

**NORTH MILTON ESTATE REFURBISHMENT****1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to commence design works and carry out refurbishments to the “non-traditional” properties on the North Milton Estate, New Milton.

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 North Milton Estate comprises 382 properties which were built between 1965 and 1977: The table below details the types of property and indicates the level of Right to Buy sales against each category.

<b>Property Type</b>	<b>NFDC Owned</b>	<b>Privately Owned</b>	<b>Total</b>
Reema Conclad Flats	132	3 (leasehold)	135
Sellick Nichol Houses	82	18	100
Calcium silicate houses	16	21	37
Traditional Flats	33	0	33
Traditional Houses	45	32	77
<b>Total</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>382</b>

- 2.2 In line with all social landlords NFDC Housing Services have been working towards upgrading all our properties to meet the Decent Homes Standard by the end of 2010 to meet the government's target.
- 2.3 Stock condition surveys carried out on the North Milton Estate indicate that the “non-traditional” properties will not meet the thermal comfort provisions of the Decent Homes Standard due to the type of construction.
- 2.4 The Reactive Maintenance and Housing Needs Sections have also received numerous complaints regarding damp and condensation particularly within the Reema Conclad flats, leading to requests for repairs and re-housing.
- 2.5 In 2007/8 an assessment of the whole estate was undertaken by Atisreal, specialist property advisors, which looked at the structural viability of the properties and options for the entire estate including complete or partial redevelopment.
- 2.6 The structural appraisal within this report stated “The stock of non-traditional types at New Milton though in largely original condition has evidently been well maintained by the Council and presently exhibits few significant structural defects. The results of the present survey show that the structural integrity of the non-traditional stock can be maintained in the long term if repairs and protective measures are implemented”. With appropriate investment they could be made to meet the Decent Homes Standard and extend the life of the properties.

2.7 Options for redeveloping the site were considered non viable due to the current economic conditions and the costs involved in resolving issues around the privately owned properties.

### **3. PROPOSALS**

3.1 To achieve Decent Homes and to provide modern adequate accommodation it is proposed to refurbish the 135 Reema Conclad flats and 82 Sellick Nichols houses. The works will include the following

- Flats -: External insulated cladding, new windows and glazed screens, new doors, improved bin store areas, new kitchens and bathrooms.
- Houses -: External insulated cladding (and associated works internally), new windows and doors, re-roofing, new kitchens and bathrooms.
- Generally -: Improvements to the parking on the estate.

3.2 Whilst the cost of kitchens and bathrooms have been allowed for in the Housing Planned Maintenance 10 year programme agreed by Cabinet on 21 November 2007, the other refurbishment works are in addition to any works already budgeted for.

3.3 The contract administration on this scheme would be carried out "in-house", with the exception of the specialist design works for the external cladding. These works would be carried out by consultants and would cost in the range £48,000 – £65,000. Tenders are being sought for these works to allow a quicker start on this project should this report be agreed.

3.4 It is proposed to carry out the construction works in two phases between January 2010 and March 2012. Although this will mean that a small number of properties will fail to meet the Decent Homes deadline by the end of 2010 the fact that they will be in a targeted improvement programme will mitigate that failure and no adverse penalty is expected to be levied against NFDC by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

3.5 The cost of these improvements is estimated to be approximately £3,000,000, which is considerably cheaper than demolishing and rebuilding the properties.

3.6 Officers have, for some time, been aware of the issues surrounding the non-traditional housing on the North Milton Estate and have therefore been prudent with recommendations surrounding investment in the Council's stock. As a result of this prudence the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) currently has a reserve of over £6.5m and it is proposed to fund this project from this reserve. This would still mean that the HRA would continue to have a prudent level of reserves to deal with any unforeseen issues that may arise in the future.

3.7 Funding is also available from the government's Carbon Emissions Reduction Target fund for the external wall insulation and this will be accessed to offset the costs as far as possible. It is anticipated that this could amount to up to £400 per property.

#### **4. TENANT INVOLVEMENT**

- 4.1 North Milton Estate has a resident involvement group which meets every two months and they will be consulted on all aspects of this scheme and its impact on their community. Consultation will ensure that any inconvenience and disruption is kept to a minimum.
- 4.2 Where choice can be given without compromising the effectiveness or the necessity of the work, this will be given.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The cost of the refurbishment is estimated to be approximately £3m (an average investment of under £14,000 per property). Funding for these works can be met from the current reserves of £6.5m held within the HRA and this will still leave an appropriate reserve remaining.
- 5.2 The refurbishment will reduce the Housing Revenue Account, but will, in the medium to long term, reduce expenditure on day to day maintenance. It will also provide better quality accommodation for tenants and thus remove the pressure on the Housing Needs Team from tenants wanting to move.

#### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 All products used in the repair, maintenance and improvement of Council homes are selected to ensure the minimum impact upon the environment and at the same time balance the need to improve the energy efficiency of tenants' homes in order to meet the requirement for thermal efficiency under the Decent Homes Standard.
- 6.2 The external insulation will improve the SAP rating of the properties and will improve the thermal efficiency and carbon footprint. By doing so tenants will have better quality accommodation that will be cheaper to heat and free from excessive condensation.

#### **7. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Many aspects of work identified in this report will improve the security of tenants' homes. In addition the external insulation will create more aesthetically pleasing accommodation and together with improved car parking the external environment will be enhanced which will hopefully create a feeling of pride in the community. This, in turn, will lead to reduced crime and anti-social behaviour.

## **8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 All improvements proposed to the North Milton Estate will ensure that all necessary equality and diversity implications are identified and included in any designs for both internal and external improvements. This will include appropriate wheelchair and disabled access to buildings and exterior landscaped areas. In addition where any existing tenants may have a need for adaptations these will be included within any modernisation and improvement scheme to ensure the best use of available resources.

## **9. TENANTS' COMMENTS**

- 9.1 This report was discussed by the Policy and Report Focus Group on 14 March 2008 and the group wished the following comment to be made:-

"There is quite a lot of excitement and trepidation on the Estate about the refurbishments. Officers have attended the last two local residents meetings and answered peoples' questions fully and have helped alleviate the concerns of residents."

## **10. PORTFOLIO HOLDER COMMENTS**

- 10.1 I am extremely pleased that this long awaited major programme of refurbishment is proposed for the North Milton Estate. It will lead to a high standard of accommodation for our residents that will be better insulated and generally more attractive. I know the existing residents are pleased that this project is proposed and are looking forward to work commencing in the near future.

## **11. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 11.1 That the Council be recommended to agree the proposal for refurbishment works on the North Milton Estate at a cost of £3m to be funded from current reserves in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) phased over a period from January 2010 to March 2012.

### **For Further Information Please Contact:**

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### **Background Papers:**

Consultant's report following structural investigations of properties on the North Milton Estate.  
10 Year Planned Maintenance Programme - Cabinet, November 2007