

Cabinet – 12 February 2007

Report of the Director of Adult, Community & Housing Services

Extra Care Housing – Current Phase

Purpose of the Report

1. To update the Cabinet on the present position of the key Extra Care Housing Project and for the Cabinet to endorse the first phase location arrangements.

Background

2. In October 2004 and again in November 2005, the Cabinet agreed a long term strategy to develop a partnered approach to the development of five extra care housing schemes in the Borough ensuring that each township would have by 2015 a scheme meeting the housing and support needs of elderly residents in each area.
3. Dudley has had a long and well respected tradition of sheltered and extra care housing in the Borough. Woodhouse and Jack Newell Court still remain as ground breaking and popular schemes in meeting the housing and support needs of elderly people. The vision and delivery service ethos they embraced were mirrored elsewhere, both in the Borough and outside. However, both these schemes and their like have only been for social renting.
4. Increasingly, Councils in many parts of the country have been working with strategic partners in the form normally of large national and regional registered social landlords to develop extra care housing schemes for a wider tenure range including owner-occupation; leaseholding; shared ownership; alongside the more traditional social rented sector.
5. Some of these schemes have been very large in scale and have been of the 400 unit plus village environment that began to match some of the retirement village developments in the USA.
6. From the outset the proposals in Dudley have not been envisaged on that scale, with the emphasis being extra care and support units

numbering between a minimum of around 40 units and a maximum of around 130.

7. In pursuit of this ambitious vision in the Borough, the Council has embarked on the first phase of the “5 for 15” programme by the procurement of a key strategic partner to work up the financing, design and development and service provision infrastructure for the first two schemes in the programme.
8. Following appropriate advertising in the European Journal and relevant trade magazines, a selection of seven prospective partners were chosen for interview. These seven were drawn from a much longer 20 plus list of prospective major league partners. This clearly demonstrated the market’s interest in both Dudley and the ambitious vision it had for its future housing and service provision in this critical area.
9. After extensive assessment and a round of lengthy interviews, the list of prospective partners has been reduced to five. It is these five who will be involved in the next stage of the procurement process and Dudley’s use of the competitive dialogue process.
10. In this earlier stage it was felt not necessary to present any of the prospective partners with details of sites.
11. However, now that the programme has moved into the next critical stage it is felt timely to introduce into the competitive dialogue arrangements the identification of the likely two sites for the first tranche of development.
12. In choosing the two sites, officers of the Council have been guided by a number of principles:
 - Firstly the availability of Council owned land. As it was clearly evident in the early stages of the competitive dialogue process that ownership and control of the land was instrumental in ensuring that the schemes met completely the aspirations of the Council.
 - Secondly, it was also clear from the competitive dialogue process that the current extra care schemes elsewhere were linked to ensuring added value from the development and linking those developments to wider regeneration initiatives for the Council.
13. From looking at the sites available and bearing those considerations in mind, the first two sites chosen are at Russells Hall and in Coseley.

14. The Russells Hall site represents the largest area of housing development land in the Borough that remains in Council ownership. From initial outline surveys it is felt that the area adjacent to and fronting Middlepark Road would be suitable in terms of accessibility, service infrastructure and potential market attractiveness for a scheme which could cover the range of required tenures in the area. It also has the benefit of having considerable site investigation work already carried out.
15. The Coseley site presently includes the Coseley Youth Centre but again a development of this type would have a real impact on the regeneration of this area, both in terms of the architectural merit of its buildings but also in employment generation terms for staff to service the needs of the residents in the extra care scheme. The potential scheme is close to a main railway line which is in a deep cutting. Whilst the potential for noise is not underestimated it is not felt to be an insuperable issue to resolve.
16. If this scheme were to go ahead, then appropriate reprovion would have to be made following full local consultation. The cost for whatever form of reprovion could be met potentially from a range of planning obligations linked either to this site or a wider programme.
17. Whilst it has never been doubted that five schemes would be extremely viable in a Borough like Dudley with its social, economic and demographic profile, the most recent Housing Needs Survey confirmed the potential viability of five schemes in a range of its key findings.

Finance

18. The procurement process has not yet been completed and any additional future decisions about the use of Council Land or Capital Expenditure will be brought back to Cabinet for approval

Law

19. These matters are governed by Part IV of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, which empowers the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate or is conducive or incidental to the discharge of its various statutory functions.

Equality Impact

20. This report is concerned with promoting independence and improving the quality of life and extending the range of options for elderly people in the Borough who have been identified as a priority group.

Recommendation

21. It is recommended:-

- That Cabinet acknowledge the progress so far and support the initial choice of sites.



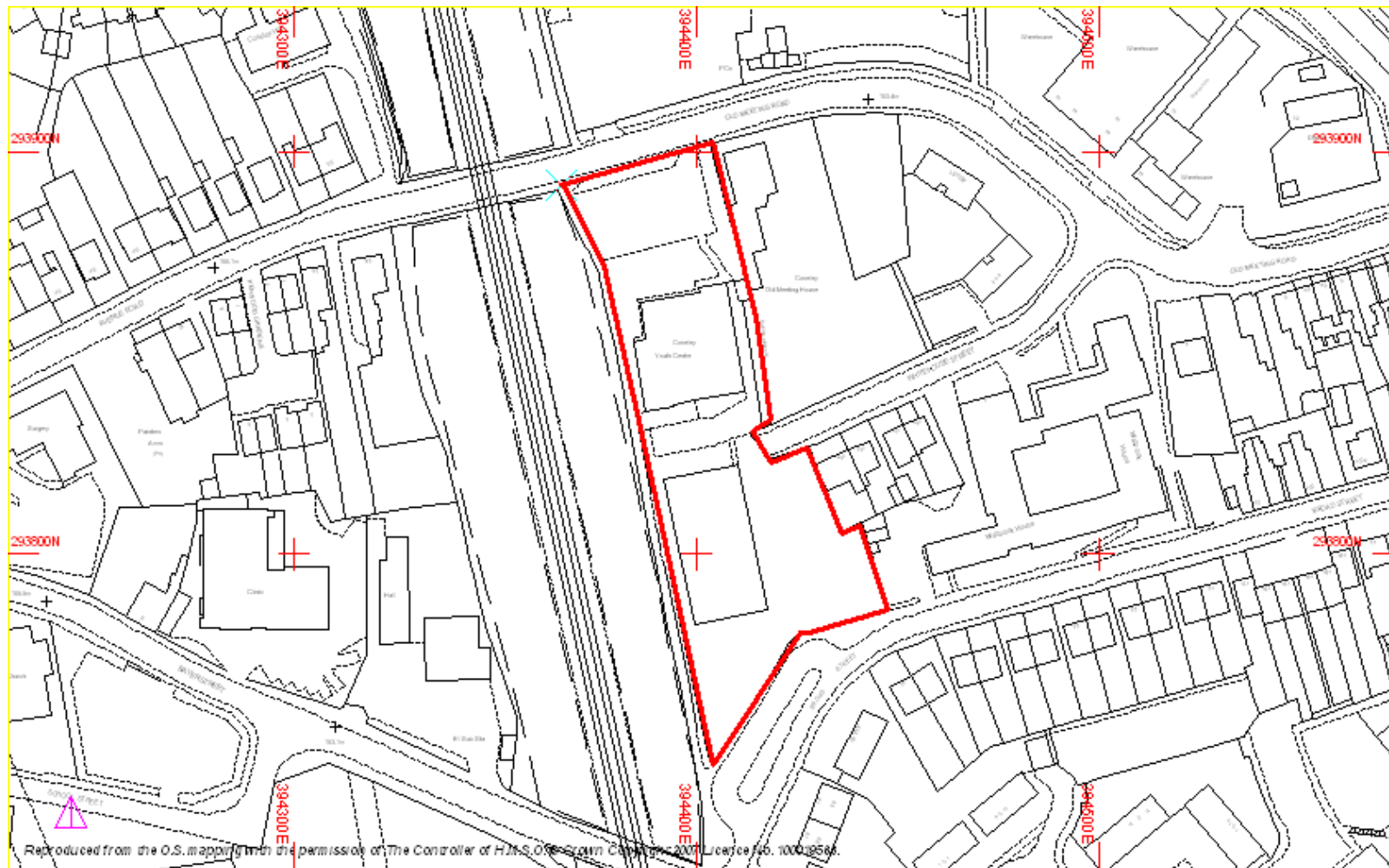
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List of Background Papers:

Report to Cabinet October 2004
Report to Cabinet November 2005
Site Maps of Broad Street, Coseley and Russells Hall

1) Broad Street, Coseley



2) Housing Site at Russells Hall
(area shaded below in brown off Middlepark Road)

