

**PROPOSED LOCATION FOR
COWSLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICE**

Report of the Director of Derby Homes

SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 Derby Homes has been working with Derwent New Deal for Communities (DNDC) on proposals for a neighbourhood office for the Cowsley area.
- 1.2 Minutes of a meeting held on 5 March 2003 identified the preferred location as the Cornwall Road/Cowsley Road – the Farm Site. These minutes were noted by the Local Housing Board (North) at its meeting on 10 April 2003.
- 1.3 All initial consultation carried out by Derby Homes and DNDC indicates that there is local support for this proposal.
- 1.4 Further consultation will take place on 16 August 2003 when a 'local' open day is planned.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Committee notes Derby Homes' continued work with DNDC, to progress this site as the preferred location for the new neighbourhood office, as a replacement for Cowsley Local Housing Office and a base for other services.
- 2.2 That given approval of this site for a new neighbourhood office for Cowsley, the Committee recommends to the Board and the City Council that, if necessary, the two properties at 96/98 Cowsley Road and eight maisonettes situated at 83-97 Cornwall Road are demolished to make way for the new neighbourhood office.
- 2.3 Pending the outcome of the final consultation and decision on demolition, Committee notes that properties currently not occupied or becoming unoccupied will not be relet to secure tenants.

MATTER FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Derby Homes is working in partnership with New Deal for Communities in the Derwent Area.

- 3.2 One of the major projects is the development of a neighbourhood office to serve the local community.
- 3.3 A number of locations have been discussed, these included
- The Gateway – Wiltshire Road
 - The Grandstand site.
 - The Farm – at the end of Cowsley/Cornwall Road
 - Pembroke Street
 - Industrial Centre – Nottingham Road
- 3.4 Based on the outcome of initial local consultation, the preferred location, in terms of overall benefits to the area and ease of access for the local community, is the Farm Site at the end of Cowsley/Cornwall Road. Currently six of the 10 properties are empty. It is hoped that the development could also include an open space with recreation facilities for young people in the area.
- 3.5 The site of the proposed new neighbourhood office is shown on the attached map. The maisonettes have long been a source of management difficulties, and have been difficult to let. Their location and design makes them unpopular.
- 3.6 DNDC have commissioned a feasibility study and an 'open' consultation day is to be held on 16 August 2003.
- 3.7 The existing Cowsley Local Housing Office is inadequate. It is based in two, three bed council houses, and there is limited space for confidential interviews. These two properties would be refurbished and returned to use as council houses. A new, larger neighbourhood office, would provide an improved service to this deprived community, and the opportunity to increase multi-agency working.

CONSULTATION IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This project is being developed in consultation with tenants and residents as part of the DNDC project.
- 4.2 Tenants currently occupying the maisonettes on Cornwall Road have been contacted and are aware of the proposals. All tenants are willing to re-locate.

FINANCIAL AND BUSINESS PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 It is anticipated that Derby Homes/City Council will finance costs of demolition from the housing capital programme, and that DNDC and all user partners will fund the capital development costs. Final costs will depend upon the size of the new building, and the number of partners sharing the building.

- 5.2 The estimated annual rent loss for the 10 properties is in the region of £26,500.
- 5.3 Costs for demolition and clearance costs are likely to be £50,000 - £70,000. Such costs would be contained within the housing capital programme. Existing tenants would be entitled to home-loss payments if demolition is approved by the Council.
- 5.4 Any expenditure needs to be offset in terms of the estimated costs of improving these properties and the high on-going responsive maintenance costs experienced over recent years.

LEGAL AND CONFIDENTIALITY IMPLICATIONS

6. The proposal to build a new neighbourhood base would be subject to planning approval.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

7. None.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The redevelopment of the area would enhance the estate, the fire damaged properties are currently a blight on the immediate location and the maisonettes are in low demand within an area of high deprivation.
- 8.2 Improvements to the currently privately owned 'farm' site would provide for community recreation and improve the overall impression of the area.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9. None directly arise.

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