
Report To:	Environment & Regeneration Committee	Date:	5 March 2020
Report By:	Corporate Director Environment, Regeneration & Resources	Report No:	ENV016/20/MM
Contact Officer:	Martin McNab	Contact No:	4246
Subject:	Addendum to the Inverclyde Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2020/21 – 2024/25		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee about funding secured through the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Supply Programme to assist Blackwood Homes to remodel MacLehose Court.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Discussions with the Health and Social Care Partnership and the Care Inspectorate on possible alternatives to the unsustainable current care home service at MacLehose Court led to a decision by Blackwood Homes' Senior Management Team and Board of Directors that the most sustainable solution would be to close the current service and remodel the building to create new homes.
- 2.2 Blackwood has secured Scottish Government funding through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme to assist with the remodelling of MacLehose Court. This presents an opportunity to provide social rented homes in the west end of Greenock which more suitably address the needs of our population, including those with disabilities and impaired mobility.
- 2.3 The funding will assist Blackwood to provide 22 one and two bedroom homes, including 3 two bedroom homes for wheelchair users featuring assistive technology. All of the units will meet Housing for Varying Needs standards and therefore be easily adaptable should this be required. Tenants will benefit from free broadband and use of assistive technology which will serve to further future proof the new homes and provide housing solutions for a range of residents.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to note both the proposal to remodel MacLehose Court, and the additional Scottish Government funding coming to Inverclyde as a result.

Martin McNab
Head of Environmental & Public Protection

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Blackwood Homes' MacLehose Court Care Home in Greenock has provided care and support to clients and their families for twenty-five years. However, national policy has seen a clear move towards shifting the balance of care away from residential settings to living independently as people's aspirations and expectations change. As a result there has been a significant reduction in demand for the type of care service provided at MacLehose Court making the housing provision unsustainable.
- 4.2 Discussions with the Health and Social Care Partnership and the Care Inspectorate on possible alternatives to the unsustainable current care home service at MacLehose Court led to a decision that the most sustainable solution would be to close the current service and remodel the building to create new homes. Blackwood decided to invest in the remodelling of the care home to move away from a residential setting and create a number of new homes which allow people to live independently with the appropriate care and support they need.
- 4.3 Blackwood previously worked with River Clyde Homes to develop 8 wheelchair homes at the James Watt Dock site. At the time it was assumed that clients of MacLehose Court could be rehomed at James Watt Dock but due to unforeseen timing issues caused by delays to the build it has been decided that River Clyde Homes will instead provide the wheelchair housing at the site themselves.
- 4.4 Blackwood will now provide an additional 3 wheelchair homes at MacLehose court which will benefit from the very latest in assistive technology. The homes will come equipped with electronic sliding doors, electric blinds and underfloor heating as well as solar panels. Other special features include rise and fall surfaces and cupboards in the kitchen. The contemporary bathrooms will be fitted with the fully adjustable Pressalit system so fittings can move horizontally and vertically. All remodelled units will meet Housing for Varying Needs standards and therefore be easily adaptable should this be required. Tenants will benefit from free broadband and use of assistive technology which will serve to further future proof the new homes and provide housing solutions for a range of residents
- 4.5 The remodelling of MacLehose Court presents an opportunity for the provision of new affordable social rented homes in the west end of Greenock which more suitably address the needs of our population, including those with disabilities and impaired mobility.

5.0 AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLY PROGRAMME FUNDING

- 5.1 The SHIP was approved by the Committee on 16 January 2020 and the Committee was informed that national and local housing providers building across Inverclyde will receive around £22 million grant funding over the next two years from the Scottish Government's Affordable Housing Supply Programme which will assist the Council and its partners in the plan to deliver 849 new affordable homes by March 2021. The £22 million funding is being fully utilised by the current projects detailed in the SHIP programme reported to the Committee on 16 January this year.
- 5.2 Where a local authority is unable to spend its offer of Resource Planning Assumptions (RPA) due to any number of development constraints, funding can be redirected to other authorities' who are able to spend the funding. This helps ensure the Scottish Government reaches the national target of providing 50,000 new affordable homes by March 2021.
- 5.3 Discussion between the Scottish Government, Blackwood and Inverclyde's Housing Strategy team regarding the remodelling of MacLehose Court has led to an agreement that further funding could be redirected to Inverclyde through the Affordable Housing Supply Programme to contribute to the remodelling.

6.0 PROPOSED HOUSING MIX

- 6.1 Situated in the west end of Greenock and roughly one mile from the town centre, MacLehose Court will be reconfigured as a modern, three storey housing complex designed to provide

accommodation for people with general housing needs and also homes developed for wheelchair users and people who have limited mobility. Remodelling work is due to begin imminently. The proposed house mix is below:

Designed for wheelchair users:

- 3 ground floor, two-bedroom flats, suitable for up to three people

Designed for people with general housing needs:

- 13 one-bedroom flats, suitable for up to two people

6 two-bedroom flats, suitable for up to three people

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Finance

National and local housing providers will receive around £22 million grant funding from 2019-2021 from the Scottish Government's AHSP. The budget for the current Scottish Parliament runs to March 2021. The next budget and three year RPA will be agreed following the outcome of the next Scottish Parliament election in May 2021. In the absence of RPA post 31 March 2021, local authorities have been instructed to plan on the basis of existing RPA levels. Further information on RPA levels post 2021 will be provided as soon as known and will inform the pace at which these future programme plans can be delivered.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

7.2 Legal

N/A

7.3 Human Resources

N/A

7.4 Equalities

Equalities

(a) Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

YES

X	NO – This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a substantive change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required
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(b) Fairer Scotland Duty

If this report affects or proposes any major strategic decision:-

Has there been active consideration of how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome?

	YES – A written statement showing how this report's recommendations reduce inequalities of outcome caused by socio-economic disadvantage has been completed.
X	NO

(c) Data Protection

Has a Data Protection Impact Assessment been carried out?

	YES – This report involves data processing which may result in a high risk to the rights and freedoms of individuals.
X	NO

7.5 Repopulation

The provision of new affordable good quality housing is intended to support and complement the work on repopulation, which is seeking to stabilise the existing population and to attract new people to the Inverclyde Council area by improving the housing quality and expanding the housing options available across Inverclyde.

8.0 CONSULTATIONS

8.1 The Head of Health & Community Care has been consulted on this report.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 Inverclyde Strategic Housing Investment Plan 2020/21-2024/25 – E&RC, January 2020.
ENV004/20/SA/RD