

Somerton Resident Steering Group meeting: Wednesday 1 November 2023, 17.30

Attendees

NCH: Pravin De Silva, Rebecca Sluman

Oxford Architects: Terry Lai, Tony Mullins

Residents: Deb Clark, Sharron Dennis, Paul Jenkins, Janine Clarke, Linda Clarke, Gwyneth Mcloughlin Johnson, Danny Davis

Councillors: Alex Pimm

Introduction

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

1 Actions from previous minutes

1.1 There were no actions from the previous meeting

2 Project Plan

2.1 Prav advised there were no changes to the project plan this month and the timescales are still the same and this is what we are working to.

3 Design Update

Regeneration

3.1 Parking Surveys have now all been undertaken

3.2 Utilities scan was carried out w/c 9th October by Survey Site Solutions for Acacia Avenue, acacia Square and Myrtle Grove. Newport City Council and Newport City Homes land

3.3 Ecology surveys are still ongoing

3.4 Tree surveys have been completed

3.5 Tony explained that a pre-application has been submitted to Newport City Council and a meeting took place with the planners on the 10th October

3.6 There was a meeting with Newport City Council on the 26th October regarding the land acquisition and the new allotment requirements. Prav explained the meeting was to go through our proposals for the new allotment requirements, which we are looking to locate an allotment site within the first phase (Acacia Avenue)

3.7 For the land acquisition we need to provide information to Newport Norse for it to go the cabinet ministers briefing, so this will take a few weeks for this process to go through

3.8 We have another meeting scheduled to meet with Newport City Council place making team and with our engineers to look at the drainage requirements and the requirements for the play space that we are looking to provide on Acacia Avenue

3.9 Design of Phase 1 (Acacia Avenue) is with the consultants to look at the topography of the site and looking at the landscaping

3.10 The masterplan is ongoing and we are working with the comments we have received from Newport City Council and Newport City Homes

3.11 Verbal feedback that we have received from Newport City Council:

- Liked the link from the corner of Chepstow Road and Abethaw Road down into the site
- Precedents for houses and flats were interesting
- Rain gardens within the highway could be beneficial for traffic calming
- Landscaping and carparking should not interfere with visibility for vehicles
- Highways wanted to ensure where the road bends, need to make sure these are safe with lots of visibility
- We have not yet received formal comments in writing from Newport City Council

3.12 The flats alongside Chepstow Road will have rear amenity space accessible via a staircase

3.13 Internal bin and bike stores, this is due to the constraints of the site

3.14 Access from the pavement for the ground floor flats so will have their own front access and there will be stairs and lifts to the upper floor flats

3.15 There will be south facing balconies, which will get the sun and also means the balconies are facing down into the site and over the road, which is great for secure by design that we are required to follow

3.16 The flats along Chepstow Road will have a hallway, open plan kitchen/living and dining rooms

3.17 Tony showed a street elevation of the flats to show what the street scene will look like

3.18 Tony showed a slide to show the colour of the brick and the detailing that we could have on the bricks, to split up the houses and flats, so they have features to them

3.19 Tony showed a floor plan for a 4 bedroom, 6 person house. On the ground floor there is a hallway with a store cupboard and downstairs shower and toilet, there is a separate living room and an open plan kitchen/dining room . On the first floor there is a store cupboard (which will house heating equipment) a centrally located bathroom and 4 bedrooms

3.20 Terry explained that off the kitchen/dining area there will be a door out into the back garden and the living room will be looking out onto the road

3.20 The floor plan for the 4 bedroom, 7 person house which is over 3 storeys. On the ground floor there is hallway with a downstairs shower and toilet and store cupboard, there is a separate living room and a kitchen/dining area, there will be a door outside to the back garden. The first floor comprises of bathroom and a store cupboard, with 2 bedroom on this floor, on the second floor there is a bathroom and store cupboard and 2 bedrooms.

3.21 Tony showed a photos showing a street elevation of the houses and how we are dealing with the topography of the site

3.22 We are looking at landscaping of the site to ensure there is defensible space around the houses

3.23 Tony showed what the public open space could look like – open grass area and a play space for young children, which will be secure and will have a fence around. There will be a path that connects these spaces, where there will be some seating so people of all ages can meet up. We are looking into this area and will be meeting with Newport City Council to go through our ideas and get their feedback

Refurbishment

3.24 The design team put together options that meet EPC C

3.25 The new specifications have been issued to the tenderers and we have received updated costs

3.26 Prav advised that we are working with our internal colleagues to understand the best solutions for the properties that are going to be refurbished

4 Communications

4.1 We are working towards holding a community consultation event before the end of the year, and we are working towards a possible date of Thursday 7th December, this will be held at the Hope Centre

4.2 We need to ensure we have all the information needed to hold this event as we do not want this to be a wasted event

4.3 If this event is going ahead an invite will be sent out to residents of Somerton via Royal Mail

4.4 The group asked if these could be sent in advanced as mail isn't being delivered every day now and sometimes people aren't receiving mails for days at a time. We will ensure that the invites go out in plenty of time for the event and it will be shared in the Somerton Estate Facebook page

5 Any Other Business

5.1 Cllr Alex Pimm has how many 4 bedroom homes there will be in Acacia Avenue. Terry explained there are 6 x 4 bed properties

5.2 A resident asked why there are 4 bedroom, 6 person houses and 4 bedroom 7 person house. Tony explained that:

- 4 bedroom, 6 person house will have 2 people in 2 of the bedrooms and the other 2 bedrooms will have 1 person in each
- 4 bedroom, 7 person house will have 2 people in 3 of the bedrooms and 1 person in the 4th bedroom
- These bedrooms can have single or double beds in them

5.2 Terry asked if there is anything we should be doing to ensure we get lots of people to the event. Residents thought a walk through of a house would be good to see that has furniture in and a walk through of what Acacia Avenue could look like with the new flats and houses

5.3 A resident asked if people could put through suggestions for the new site and for the new road. Prav explained that Newport City Council will decide what it will be called, Prav said that we can put suggestions through to NCC

5.4 A resident asked about CCTV at the Hope Centre, it is now blocked off due to private gardens, can the CCTV face onto the new open space. Rebecca said that this would need to be looked at nearer the time as there will be regulations around this

5.5 The same resident also asked that will access still be open for the Hope Centre while homes are being demolished on the one side of Poplar Road. Access will be

kept open and the contractor who will be carrying out the work will need a traffic management plan and access to the Hope Centre will be part of this plan

5.6 A resident said that NCC had sent out letters, asking people to move their cars so they can remove rubbish, remove any weeds etc, one side of Sycamore Avenue has been done but the other side hasn't. Cllr Pimm said that he will chase this

5.7 Cllr Pimm asked about the empty properties and the funding from Welsh Government. Prav explained that we have been successful in gaining funding for 8/9 properties, we need to carry out works to these properties by then end of March 2024. We are in talks with NCC about funding for the other empty properties.

5.58 Cllr Pimm asked if the works we carry out to these properties now will they be refurbished to a standard that works wont be have to be carried out again. Prav is in talks with internal teams to discuss what works will be carried out to these properties

6 Next Meeting

Time and Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 6th December 17.30 - Hybrid Meeting