

# Appendix A

## Menin House, Privett Road

This Appendix to the Fareham Housing Regeneration Strategy was adopted by the Council's Executive on the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021.



## Menin House

**Address** Privett Road (PO15 6SG & PO15 6SQ)  
**Housing Area** Fareham North  
**Ward** Fareham North West  
**Site Size** 0.37ha

**X:** 455100 **Y:** 106930

**Current Use:** 24No. flats (3-storey), 14No. garages, parking areas and grassed areas.

## The Site



## Current Stock Condition

Built in 1966, Menin House is a traditional brick cavity constructed building with concrete floors and canter-levered balconies. During the early 1990's the structure was 'wrapped' with external wall insulation. The original flat roof was converted to a pitch in approximately 2000.

The dwellings are evenly split between bedsit accommodation and one-bedroom flats. The bedsits are harder to let and in some flats the kitchen layouts do not meet Decent Home Standard expectations.

The internal soil and vent pipes are asbestos cement. This causes significant maintenance problems that are very difficult to rectify.

The asbestos cement rainwater goods that penetrate the concrete structure are beginning to fail causing damage to the concrete and steel re-enforcement bars. As these form part of the buildings structure there is no simple means to correct the issue without substantial expense and upheaval for current residents.

The heating and water systems are electrical but, due to the age of the equipment, are inefficient.

**30-year forward planning costs indicate around £600,000** would need to be spent on the property to address the essential structural issues and update fixtures and fittings in the Council owned flats. The figure would likely be far greater for a complete modernisation.



Spalling concrete in stairwell



Asbestos cement rainwater goods built into structure



External entrance

## Land Factors

### *Current ownership at the site:*

- 5No. garages (of the 14) are privately owned
- 3No. of the 24No. flats are leasehold
- The remaining properties, remaining garages and the surrounding land is owned by the Council

Menin House has relatively few leaseholders and most of the garages to the west of the building are still owned by the Council. A number of these garages remain unlet.

The existing Council ownership in and around Menin House means a redevelopment (utilising the adjacent garage area and some open space around the building) could achieve a greater number of affordable homes whilst still providing space for replacement/additional parking. Providing more affordable homes at the site will help address housing need in the Borough; it is also necessary to ensure the redevelopment project is viable.

The more sensitive areas around the mature trees to the south of the site would be avoided. Car parking (some of which is used by other nearby properties) will be carefully considered to ensure that enough parking is provided for the new development whilst considering the parking needs of the existing/remaining properties in the immediate vicinity of the site.

## Opportunity

### *Affordable Need:*

Menin House is in one of the highest areas of affordable housing need in the borough. All sizes/types of homes are needed in this location, particularly the tenures of Social Rent and Affordable Rent homes.

### *Existing perception:*

Current residents of Menin House and the wider community will likely have different perceptions and opinions on the existing building. From a Council Housing perspective, it can be very difficult to let some of the homes in Menin House due to their condition and/or perception. Bedsits are generally unpopular and less flexible to different affordable needs.

### *Development Potential:*

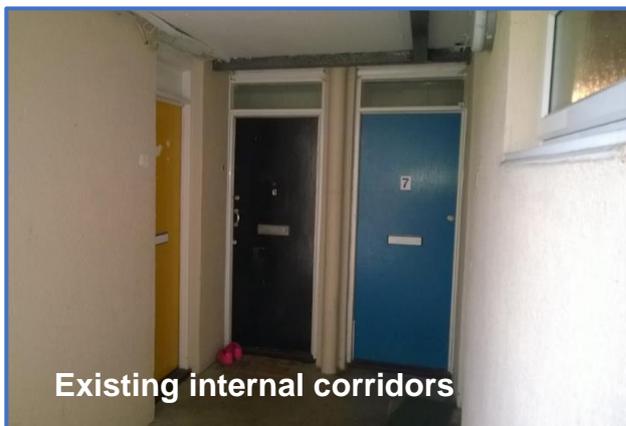
The building already differs from the surrounding built form which is predominately two storey terrace housing.

There are no insurmountable planning issues that cannot be addressed through the careful design of any redevelopment. This includes avoiding the mature trees to the south of the site and addressing car parking requirements.



A public sewer and gas pipe run through the potential site; these can be considered and avoided through any design process.

**The site has the potential for 30-50 units to be provided (6-26 net new homes).** The final number will depend on the design approach, for example whether a redevelopment was predominately flats, houses or a mix of the two.



New build properties also provide an opportunity for increased energy efficiency and greener measures to be incorporated from the outset. This can reduce typical energy costs for occupants in a way that is harder to achieve retrospectively on existing buildings.

## Cost

The potential costs to deliver a redevelopment at the Menin House site have been considered in conjunction with the Council's Finance Team. When taking all potential costs into account, together with how the scheme might be funded, it would seem a redevelopment can be viably achieved at the site.

This has considered the following areas of cost/funding: -

- Achieving full land ownership (buying back garages and flats)
- Costs associated with displacement of Council tenants (including Home Loss Payments where applicable)
- Demolition costs
- Loss of rental income whilst redevelopment occurs
- Redevelopment/new build costs (including associated project on-costs)
- Borrowing costs associated with financing the works
- The potential for Homes England grant toward any net increase in dwellings (a lower grant amount assumed to ensure this is not overestimated)

It is also important that the cost of a redevelopment project is not considered in isolation. The likely costs to the Council if the building were retained, and the potential for future difficulties in letting the flats, also needs to be considered.

A significant amount of money would need to be spent on Menin House over the next 30 years and the Council will still be left with a building that may not meet modern standards or expectations. In this instance, due to the surrounding land and extent of Council ownership, redevelopment is a viable and positive alternative.

The costs to address issues with the building may also have implications for current leaseholders in the property who would need to contribute toward many of the remedial and improvement works if the building were retained.

## **Impact to Existing Occupants**

The Fareham Housing Regeneration Strategy provides an overview of how the impact to existing occupants varies depending on whether they are a Council tenant or a leaseholder.

Contact will be made with occupants at key appropriate stages in the process. Early on the Council will seek to open-up dialogue with leaseholders in relation to the project and what it means for them. It will be important to reiterate that nothing will notably change for any occupants for some time following the identification of the site as a regeneration project.

As the redevelopment project progresses a Decant Policy will be formulated for existing Council tenants to provide them with clarity as to how they will be rehoused and what financial assistance they would be entitled to.

## **Community Impact/Engagement**

Initial concept plans will be formulated for the redevelopment of Menin house and the current occupants, occupants of nearby properties, and the wider community will be consulted to gather their thoughts and opinions on the potential redevelopment. This may include some different options, for example predominately flats or a mix of housing and flats.

This engagement process will help to inform the final design of the redevelopment before the Council submit a planning application. The statutory consultation process to the planning application will then provide a further opportunity for the public to make comments on the proposal.

## **Right to Buy Suspension**

The Fareham Housing Regeneration Strategy (Section 6) provides some information about the suspension of Right to Buy on sites that will be subject to redevelopment/regeneration.

Fareham Borough Council's Legal Services will be involved to ensure that this is undertaken when the relevant Statutory Exemption powers are applicable for the Menin House regeneration project.

## Summary of Key Points

- The current building has significant maintenance problems that are very difficult to rectify
- The asbestos cement rainwater goods that penetrate the concrete structure are beginning to fail causing damage to the concrete and steel reinforcement bars
- Correcting the issues with the property will be at substantial expense and upheaval for current residents
- 30-year forward planning costs indicate around £600,000 will need to be spent on the property to address the structural issues and update fixtures and fittings.
- The site is in one of the highest areas of affordable housing need in the borough
- It can be very difficult to let some of the existing homes in Menin House due to their condition and/or perception
- The current building includes bedsits which can be unpopular and less flexible to different affordable needs
- A redevelopment of the site has the potential to provide 30-50 new homes (6-26 net new homes)
- When taking all potential costs into account it is considered that a redevelopment can be achieved at the site
- A Decant Policy will be formulated for existing Council tenants in Menin House to provide them with clarity as to how they will be rehoused and what financial assistance they are entitled to
- The current occupants, the occupants of nearby properties and the wider community will be consulted to gather their thoughts and opinions on the potential redevelopment. This will inform the design subsequently taken through the planning process.

## Conclusion

The Council's Housing Revenue Account will incur significant costs to maintain and retain the Menin House building. Upgrades and remedial works would still not address the less favourable bedsit provision and would be disruptive for all occupants in the building.

The surrounding land and extent of Council ownership provide an ideal regeneration/redevelopment opportunity. Redevelopment of the site can replace poorer quality Council homes with a greater number of modern, high quality and 'greener' properties in what is a high affordable need area.