**Somerton Resident Steering Group meeting:**   
**Wednesday 4 May 2022, 17.30**

**Attendees**

**NCH:** Pravin De Silva, Phillip Lott, Rebecca Sluman,

**Oxford Architects:** Andrew Brown, Terry Lai

**Residents:** Janine Clarke, Danny Davis, Gwyneth Johnson, Lindsay Brown, Raqai Mahmood

**1 Introduction**

1.1 A new member Gwyneth Johnson joined the meeting for the first time. Everyone

Introduced themselves

1.2 Prav advised the group that the meeting was being recorded, there were no objections

**2 Actions from Previous Minutes**

2.1 Prav updated the group on actions from the last meeting

2.2 Resident volunteered service for the valuer scoring this has taken place

2.3 Residents to be updated on the progress of the intrusive surveys, this will be an

ongoing topic of the steering group

2.4 CCTV – Prav is waiting to catch up with Laura on this

2.5 A resident said that an action had been missed off, where an update on the Pre

App comments and asked if they could be given in terms that are easy to

understand. Prav explained that Andrew will run through this later on in the

meeting

**3 Project Plan**

3.1 Prav displayed the project plan for Somerton. NCH have managed to achieve the

key milestones set out for April. Curtains are still carrying the intrusive surveys

and they have completed 7 properties so far.

3.2 A resident asked if people know these surveys are happening, Prav explain

that we put out a post on social media. The resident asked if the group could

know what properties are being survey, Prav said that this wouldn’t be a

problem. Rebecca said that she will put the properties in the minutes so

everyone can see

3.3 Throughout May we will continue to work with the design team to explore further

options for the different areas in Somerton

3.4 We may also need to carry out further surveys on Newport City Council land. We

will be having further discussions with them to see when we can get this piece of

work underway

**4 Valuer**

4.1 Phillip explained that the scoring meeting for the two prospective valuers was

Held on Friday 29th April late afternoon, with a mix of NCH staff and residents.

We have now been able to select the valuer for Somerton, Jones-Battye

Chartered Surveyors. Jones-Battye have a wealth of experience in working with

Housing Associations across South Wales and have worked on similar project by

buying back privately owned home where regeneration works or civil engineering

works require it.

4.2 A resident asked if this is for people who want to see and asked how this works,

It was explained that for those homeowners wanting to sell then Jones-Battye

would made an appointment to go out and value the home. The homeowner can

appoint a second valuer but they can’t have an estate agent to value the house

they need to be a Royal Institute Chartered Surveyors (RICS) registered.

4.3 Jones-Battye will be advised of a start date – **NCH to Action**

**5 Refurbishment activity**

5.1 Rebecca advised that Curtains are near to completing the intrusive surveys and

the last asbestos surveys have been carried out so Curtains can work on the 3

remaining properties

5.2 Prav explained that we will also be carrying out refurbishment works on 2 pilot

properties in Somerton to ensure we get the right scheme of works

5.3 A resident asked why properties are being left empty now, Prav and Rebecca

explained that there are many reasons why a property might require extensive

works and the cost may mean it is not cost effective to re-let a property

5.4 The properties that are having intrusive surveys carried out on them are:

* 5 Acacia Avenue
* 12 Acacia Square
* 2 Laburnum Drive
* 6 Laburnum Drive
* 70 Laburnum Drive
* 17 Libeneth Road
* 1 Sycamore Avenue
* 9 Sycamore Avenue
* 24 Hawthorne Avenue
* 16 Linden Road

5.5 Three properties left to survey, will advise when they are completed – **NCH to**

**Action**

**6 Design updates**

6.1 Andrew explained that he would go through the design update on all areas we are working on with a summary of slides that we have looked at previously

6.2 Acacia Avenue – Andrew update the meeting that the pre application was submitted to NCC in Jan 22 and the Pre App meeting took place 16th March

6.3 We are waiting for the formal written response from NCC following the meeting. We will review the feedback from the meeting and the community feedback and further develop our concepts for Acacia Avenue from this.

6.4 Community Consultation Feedback – there were 76 attendees recorded on the sign in sheet, 19 responses on feedback forms. Andrew outlined the responses in the following slides in the form of graphs and discussed their possible significance and look at colorations between peoples responses. **Please see attached slides**

**Q) What issues if any do you experience where you live?**

The main answers for this was people experiencing damp in their homes and others stating they had no issues, other things that came up were around noise and parking

**Q) What do you like about the design proposal?**

The main response was that people were in favour of the design and that the size of homes were good.

**Q) What do you not like about the design?**

Again the main response was that there was nothing that people didn’t like about the design proposal. Car parking is an issues and this is something that we will look into in more detail to ensure that parking is adequate and in line with Welsh Government

**Q) What would you like to change / see in the design proposal?**

Again the highest response was that people didn’t want to see anything changed about the design proposal. People were keen to see more green / outdoor space and space that is multi-functional

**Q) What play / recreational areas would you like to see?**

The common feedback was to see something for the children, a park or play areas, football pitch. An area that can be used for everyone

**Q) What would you like to see in older persons accommodation?**

The response that came out was to provide bungalows, wet rooms, lifts, bedroom for guests.

**Q) What do you like about living in Somerton?**

The highest response was community spirit, everyone is friendly, lived in the area for years

6.5 A resident asked if more could be done to contact households, such as a questionnaire delivered and collected from each house.

6.6 Another resident commented that it is fine sending out questionnaires but no one sends them back.

6.7 Questions were put to the steering group – “Where should play/recreation areas be located” – Residents were saying that there used to be a green area up behind the shop, it there for years and one day it was gone. This was some 20 years ago. Residents said it would be good to have a play area for all ages and it was noted that many years ago the school would open up the gates during the holidays for children to play on the field. Again this was some years back.

6.8 Question – “Where should older person’s accommodation should be located” - The group while they thought that having this type of accommodation tucked away in Acacia Avenue it may not be the best location, they did think that it should be nearer to Chepstow Road or Somerton Road for closer access to the main roads and access to public transport.

6.9 Question – “Are there any locally important landmarks within Somerton” - The Tardis and the Welcome to Somerton Mural, however this was never finished completely. While the mural is a good feature it doesn’t necessarily need to stay where it is and could be updated

6.10 Laburnam Drive – We have started to review the concepts, opportunities and design principles for Laburnam and the surrounding areas. This will include looking at the overall levels across this area, the school access and opportunities to improve access, the grass hill to the south and opportunities to incorporate this into the estate. Providing public green spaces and a diverse mix of new homes.

6.11 Hawthorne Fosse – Consultation with the school has highlighted issues such as, vehicle and pedestrian access and areas of anti-social behaviour. Focus will be around the Hawthorne Fosse area as NCH own most of the homes. The aim will be to provide better access and visibility of the school, a mix of homes. The plan shared is a concept at the moment and will be developed further. This plan was received well by the group and they felt that this would be a good design to take forward

**7 Any other business**

7.1 Terry bought up the woodland area behind Laburnum and asked if it was used,

the group said that it wasn’t but it would be good to bring it into use for a green

space area