

**COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**

**24 JANUARY 2012**

**REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMUNITIES & NEIGHBOURHOODS**

**FAIRMEAD REGENERATION- MASTERPLAN**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To update Members on the progress that has been made in relation to a regeneration project for the Fairmead Estate.
- 1.2 To seek approval of Fairmead Regeneration project final Master plan.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **Members comment on and approve the Fairmead Regeneration Project Master plan, whereby it is at 'Ready State' to secure external funding at a later date.**

**3.0 KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 The Fairmead estate in Melton Mowbray was constructed in the 1970's and is of a Radburn Design typical of it time. The Radburn principles of separating vehicles and pedestrians were promoted with the objective of providing peaceful residential environments, with little danger to pedestrians from traffic. However, there are inherent weaknesses with the concept. Public space to the front of houses and parking or garage courts at their rear means that the properties have no private 'face' and residents can feel susceptible to intruders from all sides. Also, there is limited natural surveillance of routes by drivers and this can make pedestrian routes feel lonely and dangerous. Similarly, car owners cannot see the car parks and garage courts and feel that their vehicles are more prone to theft and vandalism. Overall the generic design and inward looking development form of Radburn estates creates a weak sense of place.
- 3.2 There are a number of enclosed communal areas within the Fairmead estate which have become a haven for anti-social activity and the lack of ownership felt for the green spaces has led to neglect. The numerous walkways can feel dangerous and isolated, particularly in the evenings. The estate also does not integrate well with the surrounding spaces and street patterns.
- 3.3 Overall the Radburn layout generates security and maintenance issues that require intensive management to resolve. This project has been conceived to resolve the current design issues surrounding the estate such as adaptation of the layouts to more conventional ones to improve long-term sustainability and desirability.
- 3.4 Significant resources have been and are currently spent within this priority neighbourhood by Melton Borough Council, other Government agencies and partners, yet the overall perception within the local and wider community remains low and the entire estate is not seem as a desirable place to live. Long Term improvement for the residents of this priority neighbourhood will

need to include addressing the overall poor design within the estate to make it a more desirable place to live as well as tackling social and economic factors.

3.5 CABE The government's advisor on architecture, urban design and public space has recognised the design difficulties within Radburn estates *'Radburn is deeply unpopular in many cases and demolition is considered to be the most desirable option. However, often relatively minimal interventions to address the street layout and urban design issues that make Radburn housing problematic have been shown to work and suggest that working with the existing stock can be preferable to comprehensive redevelopment. Recent experience shows that concentrating on public space, maximising or reintroducing connectivity and recreating the street as a meaningful part of a wider neighbourhood, can address some of the problems of this type of housing.'* (Creating Successful Neighbourhoods).

3.6 *Many other Local Authorities have recognised the problems associated with Radburn estates and have taken steps to improve the overall layout of their estates, such measures have included;*

- Small to large scale demolition and redevelopment
- Communal areas incorporated into private gardens
- Clearly defined frontages and improved fencing to properties
- Re-orientation of properties
- Communal car parks altered to form private cul-de-sacs with allocated or off road parking.
- Removal of unnecessary alley and walk ways
- Renaming of streets
- Incorporation of a wider type, sized and tenure of housing to create a more mixed sustainable community.

3.7 The concept behind this project was to work towards turning the Fairmead neighbourhood into a *"place that offers everyone a decent home that they can afford in a community in which they want to live (and work), now and in the future"* (Sustainable Communities: Homes for All (2005)

The object of this project is;

- To Create a decent neighbourhood and place where people want to live
- To ensure a well-integrated mix of decent homes within the Fairmead Estate
  - Increase the mix of housing available
  - Increase the tenure of housing available
- Reduce management issues and potential for antisocial behaviour

3.8 The first part of the project was to seek the local communities' current concerns and opinions the current layout of the estate and their opinions regarding a change to the design of the estate. A consultation exercise with the Fairmead Community to assess what measures they feel are necessary to improve their lives, this would include social and economic measures as well as options to improve design of the estate. This exercise would feed into the development of the business case for the project.

A survey was carried out in October 2007, which showed:

- o *40% of you feel dissatisfied (fairly or very) with the estate you live in*
- o *57% of you were dissatisfied (fairly or very) with the way the estate looks*

3.9 Stemming on from this consultation exercise a long term strategy is proposed to be developed to deliver improvements for the neighbourhood. This strategy would outline the long term measure the Council would seek to do to

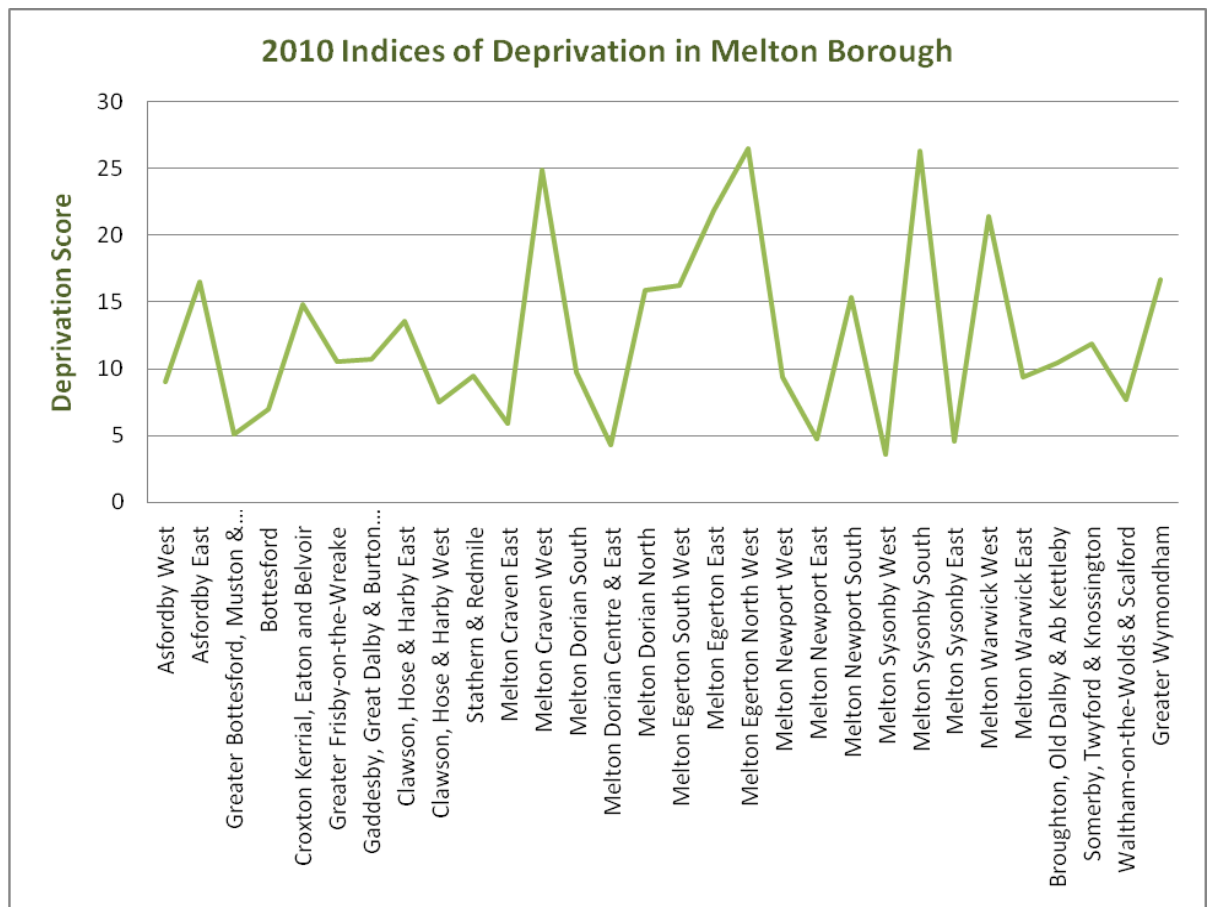
improve the design of the estate as well as other social and economic projects.

- 3.10 There are a number of solutions available to address some of the issues we have on the estate, and the meeting of 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2008, with residents, identified a number of possible solutions them. One of the key areas is to manage expectations, and no guarantee have been given to members and the community of what will be delivered, as some of the solutions will have major financial, operational and logistical issues.
- 3.11 A further meeting of 27 May 2008, with the residents of Fairmead identified the following critical success factors that would need to come out of any regeneration proposal:
- Community engagement and ownership of the scheme
  - For no-one to be disadvantaged by living in Fairmead (eg in terms of health inequalities, educational attainment, employment and access to services)
  - A sense of Pride and Enhanced Community Spirit
  - A positive public image for Fairmead
  - Integration of Fairmead with the surrounding areas
  - Improvements to the quality and security of the local environment, particularly addressing issues around cars and alleyways
  - Enhanced community facilities- particularly for young people, maximising the potential of any open spaces, garages and outbuildings.
  - For the local community centre to be at the heart of the community, raising aspirations and facilitating earlier intervention and access to services.
  - Improvement to Street Scene particularly in the middle of the estate.
- 3.12 This has led to the development of the regeneration brief, which members of this committee approved on 11 June 2008.
- 3.13 Following a tendering exercise Matrix Consultants were appointed to carry out the project, and members of the Policy, Finance & Administrative Committee approved the Fairmead Regeneration Business Case at their meeting of 8 June 2009.
- 3.14 The project was further presented to the Council's programme Board by way of a highlight report on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2009.
- 3.15 In February 2010, Matrix completed phase 1 and 2 of the projects and produced the 'Fairmead Masterplan development' document, which is attached for members as Appendix A.
- 3.16 Members are asked to note, that this is not solely a 'Housing project' and in addition the regeneration project objectives cover a number of issues i.e. community safety, community cohesion, health and other social & economic issues.
- 3.17 Residents of Fairmead were consulted at a whole day event on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2010, which was concluded by a presentation in the evening based on the document received in February 2010. The notes from the day are attached in Appendix C.
- 3.18 At the Community & Social Affairs Committee meeting of 23 June 2010 members approved the final phase of the project leading to the development of a final masterplan. This is attached as appendix A

### 3.19 Fairmead Neighbourhood Profile

Members are also asked to note that the original project was based on a number of factors that suggested that Fairmead, identified as a priority neighbourhood, suffered from a number of issues which maybe addressed through a more holistic' regeneration 'project. In Appendix B, members will note that although some areas have improved, and indeed this Council leads on a number of initiatives and projects in the area that improve the quality of life on the estate, the overall picture still suggests that issues exist

3.20 The indices of Deprivation 2010 indicate that Overall Melton Sysonby South (Fairmead estate) is the second most deprived local area in Melton and 14<sup>th</sup> most in the county.



### 3.21 Fairmead Regeneration MasterPlan.

The Masterplan covers a wide range of new ideas that cover:

- The introduction of a Spine road and Road Frontage development
- Courtyards and property turnaround
- Elimination of laneways
- Removal of fences
- Re-development of Drummond Walk Flats
- Development of Nottingham Road Frontage
- Environmental Improvements and design guidelines

3.22 The Masterplan has the potential to compliment other related projects, which members and officers feel also need some attention, this would include

supporting stand alone Housing projects where significant 'decanting' may be needed to 'free up' housing sites for future development.

### 3.22 Next Steps

Members are asked to approve the masterplan, so that it is in a 'Ready State' so that when the potential funding opportunities for these type of projects has improved. Members are asked to note this make take up to 5 years, which is aligned to the life of the plan before significant review of the plan needs to take place. The project has been identified within Melton's Local Investment Plan and the regional Homes & Community Agency have shown interest in the scheme and requested a copy of the final masterplan.

3.23 The project can be delivered in a number of ways in the future which may include this Council leading on the development, however, due to the current uncertainty around external funding, members are not been asked to approve a specific route for delivery, however, a report highlighting the implications, which will include financial and otherwise will be presented back to this committee prior to any progress.

## 4.0 **POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Fairmead is one of the council's priority neighbourhoods and falls within the neighbourhood management model. This means there is a determined effort to:

- Improving the estate in general and quality of life of its residents
  - Improving the image and desirability of the estate
  - Improving the quality and choice of housing available in the area
- Creating a more sustainable community

4.2 There are clear links with this project and some of the Council's priorities within the Corporate Plan:

- Improving the Well-being of vulnerable people
- Improve Places
- Increasing the public confidence & pride in neighbourhoods
- Help provide a stock of housing accommodation that meets the needs of the community.

## 5.0 **FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are no direct costs at this stage linked to the recommendation requested from members as the scheme can be delivered in a number of ways, and with the current uncertainty around any external funding we do not know the implications on HRA revenue and capital funding.. However, should the project reach a position of further progress and development, detailed financial analysis will be undertaken and reported back to members for approval as implications for the Housing revenue Account will need to be considered.

5.2 The budget (£25,000) to finalise the project and lead to the development of a masterplan have been met from the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme and unallocated HRA capital receipts as approved by members.

## 6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS

6.1 No direct legal implications have been identified with the recommendations contained in this report

## 7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY

7.1 Although not directly relating to the recommendations in the report, the link between community safety and the estate have been made in this report.

## 8.0 EQUALITIES

8.1 An Equalities Impact has been completed for this project and is attached as Appendix C

## 9.0 RISKS

9.1 A detailed risk register will be drawn up for this project.

Probability					Risk No.	Description
Very High A						
High B					1	No action taken to address issues within Fairmead
Significant C			2		2	Project does not progress
Low D			1, 3		3	Project does not attract HCA funding due to cutbacks in Public sector funding.
Very Low E						
Almost Impossible F						
	IV Negligible	III Marginal	II Critical	I Catastrophic		

Impact →

## 10.0 CLIMATE CHANGE

10.1 Not directly related to the recommendations, any design will seek to take into account any climate change issues

## 11.0 CONSULTATION

11.1 Extensive consultation has been carried out with the residents of the Fairmead estate, including surveys and public meetings, for the development of the project so far and is listed within the masterplan. The notes from the last specific regeneration consultation event are attached as Appendix D

11.2 A further 6 week consultation was also undertaken which ended on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2011. In summary 4 responses were received within the consultation period with a further 20 received shortly, which were provided by a resident who had –coordinated their own consultation, comments were as follows:

- Approximately 10 agreed good idea to regenerate the area
- Approximately 10 agreed certain parts of masterplan were good e.g. parking outside properties, remove rat runs, but didn't agree with spine road as will be a racetrack or the removal of the MUGA
- Approximately 4 against the proposal

11.3 Further detailed discussions with all al residents and landlords will need to take place; if/when the scheme is ready to progress from this stage in the future.

11.4 3 owner occupiers are affected by the core Masterplan and further consultation with them is required to develop an agreeable way forward. A further report updating members on this progress will be reported later in the year.

## 12.0 WARDS AFFECTED

12.1 The Sysonby Ward is affected, but potentially other wards could be affected.

Contact Officers H Rai, Head of Communities & Neighbourhoods

Date: 9 January 2012

Appendices: Appendix A - Fairmead Regeneration Masterplan Document  
Appendix B - Fairmead Neighbourhood Profile  
Appendix C - Fairmead Residents Consultation Day notes  
Appendix D - Fairmead Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers:

Reference: X/Committees/CSA/2011-12/Fairmead Regeneration Project