



To: Executive Councillor for Housing: Cllr Catherine Smart  
Report by: Alan Carter, Head of Strategic Housing  
Relevant scrutiny committee: Community Services Scrutiny Committee  
Wards affected: All Wards  
EqiA Undertaken: Yes

## **COUNCIL NEW BUILD PROGRAMME - SCHEME APPROVALS**

### **Key Decision**

**This report contains exempt annexes which are recommended to be NOT for publication and that press and public are excluded by virtue of paragraph 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.**

#### **1. Executive summary**

This report provides details of the redevelopment of properties in Aylesborough Close and Water Lane and Green End Road.

In the light of the debate at the last Committee and subsequently at the full Council meeting the Executive Councillor for Housing has requested that this report be submitted to provide further information on why the two schemes have been proposed for redevelopment including information on the equalities impact of the proposal.

#### **2. Recommendations**

The Executive Councillor is recommended to

(a)

- approve that Aylesborough Close Phase 1 (1-8a and 39-50 Aylesborough Close and adjacent garages) is redeveloped
- note the first indicative mix, design and layout of the new scheme to be evolved prior to the submission of a planning application

- approve the scheme capital budget highlighted in the project appraisal to cover the Construction Cost of the scheme; Home Loss Payments to tenants and leaseholders and professional quantity surveyor fees.
- approve that delegated authority be given to the Director of Customer and Community Services following consultation with the Director of Resources and the Head of Legal Services to seal a Development Agreement with our preferred house-builder/developer partner.
- note that residents of the current scheme will be supported in line with the Council's Home Loss Policy to secure suitable alternative housing

(b)

- approve that the Water Lane scheme (6-14a Water Lane and 238-246 Green End Road) is redeveloped
- note the first indicative mix, design and layout of the new scheme to be evolved prior to the submission of a planning application
- approve the scheme capital budget highlighted in the project appraisal to cover the Construction Cost of the scheme; Home Loss Payments to tenants and leaseholders and professional quantity surveyor fees.
- approve that delegated authority be given to the Director of Customer and Community Services following consultation with the Director of Resources and the Head of Legal Services to seal a Development Agreement with our preferred house-builder/developer partner.
- note that residents of the current scheme will be supported in line with the Council's Home Loss Policy to secure suitable alternative housing

### 3. **Background**

At the October 2012 Community Services Scrutiny Committee, the Executive Councillor for Housing was requested to approve that more schemes were taken forward under the Council's Affordable Housing Development Programme.

Although approval was given, there was much debate at the Committee and subsequently at the full Council meeting on the following two schemes.

Aylesborough Close Ph 1 (1-8a and 39-50 Aylesborough Close and adjacent garages)

Water Lane (6-14a Water Lane and 238-246 Green End Road)

Consequently, the Executive Councillor for Housing has requested that this report be submitted to provide further information on why the two schemes have been proposed for redevelopment to ensure the decision remains sound, including information on the equalities impact of the proposal.

The appendices provide details of the two redevelopment schemes in the form of Project Appraisals.

1-8a and 39-50 Aylesborough Close currently consists of 24 units, a mix of one, two and three bedroom (one only) flats and maisonettes. Twenty are rented by City Homes and four have been sold. These flats and maisonettes were approved for consideration for redevelopment as part of the Council's 3 Year Rolling Programme in June 2009.

Aylesborough Close was identified in the Cambridge City Council Housing Land Audit 2005 carried out by Savills as a site having potential to improve the layout of units on the site and increase the density. Housing officers have indicated that the flats are becoming more unpopular due to the size, particularly the one bedroom flats.

The first indicative new scheme that has been drawn up for 1-8a and 39-50 Aylesborough Close will provide a mix of 1,2 and 3 bedroom houses and flats built to modern day standards that better reflects the current and future housing needs for people in Cambridge.

6-14a Water Lane and 238-246 Green End Road currently consists of twenty four dwellings, four one bedroom one person bungalows and twenty one bedroom one person flats. Twenty three are rented by City Homes and one flat has been sold. These flats and bungalows were approved for consideration for redevelopment as part of the Council's 3 Year Rolling Programme in June 2009.

This scheme was identified in the Housing Land Audit 2005 as having the potential to be redeveloped on a similar scale and density as the existing dwellings, although there may be potential to create some three-storey blocks in parts. Housing officers have highlighted the growing difficulty in letting the units, particularly to older people, due to the size, construction and quality of the units. For example, the properties can only accommodate single people. Access to the flats above ground floor present difficulties for people with mobility problems. The space standards and layout of the units mean they are not easy to use for wheelchair users.

The first indicative new scheme that has been drawn up for the Water Lane site focuses on the re-provision of Affordable Housing for older people (as opposed to family or working age single person general housing) as the site is well located in terms of services and access to transport links and amenities. The 14 Affordable Housing flats are planned for people over 55 years of age and will meet Homes and Community Agency standards for older people. They will have much better space standards and will be accessible to people who use wheelchairs and will have lift access to first floor and above. The two bedroom units will allow live in care as needed.

## **4. Implications :**

### **(a) Financial**

The financial implications of each scheme are shown in full in the Appendices. As the schemes are still subject to planning the costs are indicative. As final schemes are worked up they will only proceed if they can be funded within borrowing and capital funding parameters in the new 30 Business Plan that has been established under 'self-financing'. If a final scheme cannot be delivered within the budget requested then a revised approval will need to be brought back to Committee for scrutiny. The risk that the schemes cannot be funded can be mitigated by;

- Adjusting the balance between new Affordable Homes and market housing in the schemes.
- Working with one of the housing association partners on the Council's Affordable Housing Development partnership framework agreement to part or completely fund a scheme
- Reduce the number of schemes in the overall programme.

It should be noted that errors have been identified in the budgets approved at the October 2012 Committee. Previously estimated Home Loss Payments to leaseholders were omitted. These errors have been corrected in section 4 of the Project Appraisal.

### **(b) Staffing**

A Development Officer from the Enabling and Development Team will be allocated to project manage each scheme. Projects will be monitored by the Affordable Housing Development Programme Board, a group of officers that meets quarterly. The Board includes representatives from the Enabling and Development Team, City Homes, Housing Strategy, and Procurement. Internal Audit and Legal are corresponding members.

### **(c) Equal Opportunities**

A revised equalities impact assessment (EQIA) for the Affordable Housing Development Programme is the subject of a separate report to this Committee. EQIAs relating to each of the proposals that are the subject of this report are shown as confidential appendices.

It should be noted that if the Council did not pursue the redevelopment of some existing housing as part of the new Council house building

programme it could result in some of the most vulnerable people in the city being sustained in some of the poorest housing.

In summary, approximately half of the residents at Aylesborough Close scheme are households with children and half are single working age adults.

The redevelopment of the properties at 1-8a and 39-50 Aylesborough Close will have the following equalities impact

### **Positive Impacts**

- The mix of new housing planned will better reflect future housing need
- The new housing planned will improve the balance of housing in the local community
- The mix of new housing planned will increase the provision of much needed family housing
- The new housing planned will be to better space standards than the housing proposed for redevelopment
- The new housing planned will be to improved energy efficiency standards helping to keep utility bills low for the residents
- All residents required to move will be re-housed in better standard accommodation

### **Negative Impacts**

- The disturbance and uncertainty caused by the implementation of the AHDP may be unsettling. It is noted that some residents may choose not to reveal all of their support needs to officers and therefore appropriate support cannot be made available.
- Everyone will be re-housed. However, If residents who are required to move have very particularly requirements it may not be possible to re-house everyone to a new home in the area of their choice.

At 6-14a Water Lane and 238-246 Green End Road ten of the residents are over the age 60 and others are working age adults. All are single person households. Of the 24 residents, the support needs of approximately two thirds are known.

The redevelopment of the properties at 6-14a Water Lane and 238-246 Green End Road has been assessed to have the following equalities impact;

### **Positive Impacts**

- The new housing planned will improve the quality of housing for older people including; better space standards; improved accessibility; and improved energy efficiency standards helping to keep utility bills low for the residents
- All residents required to move will be re-housed in better standard accommodation

## Negative Impacts

- The disturbance and uncertainty caused by the redevelopment proposals will be unsettling.
- Everyone will be re-housed. However, if residents who are required to move have very particular requirements it may not be possible to re-house everyone to a new home in the area of their choice.
- Some residents may choose not to reveal all of their support needs to officers and therefore appropriate support cannot be made available.

To mitigate the negative impact of the proposal the following actions have been identified;

- All residents are provided with a named housing officer to contact immediately after the decision has been made to redevelop a scheme.
- All residents will be offered as little or as much support as they feel they need to secure alternative housing and then to move, including the option to return to Water Lane.
- At the request of the resident, any formal or informal carers will be contacted and be liaised with to ensure the resident receives the appropriate support.

In line with the Council's Home Loss Policy, the type of support to be provided to those tenants and leaseholders who need it are as follows

- Assistance with registering on Home-Link
- Assistance to view alternative accommodation
- Assistance with forms relating to change of address
- Assistance with rearranging care support if applicable
- Where no friends or family are available arranging packing and removals
- Clearance of unwanted items
- Arranging lifting and refitting of carpets and curtains refit

### (d) **Environmental**

All of the new homes will meet Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Housing as a minimum.

## **(e) Procurement**

See Appendices 1 and 2 to the report

## **(f) Consultation and communication**

### **1-8a and 39-50 Aylesborough Close**

There has been a mixed reaction, for and against, to the proposals from the residents. Some of the residents with families are keen to move to more appropriate accommodation and have expressed the view that the existing dwellings are unsuitable for families with young children as the garden areas are not secure, and there is a lack of adequate storage for families. The flats are also not always suitable for families with a household member who has a physical impairment due to the size, design and layout of the flats.

All the four leaseholders and the twenty tenants have been contacted by housing staff. The three resident leaseholders would prefer not to move as they have invested in their existing property and are also concerned that they will not be able to afford to buy another property on the open market. Officers will work with leaseholders to look at their options and work is underway to consider the Council developing an 'equity share' model of housing that would provide an option for leaseholders. If feasible, the leaseholder would invest their capital stake in their current flat into another home owned by the Council with the Council retaining the balancing stake.

City Homes officers are offering support as required to a small number of tenants that have requested their help and officers are aware of their support networks. All the tenants will receive top priority Band A status on Home-Link and a Local Lettings Plan is in place giving these residents greater priority to remain in the locality should they choose to do so.

### **6-14a Water Lane and 238-246 Green End Road**

Most individual residents have met with City Homes officers. Officers are aware of those that are most 'vulnerable', their support networks, and requirements for additional support. All the tenants will receive top priority Band A status on Home-Link and a Local Lettings Plan is in place giving these residents greater priority to remain in the locality should they choose to do so.

Of the current residents of 6-14a Water Lane and 238-246 Green End Road, 14 are aged 55 year and over. They therefore could return to the

new scheme if they choose. Following initial meetings with City Homes officers, no resident has expressed a wish to return.

Contact has been made with the leaseholder on the site and this will be developed further.

The diversity of the residents living in 6-14a Water Lane and 238-246 Green End Road (ie ranging from frail older people to working younger single people) makes it difficult to effectively engage with them as a group. A number of individuals are supported by informal advocates who are giving the view that most residents do not want to move. This view was substantiated at a recent residents meeting when the few residents that were able to attend voiced their opposition to the redevelopment. It is also clear that there is a degree of mutual support between some residents. This adds weight to an option to phase the redevelopment of the site to allow some tenants to move within the site if this is feasible and viable.

#### **(g) Community Safety**

All new Affordable Housing is assessed against Secure by Design criteria.

#### **5. Background papers**

None.

#### **6. Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Project Appraisal - Aylesborough Ph 1: 1-81 and 39-50  
Aylesborough Close and adjacent garages

Appendix 2 – Project Appraisal - Water Lane: 6-14a Water Lane and 238-246 Green End Road

Existing site layout and new indicative scheme layouts also enclosed.

#### **7. Inspection of papers**

There are no background papers but if you have a query on the report please contact:

Author's Name: Alan Carter  
Author's Phone Number: 01223 – 457948  
Author's Email: [alan.carter@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:alan.carter@cambridge.gov.uk)