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New shops plan gets go-ahead

15/ 8/2008

A £30M new shops and homes plan for Beswick has finally been given the green light.

The scheme, replacing Beswick Precinct, will see 295 new homes built and the relocation of shops to purpose-built units on Grey Mare Lane.

Homes will be built to a forward-thinking design, which allows each one to be easily adapted for disabled use.

Graham Edward, managing director of architects Edwards Architectural Services, explained the 'design for life' idea.

He said: "It is making a house user-friendly for ever.

"There are big rooms, big corridors and doors, and space for a future lift. It makes sure stairs are easy to use and it would be easy to put a stair lift in.

"If you buy as a family, then have a disabled child or get older and become disabled, you don't need to move and can still be around neighbours you have known for years."

Above the shops - which will include existing businesses such as Beswick supermarket, the post office and chemist - will be 42 apartments in a four-storey block, with a community garden for residents on the top floor.

Builders Gleeson Regeneration say they will start on constructing the new shops later this month, with shopkeepers moving in by Christmas 2009.

Beswick Precinct has been half demolished for almost a year, with some of the original tenants relocating as long ago as January 2007.

Hoardings went up last May and demolition work started last October.

Since then, minor changes to the plans have been blamed for the delay.

The redevelopment site covers an area from Bell Crescent to the south, Grey Mare Lane to the east, Blackrock Street in the west and the new academy school site to the north.

There will be 21 five-bed houses, 10 four-bed houses and 56 three-bed houses, as well as 139 two-bed homes and 27 one bed-houses. They will be largely laid out in squares - with homes facing outwards and gardens and enclosed recreational space behind.

Secure car parking as well as on-street is included.

Sean McGonigle, director of regeneration at regeneration company New East Manchester, said: "We are working with our development partner to ensure the new development is completed as quickly as possible and, together with the local community, we look forward to seeing the new shops in place."



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