

Committee: Housing Board

Agenda Item

Date: 13th November 2014

4.3

Title: Reynolds Court, Newport

Portfolio Holder: Doug Malins – Housing Development Manager

Key decision: No

Summary

1. This report updates the Housing Board with regard progress on the redevelopment of the sheltered scheme at Reynolds Court, Newport.
2. The Sheltered Housing Asset Management Review identified this scheme as being the worst performing in terms of physical attributes and high void levels. At the Cabinet meeting on 31st July, Members agreed to progress with the redevelopment option, which ratified the decision made by Housing Board on the 22nd July.

Recommendations

3. That the Housing Board:
 - a. Note the contents of this report.

Financial Implications

4. Financial provision for the development of new Council owned homes is included within the Housing Revenue Account.
5. The Indicative cost for the development has been calculated, but will be subject to value management as proposals are developed in greater detail. The final cost will be known following the tender process for the selection of a building contractor.

Background Papers

6. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

Sheltered Housing Asset Management Housing Board Report – 4th Nov 2013
Henry Riley Feasibility Cost Plan No. 1 – 4th July 2014

7.

Communication/Consultation	Existing tenants, local residents, Parish Council and external agencies
Community Safety	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Health and Safety	Works will be carried out with some tenants

	still in occupation. Detailed method statements will be required to ensure Health and Safety requirements are met.
Human Rights/Legal Implications	Tenants will be eligible to Homeloss payments, as well as assistance with disturbance.
Sustainability	The redevelopment option will provide an opportunity to construct new thermally efficient homes for people in housing need.
Ward-specific impacts	Newport
Workforce/Workplace	Housing and Environmental Health

Situation

8. The scheme consists of 31 units, including the 3 bedroom flat that was previously occupied by the resident warden. Of these 31 units, 22 comprise bedsit accommodation. These bedsit units are clearly an outdated form of accommodation, and are therefore regularly refused and are considered hard to let. Long term void units have contributed to substantial levels of rent loss for the scheme.
9. The scheme also has other poor physical attributes that add to its unsuitability for modern life. There are no lifts; the communal kitchen is too small; the hairdressing salon is small and unappealing; there is no reception area; there is no scooters store/charging point. The existing building is generally in need of modernisation.
10. However, the scheme is in an excellent location within Newport, close to good transport links and other facilities. Therefore investment to make this scheme fit for purpose would increase demand for the accommodation.
11. There has been detailed consultation with the tenants over many months, including site visits, presentations and one-2-one visits. The tenants are supportive of the redevelopment proposal.
12. The Council's architects, Saunders Boston, have been refining the design drawings since Cabinet approval in July. A Pre-Application meeting was held with Planning Colleagues on 18th September, in order to obtain formal Planning Officer comments. The proposal was positively received, although there were issues raised that the architects have since resolved. A copy of the latest drawings, including 3D imagery, are appended to this report.
13. At the time of writing this report, I can confirm that consultations are booked in as follows:
 - i. Meeting with Parish Council and Local Members – 30th October
 - ii. Public consultation events – 5th and 6th November
 - iii. Planning Committee Workshop Presentation – 12th November
A verbal report on the outcome of these consultation events will be provided.

14. The estimated build cost for this new build scheme is **£7,374,110**. This allows for build costs plus all design fees, all fit out costs, a 2 phased development and a large contingency to take account of identified risk elements. As the scheme is progressed still further, the risk elements will either be firmed up or eliminated.
15. Following a recent meeting with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), it has been suggested that UDC can bid for Affordable Housing Grant. This will clearly assist with sizeable cost of this development, and is currently being pursued by officers.
16. An indicative development programme has been developed, highlighting key dates. A Planning Application is to be submitted by the end of November 2014. This will then be heard by the Planning Committee in either February or March 2015. Subject to being granted permission, and also subject to the successful procurement of a building contractor, start on site is targeted for July 2015. All of the existing tenants are aware of this target start on site date.

Risk Analysis

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Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
Not achieving planning permission	1 Planners supportive	4 Development not possible	Pre-planning discussions with planners
Tenants not supportive	1 Tenants fully engaged	3 Tenants not satisfied	Continuous engagement.
High construction costs	3 New build option has high costs	3 Scheme unviable	Value management to be undertaken throughout design process

1 = Little or no risk or impact

2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.

3 = Significant risk or impact – action required

4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.