with the council's priorities and the aspirations of Bury College. These commitments extend beyond the physical delivery of the development and are designed to maximise long-term social, economic and environmental benefits for local residents, college students and communities.
66. Working in partnership with Bury Council, Bury College, local businesses and the wider community, Watsons will implement a project-specific social value plan focused on skills development, education, employment opportunities, work experience and community engagement. A dedicated social value manager will oversee delivery, monitoring and reporting of these commitments throughout the project lifecycle.
67. Key commitments include establishing a formal partnership with Bury College to support curriculum co-design, helping to ensure that learners develop the technical skills, behaviours and industry knowledge required for future employment within the construction and housing sectors. Watson have committed to providing practical support, industry engagement and learning opportunities to strengthen links between education and employment.
68. The social value package also includes engaging with the council led, GMCA Economic Inactivity Trailblazer programme to offer a range of on-site construction related targeted interventions to support local employment and skills outcomes, creating opportunities for residents to access training, work experience and careers within the construction industry. These initiatives are intended to deliver lasting benefits beyond the completion of the residential development and support the council's wider objectives around inclusive growth, economic opportunity and community wellbeing, and in line with the council's social value strategy.

Links with the Corporate Priorities:

69. The Pyramid Park and Q-Park residential works support the delivery of the Bury 'Let's Do It!' strategy and the four Bury 2030 principles that underpin it:

Local Neighbourhoods: The delivery of housing at Pyramid Park and Q-Park will support the local neighbourhoods strategy by enabling residential development at these core town centre, sustainable brownfield sites. A new, mixed intergenerational town centre community will be fostered at Pyramid Park and Q-Park through the forthcoming development, which will deliver a mix of new affordable and sustainable homes, whilst also supporting the council's wider objectives for regeneration, economic growth and place making. This new neighbourhood will deliver new, high-quality residential serving a range of needs, with family housing, apartments, extra care / specialist accommodation and housing for older people planned at the site.

An Enterprising Spirit: Our spirit of enterprise and innovation will be harnessed through the forthcoming residential scheme, which will transform what are currently unviable, constrained and dilapidated town centre sites, into a new, inter-generational residential neighbourhood. The scheme will support development and good growth, through investment in new housing and supporting physical infrastructure. A new pedestrian route will be facilitated through from the town centre across to Bury Interchange, which is currently undergoing an £85m overhaul to deliver a modern and integrated transport facility. The council continue to work closely with TfGM's project team, who are overseeing the redevelopment of the interchange, in order to maximise outcomes for both schemes and for the wider town centre. We will connect local people to new opportunities via the remediation scheme and through the future residential scheme development. Work experience, apprenticeships, placements and skills enhancement with local education providers, such as Bury College, will be realised.

Delivering Together: The remediation scheme and future residential development will foster a new community on the fringe of Bury town centre, fostering new relationships and connections to grow. The future housing development will deliver new sustainable homes and high-quality public realm, which will support community uses and strengthen connectivity and permeability to existing communities at Town Fields Close and across east Bury. The council and Watson will continue to engage and update key stakeholders and local residents as the development scheme progresses.

A Strengths-Based Approach: The council and Watson will value and build on the strengths of our residents and communities by continuing to engage, listen and empower, through the duration of the residential scheme works and via the realisation of social value outcomes. The strengths, successes and expertise of our Bury based business will be harnessed through the extensive use of the local supply chain. The forthcoming residential scheme at Pyramid Park and Q-Park will take an evidence-led approach to intervention, by delivering much needed town centre housing for identified groups, including extra / specialist care accommodation provision.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

70. An initial equality impact screening has been carried out. This showed that there are unlikely to be any equality impacts on people or organisations arising from this activity. Equality impacts will be continually reviewed as the residential development progresses however there are no equalities concerns at this stage.
71. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the council to dispose of Pyramid Park and Q-Park, appoint and enter into a legal agreement, licence and any other ancillary agreements with Watson for the delivery of housing

development at these sites. The realisation of new housing will help a range of cohorts to live independently in this sustainable town centre location and deliver a significant element of the identified housing shortfall.

72. The robust CFP procurement exercise that has been conducted has been done in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023, which has ensured a fair, open, effective, and transparent process.
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Environmental Impact and Considerations:

73. A full planning strategy, which will address the ecological and environmental impacts of the residential scheme will be submitted to the local planning authority for approval in 2027. This strategy will fully consider, evaluate and mitigate the environmental impacts of the proposed residential scheme and construction works, in line with local and national planning policy legislation requirements.
74. The ongoing remediation scheme will help unlock and bring a disused brownfield site forward for high-quality, sustainable residential development. Noting the interface between the ongoing, planned approved, remediation works at Pyramid Park, and the future residential scheme development, a phased, joint approach to biodiversity and ecology matters at the site has been agreed with the local planning authority (LPA) and the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU). This approach ensures that through the remediation works at Pyramid Park, and considering the future residential scheme across both sites, that a 10% BNG uplift and a sufficient provision for the long-term management of these improved habitats will be secured.
75. The habitat characteristics that define the Townside Grade B SBI, which covers part of the Pyramid Park site area, will be enhanced both through the on-site re-provision and enhancement, but also through some off-site BNG gain measures. This approach has been agreed following extensive consultation with the LPA and GMEU. Some off-site biodiversity gain is required as it would not be possible to deliver the full BNG uplift entirely on-site without significantly compromising the developable space and viability of the future Pyramid Park residential scheme. A number of unique species that could not be re-provided within the Pyramid Park site area, including some mixed scrub, lowland meadows and fens, have already been augmented and improved elsewhere, at a habitat bank located nearby within the Manchester Pennine Fringe National Character Area and managed by a trusted national provider of off-site biodiversity areas.

76. The forthcoming residential scheme at Pyramid Park and Q-Park will be low and net zero carbon by design, with sustainability and carbon reduction fundamental to the proposals. Proposed measures include new energy and water efficient buildings to minimise carbon in operation, the use of sustainable building materials to reduce upfront embodied carbon, photovoltaic panels and air source heat pumps. Nesting bricks on the side elevations of buildings and in shaded areas will encourage wildlife and provide bird nesting opportunities. Reflecting the location of both sites and the accessibility to public transport, the future residential scheme is expected to adopt a parking-light approach, with car parking provision at a level that is just sufficient for the needs of the development and considering the sustainable town centre location.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Reputational risk – erosion of confidence in the ability of the council to successfully deliver the remediation works scheme and facilitate the disposal of Pyramid Park by the agreed GFA deadline of 31st March 2027, thereby enabling the delivery of the residential scheme. Failure to dispose of the site and appoint a developer in a timely manner would jeopardise the BLRF2 GFA delivery milestones. This risks the claw back of the £1.73 million grant and would also jeopardise the anticipated capital receipt.	An expert and experienced project delivery team with effective project management and governance structures. External contract management support. Appropriate contingency provision and risk management strategy. The procurement of Conlon under a PCR compliant framework (via the North West Construction Hub).
Permissions risk – delay in discharging pre-commencement planning conditions that impact the start on site and wider construction programme	Watson have a strong track record and extensive experience of navigating the planning process. Watson have an in-house planning consultant appointed to lead all aspects of the future planning application.
Delivery risk – site conditions, including unforeseen conditions resulting in cost increases.	Conlon are delivering a full land remediation strategy and associated preparatory enabling works at Pyramid Park which have de-risked the site and prepared it for residential development. At Q-Park, structural engineers have confirmed that the existing structure can accommodate the future construction and weighting of an additional six-storey residential building.

	Further site investigations and due diligence will be undertaken by Watson and appropriate cost planning and contractor engagement undertaken, if/when required during the residential scheme construction.
Delivery risk – build cost inflation / commercial viability of contracting organisation.	Watson have robust contractual arrangement and effective contractor management through regular meetings and contract retentions. A parent company guarantee will be sought from Watson Construction (Holdings) Ltd to mitigate risk of insolvency.
Delivery risk – supplier risk i.e. availability of specialist sub-contractors.	Watson have demonstrated full capability of managing their sub-contractors and supply chain via a multi-disciplinary arrangement.
Financial risk – increase in costs during construction	Watson are aware of the likely Section 106 contribution and have appraised the scheme appropriately. The land offer has been subject to due diligence and an evaluation of the development appraisal and cost plan undertaken. Appropriate contingency provision sums to cover inflation, risk, asbestos etc. Early contractor / supply chain involvement by Watson to ensure a robust cost plan is in place that will be regularly monitored throughout the contract, including contingencies to cover unforeseen works, rise in inflation etc. Effective financial monitoring / management systems will be in place.

Procurement Implications:

77. Procurement undertaken in accordance with the Competitive Flexible Procedure under the Procurement Act 2023. Bidders have been informed of the recommendation to award to Watson Construction Ltd pending cabinet approval.

78. Whilst the evaluation process has concluded, and Watson Construction Ltd is the recommended bidder. The Authority's decision to award remains subject to Cabinet approval.
 79. Should Cabinet approve the recommendation, a Contract Award Notice under section 50 of the Act will be published. Upon its publication, a standstill period of eight working days will commence.
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Legal Implications:

80. The Council has undertaken a Competitive Flexible Procedure in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023 to identify a development partner for the Pyramid Park and Q-Park sites. Subject to Cabinet approval, the Council must ensure that the appointment and subsequent contractual arrangements are completed in accordance with the procurement process that has been undertaken, the Council's Constitution, and all relevant statutory requirements.
81. Failure to dispose of the site to a developer in a timely manner may jeopardise the drawdown and retention of BLRF2 funding and the achievement of GFA delivery milestones.
82. In progressing the scheme, the Council is exercising its broad powers to promote economic development, regeneration and housing delivery, including through the Localism Act 2011 and section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972. The proposals align with wider strategic objectives to bring forward brownfield land and deliver mixed, inter-generational housing. In doing so, the Council must continue to comply with its statutory duties, including the best value duty under section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, equality obligations under the Equality Act 2010, and any applicable subsidy control and procurement requirements. Robust governance and decision-making arrangements are essential to mitigate legal, financial and reputational risk.
83. The Q-Park site is subject to existing leasehold interests. It will be necessary to undertake a detailed title review and consider the effect of existing leases, occupational interests, easements, rights of access and other third-party rights before any disposal structure is finalised. These interests may affect the nature, timing and implementation of the proposed development.

Financial Implications:

84. A RICS red book valuation of the sites has been undertaken. This valuation has been used to benchmark the offers upon concluding the procurement process.
85. The existing contracted remediation work is to be fully funded from the grants received (and approved previously in March 2023 and July 2026) and there are no revenue implications resulting from this.

Appendices:

None.

Background papers:

- March 2023 Cabinet Paper
(<https://councildecisions.bury.gov.uk/documents/s34600/Proposed%20Disposal%20of%20Pyramid%20Park.pdf>)
- July 2026 Cabinet Paper
[*Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 8th July, 2026, 6.00 pm - Bury Council*](#)

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning
Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)	To ensure new development has a measurably positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity, compared to what was there before development, schemes must deliver a BNG uplift of 10%. BNG became mandatory in February 2024 under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as inserted by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021).
Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF2)	The BLRF2 programme has provided up to £60m in capital funding to enable local authorities across the country to release council-owned sites on brownfield land for housing development. BLRF2 enables councils to take a brownfield-first approach to development by unlocking otherwise unviable brownfield sites for new homes, whilst supporting regeneration, economic growth and place making. The programme is funded and supported by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local

	Government (MHCLG); and delivered by One Public Estate (OPE).
Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP)	The Bury Unitary Development Plan (UDP) was adopted by the Council on 29th August 1997 and acts as a guide for the future development or protection of land in the borough and together with other adopted Development Plan Documents its policies and proposals form the basis for the Council's decisions on planning applications. The Council is now working to replace the adopted UDP with a new document called the Bury Local Plan. Until the new Local Plan is produced the UDP will continue be used to make planning decisions.
Competitive Flexible Procedure (CFP)	A competitive flexible procedure (CFP) is a new way for the public sector to run a procurement through competition. Introduced through the Procurement Act 2023, it is designed to give contracting authorities more opportunity and choice in how goods and services are purchased. The CFP consolidates the various tendering processes available under the previous procurement regulations into a single adjustable system. Unlike other procedures which follow set stages and timelines, there is no fixed template for the CFP process allowing a bespoke single or multi-stage procurement procedure to maximise outcomes.
Grant Funding Agreement (GFA)	A legally binding contract that outlines the terms under which a funder provides grant funding to a recipient and responsibilities of the grant recipient in meeting those terms.
Greater Manchester Ecology Unit (GMEU)	The GMEU provides specialist advice to, and on behalf of, the ten district councils that make up Greater Manchester Combined Authority on biodiversity, nature conservation and wildlife issues.
Joint Contracts Tribunal (JCT)	The Joint Contracts Tribunal is the UK's leading provider of building contracts. A JCT contract is a standard form agreement which provides clear, legally tested terms for construction works. These contracts allocate responsibilities, risks, and payment obligations between the employer (client) and the contractor. They streamline project delivery by using recognisable clauses that cover design, procurement, quality standards, and dispute resolution.

One Public Estate (OPE)	One Public Estate is a partnership between the Office of Government Property (OGP) in the Cabinet Office (CO), the Local Government Association (LGA), and MHCLG. Their aim is to bring public sector bodies together in place in order to create better places; to use public assets more efficiently; to create service and financial efficiencies; and to release land for development to create new homes and provide jobs for communities.
Places for Everyone (PfE)	Places for Everyone (PfE) is the joint statutory development plan for nine Greater Manchester authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) for jobs, new homes and sustainable growth. It sets out where we will build the new homes we need, where our businesses will locate to sustain and create jobs for our people, what infrastructure is needed to support the development and to protect and enhance our towns, cities and landscapes. It covers a timeframe up to 2039.
Public Open Space (POS) Notice	Public Open Space (POS). A public open space notice is a formal legal announcement used by a local council to state its intent to sell, lease, or change the use of protected community land like parks or recreation grounds. It ensures transparency by alerting citizens so they can raise objections.
Public Rights of Way (PRoW)	Public Rights of Way are public highways protected in law. They include footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways used for travel, exercise and leisure.