

St Matthews and Birchills/Leamore Local Neighbourhood Partnership
24th October 2005

Briefing Note on Shops/Flats in Stephenson Avenue

This briefing note gives a summary of the current position with these shops and flats in Stephenson

The shops at Stephenson Sq. are council owned and all but one of the flats above is let to WHG on 150 year leases following LSVT. The one exception is the flat above the fish and chip shop, which is let to the tenant of the shop. The council has only direct management responsibility for/control of 1 flat.

Some 18 months ago, the council, Beechdale Community Housing Association (BCHA) and whg meet around issues of anti-social behaviour generated by flat tenants. The outcome was that BCHA agreed to look at proposals for the block and the wider car park/former neighbourhood office site etc.

In June this year, Sue Byard from Housing and Steve Law from Asset Management attended a Beechdale Regeneration Partnership meeting where potential plans for the parade were discussed. It was confirmed that the council see the shops as an important local centre and would not wish to see them replaced by housing if it meant that the shopping facility was lost. It was also noted that the property values that apply in Beechdale would not support their replacement with new shops. It was also suggested that it would be helpful if the local community could provide some suggestions for what they would like to see.

Recently one of the shop tenants has expressed an interest in acquiring the parade. From a council perspective we are looking to find a long term solution to the issues identified locally and for financial policy reasons we need to demonstrate Best Consideration and as such we were not able to contemplate a sale direct to this tenant. That said, as a local stakeholder, their interest in finding a solution was welcome and hopefully they would continue to offer their support in developing further proposals.

I understand that officers of BCHA, whg and the Council are happy to explore the feasibility of further proposals and willing to meet further with Beechdale Regeneration Partnership to include their views

Mark Chaplin
Housing Strategy Manager