

Appendix 9 - Items of particular note during consultation.

North Area – Angram Bank

An officer recommendation was made to the TARA to redesignate bungalows on Potters Gate from 40+ to 60+. The TARA objected to this and requested that the bungalows should be designated to general needs on the basis that:

- The bungalows do not have ease of access to the surrounding area
- There are bus stops, shops and medical amenities closer to other properties in the locality
- The monitored alarms beneficial to older people had been removed.
- There was already a mixed age tenure due to lets being made on the basis of need to this type of accommodation
- There are sufficient properties on the estate that are designated for 60+ and there were concerns for future demand and the availability of this type of accommodation for younger households.

Further consideration was given to the proposals taking account of these representations and reasons. It was agreed that the officer recommendation be amended on the basis of this and the proposal is now to designate these bungalows to general needs.

North Area – Binstead

2 public meetings were held to introduce the officer recommendation to change the age designation for blocks of flats on Binstead Drive, Binstead Road and Cookson Close from 40+ to General Needs. At each of the meetings residents objected to the proposals and requested that the designations should be amended to 60+ on the basis that:

- The properties were particularly suitable for older people given the topography of the site
- There were concerns about anti-social behaviour in the area
- There were concerns about access and parking to this particular estate. Many thought this was already congested and felt that this may become even more difficult if the change in designation brought about an increase in traffic to the estate. Many were concerned on the effect of access of the emergency services.
- It was considered that turnaround was stable at the time of the meetings although residents accepted there may be a need to review this in the future if this changed.

Further consideration was given to the proposals taking account of these representations and reasons. As a way forward it was agreed that the officer

recommendation should be amended on the basis of this. The proposal is now to designate properties on Binstead Drive and Binstead Road to 60+. This designation will however be subject to review and amendment should there be a change to the stability of lettings on this estate.

Central Area – Abbeydale

An officer recommendation was made to the Abbeydale TARA to redesignate all 2 bed bungalows on this estate from 60+ to general need. The recommendation was that all one bed bungalows on the estate were to remain at 60+.

In addition to general concerns about the potential for an increase in antisocial behaviour, issues raised by during the consultation by local residents were:

- that the bungalows on this particular estate had been specifically designed for and access restricted to older people and those with disabilities.
- there was no 'vetting' of prospective tenants to ensure they were not drug users

The officer leading the consultation explained this was not the case but because of the fact that the current age designation (60+) in effect restricted access from anyone under residents to meet that age criteria it may have appeared to be the case. Residents were also reassured that appropriate tenancy management processes and procedures were in place to deal effectively with any anti-social behaviour matters as they arose.

Further consideration was given to the proposals taking into account the representations and reasons put forward in the consultation. It was considered that while these properties do not become available frequently, the eligibility criteria for these properties means they would only be available to very few households and this would not represent the best use of stock. Additionally, there are few social housing alternatives in the area for younger households and amending the age designation would make these properties available to a wider age group who would not otherwise be able to access accommodation in this area. It was also considered that given their level access, these properties, regardless of any age designation, would also still be available to people who had been awarded a rehousing priority for mobility needs ahead of others.

On the issue of vetting there are no plans to introduce this and there is no guarantee that this would ensure that the estate was unaffected by drug usage.

On balance therefore it was decided that the officer recommendations would not be amended following the consultation.

Central Area – Derby Street/Terrace/Place

An officer recommendation was presented to the Heeley Rise TARA to redesignate flats on Derby Street, Derby Terrace and Derby Place. These properties are currently age designated to 60+ and 40+. Some of these are chalet style flats and so have level access at most levels. These flats are also in mixed blocks, that is to say there are both one and two bedroom properties in the same block of flats. The recommendation was to redesignate the all flats including those in mixed blocks to general needs accommodation.

The TARA expressed concern about these proposals and expressed the view that

- it was locally accepted these blocks are very quiet, as they were occupied by older people which made them popular for that reason. There is also a high percentage of adapted properties making them particularly suitable for people with mobility issues.
- Some of the committee likened it to a small village community and believe that changing the banding to general needs will upset that balance and some residents will perceive it as a real threat.
- The committee described the proposal as “inappropriate” for those blocks due to the potential for anti- social behaviour and they understood this was the case in some existing general needs accommodation in the locality.
- The TARA believed there was already a balanced mix of properties in the locality and were very strongly opposed to the officer recommendation for the properties to be redesignated to general needs.

Further consideration was given to the proposals taking account of these representations and reasons. After consideration it was decided that the original officer recommendation would not be amended and the proposal to redesignate these flats to general needs would remain.

Central Area – Warminster Road- Brindley

An officer recommendation was presented to the Brindley TARA for flats on Brindley Close and Brindley Crescent which are age designated to be redesignated to general needs accommodation.

Some members of the TARA were unsupportive of these proposals and expressed the view that

- The 40+ age designation should remain
- That upper flats could be redesignated to younger people but that lower flats should be available only to older people due to their mobility issues
- There is a perception that older people are being forced out of properties to make way for younger people.
- That younger people are likely to cause problems and ASB on the estate.

These views were not universally held or agreed by all members of the TARA.

Further consideration was given to the proposals taking account of these representations and reasons. After consideration and examining further bidding and demand information it was decided that the original officer recommendation would be amended and the proposal is now to redesignate age designated properties on Brindley Crescent only to general needs.

North West Area – Stannington

A set of officer recommendations was presented to the Stannington TARA to redesignate 21 blocks of flats on this estate from 60+ and 40+ to general needs.

There was overall support for this proposal, however, there was concern regarding Block 28 – 34 Stanwood Road. The TARA requested that the properties in this block were let sensitively given their proximity to the neighbouring sheltered scheme. Note was taken of this and it was agreed that the recommendation to designate as general needs may be accompanied by a sensitive let tag on this block.

North West – Langsett and Lower Walkley

A set of officer recommendation were originally presented to the local TARA which suggested that bungalows and blocks of flats currently designated to 40+ should be redesignated to general needs. The TARA was happy to support the proposals for the bungalow accommodation however raised concern about the proposals for the blocks of flats. In particular they suggested:

- Of the 2 blocks of flats on the Lower Walkley estate they considered the access to one of the blocks and the age profile of existing tenants supported a redesignation to 60+ rather than to general need
- On the Langsett estate the TARA asked the officer to re-examine the access arrangements for 7 blocks of flats which had been proposed to be redesignated from 40+ to general needs at it was thought these should be better accessed by older people and should be moved to 60+.

Further consideration was given to the information and suggestion from the TARA and local Councillor arising from the consultation. In particular information regarding the number of steps and steep access to these blocks. It was agreed that the proposals be amended to allow redesignation of one of the blocks on Lower Walkley to 60+ and the other to general needs.

For Langsett it was agreed that the proposals be amended to allow 5 blocks of flats to be redesignated from 40+ to 60+ and the remaining 2 blocks from 40+ to general needs.

North West - Uppertorpe

There are 7 tower blocks of flats in Uppertorpe. 6 of these are currently designated to general needs. The remaining block – Wentworth – is currently designated to 40+. An officer recommendation was presented to the local TARA to change the age designation on the Wentworth tower block to general needs.

The TARA suggested that the block should be changed to 60+ rather than general needs. The reasons for this were that it used to be a 60+ block and the age profile of this block was mainly older people over 60. Available properties which were advertised in this block were attractive to older people in neighbouring blocks who would welcome a move to age designated accommodation. The block is also well located for local amenities such as bus stops and shops.

Further consideration was given to this suggestion and the reasons for this. Local and demand information was revisited although the demand from older people in this specific area was inconclusive. However, given the availability of general needs accommodation in this area it was agreed that at this time the proposal be amended to redesignate this block of flats from 40+ to 60+ , with a clear commitment that the demand for properties in this block will be re-evaluated once additional properties have been advertised. Further consultation would take place with a recommendation to designate if this was necessary following this re-evaluation.

South East – Woodhouse

An officer recommendation was presented to the local TARA to redesignate all bungalows in the Woodhouse estate from 40+ to general needs. The TARA supported the recommendation; however following this meeting the local Council member raised concerns about the availability of bungalow accommodation specifically for older people in the area.

The Councillor stated that a high proportion of people bidding for these properties were older residents, and considered there was a lack of this type of accommodation in the area which was particularly suitable for older people.

Following this further representation, demand and bidding information was revisited to identify the proportion of bidders from older people. It was identified that a high proportion of bidders were in fact over 60, so this evaluation evidenced there clear demand from older people in this area for bungalow accommodation.

This information was taken into account and in view of this the original proposals were amended to change the designation on bungalows at Ashpool Close Massey Rd, Stacy Avenue and Stacy Rise to 60+.

South West – Painted Fabrics

Painted Fabrics does not have TARA.

In the absence of a Tenants Association all tenants on Painted Fabrics affected by the proposals were advised of this in writing on 11 November 2014, and were advised that they could discuss this with appropriate officers. Many tenants and residents contacted the Area Office and expressed their concern about the negative effect the proposed changes would have on them. As a result of this a drop in session was arranged for 27th November 2014. Shortly before the drop in session was due to start officers present were advised that all the tenants and residents on the estate affected by the proposals would be attending the start of the session. As a result of this information it was decided to hold a Public Meeting. Two local Ward Councillors were also in attendance at the meeting.

At the public meeting officer recommendations for redesignation to blocks of flats on this estate were presented.

There are 124 flats at Painted Fabrics. All the flats are currently age designated to 60+. Some of the blocks of flats are all one bed properties. Some of the blocks of flats are mixed, that is to say there are both one and two bed properties in the same block.

The officer recommendation is that all the blocks containing one bed properties only remain as 60+ and the mixed blocks are redesignated to general needs.

There has been considerable concern expressed publically about the redesignation proposals to mixed blocks on this estate. Representation was made at the public meeting where the concern was around the impact this would have on the estate, the clash of lifestyles as a result of the ages of current residents in the flats, and the effect this would have on the quiet enjoyment this would have on their homes. The meeting requested that a review be undertaken to reconsider the proposal with a view to all the flats remaining in the over 60 category.

Questions were also asked about the suitability of this accommodation for families with children and whether consideration had been given around facilities and amenities for children within the make-up of blocks. Assurances were given that a number of factors had been taken into account when considering the age designation of each block of flats or bungalows.

There has also been local media attention outlining the concerns raised and a leaseholder of one of the properties at Painted Fabrics has campaigned against the redesignation to his local MP and has raised the issue with the current Cabinet Member for Housing. Both have responded to enquiries on this issue

A re-evaluation of the bidding and demand information was undertaken, the information regarding the number of right to buy and private ownership on the estate and the impact this may have on future residents in the area was taken account of, along with the concerns raised throughout the consultation. However after further consideration it was decided that the redesignation proposals should remain unchanged. This means that the proposal is that the one bed properties

which make up 23% of the flats on this estate remain designated to 60+ while the remaining mixed blocks of flats are to be redesignated to general needs. There is no change to the leaseholders' status or restrictions to whom they may let their properties, should they so wish, by these proposals.