

Somerton Resident Steering Group meeting: Wednesday 7 September 2022, 17.30

Attendees

NCH: Rachel George, Pravin DeSilva Phillip Lott, Rebecca Sluman,
Oxford Architects: Andrew Brown, Terry Lai

Residents: Janine Clarke, Danny Davis, Gwyneth Johnson Mcloughlan, Carol Williams, Ceri Antonen, Paul Hoare, Deborah Hoare, Rebecca Watts, Tesneem Ahmed, Jane Fry, Raqia Mahmood

Councillors: Debbie Harvey, Timothy Harvey, Alex Pimm

Introduction

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

1 Action from previous minutes

1.1 Prav went through the previous minutes there was 1 action for NCH to look into, which was to see if we could send updates via resident's email addresses. Prav explained that Rebecca is carrying out visits to our NCH customers and we will be collecting their email addresses. We will also be discussing this with our IT team, to see what is possible in terms of emailing out updates

2 Project Plan

2.1 Prav explained that we have hit our key milestones for the month. Work has progressed on the design options, Andrew will run through this within the design update section. We have progressed with the voluntary purchase scheme, Phillip will provide an update in the next agenda item. Work on the refurbishment project is well underway, we have carried out surveys and we are working on designing the specification for the 2 pilot properties.

2.2 During September we have the Community Consultation Event on Thursday 29th September, Hope Centre 3:00 – 7:00pm.

2.3 On the 22nd September we are having an internal team review meeting with colleagues from other teams in NCH to show them our designs for regeneration and refurbishment to get their thoughts and feedback

2.4 Rachel explained that there were other actions for NCH to follow up since the August meeting:

- Update the project plan as we are half way through the year, this will be shown at the community event, we can then make any changes / amendments needed from the feedback we receive – **NCH to Action**

3 Valuer

3.1 Phill explained that valuations are still on going, to date we have received 35 requests for valuations, 14 are in legal stages, 6 have had a second valuation and talks ongoing between Jones Battye and the homeowners appointed valuer. 1 property has completed, there will be more completions to follow

3.2 A resident asked if we thought that 35 is a low number, Phill explained that we are still getting enquiries through. We haven't actively gone out and advertised this scheme as it is a voluntary process and people knew that this is the route we were going down. We also have Peter Alan onboard so homeowners will be able to speak to those agents and get financial advice and discuss the options to buy within the new scheme. We are only a few months into this scheme and the process does take a long time from start to finish and we will speak to people as the project develops

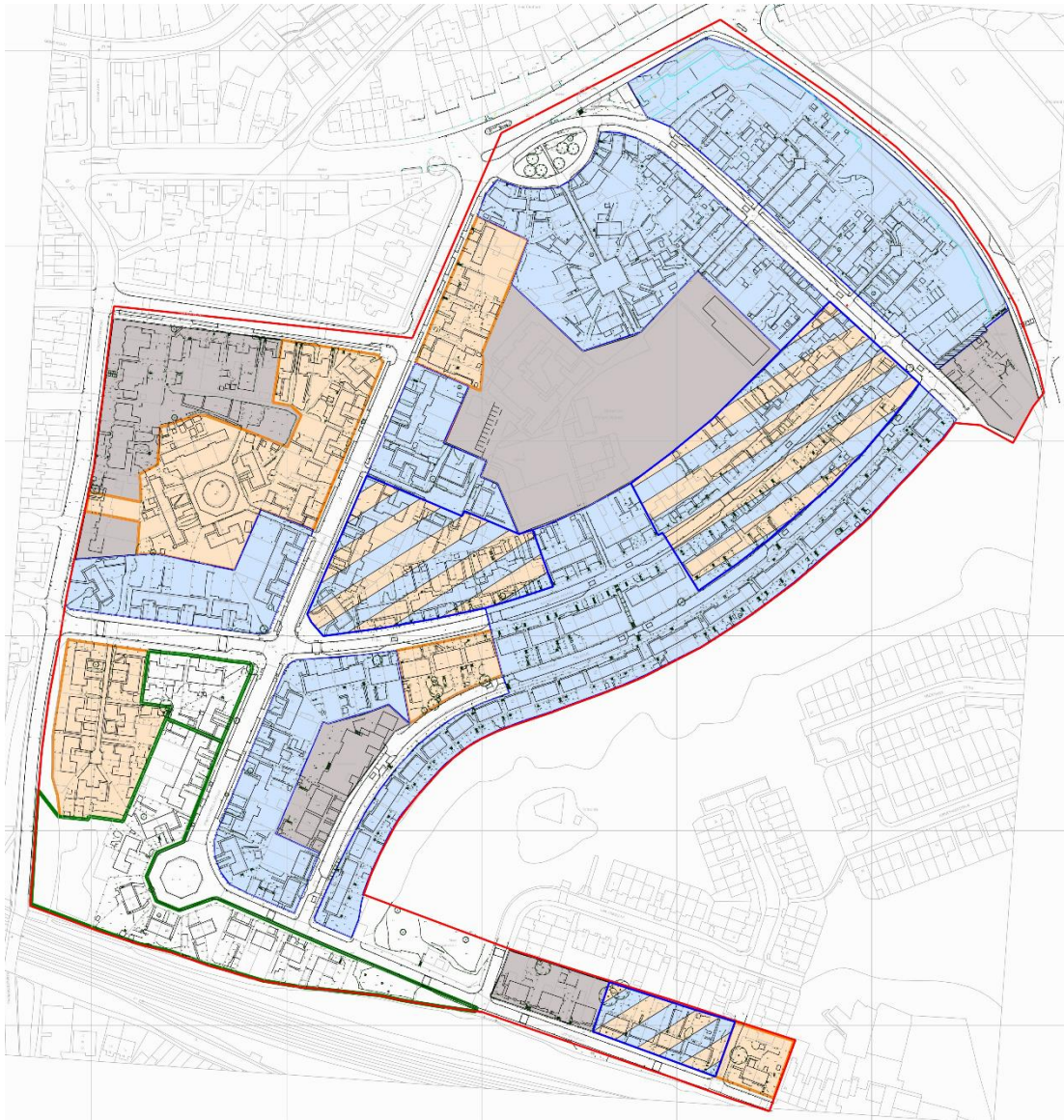
3.2 Cllr Deb Harvey stated that last month there were 14 with legal and this number has stayed the same. Phillip explained that we are in conversation with a number of homeowners, where they are awaiting a second valuer, waiting to appoint a solicitor. Valuations have gone out and we are waiting for homeowners to come back with their decision and others who are wanting to sell but want to sort out an onward purchase.

3.3 Cllr Deb Harvey asked that if we only have 35 homeowners that want to sell, what does that do for NCH plans, we working with Peter Alan and working up home ownership options that current homeowners will want to buy into but if we only buy a number of homes through the voluntary purchase scheme then we will need to re-look at our design options this also goes for if we do buy properties in a certain area then our plans could change from refurbishment to regeneration

4 Design Update

4.1 We have showed Acacia Avenue, Sycamore Avenue and Hawthorne Fosse as regeneration areas to date, we have also looked at areas for refurbishment.

4.2 Voluntary purchase scheme may push up the NCH ownership and this can move areas from refurbishment into regeneration areas. Please see map and key:



KEY:

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- Somerton Boundary

 - Areas that we are considering not including in our work

 - Areas that are likely to be refurbished

 - Areas that we are looking at for regeneration

 - Areas that we are reviewing for either refurbishment or regeneration

 - Areas that could be either refurbished or regeneration

Grey – these are areas where there are entirely homeowners and hearing feedback from the community we are looking to take these areas out of our plans altogether. This means we won't be looking to carry out regeneration or refurbishment and we will not be looking at commencing any new voluntary purchases.

Orange – these are areas which have a higher number of private owners and listening to feedback we understand these homeowners are not interested in being involved in a regeneration scheme. We are therefore looking at whether we can carry out refurbishment of our homes in these areas. Please be aware that having areas for refurbishment is dependent on us being able to identify an effective and affordable refurbishment solution to the problems we have identified in these properties and this is something we are still working on.

Blue – these are areas where due to the condition of homes, the proportion of homes owned by NCH and/ or the place making and amenity opportunities that could be identified for the wider community we are developing regeneration proposals. We are working to show these proposals to you at the event in September.

Blue/ Orange – these are areas that due to the voluntary purchase scheme NCH ownership of homes may be increasing and we are looking at regeneration options, although we are still also considering refurbishment.

White – there are areas we are still looking at and will become either regeneration or refurbishment areas.

4.3 Sycamore / Hawthorne Avenue design shows the possible location of older persons accommodation

4.4 Hawthorne Fosse shows apartments and houses, we have engaged with the school to look access to the school as it is their main vehicular access

4.5 Acacia Avenue plan shown previously has changed slightly from comments from the community and Newport City Council, older persons accommodation has moved from this site, increased amenity and green space for the flats, the shop has moved up towards Chepstow Road

4.6 Discussed in previous meetings about regeneration for Laburnum Drive, due to ownership, issues with damp and condensation from surveys undertaken, the street is isolated from the rest of the estate in terms of vehicular and pedestrian links, we are looking to increase pedestrian links across the estate. Looking opportunities to introduce public and green space along Laburnum Drive

4.7 Cllr Tim Harvey asked if we will be working with the police in relation to having steps into the school and maybe up to some streets. Andrew explained that all partners will be consulted with on the plans, Rachel went onto say that all our designs will go through a process called "Secure by Design" where a person in the police will give us feedback on our designs and will sign off once it meets all the regulations

4.8 Sycamore and Hawthorne Avenue, directly south of Hawthorne Fosse, which is being looked at for regeneration and refurbishment. There are currently 26 homes, if NCH buys homes in this area it will give NCH the majority ownership

4.9 This is the first time we have shown designs for this area, with a mixture of homes and flats, looking to locate flats potentially on the corner which will help to place emphasis on the junction of Sycamore Avenue and Hawthorne Avenue, creating green and pedestrian links to the school. Car parking provision is all off street, 30 new homes with 59 car parking spaces

4.10 A residents asked about car parking on other sites doesn't reflect a ratio of 2 parking spaces per 1 property as it does on this site. We have a transport consultant working on the project with us to ensure that we are meeting the requirements with regards to car parking. Cllr Tim Harvey agreed with the resident and stated that 2 parking spaces per property is needed.

4.11 Ashley Road which includes Somerton Crescent and Poplar Road, there are currently 40 existing homes, some cases of rising damp, penetrating damp and condensation. We received feedback from the consultation event in March to look at this area for regeneration. There are many opportunities this site brings, key location for the school and visibility from Chepstow Road, improve traffic around the school gates and the Hope Centre, potential for a play area to be provided in front of the Hope Centre. Also, there is potential for older person accommodation at the top of this scheme as there is good transport links on Chepstow Road

4.12 For this proposal there are approx. 50 new homes

4.13 Hawthorne Avenue, the lower end of the street, which backs onto the Pobl properties on Laburnum Drive, there are currently 20 existing homes. This proposed site will run from the corner of Sycamore / Hawthorne Avenue (at the cross road) and until to the turning into Laburnum Drive.

4.14 The proposal is approx.30 homes with a mixture of flats and houses. Flats on the corner plots which will help emphasis on the junction. Off road parking is designed within this scheme

4.15 Libeneth Road, 8 existing homes and will look to build 8 new home, this scheme is on the left-hand side of Libeneth as you are driving to the scrap yard. Off road parking is also proposed on this scheme

4.16 Throughout our design proposals we are looking at each scheme links up and making those links through existing and new green spaces, linking acacia avenue, green space in front of the Hope centre, at the top by the Tardis on Chepstow Road. access to the school from Laburnum Drive.

4.17 Create smaller meeting spaces so people can meet informally between properties, there will be high level of natural surveillance, soft landscaping.

4.18 Looking to create more pedestrian access around Somerton, to ensure there are safe pedestrian walk ways

4.19 We are looking strategically at what location is best to place different types of properties, form flat, houses, older persons accommodation

4.20 A resident raised that locating older persons accommodation on Sycamore /Hawthorne Avenue is a good place as the ground is flat and easy access to the main

road. Cllr Tim Harvey said that it might be an idea to contact Newport transport to find out if a bus stop could be located near to our older persons accommodation

4.21 Cllr Deb Harvey asked if older persons accommodation isn't situated within a scheme of family homes

4.22 Rachel explained that we can speak to our transport consultants about bus routes and bus stops. Cllr Deb Harvey said that she would raise this at a transport meeting

4.23 Andrew went onto discuss the refurbishment programme, a works specification has been drawn up and it is being reviewed by NCH and consultants. This will undergo a cost exercise

5 Communication

5.1 Community Consultation event – Thursday 29th September 3:00 – 7:00pm at the Hope Centre.

5.2 Information and invite will go out to resident's week commencing: 12th September

5.3 Rebecca explained that there will be a team of us hand delivering the invites instead of using Royal mail

6 Any other business

6.1 A resident asked if the recording of this meeting will be put up on our website. Rachel explained that this hasn't been agreed previously and it would need agreement from every member but it is something that we can look it – **NCH to look into this**

7 Next Meeting

Time and date of next meeting:

Wednesday 5th October: 17:30pm – Hybrid meeting