

Committee Report Checklist

Please submit the completed checklists with your report. If final draft report does not include all the information/sign offs required, your item will be delayed until the next meeting cycle.

Stage 1

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Yes / No	Date
Councillor engagement / input from Chair prior to briefing		
Relevant Group Head review	CH	29/05/26
MAT+ review (to have been circulated at least 5 working days before Stage 2)	Yes	29/05/26
This item is on the Forward Plan for the relevant committee	Yes	25/06/26
	Reviewed by	
Finance comments (circulate to Finance)	AB	03/06/26
Risk comments (circulate to Lee O'Neil)	LO	29/05/26
Legal comments (circulate to Legal team)	JC	03/06/26
HR comments (if applicable)	n/a	

For reports with material financial or legal implications the author should engage with the respective teams at the outset and receive input to their reports prior to asking for MO or s151 comments.

Do not forward to stage 2 unless all the above have been completed.

Stage 2

Report checklist – responsibility of report owner

ITEM	Completed by	Date rec'd
Monitoring Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	DMO J. Clare	05/06/26
S151 Officer commentary – at least 5 working days before MAT	T. Collier	03/06/26
Commissioner engagement	DM	09/06/26
	Delete as applicable:	No issues
Confirm final report cleared by MAT		

Business, Infrastructure & Growth Committee

25 June 2026

Title	Demolition of 34 Kingston Road, Staines-upon-Thames (Oast House & Kingston Road Site)
Purpose of the report	To make a decision
Report Author	Bruce Strong – Investment Asset Manager
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Exempt	No
Exemption Reason	N/A
Corporate Priority	Community Environment
Recommendations	<p>Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Approve the Group Head of Assets' submission of a Planning Application for the demolition of 34 Kingston Road, Staines-upon-Thames and the procurement of a contractor to carry out the demolition.
Reason for Recommendation	34 Kingston Road is in a poor state of repair and is a health and safety concern. It is not cost effective to bring the property back into a good state of repair. In addition, the property is costing the Council c. £12,350 pa in empty home council tax. If the property is demolished, this charge will cease.

1. Executive summary of the report

What is the situation	Why we want to do something
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 34 Kingston Road forms part of the Oast House and Kingston Road car park regeneration site. When the site was purchased in 2019 the property was vacant, and in poor repair and we understand has been unoccupied for over 15 years. Over the past 7 years the property has remained vacant due to potential redevelopment of the site and has deteriorated further. It was not economically viable to bring the property back into repair. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The property is unsafe and dangerous. As the property is vacant and considered a 'second' property for Council Tax purposes it attracts a 300% surcharge, making the Council Tax for 2026/27 c. £12,350. It is not economically viable to bring the property back into residential use. The property is in an exceptionally poor condition making it a blight to the immediate area, which is causing complaints by neighbours.

This is what we want to do about it	These are the next steps
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit a planning application to demolish the property, subject to necessary consents and in so doing remove any safety concerns with the property and save the ongoing council tax costs of c. £12,350 per annum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Submit a planning application for consent to demolish the property and should the Application be successful, undertake the demolition.

2. Key issues

- 2.1 The property is a 2 bed detached house that has been vacant for over 15 years. As the property is considered a second property for Council Tax purposes then it is subject to a 300% surcharge, making the Council Tax for 2026/27 c. £12,350. The future of the wider Oast House and Kingston Road site, of which this property forms part, is being reviewed and during this process, the Council will remain liable for holding costs during this period which could be a further 12 – 24 months.
- 2.2 The property is in a very poor condition with part of the first floor unsafe, presenting a health and safety concern, particularly if there was unauthorised access. A building survey was undertaken on the property which concluded that to make the building safe would cost c. £50,000 and to bring it back into use would be up to £350,000. See Appendix 1.
- 2.3 The property forms an important part of the Kingston Road and Oast House regeneration site, as it fronts the main road and gives the development site a regular shape, and including it in the regeneration site will maximise the redevelopment opportunity.
- 2.4 To demolish the property planning permission is required. Initial surveys in 2023 indicated that bats might be present and roosting in the building. Three emergence surveys are currently being undertaken with a final report likely to be released by the end of June which will clarify whether bats are present and which species are roosting. The first two surveys did not identify any bats being present.
- 2.5 Should the planning application be successful, and confirmation that bats are present in the building, our bat specialist has confirmed that prior to demolition bat boxes can be put up in the immediate area as alternative roosts. These, however, need to be on private land but can be on trees and buildings. The bat licence will determine appropriate roosts, but it may be that we can consider trees within our ownership of the residential properties at 38 and 42 Kingston Road. Ideally, we do not want to put them on our adjacent buildings as this will just transfer the bat issue.
- 2.6 The demolition will need to be undertaken in October or March when the bats are least likely to be present.
- 2.7 We have previously obtained quotes to demolish the property which ranged from £14,000 to £42,000 however if bats are present then this effects the method used to demolish the property with the removal of the roof required to be undertaken by hand and the property scaffolded to facilitate this. We have

retendered the demolition of the property on the basis the property has or does not have any bats, and the quotes are to be received by the 12th June.

- 2.8 The total cost of the planning application, dealing with any bats and demolition is likely to be between £33,000 and £68,000 (the variation being very dependent on the cost of demolition being the single largest cost) making it more cost effective to demolish the property than to make it safe and pay council tax for a further 12 – 24 months at a cost up to c. £75,000.

3. Options appraisal and proposal

- 3.1 Option 1 - The **preferred option** is to demolish the property subject to submitting the necessary planning application. This is the preferred option as it will remove the health and safety risk, it will stop any neighbour complaints and is the most cost-effective option, compared to bringing the property into a safe condition, and it ceases holding costs of up to £24,700 (for a two-year period).
- 3.2 Option 2 - Do not demolish the property but instead make the building safe, at a cost of £50,000, and pay holding costs of up to £24,700 until the site is sold. This is **not the preferred option**, as the cost to demolish the property is less than making the property safe and paying council tax for the period until the sale of the property completes. The property is very likely to be demolished by the purchaser of the wider site in due course anyway.
- 3.3 Option 3 – Secure the property with hoarding and install steel sheets to access points to reduce as much as possible any unauthorised access. While this is likely to be cheaper than options 1 and 2 this is **not the preferred option**, as the building will continue to deteriorate which could lead to the roof collapsing in and the council having to undertake immediate safety works and/or full demolition.

4. Risk implications

- 4.1 Not demolishing the property will leave the Council exposed to the potential risk that the building will collapse as its condition deteriorates further leaving a more immediate health and safety risk.
- 4.2 Gas and electricity services are still connected to the property which could present a risk, however these will be removed on demolition.
- 4.3 Until the final bat report is issued there is a risk that the assumed methodology in demolishing the property will be inaccurate and lead to a variation in the cost of demolition. The ecology company has however already provided some guidance on this methodology and is included in the demolition specification to minimise the risk.
- 4.4 The availability of suitable alternative roosts will determine whether a licence to 'relocate' the bats is granted.
- 4.5 Similarly, we do not know yet the level of involvement/time required by the ecology company to relocate any bats, however we have made an allowance in the budget based on a day rate and likely time for the ecologist.

- 4.6 We are unlikely to have the demolition quotes until the 12th June and therefore an estimate has been used based on the previous quotes.
- 4.7 If bats are present, the window for submitting the planning application, receiving consent and starting the demolition will need to be carefully managed to ensure the demolition can be undertaken during October.
- 4.8 To mitigate against the risk that planning for the demolition is not granted, we have taken advice from colleagues in planning on the form the application needs to take and considerations in the demolition methodology. We will also be instructing a planning adviser previously used by the Council to submit the application thereby reducing the chance of this happening.
- 4.9 The demolition contractor will need to set out clearly their methodology for dealing with demolition should bats be present, the presence of the ecologist and dealing with any asbestos in the upper parts of the building, potentially all at the same time.
- 4.10 The site is relatively small and next to a main road, and the demolition, if approved, will need to be undertaken appropriately. To mitigate any issues demolition contractor's method statement will be signed off by our health and safety team.

5. Financial implications

- 5.1 The total cost of demolition (estimated between £33k and £68k) will be met from an approved Capital Programme budget for 2026/27 of £100k.
- 5.2 Implementation of this option will also result in revenue savings, as the annual council tax budget of £12k will no longer be required.
- 5.3 Retaining and renovating the property would require significant additional capital investment.
- 5.4 Therefore, the preferred option represents the most financially advantageous approach.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 Under paragraph 4.2 (f) Part 3 section (d) of the Scheme of Delegations to Officers the Group Head of Assets has delegated authority to make the application for planning permission in relation to Regulation 3 of the Town and Country Planning General regulations 1992 on behalf of the Council as developer where the financial impact does not exceed the value of £100,000 for the whole project.
- 6.2 The Council has statutory powers to enter into contracts for services and works pursuant to both the general power of competence under the Localism Act 2011 as well as powers under section 11 of the Local Government Act 1972. The exercise of these powers must be in compliance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegation. Any applicable public procurement legislation must also be complied with.
- 6.3 Legal Services must be consulted as appropriate throughout the procurement and contract award process.

Corporate implications

7. Commissioners' comments

7.1

8. S151 Officer comments

8.1 The S151 Officer confirms that all financial implications have been taken into account and that the recommendations can be fully funded from the 2026/27 Capital Programme Provision and will result in an ongoing saving against the Revenue Budget.

9. Monitoring Officer comments

9.1 The Deputy Monitoring Officer confirms that the relevant legal implications have been taken into account.

10. Procurement comments

10.1 The appointment of a demolition contractor should comply with the Council's Contract Standing Orders.

11. Equality and Diversity

11.1 There are no perceived implications on equality and diversity if the recommendation is accepted.

12. Sustainability/Climate Change Implications

12.1 The demolition of the property will enable any future development to be built to newer, more stringent environmental and sustainability standards. This will increase the efficiency of any future development over the continued use or commissioning of the existing structure.

However, embodied carbon within the existing building will be lost if the materials are not retained for further development or repurposed into a new structure/surface. This should be considered in the demolition contract.

13. Other considerations

13.1 n/a.

14. Timetable for implementation

14.1 The recommendation will be implemented immediately if approved.

15. Contact – Bruce Strong, Asset Manager

***Please submit any material questions to the Committee Chair and Officer
Contact by two days in advance of the meeting.***

Background papers: There are none.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Condition Report

Appendix 2 – Summary of Demolition Quotes – **to follow**