**Somerton Resident Steering Group meeting:**

**Wednesday 10 January 2024, 17.30**

**Attendees**

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

**Oxford Architects:** Terry Lai, Tony Mullins, Phillipa Courcoux

**Residents**: Janine Clarke, Linda Clarke, Gwyneth Mcloughlin Johnson, Danny Davis, Paul Jenkins, Carol Williams, Raqaia Mahmood

**Councillors**: Alex Pimm, Tim Harvey

Introduction

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

1 Actions from previous minutes

* 1. There were no actions from the previous meeting

2 Project Plan

2.1 Prav advised that our main focus is to get the Welsh Government submission in for the 1st / 2nd week of February

2.2 We will be looking to get a community consultation arranged for February

3 Design Update

Regeneration

3.1 Tony explained that we will be carrying out surveys for bats and reptiles as these surveys will take place after we submit the planning application, Newport City Council (NCC) are aware of this and these reports will be submitted while the planning application is being processed

3.2 We are having a water course survey carried out on Wednesday 17th January by Solum, this is to check where the water course comes into Somerton from the allotments on Aberthaw Road

3.3 The boundary for area 1 (Acacia Avenue) will now exclude the 1 side of Poplar Road, this will now be added to area 5

3.4 The public open space will be reduced and will contain a smaller more informal children’s play area. This revised design is being looked and developed by the Landscape Architect

3.5 We will be focusing on the planning application for Area 1 (Acacia Avenue) and will not be submitting an outline planning application for the rest of the phases at this time. This is to reduce the planning risk and is the quickest and most efficient way to start on Phase 1

3.6 As we have made changes to the designs following the pre-application comments received from NCC planning team a cost exercise will be undertaken by our Quantity Surveyor due to the changes that have been made to Phase 1

3.7 We have rotated 2 houses to ensure they have parking within the curtilage of the properties

3.8 There has been coordination between the Transport Consultant and NCC to add into the designs bicycle parking and motorcycle parking. They have also been looking at the road widths of the new road and to ensure we are meeting with the visibility requirements

3.9 There is a low volage cable that runs through the Acacia Avenue site, our Mechanical and Electrician is working to confirm the position of this cable and if it needs to be re-routed

3.10 The land that we intend to purchase from NCC will go to the Ministers briefing in January

3.11 Prav has a meeting with NCC to discuss the land purchase

3.12 Secure by design application has been formally submitted and are waiting for comments back on the application

3.13 Terry showed the flats on Chepstow Road and those that back onto Aberthaw Road to show the massing and possible design of the blocks on each elevation

3.14 Terry showed the flats next to the public open space, all elevations will have windows to address the public open space, Acacia Avenue and Sycamore Avenue

Refurbishment

3.15 Prav advised that we are working with our internal colleagues to understand the best solutions for the properties that are going to be refurbished and our Assets team are carrying out similar works in a property in Rogerstone, so this will be used as the pilot property and no pilot works will be carried out in Somerton

3.16 Prav asked if the group wanted to have a look at the property in Rogerstone to see the standard of works. Prav to arrange this – **NCH to action**

3.17 Prav explained that refurbishment works will be taking place on properties in Somerton

4 Communications

4.1 We will look to hold a community consultation event in February, which will focus on the designs and plans for Acacia Avenue (Area 1)

4.2 We are looking to submit The Welsh Government pre-planning submission in February

5 Any Other Business

5.1 A resident asked about parking and is there enough parking spaces for the properties we are providing. Prav explained that we have a Transport Consultant on board and he is working with NCC to ensure we are providing the correct parking spaces

5.2 Cllr Tim Harvey asked if the parking number have reduced. Terry explained that the numbers haven’t been reduced and are in line with current policy. Somerton is within a sustainable area as it is close to bus routes and the city centre, so you get points for sustainability and can reduce parking spaces, which we haven’t done and are providing car parking space above what is required by planning policy

5.3 Terry explained that we are providing car parking spaces within the curtilage of houses, there will be parking for flats and visitor parking

5.4 Cllr Tim Harvey asked about the widths of the roads. Terry explained that the main Acacia Avenue road will be staying the same and the new road will be 5.5 meters and will be a 2 way road and will be fully compliant as a residential road

5.5 Cllr Tim Harvey asked about the reduction in the public open space, Tony explained that while it has reduced, the properties in Poplar Road will now enter Phase 5, so more public open space it could be added into this phase

5.6 Tony explained that the play area was down as a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) but will now be designated as a Local Area for Play (LAP). A LEAP is an unsupervised area equipped for children of early school age. A LAP is a small area of open space specifically designated and primarily laid out for very young children to be able to play close to where they live

6 Next Meeting

Time and Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 7th February 17.30 - Hybrid Meeting