



South
Cambridgeshire
District Council

Non- Traditional Constructed Properties

Published:



Section 1: The Current Position

- 1.1 The Council has 72 properties that are of a non-traditional construction type. They span 1920 -1970s with the majority built in the 1940s
- 1.2 Some are classed as defective under Housing Act 1985 and require remedial works to bring them up to or a satisfactory structural standard or be demolished. Others although not suffering from structural defects are failing and have very poor levels of insulation
- 1.3 The issues relating to the non traditional construction properties owned by the Council have been dealt with in an ad hoc fashion over the years. Some properties have been sold under the right to buy, some properties included within regeneration schemes (such as the Windmill Estate in Fulbourn) while others have had remedial work carried out as a matter of urgency.
- 1.4 The purpose of this strategy is to establish what stock we have, the options available, the risks and financial consideration and the way forward to rectify the properties through a planned approach. This will be the first time that the Council has had a comprehensive strategy that will resolve all of the remaining issues with these types of properties.
- 1.5 This strategy is linked to the Housing Strategy, the Asset Management Strategy, the Warm Homes Strategy and the Sustainability Policy
- 1.6 Of the remaining properties in Council ownership some works have been carried out where the structure is not considered to be failing, to insulate them and bring them up to acceptable standards of thermal comfort. To date this has been minimal but has been supported through grant funding that came from either bidding for it as and when it has come available or claiming back grant funding under government initiatives such as CERT which has now been replaced with the Energy Company Obligation (ECO).
- 1.7 Many of properties have structural considerations which must be taken into account. From surveys it is clear that some are worse than other. Not all properties have structural defects but they are poorly insulated and have key component failure.
- 1.8 As all property types are individual whilst an approach can be agreed for each type contingency requires to be built in to the programme.
- 1.9 The programme is expected to run for four years.



Section 2: Considerations

- 2.1 With all the properties there is little opportunity to successfully demolish and rebuild as the site is too small to make it attractive or the properties are joined to owner occupiers and cannot be separated.
- 2.2 The properties all require significant capital investment and grant funding whilst available at present cannot be guaranteed in the future
- 2.3 Decanting of tenants will be required in most cases and will have a financial impact and an impact on the stock available for let
- 2.4 Refurbished property will also require the renewal of key components as their expected life span has been impacted by the property conditions. Additional work will mostly be limited to kitchens which will have a financial consideration beyond the structural works.
- 2.5 With refurbished property there is a risk that tenants could exercise the right to buy.
- 2.6 This work represents a significant project in terms of capital expenditure, timescale and the expertise and knowledge required.
- 2.7 In some cases consideration will be given to whether they should be disposed of either to a RP or on the open market
- 2.8 Appendix 1 sets out the approach to be taken by the Council that will seek to address the issues arising from these considerations where possible.

Section 3: Risks

- 3.1 Much of the non-traditional stock has reached such a level of deterioration that to do nothing is not an option.
- 3.2 A survey of the Airey stock in 1999 by a structural engineering company recommended immediate action. Due to financial constraints at the time the needs of only some properties have been addressed since then.
- 3.3 A recent survey of an Airey property has shown that it is in very poor structural condition with significant carbonisation and cracking of the steel supports. The extent of the corrosion was unexpected and deemed to be one of the worst examples the engineer has seen. This situation will deteriorate over time.
- 3.4 Other non-traditional constructed properties do not suffer from structural issues but do share the problem of extremely poor thermal insulation which impacts on the internal fixtures and fitting as well as impacting considerably on residents health and enjoyment of their home.



- 3.5 With rising fuel prices and there has been a corresponding rise in complaints of dampness and condensation suggesting rising fuel poverty.

Section 4: Financial Commitment

- 4.1 The works required will need to come through the HRA as capital commitment programmed each year. Where possible grant funding will be claimed that will be rolled forward to the following year to meet the estimated cost that year.
- 4.2 Appendix 2 sets out the expected programme spend which is around £3.3m over a four year programme.
- 4.3 The financial impact will be minimised by use of existing capital budgets to renew key components where possible
- 4.4 Opportunities for additional grant funding will also be sought and bid for as it arises.



Appendix 1: The Approach

- 1 The programme of work required will prioritise the worst affected properties which have structural and key component failure.
- 2 The work will be led by an internal Project Team sponsored by the Director of Housing and led by the Head of Housing and Property Services supported by Asset Management, Planned Maintenance, Housing Management and the main contractor. The main contractor will take the lead on health and safety requirements and address these as a standard item at the Project Team meetings.
- 3 All property types will be given a full options appraisal when they have been structurally assessed as to whether they are retained or disposed of in line with the Sustainability Policy.
- 4 The properties will be brought up to as standard that guarantees the life of the properties for 25 years minimum but does bring them up to mortgageable standard. There is no requirement to do so and lenders do change their criteria, to try to reach mortgageable standard could put the Council at risk of requiring spending considerable capital on further work in the future.
- 5 The work to the properties will seek to bring them up to a structurally safe condition that achieves the highest measure of thermal comfort that is realistically achievable. Renewable technologies where possible will be installed and where internal key components are required to be replaced this will be done. Consideration will be given to the external environment to ensure works are in keeping with its surroundings
- 6 Liaison with key agencies such as Building Control and Planning will require to be undertaken prior to work taking place to ensure the necessary constraints are in place
- 7 Grant funding available at the time will be claimed but not factored into the cost of the programme unless it is guaranteed.
- 8 The works represent a considerable spend however it is considered that in the initial phases to address the work of the stock namely Airey houses and Hauxley bungalows the work can be procured using the Eastern Procurement Consortium, Special Projects contract to carry out the works and sub-contract component works to existing contractors for roofs, heating and decent homes work such as kitchens and bathrooms.
- 9 Full tenant consultation will be carried out that will include leaseholders and owner occupiers as the works will need to address individual needs particularly in the bungalows which house predominantly older and disabled residents. The Hauxley bungalows are concentrated in two villages, Sawston and Duxford



- 10 The Airey houses of which there are 13 remaining require to be decanted as they do require structural repair work to steel columns. Only by opening them up can the full extent of the repair work be determined. Unlike other areas the Councils stock whilst affected is not as exposed and therefore less likely to be seriously affected but nevertheless requires to be empty to allow the works. Some approaches to this work can allow tenants to remain but is still becomes a building site which is difficult to manage Decanting can be achieved through a planned approach to minimise the impact on the stock.



Type	No	Common Defects	Remedies	Cost
Airey	15	Structural failure through cracking of PRC columns, water penetration through PRC panels, high chloride content in PRC panels Very poorly insulated. DESIGNATED DEFECTIVE- part XVI Housing Act 1985 due to carbonisation of the structural columns	Removal of corroded steel columns and replace, concrete ring beam around base or timber structural frame over clad with insulation and render. The external can be bricked up which affects the cost.	£1,350,000
Hawksley	29	Profiled aluminium clad bungalows liable to corrosion of sill members and bottom edges of cladding. Very poorly insulated and failure of cladding particularly on the roof	External insulation, roof replacement with light weight profile tiles and internal decent home work as required	£638,000
Swedish Timber	13	Localised decay of timber cladding, bargeboards, porch posts at foot, sole plates, condensation in roof space, poor fire separation in roof space, risk of interstitial condensation	Timber frame structure built to support remove timber and cover with insulation and render. Re-roof?	£585,000
Addison	12	Precast Concrete 1920 Grooved PRC columns, PRC panels, cavity , PRC panels	EWI	£168,000
Unity	1	Cracking of PRC columns, cracking and spalling of PRC lintels. Corrosion of steel at interface between RSJ floor support beam and PRC columns, Corrosion of copper strap retaining clips, significant levels of chloride in PRC external panels, asbestos cement roof sheets. DESIGNATED DEFECTIVE- part XVI Housing Act 1985 due to carbonisation of the structural columns	EWI	£14,000
Industrial	2	Concrete, low thermal insulation	EWI.	£28,000
Wimpey No-fines	11 5	Vertical cracking of no-fines concrete external walls, horizontal cracking of render above windows, scarcity and corrosion of wall tiles to brick cladding, low to high rates of carbonisation of dense aggregate concrete ring beams	Low priority, EWI programme funded from HRA Capital budget is progressing all work	£0

Title



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Type	Numbers	Cost/property	Cost	Year 1	Year 2	Year3	Year 4	Year 5
Airey	15	£90,000.00	£1,350,000.00	£540,000.00	£450,000.00	£360,000.00		
Hauxley	29	£22,000.00	£638,000.00	£440,000.00	£198,000.00			
Swedish	13	£45,000.00	£585,000.00		£315,000.00	£270,000.00		
Addison	12	£14,000.00	£168,000.00				£168,000.00	
Unity	1	£14,000.00	£14,000.00			£14,000.00		
Industrial	2	£14,000.00	£28,000.00			£28,000.00		
Contingency				£120,000.00	£120,000.00	£120,000.00	£120,000.00	
Total				£1,100,000.00	£1,083,000.00	£792,000.00	£288,000.00	