

SOCIAL WORK AND HOUSING COMMITTEE – 6 JUNE 2013

TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION UNITS, MARTIN BRAE, INVERURIE

1 Recommendations

It is recommended that Committee agree that:

- 1 Council Officers undertake a feasibility study on the future use of the Martin Brae, Inverurie, site taking into consideration provision of temporary accommodation and the potential for new build mainstream affordable housing.**
- 2 Officers consult with the Garioch Area Committee and formal other stakeholders.**
- 3 Agree to receive a further report on completion of the feasibility study.**

2 Background/Discussion

- 2.1 The Martin Brae site has 20 temporary accommodation units and has been in use for 18 years.
- 2.2 The housing in Martin Brae was designed in 1992 as temporary accommodation with a limited life; as such any significant improvements to the fabric have to be carefully considered in relation to ensure value for money. Various options were considered and each required to be carefully appraised, part of this exercise was to undertake an invasive inspection of the structure and the fabric, with a view to indicating the viability of retaining the buildings for a period in excess of their original temporary life span. This demonstrated that generally the structures were in relatively good condition. There was no significant deterioration of steelwork and the majority of the timber was clean, dry and in good condition and despite their temporary nature the dwellings had generally weathered well. The sample of dwellings inspected were found to be structurally sound with no obvious problems, which might threaten their stability or structural integrity, only some minor hairline cracking was observed.
 - 2.2.1 Despite the above, these units have had a history of extensive condensation and mould problems due to the construction used. After establishing the structural integrity an exercise was undertaken to establish the relative ease and cost of bringing these buildings up to modern day standards, to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and achieve the forthcoming Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH). The budget for improving the units to a standard which struggled to meet the SHQS was £32,000 for each property, a total of £641,000. Unfortunately it wasn't technically feasible to improve these units to modern day standards and due to their construction they would always remain temporary and require regular

intrusive surveys by a structural engineer to ensure their continued integrity and safety.

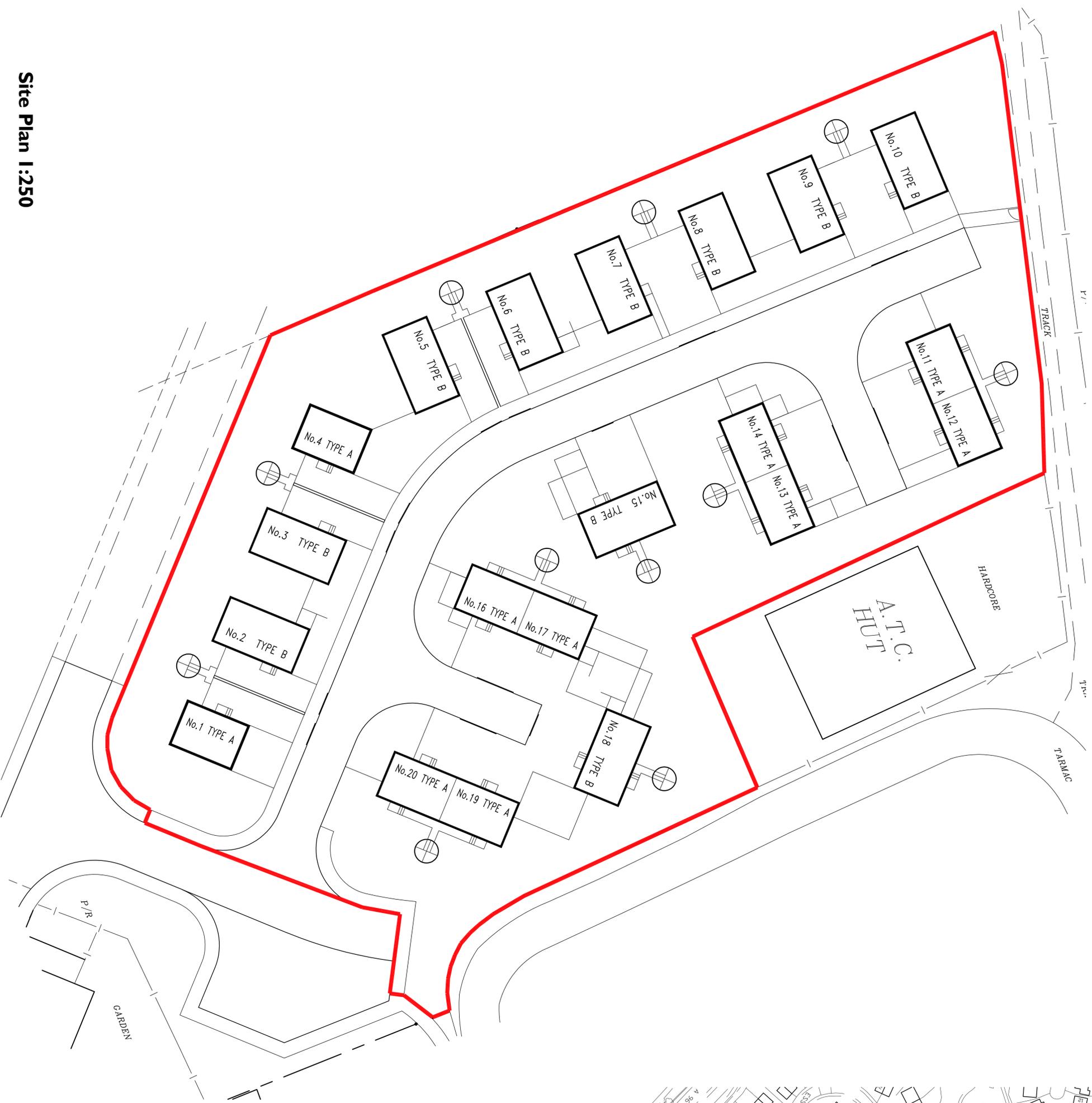
- 2.3 With the focus now on the prevention of homelessness it is anticipated that future demand for homeless temporary accommodation will reduce over future years. Any replacement temporary accommodation will be dispersed within mainstream housing rather than grouped together on one site.
- 2.4 The site, identified in Appendix 1, will be investigated to ensure maximum potential. Officers through a feasibility study will determine the number and type of housing most suitable for this location and that which will best meet housing need.
- 2.5 A further report will come back to Committee detailing the output from the feasibility study.
- 2.6 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Corporate Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and agree with the content.

3 Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications

- 3.1 An equality impact assessment (EIA) is not required at this time because it will be considered along with the feasibility study. The feasibility study will consider the impact of any change of use to this site. The EIA will accompany the committee report which reports back on the outcome of the feasibility study.
- 3.2 The HRA business plan has capacity to deliver 50 new council houses each year over the next 6 years. The current programme commits 115 from the approved 300 units.
- 3.3 The feasibility study will be carried out within existing resources.

Ritchie Johnson
Director of Housing and Social Work

Report Prepared by: Janelle Clark, Housing Manager
DE 24 May 2013 final version



Location Plan 1:1250

Site Plan 1:250

Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL
Property



Woodhill House Westburn Road Aberdeen AB16 5GB Tel (01467) 620981 Fax (01224) 664470

job title Inverurie, Martin Brae - Housing Upgrades

drawing title Location & Site Plan

scales 1:250, 1:1250
date August 2009 drawn by J Harwell

revision number
Part of the Transportation and Infrastructure Service