

REPORT TO: HOUSING COMMITTEE – 9 MARCH 2015

REPORT ON: SURPLUS LOCK-UP GARAGES AND GARAGE SITES

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

REPORT NO. 63-2015

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval to declare 169 lock-up garages and 15 garage sites surplus to requirements.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

- 2.1. the lock up garages and garage sites listed in Appendix 1 identified for demolition are declared surplus to requirements and are demolished.
- 2.2. the Director of Housing determines a long term strategy for the sustainability of sites contained within Appendix 1, including the marketing of available units. In addition, ensuring that appropriate measures, including the conducting of surveys are undertaken to review and determine future requirements.
- 2.3. the City Engineer is remitted to bring forward proposals for demolitions where agreed and post demolition treatment works as necessary.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1. The cost of demolition and associated works will be met from the 2014/2015, and subsequent year's HRA Capital Estimates.

4. MAIN TEXT

- 4.1. There are 778 lock-ups and 120 garage sites on the Housing Revenue Account. Only 555 lock ups and 78 garage sites are accruing income. Were all lock ups and garages occupied and generating income the reduction in rental income for the 184 lock ups and garages recommended for demolition would be £77,220.
- 4.2. Weekly rental charge for a lock up garage is £9.50, plus VAT for non DCC Housing tenants, and £2.75 for a garage site. Rental income for 2013/2014, for those in the rent system, was £267,009. Void loss was £71,096 (26.6%).
- 4.3. Voids are due to lack of demand for certain locations; poor condition; garages being too small for modern cars; isolation of location and concerns about security; unwillingness to pay the current rent charge. There are now various locations across the city where entire blocks are empty or where occupied units are pepper potted within multiple groupings of void units.
- 4.4. Repair works have been undertaken in some locations but only where there is an expectation that there will be ongoing demand. In 2013/14 expenditure was £27,100 and £19,715 for 2014/15 to date.
- 4.5. An option appraisal of all lock up and garage stock was undertaken including:
 - A desk top review and site inspections by Housing Officers

- Data drawn from Council systems
- Information from locally based RSLs
- Information on lock up strategies from other councils.
- Information was sent out to all of those potentially affected by the proposal to demolish seeking comments. For those sites identified in Appendix A where demolition is proposed this was seen as a positive way forward. However there were concerns expressed about the lock ups sites in Charleston, Menzieshill and the garage site at Sandeman Street. Therefore further consultation will be undertaken.

This concluded that:

- There are locations which are fully occupied that are fit for purpose and require no action meantime.
- There are locations which are popular but the void units require significant repairs works to make them fit for purpose.
- There are locations which may benefit from a wider marketing exercise to ensure residents understand the opportunities in their area.
- There are locations where there is more than one block of lock ups on the same site or in the same locality. Condition is generally good but cumulatively there is a high concentration of lock ups in the same location making it difficult to re-let all voids. It is proposed that lets be consolidated into fewer blocks and the unsustainable blocks be demolished.
- There are locations where the blocks are unsustainable due to high void levels, lack of demand, vandalism and disrepair and security issues.
- As outlined above, there are areas potentially at risk where further consultation or surveys are required.

5. WAY FORWARD

- 5.1. Surplus lock ups and garages – where there are high levels of voids, lack of demand and where significant repairs are required this stock should be identified as surplus and demolished.

In these locations notifications will be issued to remaining occupiers in these blocks and occupiers will be invited to contact the Housing Department should they wish to re-locate to a sustainable lock up/garage site. For garage sites the Council will not relocate a garage structure but, if available, will seek to offer an alternative site to the lessee. Blocks/structures will be demolished after all tenancies at individual locations are terminated.

5.2. Remaining Lock-Ups/ Garages

- 5.2.1. Where blocks with few voids are considered sustainable – condition surveys will be undertaken and improvement works carried out. Voids will be offered to occupiers displaced by demolition or actively marketed by advertising voids in the District Offices and on the Council's website.
- 5.2.2. In blocks with higher voids but considered to be sustainable – condition surveys will be undertaken and costs obtained for repair works. Surveys will be implemented as appropriate to determine demand for lock ups at each location. Where demand is identified the Council will carry out works and actively market voids. Where no demand is identified the Department will report back to Housing Committee on these blocks within 2015/16.
- 5.2.3. In order to ensure that sustainable blocks are maintained provision will be made within the External Cyclical Maintenance programme (Planned Maintenance) for repair works to be undertaken. This programme is delivered across the city on an 8 year cycle basis. Works identified in the first cycle may be significant but successive cycle works should reduce due to anticipated lifecycle of elements.
- 5.2.4. The District Housing Offices will continue to provide a responsive repairs service.

5.3. **Alternative Uses for Lock-Up Sites**

- 5.3.1. Consideration has been given to whether there may be alternative uses for garage sites, for example to provide additional car parking where there may be a need in the area. The principle of clearing away the lock ups and using the area for car parking does not raise significant planning issues. However, there would be costs in bringing the surface left after demolition up to a useable standard and provision would have to be made for ongoing maintenance costs. If consideration were to be given to these becoming part of the adopted road network, this could result in additional construction costs due to the standard of finish required and provision for maintenance would also be required within City Development budgets. However, in some areas of the City it may be that additional parking spaces could benefit localities and consultation will take place as necessary.

6. **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of sustainability, strategic environmental assessment, anti poverty, equality impact assessment and risk management. There are no major issues.

7. **CONSULTATION**

The Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services and all other Chief Officers have been consulted on the preparation of this report. No concerns were expressed.

8. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

ELAINE ZWIRLEIN
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING

26 FEBRUARY 2014

APPENDIX 1

West District	Location		No	Void	Void>6 months	Retain	Demolish	Comments
	Blackness Avenue	1-32 Lockup	32	2	0	32		
	Logie Avenue	1-12 Lockup	12	6	2	12		
	Glenagnes Street	1-33 Lockup	33	15	14		33	
	Bankmill Road	1-12 garage	12	0	0	12		
	Greenbank Place	1-13 Lockup	13	5	2	13		
	Canning Street	1-5 Lockup	5	1	0	5		
	Kinloch Street	12-22 Lockup	11	4	0	11		
	Kinnaird Street	1-11 Lockup	11	1	1	11		
	Campbell Street	1-58 Lockup	58	14	14	58		Survey
	Arthur Street	1-8 Lockup	8	0	0	8		
	Brownhill Street	1-10 garage	10	0	0	10		
	Myrekirk Terrace	1-34 Lockup	34	21	18	34		Survey
	Forth Crescent	1-10 Lockup	10	0	0	10		
	Etive Gardens	1-4 Lockup	4	0	0	4		
	Earn Crescent	1-14 Lockup	14	2	0	14		
	Lossie Place	1-4 Lockup	4	0	0	4		
	Charleston Drive	1-14 Lockup	14	0	0	14		
	Spey Drive	1-10 Lockup	10	8	8	10		Complete further consultation
	Thurso Crescent	1-12 Lockup	12	9	5	12		Complete further consultation
	Clyde Place	1-15 Lockup	15	9	7	15		Complete further consultation
	Deveron Terrace	1-16 Lockup	16	15	7	16		Complete further consultation
	Orrin Place	1-19 Lockup	19	11	9	19		Complete further consultation
	Deveron Crescent	1-23 Lockup	23	20	19	23		Complete further consultation
	Forth Place	1-7 Lockup	7	6	6	7		Complete further consultation
	Tweed Crescent	1-27 Lockup	27	17	14	27		Complete further consultation
	Craigowan Road	1-37 Lockup	37	21	19	37		Complete further consultation
	Balgarthno Road	1-26 garage	26	14	14	11	15	
	Bankmill Road	1-7 Lockup	7	5	5	7		
	Lansdowne Gardens	1-9 Lockup	9	7	6	9		Survey
	St. Mary Street	1a to 1r Lockup	18	14	13		18	Brick up
	Sandeman Street	1-48 garage	48	28	26	48		Complete further consultation

APPENDIX 1 con'td

East District	Location		No	Void	Void>6 months	Retain	Demolish	Comments
	Balunie Street	1-6 Lockup	6	0	0	6		
	Balmoral Gardens	1-9 Lockup	9	2	2	9		
	Balunie Drive	1-14 Lockup	14	0	0	14		
	Balunie Drive -19	1 garage	1	0	0	1		
	Baldovie Terrace	1-12 Lockup	12	4	3	8	4	
	Aboyne Avenue	1-28 Lockup	28	17	16	28		Survey
	Craigie Avenue	1-7 garage	7	2	2	7		
	Craigie Drive	1-11 lock up	11	5	6	11		Survey
	Strips of Craigie Road	1-11 Lockup	11	2	1	11		
	Carlochie Place	1-10 Lockup	10	5	5	10		Survey
		1A-14A Lockup	14	4	1	14		Survey
	Greendykes Road	40-47 Lockup	8	2	2	8		
	Kinnordy Terrace	1-7 garage	7	1	1	7		
	Gardyne Place	1-11 Lockup	11	6	4	8	3	
	Anton Drive	1-14 Lockup	14	6	6	14		Survey
	Abernethy Road	1-8 Lockup	8	1	1	8		
	Strathmore Place BH	1-10 Lockup	10	4	4	10		Survey
	Westfield Road	1-12 Lockup	12	0	0	12		
	Manor Place B/F	1-9 Lockup	9	0	1	9		
	Fintry Crescent	1-15 Lockup	15	9	6		15	
	Dalkeith Road	1-4 garage	4	1	1	4		
	McLean Street	1-5 garage	5	0	0	5		
	Balgowan Avenue	1-17 Lockup	17	2	2	17		
	Huntly Road	1-24 lock up	24	24	24		24	
	Kemnay Gardens	1-44 lock up	44	44	44		44	
	Ballindean Road	1-28 lock up	28	28	28		28	
	Totals		898	424	369	714	184	