



**Record of Officer
Executive Decision 26/DforH&C/23-24**

Date of Decision: 22 February 2024

ADUR & WORTHING
COUNCILS

If you have any questions about this decision please contact Democratic Services on 01903 221006 or email democratic.services@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Record of Decision: 026/DforH&C/23-24 Contract for Ashcroft Demolition Works

Decision taken by: Director for Housing & Communities

Declaration of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests: I do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest, or conflict of interest.

Decision:

To enter contract with M&M Demolition Ltd to demolish the main building at Ashcroft, Kingston Lane for both health and safety and development enabling reasons, following a decant (for health and safety reasons), planning approval in 2021 for redevelopment and a thorough tender process for the works in Autumn 2023.

Key Decision: Yes

Reason For Decision:

In early 2020, residents of the Ashcroft Sheltered Housing block were moved out following a Type 1 Fire Risk Assessment for the building which indicated serious issues with the evacuation strategy and compartmentation of the building. A further Type 4 risk assessment found that risk to life from fire was substantial, and in addition, the building does not meet the requirement of the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018.

To comply with current regulatory standards and those actions identified within the Type 4 Fire Risk Assessment, any refurbishment would result in a significant net loss of dwellings in the block. In 2021, residents were consulted on refurbishment and redevelopment options with the majority of residents in favour of construction of a new block rather than refurbishment of the existing. In 2022, planning consent was achieved for the demolition of the Ashcroft block and delivery of a new, 44-unit sheltered housing scheme. £407,000 was secured from the Brownfield Land Release Fund (BLRF) to support the preparatory works and the abnormal costs associated with delivery of the project.

In Summer 2023, tenders were invited for the construction works required to deliver the project, which included the demolition works. At the same time, the Council learnt that it would not be eligible for Homes England funding until it was deemed by the Regulator to be out of the regulatory breach, so we are not able to proceed at present with the redevelopment works.

The building at Ashcroft is fundamentally unsafe, with rainwater ingress potentially affecting the integrity of the structure, damage to flooring and staircases, no power or heat

and broken windows. It is costing the Council a lot of money in efforts to keep secure, including rent of fencing, steel panelling across windows, steel across doors, CCTV to capture any intruders and a responsive security company. Despite this, the building has been broken into many times.

We have the BLRF grant to demolish the building and prepare the site for development, which if unspent after March 2024, will have to be returned.

In Autumn 2023, single stage fixed price tenders were invited for the demolition works. Five submissions were received. Tender documents specified a 60% Price. 40% Quality split in terms of evaluation weighting. Following this moderation review, and a review of accuracy and measured works. M&M Demolition Ltd scored both the highest in terms of Quality and Price, with a tender sum to the value of £129,200, confirmed by our Employers Agent and Quantity Surveyor as representing value for money for a demolition scheme of this nature and geographical location.

The administrator of the BLRF grant will not seek to claw back the difference between the grant and the cost of the works. Soon after, to satisfy the conditions of the grant, the Council will either have to a) implement the planning permission (which can be achieved through digging of a trench for example) to demonstrate that development is progressing or b) dispose of the land to a third party to enable development to come forward.

Alternative Options Considered:

To keep the building in-situ until demolition can be included within a main delivery contract. This was discounted because the building is costing a lot of money to keep up and it is increasingly difficult to guarantee non-entry. Further, we are unsure when we may be eligible for Homes England grant and be able to continue delivery of the project.

To refurbish the building. This was discounted because it is not cost efficient or logistically possible to improve the building to a proper standard.

Other Matters Considered:

Legal Advice and Issues	x	Financial Advice and Issues	x
Sustainability Issues	x	Equality Issues	x
Community Safety Issues	x	Human Rights Issues	x
Reputation	x	Risk Assessment	x
Health & Safety Issues	x		

Consultation:

In March 2021, residents were consulted on the future of the Ashcroft block. More than half of respondents would prefer a brand new block built than the existing one refurbished.

Background Papers: Ashcroft Sheltered Housing Scheme, Joint Strategic Committee, 13th July 2021

1st Quarter Capital Investment Programme & Projects Monitoring 2023/24, Adur Joint Strategic Sub-Committee, 27 September 2023

Tender Summary Report - Ashcroft House – Scheme Demolition, 11th January 2024

Contact Officer:

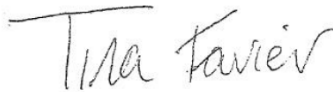
Anthony Probert
Senior Development Manager, Major Projects & Investment

anthony.probert@adur-worthing.gov.uk

Call-in: The call-in deadline for this decision will be 5:00pm on 29 February 2024

Date: 22.02.2024

Name:



Director for Housing & Communities Tina Favier