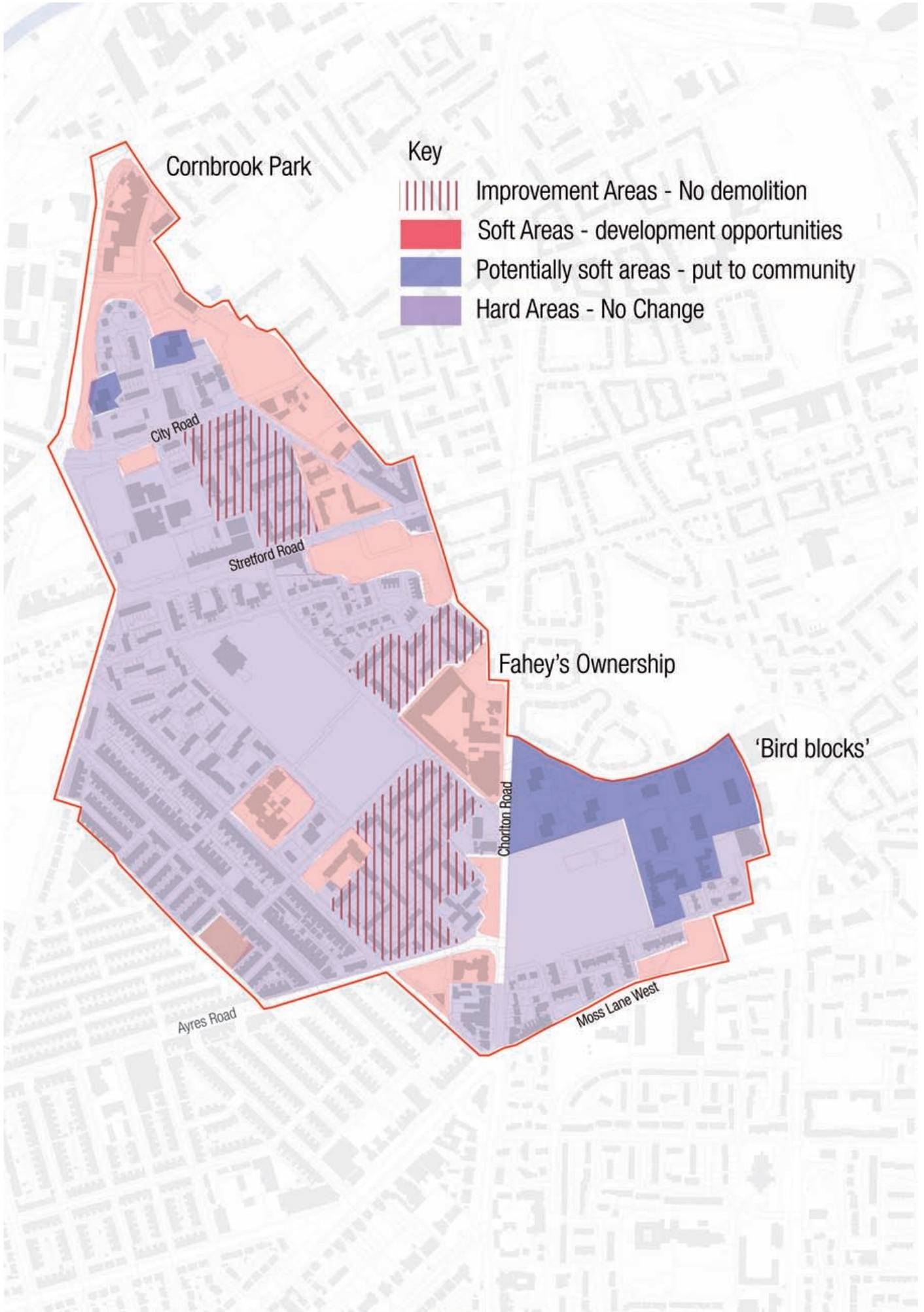


PART 4: Developing Options

This chapter builds on the existing opportunities and begins the process of Community Design through a series of Design Charettes for each of the three areas of Old Trafford. The masterplanning options which emerge from the Charettes are then taken back to the community for feedback and a preferred option is developed. This is divided into 9 key projects.



Opportunities for Change

The starting point for the masterplanning exercise is what we call the ‘hard and soft’ exercise. The aim of this is to identify those parts of the area where minimal change is expected (the hard areas) and those area where development is possible (soft). The latter becomes the canvas for the masterplan.

A number of factors feed into the identification of soft areas; The current condition of the site and its prominence, whether it is in public ownership, the intentions of private owners and the viability of investment in housing that doesn’t yet meet the Trafford Standard. On the basis of these criteria the area has been divided up into the following categories:

- Hard sites where no change is envisaged.
- Improvement areas where no demolition is planned.
- Sites which are definitely available for development.
- Sites which are potentially available and where the community should be asked what should happen.

The results of this process are described on the plan to the left and below:

Hullard Estate:

- The low rise housing at the heart of the estate will remain unchanged.
- There are questions over the future of the two tower blocks because of the costs of bringing them up to the Trafford Standard. Its was agreed that the community should be asked about the future of these blocks.
- The supported accomodation for older persons on City Road currently vacant and on a short term lease, to become available in the near future.
- The Malvern Walk shops have been categorised as possibly soft.
- The same is true of the open space in the area that is poorly defined and feels unsafe.
- The poor quality industrial space to the north of the area is shown as soft because of the prominence of this site.

The Rivers

- Most of the Rivers estate will remain as it and is identified for improvement.
- Trafford and Ryland’s Blocks are in a poor state and currently do not meet the decent homes standard and are identified for demolition.

The Central Area

- The Essex Way area is a vacant site and is available for development.
- The Fahey’s depot is being explored by the owners as a development site and so is soft.
- Isobel Baillie Lodge is surplus to requirements and is available for development.
- The community centre would become available if a new community facility were to be built elsewhere.
- Duerrs, has been vacant for a while and is subject to and outline planning application for 19 homes which are likley to be developed in the near future.
- The Polish Ex Service Mens Club is currently vacant and is a possible re-furbishment opportunity for other business and community uses.
- There are a series of potential sites on Chorlton Road that may become available. Clifton Court is leased from THT and may be available at the end of the lease.

Tamworth

- The main issue here is the seven towers. The three balcony blocks are generally more successful than the four Bird Blocks but all need significant investment. The money for this is however in the business plan and it was agreed that the community should be asked about which if any towers should be demolished.



Tamworth Estate



Shrewsbury Street/School Walk

Hullard and the Rivers



The design charrettes

The Design Charrettes were held over a two week period in July 2008 where the masterplanning options were developed in public through interactive sessions with local people and parallel youth workshops.

The masterplanning options were developed through a series of community 'design charrettes'. The masterplanning area was split into three - the Hullard and Rivers Estates, the Shrewsbury Street/School Walk areas and the Tamworth Estate. In each area we found a local venue and ran two evening sessions together with a bus tour. Alongside the workshops we ran a series of sessions for young people which involved going out to talk to them on the estate and then running workshops parallel to the charrettes.

The first of these sessions looked at the areas as they are today. The workshop started with a presentation of urban principles and was followed by a series of analysis sessions looking at the urban form, street network, open spaces and land uses of the area. The intention was to get people to identify the area's problems as well as identifying the causes in as much as they related to the design and layout of the estate. The session concluded with a hard and soft exercise, in which the groups discussed which parts of the area could be developed.

The Saturday after the first workshops we arranged a bus tour of new housing schemes in Manchester. This included Ordsall, Chimney Pot Park and Lower Broughton in Salford, the Three Sisters in Collyhurst, New Islington and New East Manchester, the Northmoor Home Zone and Hulme. The intention was to give a feeling for what was possible in the Old Trafford area.

This fed into the second session which started with a slide show of possibilities that people used to create a set of 'mood boards' with collages of pictures of the sort of places that they would like to see in Old Trafford. This led into the main masterplanning session that started by replanning the street network of each area, looking at the open space and then developing a three dimensional masterplan in plasticine.

Each workshop was split into subgroups and each of these were encouraged to explore different options. The result was two options from each workshop, typically a modest option and a radical option. Following the workshops these were expanded into three options as the basis for a public exhibition in September 2008.





Option 1 - Minimal change

- Demolition of Cornbrook Court
- Retention and refurbishment of Empress Court, Princess Court as well as Trafford and Ryland's Courts
- New build on Cornbrook Court and around Princess Court
- New housing on the site in front of Old Trafford Community School on City Road.
- Improved open space linking to St. George's Park overlooked by housing
- Cornbrook Park Road reopened to link Princess St. and City Rd.
- Virgil Street Extended to City Rd.
- Home Zones created on residential streets



Option 2 - Medium change

- Cornbrook Court, Malvern Row, Trafford Court, Ryland's Court demolished and redeveloped for housing
- Retention and refurbishment of Empress Court and Princess Court
- New residential development on Chester Road
- Open space reduced but improved with new development providing surveillance
- Cornbrook Park Road reopened to link Princess Street.
- Virgil Street Extended to City Road, Trafford Place extended to Lucy Street
- Home Zones created on residential streets
- Lets Go Global moved into a new unit



Option 3 - Maximum Change

- Empress Court, Princess Court, Trafford Court, Ryland's Court, Cornbrook Court, Malvern Row, garages on Rivers Estate to be redeveloped for housing
- De-Radburning of Rivers and reintroduce streets and internal courtyards
- New gateway development in the northern part of the area
- New residential development on Chester Road
- Reduced open space to create a new frontage to St. George's Park
- Access improvements as in Option 2

Hullard and Rivers options

The residents at the Hullard and Rivers Workshops were very open to the idea of radically re-configuring the estates but were more cautious when it came to demolition.

The Hullard and Rivers workshops were held at Lets Go Global on 8th and 15th July 2008. The main concerns related to the lack of facilities in the area, the fact that it felt cut off and the problems associated with the tower blocks and walk up blocks. There was also concern about the confusing layout of the Rivers Estate.

The workshop came up with two options for the area illustrated below. Both options are fairly similar – they retain the tower blocks, reopen Cornbrook Park Road, re-configure the Rivers Estate and redevelop the industrial units to the north. They differ mainly in the amount of open space.

The three options developed for consultation introduce more variety to give people a wider choice. Options 1 and 2 retain the towers while 3 redevelops them. The redevelopment of the industrial units is only shown on Option 3 along with the re-configuration of the Rivers Estate. These three options were used as the basis for consultation.



Youth comments:

"It would be so nice to have a cinema close by" Jenna Hughes, 12yrs "We want a clean area with astroturf like the one at West Union St. Community School", Tony Robinson, 15yrs





Option 1 - Minimal change

- The refurbishment of part of Fahey's depot for community use.
- The redevelopment for housing of: the car wash site on Chorlton Road, Isobel Baillie Lodge, Essex Way/Stretford Road, Shrewsbury Street Car Park, the cleared Site on Ayres Road and the corner of Maher Gardens.
- The improvement of the St. Alphonsus fields as a park.
- Cornbrook Street improved between Stretford Road and St. Brides Way.
- Shrewsbury Street Community Centre expanded and a smaller facility developed on Fahey's Site.



Option 2 - Medium change

- Redevelopment of the Fahey's Depot for housing with community use in the retained building
- Mixed use development of the Essex Way/ Stretford Road.
- Redevelopment for housing of the car wash site, Ayton House, Isobel Baillie Lodge and the Shrewsbury Street car park.
- Improvements and de-radburning of the Clifton's estate.
- New frontage onto Chorlton Road around the Sharon Church and Clifton Court.
- The improvement of the St. Alphonsus fields as a park.
- Reopening of Clifton St. Hamilton St. and Cornbrook St.
- Shrewsbury Street Community Centre expanded and a smaller facility developed on Fahey's Site.



Option 3 - Maximum change

- Redevelopment of the Fahey's Depot for employment and housing with community use in the retained building.
- Mixed use development of the Essex Way/ Stretford Road.
- Redevelopment for housing of the car wash site, Ayton House, Isobel Baillie Lodge and surroundings and the Shrewsbury Street car park.
- Improvements and de-radburning of the Clifton's estate.
- New frontage onto Chorlton Road around the Sharon Church and Clifton Court.
- The improvement of the St. Alphonsus fields as a park.
- Reopening of Clifton St. Hamilton St. and Cornbrook St.
- Shrewsbury Street Community Centre expanded and a smaller facility developed on Fahey's Site.

Shrewsbury Street and School Walk options

The options for the central area are based around turning the central open space into a park and reconnecting the street network so that it feels less isolated.

The Shrewsbury Street and School Walk workshops were held at the Community Centre on 10th and 17th July 2008. The main concerns related to safety and crime particularly around the central open space that was seen as unsafe.

The workshop came up with two options for the area which again were quite similar. They both looked to a new park on St. Alphonsus fields as a new heart to the area surrounded by a reconnected street network. Both also show infill development on Essex Way and along Chorlton Road. The main difference is that the plan to the right replaces the Shrewsbury Street Community Centre with a new facility on the Fahey's site allowing the old centre and Isobel Baillie Lodge to be redeveloped for housing.

The three options developed for consultation are based on the ideas of the park and the reconnected street network. The main differences are the options for the Fahey's Depot and the extent of infill development.



Youth comment:

"We have a lovely house but the graffiti isn't nice at all ..." Linko and Vanish Mackova, 11yrs, 13yrs





Option 1 - Minimal change

- Retains all seven towers
- Trafford Standard works to the towers including internal and external refurbishment.
- Works to the base of the blocks to improve parking, create community facilities and the quality of open space.
- Development of a fringe alongside Maher Gardens to create a greater mix of housing and surveillance of the open space.
- The creation of a permeable street network by re-configuring the base of the towers with through-streets and connecting Maher Gardens to Chorlton Road.
- Improvements to the balance of the park.



Option 2 - Medium change

- Retains the three Balcony Blocks to be refurbished to the Trafford Standard with works to the ground floor as described above.
- Demolition and redevelopment of the Bird Blocks: Eagle Court, Falcon Court, Osprey Court and Raven Court along with the Seahawk Pub.
- A new urban neighbourhood on the cleared sites of housing and flats to replace those lost by demolition.
- A new parade of shops facing onto the park.
- The creation of a permeable street network including reopening Maher Gardens
- Improvements to the parkland



Option 3 - Maximum change

- Demolition of all seven towers; Eagle Court, Falcon Court, Osprey Court, Raven Court and Clifford Court, Grafton Court, Pickford Court along with the Seahawk Pub.
- A new urban neighbourhood on the cleared sites of housing and flats to replace those lost by demolition.
- A new parade of shops on Moss Lane.
- The creation of a permeable street network including reopening Maher Gardens and part of Cornbrook Street.
- Improvements to the parkland

Tamworth Options

The key issues with the Tamworth Workshops related to the future of the tower blocks. There was a willingness to consider this and to look at ways of better integrating the estate into the surrounding area.



The Tamworth Street and School Walk workshops were held at the Community Centre on 9th and 16th July 2008. The main concerns related to the internal state of the blocks, particularly the lifts and communal area and issues about crime and safety .



The workshop came up with two options illustrated below. The first was based on the retention of all seven towers and broached the idea of building on part of the park. This is reflected in the minimal option to the left. The second option redeveloped the Bird blocks to create a new neighbourhood between Bold Street and Moss Lane. This is reflected in Option 2 to the left. Both of these options include the opening up of streets to create a permeable street network. This includes a direct north/south route and the reopening of Maher Gardens. As many residents expressed the desire to see all the towers demolished we have added a third option to the left that explores the demolition of all seven towers.

Youth comments:
 "They asked us about what we would like here and we didn't ask for a baby play area, we wanted a football pitch but they didn't listened did they."
 Ronnie Moore, 15yrs



Plans developed during charettes



Plans developed during charettes developed into options for consultation with residents of the Tamworth Estate.



Resident views

A total of 88 questionnaires were completed by residents, the majority on the Tamworth Estate where most change is likely. The majority of residents opted for radical change including the demolition of the tower blocks. This fed into the options appraisal described on the following page.

Residents views were collected through a series of exhibitions in each area at the end of September/early October 2008. Staffed exhibitions were held in each part of the area after which the boards stayed in the library for another two weeks. Questionnaires were available for people to record their views. In total 119 residents attended these exhibitions and 88 response forms were completed. The majority of these (58) came from the Tamworth Estate, which is remarkable given the low level of community involvement in this area in the past. There was however a poor response from the Central Area, insufficient to draw any firm conclusions.

Hullard and the Rivers: In this area 25 responses were received. Of those that expressed a preference, eleven preferred Option 3 and only one and two respectively preferred Options 1 and 2. This represented a desire for radical change and to see the demolition of Trafford and Ryland's Courts and the two towers. However most of the respondents were from the low rise blocks and there was not enough feedback from the towers to judge the views of residents.

Central Area: There were only five completed questionnaires for the central area, reflecting the limited change proposed in the area. Three of the five opted for the radical option and the other two chose option 1 but the numbers are too small to draw firm conclusions.

The Tamworth Estate: This area elicited the greatest response with 58 completed forms from across the area. The preferred option was a close call between Option 2 (demolition of the Bird Blocks) and option 3 (total demolition of the Bird and Balcony Blocks). The situation was confused however because many residents of the low rise blocks objected mainly to opening the streets up and expressed a preference accordingly. We have however looked more closely at the responses from the residents of the tower blocks. The response for Option 2 was very balanced with equal numbers for each of the four categories; 'strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree'. By contrast the responses on Option 3 were 16 'strongly agree' and 10 'strongly disagree' with nothing in the middle. Further analysis shows that the balcony residents were fairly evenly split with a small majority for Option 2 while the Bird blocks had a significant majority for Option 3 (in other words if our blocks are to be demolished the balcony blocks should be too!).



Photo: Close up view of the Bird Blocks

Options appraisal

The views of residents were generally in favour of radical intervention including demolition. This has been tempered by a viability assessment, assessment of regeneration impact and the views of stakeholders to arrive at a preferred option.

Resident Views: The views of residents, as described on the previous page can be summarised as follows:

- A general preference for more radical options.
- A willingness to see the towers demolished.
- A willingness in the northern and central areas to open up the street network.
- A concern about opening streets on the Tamworth Estate - from the residents of the low rise housing.

The views of the community have been set alongside three further options appraisals; viability, regeneration impact and the views of stakeholders.

Viability: Advice on viability was provided by EKOS. This has proved difficult in the current market because very little is viable. However the main issue as the market picks up will relate to the amount of publicly-owned land released by demolition and the potential for developing housing rather than flats (because the former are more viable). The viability of redeveloping the tower blocks on the Tamworth Estate would therefore be greater than the tower blocks on the Hullard Estate, because the latter would release very little additional development land.

Regeneration impact: The issue with regeneration impact is whether the minimal options will be sufficiently transformational to bring about a permanent change in the area. The issue, for example on the Hullard and Tamworth estates, is whether they can thrive in the future with some or all of the tower blocks remaining. The conclusion from

the visit to the refurbished Three Sisters towers in Collyhurst was that this probably was possible provided that the towers are comprehensively refurbished. More important to the transformation of the area than the demolition of blocks is the opening up of the street network. The neighbourhoods with the greatest problems are those that feel most isolated and transformation is possible by opening up the street network and de-redding the low rise estates.

Stakeholder Views: Throughout the study meetings have been held with a range of stakeholders including land owners, departments in Trafford Council, Manchester Council, the Trafford Housing Trust and the Neighbourhood Management Partnership. The options together with the views of the community and the options appraisal were discussed with them to agree the preferred option. The conclusions of these discussions were as follows:

- We should go for the radical option where possible to bring about transformational change in line with the views of the community.
- Princess and Empress Court should not be demolished because they remain popular with residents (who were not represented in the consultations) and because redevelopment is unlikely to be viable.
- The Balcony Blocks should be retained but the Bird Blocks should be redeveloped. This would allow for the planned decanting of residents and the creation of a good viable development site.
- The road network should be reconnected but this should be tempered on the Tamworth Estate in response to tenant concerns.

