

APPENDIX 1

REPORT: Non-Traditional Housing, Tarran Properties – Braithwell Road, Chadwick Drive and Newlands Avenue, Maltby

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to inform Housing Cabinet Members of the findings of recent consultation carried out with the residents with regard to the non-traditional Tarran properties at Maltby.

2. Introduction

2.1 Housing and Environmental Services Cabinet Member has approved a general strategy for the disposal and/or demolition of non-traditional properties following extensive consultation with existing tenants and ward members. This decision was based on evidence that showed that the non-traditional stock can contribute to the spiralling decline of an area, and that refurbishment costs were out of all proportion to the value and life expectancy of the property.

2.2 A report was submitted to cabinet on 2 February 2004 examining the future of the non-traditional Tarran properties at Maltby. Initially, all of the Tarran properties were owned by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council and presently 82 of these properties are occupied (either tenanted or owner-occupied) with the remaining 4 properties void, 14 properties have been bought under the Right to Buy process and a further 9 properties are pursuing a Right to Buy application. 72 Council properties remain in the ownership of RMBC. Housing Regeneration and the Maltby Estate Management team carried out individual consultation with the residents of 78 properties to establish the circumstances, needs and aspirations of the community.

3. Tarran Housing

3.1 Tarran properties are designated a defective dwelling under Section 528 of the Housing Act 1985. These properties were originally erected in concrete panels with asbestos sheet roofing. Defects include the spalling of concrete and the corrosion of the reinforced steelwork. They were intended to provide only short-term post war accommodation and were given a life span of 25 years. They are all in the region of 56 years old and many are showing signs of the defects associated with these properties.

4. Structural & Repair Costs

4.1 Economic and Development Services carried out a feasibility study in December 2003 to determine the works necessary to replace the asbestos roofing and an approximate cost was provided. In addition to this study, information was provided by Bramall Construction (Housing Services Contractor and Decent Homes Partner) who have recently carried out the 'brick skinning' of non-traditional housing to improve the performance and appearance of non-traditional properties in Derby. The table below indicates this and also the costs associated with refurbishing the properties to meet the Decent Homes standard and evidence provided by the Decent Homes team show that costs average approximately £12,300 per property. A decision to refurbish and therefore retain these properties will result in management and responsive repair costs being incurred. Costs have been calculated to 2010.

TABLE 1

Calculation of refurbishment costs for one Council owned Tarran property		
Removing the asbestos and re-roofing the properties		£12,000
To meet the Decent Homes standard	Replacement/upgrading of Central Heating system	£ 3,200
	Replacement kitchens	£ 2,700
	Replacement bathrooms	£ 1,500
	External Doors	£ 1,200
	Windows	£ 1,900
	Electrical re wire	£ 1,800
Brick skinning to exterior of property	Demolish and prop	£ 1,700
	Excavate & concrete founds	£ 1,400
	External walls	£ 8,750
	Extend Roof	£ 2,200
	Provision for scaffold	£ 1,000
	Renew paths	£ 1,000
	Re-plaster external walls	£ 900
Management Costs	Up until 2010	£ 2,800
Annual responsive Repairs	Up until 2010	£ 3,600
	Total	£ 47,650*

* note - this figure does not include fees.

4.2 Therefore, to refurbish all 72 properties would cost approximately £3.5 million plus fees.

- 4.3 This is not a viable option, as the life expectancy of the properties will not be extended sufficiently to justify the associated costs to bring the properties up to a Decent Homes standard.

5. Energy Efficiency

- 5.1 Presently, the majority of the non-traditional housing stock in Rotherham is less energy efficient than their traditional counterparts. However, the Tarran properties have previously benefited from cavity wall insulation and should be treated as a traditionally constructed house when establishing an energy rating.
- 5.2 The Government's Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) is rated on a scale of 1 to 120. A SAP energy rating gives a measure of the energy efficiency of a home. It is based on energy costs for space and water heating. The higher the rating number, the more energy efficient the home.
- 5.3 The energy rating (SAP) for Rotherham housing stock is an average of 58 (above national average of high 40's) and this figure is similar to that of a 3 bed roomed house (both traditional and Tarran property) with cavity fill, gas central heating and partial double glazing. By carrying out the refurbishment works highlighted above the energy efficiency will be improved by 18 points and the energy running costs will be reduced by £160 a year.
- 5.4 However, based on approximate costs and advice from Housing Services Energy Efficiency Team, it would not be advantageous or economical to improve the energy efficiency of the Tarran properties for a short term period. It would be advisable to investigate further options where the energy efficiency of the homes could be improved both to the residents and the Council in the long term.

6. Consultation (Social Survey) exercise

- 6.1 There is an exceptional sense of community in this area and the residents are proud of and look after their estate. There are few reports of crime and anti social behaviour on the estate. From a housing management view this area is low maintenance and the properties are high demand due to their spaciousness, large gardens and an intense sense of community. Although some tenants accept that refurbishment costs are reasonable to remove the asbestos roofing and bring these properties up to a decent home standard, over 94% (73 properties) of the community want to see the properties refurbished, whatever the cost. If refurbished, tenants have been informed that the works will cause major disruption and tenants will have to move out of their home for works to take place. All tenants benefiting from refurbishment work will have to be temporarily re-housed whilst the works were being carried out and return to the estate upon completion of the works. Due to this, some tenants (6 households) have stated

that they would not be able to endure two moves to allow refurbishment works to take place and would not wish to return to the estate.

6.2 Housing and Environmental Services Cabinet Member approved strategies for the disposal and/or demolition of non-traditional properties. An economical alternative to refurbishment would be the redevelopment of the estate. Redevelopment would briefly require the following:

- Council tenants to be re-housed, some temporarily to allow them to return to the estate.
- Owner/occupied properties to be purchased by the Council to facilitate demolition
- All residents to be paid home loss and disturbance costs
- Demolition of all properties
- Redevelopment of the area

6.3 An indication of the costs to clear the estate and therefore allow redevelopment to take place is shown below.

TABLE 2

Costs to clear site			
	No. of properties	Individual cost	Total cost
Home loss payments	86	£ 3,100	£ 266,000
Disturbance costs	86	£ 500	£ 43,000
Acquisition of private properties	14	*£22,000	£ 308,000
Acquisition of potential private properties (council tenants currently pursuing a right to buy application)	9	*£22,000	£ 198,000
Demolition costs	86	£ 3,500	£ 301,000
		Total	£1,116,000

*This figure is the current market value of the Tarran properties as used to assist the right to buy process.

6.4 Close consultation has been carried out to investigate the needs and aspirations of the community and although the majority of the residents would prefer to have their homes refurbished and remain as tenants or owner-occupiers there are a number of individuals who see an opportunity to change tenure.

TABLE 3

Present tenure 'split' for Tarran residents	
Tenure	No of properties
Council tenants	72
Owner occupiers	14
Total	86

Residents tenure 'split' following social survey	
Tenure	No of properties
Housing Association tenants*	27**
Owner occupiers	22**
Permanent move away from estate	1
No appropriate answer given	31
Total	81

*6 respondents stated that they would return to the estate as Council tenants even though this was not an option following a decision to redevelop

**3 respondents chose to state that they had no preference between being tenant or an owner occupier.

- 6.5 Of the respondents who chose one of the appropriate options regarding tenure, there appears to be an equal mix of tenants and owner occupiers which would indicate that the community mix would be sustainable. However, there is concern regarding the 31 households who did not chose to specify whether they would wish to be a Housing Association tenant or an owner occupier and these individuals will require future consultation regarding their specific needs.
- 6.6 Regarding redevelopment and re-housing, an immediate problem the council will face will be the number of residents who will want to be re-housed in the Manor area, both on a temporary and permanent basis. Many residents have specified particular roads and only those that they are willing to move to.
- 6.7 Information from Maltby Housing Office indicates that there are 6 voids (approximately) a year on the Manor estate and where some residents are willing to move within the Maltby estate but only to areas such as Cliff Hills and in some cases Highfield Park. Again void figures for these areas are very low, (approximately 6 a year). Every resident specified that they would not be willing to make a permanent move to the Birks Holt Estate or the White City Estate. There have only been 7 residents that have expressed a wish to leave Maltby and be re-housed elsewhere within the borough.
- 6.8 A number of residents, 8, who expressed a preference to return to the estate as owner-occupiers did so on the understanding that the option of affordable housing would assist in the purchase. The problem many owners' face is they have no mortgage or loan outstanding on their property and they are not at a time in their life when taking on a mortgage is a feasible thing to do. Their properties will be valued at a much lower price than traditional housing due to the non-traditional properties being categorised as a defective dwelling under the Housing Act 1985. Unless affordable housing is made available with additional gap funding or shared ownership where appropriate, the majority of the residents in the area will be priced out of the current market.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 Although re-development appears to be the only cost effective way forward it will be a long process to accommodate the needs of the community if we provide like for like accommodation in areas of their choice. Although during consultation it was suggested to single/older persons that accommodation other than family housing could be an option for them, only a minority were interested. Many who would be eligible for bungalows that could take the strain off the family housing demand waiting list do not wish to take this option.
- 7.2 The cabinet report of 2 February 2004 stated that re-housing and decanting for re-development of the site would take one to one and a half years. Taking into consideration the feedback received during consultation and the desire of the tenants and residents to be re-housed in the immediate area, this process may be significantly longer than originally perceived.

However, it is also a fact that once an estate begins to empty, remaining residents become increasingly anxious to move away – whether permanently or temporarily – as fast as possible.

8. Preferred Option

- 8.1 It is not considered sustainable to refurbish the Tarran homes. It is recommended that disposal and redevelopment be the preferred option.