



Qualitative Responses

Introduction

Under the question, 'Please describe any additional impacts you anticipate for any of the options that have not been addressed in previous questions,' residents were given the opportunity to voice their concerns and comments on the impact the options will have on their households and community. Responses have been incorporated into the analysis of survey responses along with the qualitative response for the options appraisal.

The report sections the responses under identified protective characteristic groups, each viable option, and key stakeholders' groupings (residents living in RAAC-affected homes, local and wider community).

Identified impacted groups: Protective Characteristics

Age

'Elderly homeowners will be unable to afford any of the options without support and they should not be made to leave their homes without appropriate reimbursement to enable them to afford to move somewhere else. Or the council could offer them alternative accommodation but sign the title deeds to them so that they do not have to worry about their future.'

'I am absolutely devastated. We have done our property up to a high standard for our retirement and it's very unacceptable being treated like this...'

'My grandad is in his xxx and owns his home, a house where he has raised an entire family. This is a man who has served his country in the military, a man who has worked in care for those in need and a man who for years volunteered to count the votes at election time. A man who has done much more than most for his country and would never ask for anything in return. To see the impact this has had on his life, at a time he started getting back on his feet and enjoying life after losing my grandma has been heartbreaking. The country he has served his whole life built and knowingly sold him a house with a defect (RAAC).'

'I am a pensioner and cannot afford any of the options, I am the only tenant since the purchase from the council and wish to be informed of how the council are going to take responsibility for the sale of a property with RAAC.'

Key points

- There is concern around options for pensioners who own their home.

- Impact on mental health and wellbeing for pensioners in the later stages of their life.

Disability: Quotes

‘This is causing me massive stress which is NOT good. I can’t run if my roof falls in!’
(key stakeholder impacted by poor mobility)

‘This option (option 3) would mean having to move out of the house with a disabled child with autism, an under 3-year-old and myself having health issues, then have to move back in again which creates big disturbances mentally, emotionally and physically for all involved.’

‘This (option 4a) impacts me mentally, physically and financially. This feels like a bereavement even thinking about the community and memories being bulldozed.’
(Key stakeholder who is disabled and elderly)

‘...I would be concerned that my access to services, public transport, etc was at least as good in my new home, and that I would be rehoused into a suitable home that is adapted for my needs, and in an area where I could still remain in contact with friends and family.’

Key points

- Complexity of moving under proposed options, due to neurological and physical disabilities.
- lack of physical ability to leave home easily if implication of RAAC causes physical defects to homes.
- Future access to public services and suitable housing to suit resident needs.

Socio- economic

Homeowners

'Given that homeowners could be made homeless by this decision the Council should be looking at how they can, as a social landlord, offer housing to homeowners affected. It may also be worthwhile for the council to negotiate an agreed settlement with homeowners rather than progressing with compulsory purchases as the legal fees may be less and this may be achievable in a shorter timescale.'

'Deciding to demolish the houses will negatively affect hundreds of homeowners. My main concern is where they will all go at the same time when properties in Aberdeen are even more expensive now and who will pay them for everything they may lose. Some owners are first time buyers, some have a good fixed-interest rate on their mortgage, some have already paid for their properties and are debt free. It would be highly immoral to just kick them out from their homes.'

'If repair is chosen, the impact is financially out of my price range...If demolition is chosen the impact is loss of home and becoming homeless.'

'I am a parent, aunt and sister-in-law of 3 RAAC-affected properties with all 3 homeowners having different circumstances. The stress and anxiety between our family is horrendous...The worry of their future terrifies me. No matter which option is chosen, it's going to cost them money and when it comes to the cheapest (demolition) then means they've no roof over their head. So what then? The Council rehuses them from their 3- and 4-bedroom houses to a one bedroom property as that's the criteria they would meet. They'd have rent to pay and probably the rest of their outstanding mortgages.'

'I am the mother of my daughter who has children and is the owner of an affected property. The cost implications and financial loss of any of the above solutions are horrendous through no fault of hers. A lot of money has also been spent on improving her house. There are significant implications for all the people living in the affected properties on their physical and mental health.'

'The financial impact of each option will depend on a variety of factors, i.e. if funding is secured for repair from Scottish or UK government, then this will be reduced. Until we know what our houses will be valued at and what we will be offered through either VCO or CPO, we are unable to comment on the financial impact this would have. As discussed at the drop-in session, I personally have xxx still to pay on my mortgage, so this could have significant impact on me not only financially, but also in the ability to move on with my life due to my credit rating etc.'

'I am a pensioner and cannot afford any of the options, I am the only tenant since the purchase from the council and wish to be informed of how the council are going to take responsibility for the sale of a property with RAAC.'

'If I cannot move on and buy a new property of my own, I will have nowhere to live, meaning that I will require Council accommodation. This would impact my mental and physical health significantly as I would only be entitled to a 1 bed flat.'

'It would make no financial sense to pay out almost the entire value of the house again for this kind of repair.'

Key points

- Options being unaffordable to homeowners, resulting in homelessness
- Current value of their home being affected by RAAC resulting in having little options in the future.
- Impact this has on their health and wellbeing.

Options

Option 2: Install a support timber frame under existing RAAC roof panels

'I do not believe this option will encourage former tenants to move back to Torry, and given all the publicity regarding the roofs, I also believe new tenants will be unwilling to move into the properties....I also think it has the risk that private owners will choose not to buy into the scheme and therefore Council properties will be located adjacent to private properties that won't receive the timber frame.'

'How much peace of mind would this give? The RAAC is still going to be present.'

'An expensive sticky plaster that is a temporary fix will be an expense in the long run. I'm very concerned about the safety of such a solution. Not wanting to have to have regular inspections i.e. strangers coming into the house and not sure if they are genuine.'

'Can our homes still be sold with this option?'

'We would not feel safe, as the RAAC would still be present and collapse, and the ongoing inspections and maintenance would be costly. Also house value would be less as RAAC still present.'

Key points

- Residents not feeling safe if this option were to be carried out due to RAAC remaining in situ.
- Residents not being content if the need of further surveys are to be carried out due to impact on disturbance.
- Value of the home continuingly to be affected.
- Costs associated with ongoing maintenance and surveys for homeowners.

Option 3: Removal of RAAC panels and replace roof

'I do not believe this option will encourage former tenants to move back to Torry and it may also discourage new tenants from moving in given all the publicity regarding the roofs. I also believe it is financially unviable for most private owners. Again, I also think it has the risk that private owners will choose not to buy into the scheme and therefore Council properties will be located adjacent to private properties that won't receive new roofs.'

Key points

- Due to this option being unaffordable to homeowners, risk of lack of collaboration to replace roofs and works being stalled/not completed.

Option 4a: Demolition only

'...Demolition is the only way forward for the good of everyone in Aberdeen City so that the money can be spent in areas which is desperately needed for more people in Aberdeen rather than the few in these homes.'

'I believe that demolition is the only viable option, however option 4a is costly, with little benefit, and potentially rips the heart out of the community.'

'This option is potentially devastating for homeowners such as myself, however, I think it does bring closure. The mental anguish placed on homeowners by the Council's decision is immense and one thing I believe we need is final closure. I do not wish to feel stuck in my home because the Council cannot make a decision, or to find myself living in a building site for the best part of a decade. I wish to be able to move on. Both metaphorically and literally.'

'If the properties were demolished only, the ground cleared and possibly landscaped, it would reduce the community as a whole with the reduction in available homes and displacement of current tenants. In the area in question, if left as a vacant site, the area is quite likely to be turned into a wasteland.'

'If the houses are going to be demolished only, the ground left will need to be properly maintained. If this is grass planting, will the council maintain this to a suitable standard with regular cuts? Will there be pedestrian paths through these areas? How will litter and fly tipping be controlled?'

Key points

- A number of respondents have stated demolition to bring about some sort of closure.
- A number of respondents comment on the negative impact demolition has on the community followed by the result being land that is unkept.

Option 4b: Demolition and build new homes

'Aberdeen is in the midst of a housing crisis: far too few social/public rents, rising private rents, rentals in horrendous condition. We need Council flats in Balnagask, lots of them, and of high quality, with high EPC ratings....over 500 council homes should be built.'

'Option 4b of building new properties should return the heart to community. While the most expensive, and longest option, it does remove all the RAAC issues and modern housing should be better for the environment in the long run.'

'Rather than keeping the same number of units, it would be more sensible to demolish and build a greater number of units, i.e. more stories and flats. Having new homes at the end of the project would bring back community and leave a positive impact.'

'I think that these old houses should be demolished because the wall is crumbling, the plumbing stinks because it's leaky, Electric's wires are also dangerous. New houses are being built all over the world and this is the norm of civilization.'

'Makes sense demolition and rebuild for the mental health for the owners and the tenants.'

'The Council should consider the type of units built and should not simply replace like for like. If flats were built, then more units could be delivered and thus creating much needed social housing for the city.'

'Have been born and lived for 70 years in Aberdeen mostly at the South side of the city and Torry has been the most friendly area and kind hearted. People do care. Give us new houses for many new families and a new start for them and Torry.'

Key points:

- Building new homes provides much needed social housing
- Investment will bring about a positive impact for the community and improved environment
- Fresh start for both residents and those moving into the area.

Local and Wider Community

'Further poverty to the Torry area. Local business closures and job losses.'

This is ripping the heart out of a community...e.g. schools being closed, green spaces being destroyed, access to sport/ exercise facilities being closed... The future of the remaining schools should be thought about as well as the healthcare facilities. Families are being torn apart and as a result, parents may find it harder to stay in employment as their before and after school care has been moved away or they have to move away from them.'

'...this will cause more ASB no matter which option, scaffolding, diggers etc is an obvious target for ASB, and Police and Wardens do not have the manpower to man these sites the hours that workmen clock off-shift. I hope no matter which option is taken, the funds for sourcing outside security is sought.'

'There are major implications for the local services, schools and health services. There are additional worries about property being empty and open to vandalism, squatters and inappropriate use.'

'Noise and air quality when works taking place, impact on money spent on other Torry council streets already. Although rent and council tax has gone up, there is a huge deterioration of our services especially noticeable in grass cutting, weeding, broken rusting fencing replacement seems to have been halted.'

'... the wider community but the heart of Torry is being ripped to bits and they are needing some good news and something to look forward to...Torry is a very strong and precious place of Aberdeen...our area has been destroyed by many industrial changes, it is time to think about the people who live in this wonderful area of Aberdeen.'

Key points:

- Consequential negative impact on education, healthcare and leisure facilities/services.
- Impact on crime and anti-social behaviour on the local community.
- Noise and air quality impact during works.
- Continues impact industrial changes have on the area.