**Somerton Resident Steering Group meeting:**    
**Wednesday 7 December 2022, 17.30**

**Attendees**

**NCH:** Pravin DeSilva, Phillip Lott, Rebecca Sluman,

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

**Residents:** Janine Clarke, Danny Davis, Gwyneth Johnson Mcloughlan, Paul Jenkins, Brian Stevens, Deborah Hoare, Paul Hoare, Jane Fry, Carol Williams, Debbie Clarke, Matthew James

**Councillors:** Gave their apologies for this meeting

**Introduction**

Rebecca advised the group that the meeting was being recorded, there were no

objections

1. **Action from previous minutes**

1.1 Prav went through the minutes from November meeting.

1.2 A resident asked if we could look at a NCH new build property. Rebecca has spoken to the Neighbourhood Manager for that area and they will notify Rebecca when a property becomes empty

1.3 A resident asked about putting out some comms around getting peoples email addresses so we can email people updates instead of hand delivering information. A newsletter will be going out before Xmas asking if people would like to receive updates via email please supply us with your email address to be added to a mailing list

1.4 Rebeca attended the Somerton Cllr Surgery on Wednesday 7th December at the Hope Centre at 11am, we had no one attend the surgery

1. **Project Plan**

2.1 Prav explained that we have progressed and hit our mile stones

2.2 We have had positive feedback from Welsh Government

2.3 We have been working on design options for each area and these options may change as we go through the process

**3 Valuer**

3.1 Phillip explained that we have had 47 valuations carried out to date

3.2 16 of those have had the valuation reports and offers and we are at varying stages of conversation with those homeowners.

3.3 Seven homeowners have appointed a second valuer

3.4 Fifteen properties are in the legal stages

3.5 There have been 6 completions to date

3.6 The process is continuing and going well

3.7 A resident asked if the valuations are only been carried out in regeneration areas, Phill confirmed that this is the case

**4 Design Update**

4.1 Andrew went through a summary of Novembers meeting:

* Community Consultation
* Residents Steering Group
* Stakeholder Meetings with the school and secure by design office
* Welsh Government
* NCH One Team internal meeting

Listed the ‘common thread’ comments and began to develop a list of Design Review actions:

* Review older persons accommodation (location and mix of homes provided)
* Location of general needs flats
* Purpose for the new Green / Public Spaces
* Natural surveillance
* Location of the shop
* Car parking provision with each area and for the estate as a whole
* Continue to develop concept proposals for areas not considered to date

4.2 Regeneration we have been reviewing our next steps looking at the feedback we have received from the consultation events and various meetings to look at taking forward a planning application

4.3 Acacia Avenue we will be reviewing opportunities around green public open space and access up to Aberthaw Road and looking at new steps on Acacia Avenue, leading up to Aberthaw Road, these will now be in line with the line of site from Sycamore Avenue, so there is good visibility around and up to the steps

4.4 Sycamore Avenue and Hawthorne Avenue we have looked at how we maintain the homeowners properties

4.5 After having discussions with the local authority they have advised there will be benefits of have the green, public open space within the Acacia Avenue phase

4.6 A residents asked why the play area is where it is and not on the other side of the estate. Andrew explained that it is next to the Hope Centre which is a key asset as a community facility is currently hidden from the road this will help to open it up and also being a community building it will work well with the open space being next to it. We have looked at other areas but we feel the play space is more suitable to this site and will link in well with Acacia Avenue possibly being the first phase of Somerton and provide meaningful change for the estate

4.7 We have looked at both sides Sycamore Avenue for providing older person accommodation through flats and bungalows. A high proportion of properties belong to NCH, with some homeowners going through the voluntary purchase scheme. There are still a small number of homeowners that we haven’t come forward. A scheme has been put together showing homeowner properties left in situ and if an NCH property is attached to a homeowner property then that will be refurbished, if the owner doesn’t want to sell.

4.8 The south of Sycamore Avenue inc Hawthorne Aveneue we are looking to provide bungalows with a small communal garden and a block or apartments with some shared communal facilities for those residents to form a community for themselves and the bungalows. We are proposing for the 2 sites 6x 1 bed flats and 15x 2 bed bungalows

4.9 A resident asked about the communal garden behind the bungalows and was worried that this would be an attraction for kids to hang around there. Andrew explained that we don’t want to create any gated communities we need to look at how we can make this secure so it is only for the older persons residents to use and enjoy safely

4.10 Prav explained that we will be working this design. Rebecca explained that we want to make this area an inviting place for older people to enjoy maybe with some seating, high rise flower bed and planters so residents can maintain some of the garden area if they choose to

4.11 Andrew went onto show an area that we haven’t looked at previously which is the first properties on Libeneth Road, the majority of properties are owned by NCH and there are 8, 3 storey houses there currently. We have looked at this as a location for flats due to its long linear nature

4.12 The first flats will be inline with the houses on Hawthorne Avenue, so they will be 2 storey flats and as we progress up the site there will be 3 storey flats and 4 storey flats these will comprise of 1 and 2 bed flats. Off street carparking will be provided. There will be communal outside space for these flats

4.13 Andrew explained that we are looking at how we provide the new homes for Somerton and we have been looking at modern methods of construction (MMC), Newport City Homes are keen to explore this option. MMC looks at providing alternative way of delivering new homes on site instead of using the traditional build method with bricks and mortar. MMC are carried out off site, in a factory and delivered to site. Different elements can be provided such as pre-fabricated timber walls all bolted together on site, to the other end of the scale where you have a fully completed house delivered on a lorry and craned into place and plumbed in very quickly

4.14 we have been exploring these options and over the summer we met up with a few different providers to find out what they delivered and if they fitted in with what we wanted to do.

4.15 We visited a company called TopHat in the summer to look at their factory in Derby and we were shown what they are building via a production line. TopHat have a number of different house and flat types

4.16 Prav explained that we want to get an MMC provider on board with us, we are currently working with our Procurement team to test the market and get the best provider to work with us on Somerton. They are the principle contractor and don’t subcontract out the work

4.17 Prav explained that we would like to get Tophat to attend a steering group meeting to give us a presentation of what they can provide

4.18 A resident asked if TopHat provide a guarantee for the homes they provide, Prav explained that this would be the case.

4.19 A resident asked have we seen any houses that TopHat have produced say 10 years since they were put together. Prav explained that we haven’t seen any houses that have been up that are built using MMC but we will be looking at visiting some sites. MMC is a relatively new concept so we may not find houses that have been standing for 10+ years but we will definitely be looking into this

4.20 The group thought that this is a good idea but they want to see more information and want to know that these homes are standing the test of time and they will still be standing in many years to come

4.21 A resident said that these types are homes should save people money on their energy bills

4.22 A resident said that we don’t want to take advice from people who want us to buy their product but we want to know what it is like from people living in homes made from MMC

4.23 A resident said that they time scale that they can get houses built is amazing, for a traditional build it would take 5 years to build 270 homes but with MMC it would take 2 years to build the 270 homes

4.24 Prav explained that Welsh Government want housing providers to start exploring MMC options

4.25 Andrew showed some photos provided by TopHat of what their houses and flats look like from the outside and an internal photo of a kitchen. Andrew explained that constructing homes within a factory environment, they can be produced far quicker and there is repetition and precision that some main contractors using traditional building methods struggle to get on site

4.26 The group expressed their concern over using sub-contractors and like the idea of using a principle contractor for Somerton

4.26 Andrew went on to look at the refurbishment works, all the surveys are now complete and in terms of the specifications this will all be complete pre- Christmas

4.27 NCH will be working with their procurement team to look for contractors that can complete all the works on the 2 pilot properties

4.28 Andrew explained that the next steps for the team are:

Regeneration

* Develop proposals for flats along Aberthaw Road and Chepstow Road
* Review locations of Older Persons Accommodation
* Continue to develop concept plans for areas which have not been explored to date
* Continue to work through what’s required for planning and our approach
* Schedule a review session to consider phasing (the order of the works)
* Further work with Peter Alan on options for homeowners

MMC Opportunities

* Continue to work with NCH procurement on MMC options / TopHat

Refurbishment

* Complete design stage pre-Christmas
* Explore procurement options with NCH

**5 Communications**

5.1 Rebecca explained that we are working on the information we have received from our customers to look at phasing and how we will programme this

5.2 Rebecca explained that we have put together a newsletter which is a round up of 2022 and what we have planned for 2023. These will be hand delivered the week before Christmas

5.3 Rebecca explained that in the newsletter we have put a section in asking people if they want to, they can supply their email address, so they can receive updates / newsletters electronically

**7 Any other business**

7.1 A resident bought up there is work going on at a void property in Sycamore Avenue. Rebecca explained that she wasn’t aware of this works but will chase it up – **NCH to action**

**7 Next Meeting**

Time and date of next meeting:

**Wednesday 11 January: 17:30pm – Hybrid meeting**