



**WARDS AFFECTED : COLEMAN  
WYCLIFFE**

**CABINET**

**18 SEPTEMBER 2000**

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**TOWER BLOCK DEMOLITION**

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**Report of the Director of Housing & Director of Commercial Services**

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The Council have agreed to demolish the four tower blocks at Rowlatts Hill and St Matthews, and the properties are now empty, ready for demolition.

At Rowlatts Hill the contract is proceeding as planned with a demolition by explosion planned for 29 October.

However at St Matthews the cost of demolition is now estimated to be £120K greater because the method of demolition will have to be floor by floor deconstruction rather than explosion. The reason for this is that the contractor has been unable to satisfy Council officers that explosive demolition would comply with Health and Safety requirements and would carry an unacceptable degree of risk to nearby property and underground services.

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the two tower blocks at St Matthews be deconstructed with the costs phased over the 2000/01 and 2001/02 Housing Capital Programmes.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The additional costs associated with deconstruction (£120K) will fall to be met and be a first call on the 2001/02 Housing Capital Programme.



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### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION/APPENDICES**

The Council has agreed to demolish two tower blocks at Rowlatts Hill and two at St Matthews in October 2000. This report shows the progress being made and what actions remain.

The report covers: technical and safety issues; cost, the future use of the site; promotion/publicity; and timetable.

#### **Technical & Safety Issues**

The Director of Housing is the client for the demolition as notified to the Health and Safety Executive. The Director of Housing has appointed the Director of Commercial Services as the consultant to carry out all of the technical duties.

At Rowlatts Hill, where both tower blocks will be demolished by explosive, there are no major health and safety concerns. The site is fenced and access is being controlled by the contractor. Soft stripping and asbestos removal is in progress. A working group comprising representatives of all Departments, Emergency Planning Officer, Safety Officer and the Police has been set up to plan and prepare for the evacuation of the exclusion zone. A planning meeting including the other emergency services has already been held.

At St Matthews there is currently an uncertainty regarding the safety of the explosive method of demolition. The Council has received reports from the lowest tenderer on the vibration effects of explosive demolition on surrounding buildings and buried services which have proved to be of insufficient detail to provide the Council with adequate assurances regarding Health and Safety. As these issues have not been answered, the Director of Commercial Services has no option other than to recommend that a contract be drawn up based on deconstruction of the block rather than by explosion.

## **Cost**

The Housing Committee in May were advised of a total cost of £2,820k to demolish all 4 tower blocks and that negotiations were taking place with the contractor for a reduction of £120k if the St Matthews tower blocks could be demolished safely by explosion. If so that would mean a net cost of £2,700k and £700k of funding was identified to meet the cost along with the Capital Programme provision of £2m.

Since explosive demolition at St Matthews is not proposed and deconstruction is required, further funding of £120k would be required.

The contract has been signed for Rowlatts Hill but not St Matthews.

## **Future use of site**

The site at Rowlatts Hill will provide 3.65 acres approximately and proposals have been sought from developers for owner occupier/shared ownership. However the response was not likely to provide a capital receipt for the Council and new proposals are now being sought so that further consideration can be given in October.

The site at St Matthews will provide 0.567 acres (excluding the shops) and a development has been agreed of 24, 3 and 4 bedroom homes for rent including some to wheelchair standard and lifetime homes standard. These will be developed by ASRA, and Foundation Housing Association – Housing Corporation funding of £840,912 has been agreed .

The scheme must achieve project approval through the Housing Corporation this financial year in order to commit the allocation, otherwise this funding will be lost with no guarantees of future funding being available. At this stage there are no concerns about this.

## **Promotion/Publicity**

Members views are sought on whether the demolitions at both sites are given a high profile in the national media. This could include live filming being shown on the internet, as was the case in Hackney. Certainly locally it will be a major media issue. The explosion is likely to lead to positive media, provided no accidents occur, but deconstruction and rubbish clearance from an explosion are likely to lead to resident complaints about dust and noise.

The positive aspects will be about what will replace the tower blocks and how the community will be improved and this will feature in Link and other publications.

## **Timetable**

Rowlatts Hill

St Matthews

Resident consultation	31/7	September
Asbestos etc removal	19/10	September
Demolition	22/10	October
Site cleared	6/1/01	May

### **Equal Opportunity Implications**

The redevelopment of these sites, particularly St Matthews should provide opportunities for improved community development in those area.

### **Sustainable and Environmental Implications**

Redevelopment should lead to more sustainable communities. These new properties will be built with better energy ratings.

### **Crime and Disorder Implications**

The redevelopment will reduce crime which has been associated with these tower blocks.

### **Consultations**

All Departments including Legal Services and Commercial Services as well as Police and Health and Safety Executive.

### **Background Papers**

Housing Committee reports November 1999 and May 2000.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The aim of the Housing Department is "A decent home for every citizen". This report addresses the following objectives:

Objective 1 – to improve the condition of Leicester's housing stock and resolve unfitness in all sections.

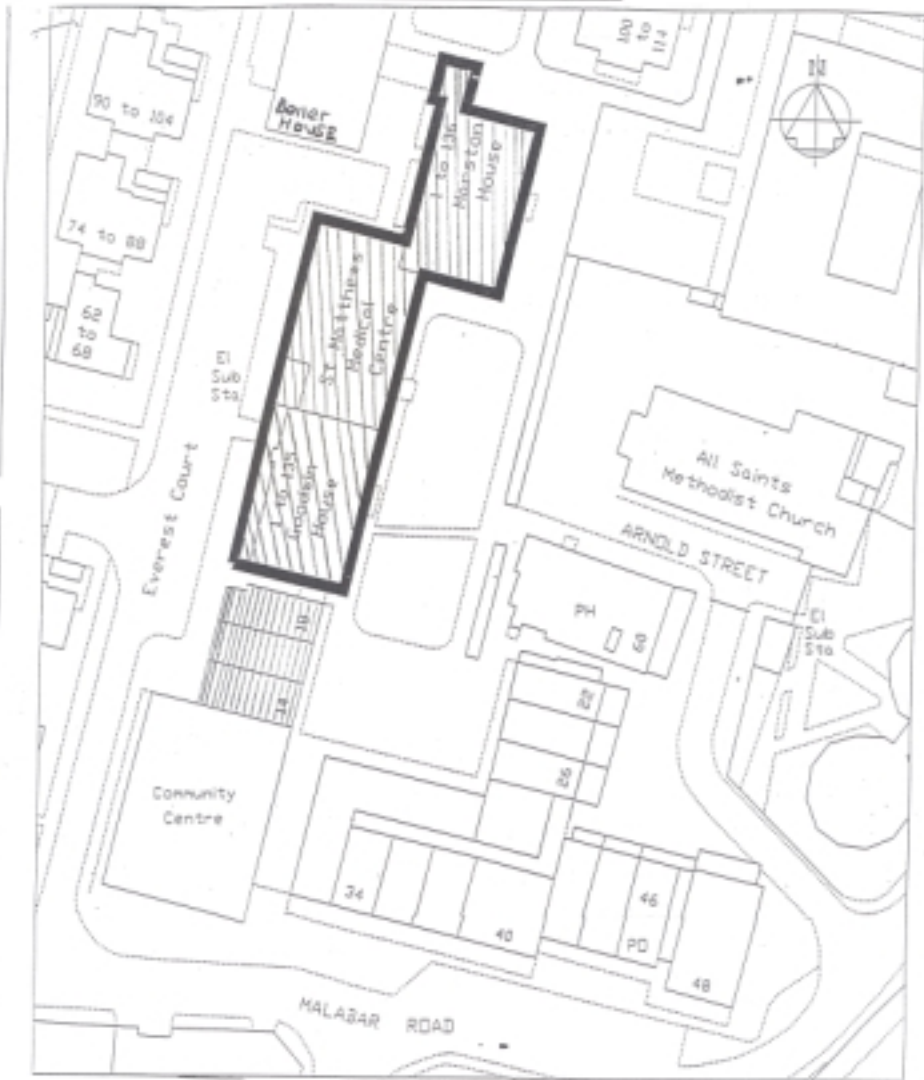
Objective 2 – to encourage provision of new housing to meet the needs of Leicester's citizens.



Objective 3 – to reduce the number of empty and under-occupied houses in Leicester.


### **Author**

**Ian Harkness, Extn 6805**

**Buildings to be Demolished at St. Matthews**



**Key:**  **Considered for Blow Down**  
 **Deconstruction**

 **City Consultants**  
 Withdrawing engineering services  
 1/2's Division of Commercial Services  
 18 New Hall, Leicester, LE1 5JL  
 STRUCTURAL ENGINEERS

**MARSTON HOUSE &  
 GOODWIN HOUSE AT  
 ST. MATTHEWS ESTATE**  
 DEMOLITION OF TWO

Rev	Amendment	Date
Drawing No.		Scale
SL(0)/12314/301		NTS
Drawn	KJC	Date 15/09/99