

## Serpentine Court Steering Group

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2019

### Minutes

Residents: Danielle Slaymaker (Chair), Sharon Jordan (Deputy Chair), Cassandra Elliott (Deputy Chair), Robyn Goodwin, Nadia Hardi, Joan Forsyth, Pauline Wright, Stacey Coleburt, Jan Power, Mariee Wymer (observer – Locals of the Lakes), John Pearce (observer)

Staff: Lizzie Brown (Milton Keynes Council), Kevin Farrell (Tpas), Samantha Goodwin (Tpas)

Apologies: Cllr Emily Darlington, Ronke Oludapo, Shannon McCaul, Mercy Zvenyika, Jean Wallace (observer), Clive Wallace (observer), Anne Bircham (Milton Keynes Council)

#### 1. **Welcome and introductions and ground rules**

Danielle the meeting with a welcome and introductions.

#### 2. **Minutes of 10th September 2019**

Agreed as a true record.

Matter Arising – HTA did not carry out a poll or produce a drawing of the drainage works for the exhibition on 28 September.

**Action (LB):** Lizzie to contact HTA and request the drawing for discussion at the November SCSG meeting.

Matter Arising – Resident Charter – see item 5.

Matter Arising – Local Lettings Policy – see item 3

Matter Arising – Study visit to Dollis Valley – see item 4

#### 3. **Project Update – Lizzie Brown (MKC)**

At the last Project Board meeting Sharon and Kevin raised several points for clarification and Lizzie agreed to attend the SCSG meeting to provide explanations:

##### Hybrid planning process and timeline

Lizzie explained that a hybrid planning application is an application where full planning permission is sought for certain elements of the plan, and outline planning permission is sought for other parts. The reason the Lakes planning application is asking for both full and outline planning, is that some elements of the plan are more complex and need more work. If MKC waited until it had enough detail to ask for full planning permission for the whole plan, it would delay the process even further. The reason that both elements are being presented together as one plan, at the same time, is because of the nature of the new housing, which will form the areas that Serpentine Court residents are rehoused in, meaning each part of the plan is linked to all other parts.

Lizzie confirmed that the latest date for the planning application is February 2020 and shared a detailed timeline (see appendix 1). SCSG members understand the reasons for the delay and pointed out that the deadline has slipped a couple of times. Some residents will be concerned about the delay. SCSG asked MKC to produce an update leaflet for all Serpentine Court residents explaining the reasons for the delay, as soon as possible. Lizzie agreed to consult SCSG over the content and design of the leaflet. Members of SCSG agreed to hand deliver it.

The planning application will have a 10-day call-in period, and any objections will have to be submitted by 14 February.

**Action (LB):** MKC to produce and leaflet and share with SCSG for proof reading and comments, and to keep SCSG updated on the planning process.

#### Project finances

On the visit to Dollis Valley, the resident chair of the local estate board had expressed surprise that MKC was not building each phase of the regeneration on a 2:1 ratio of 2 private home to 1 social home in order to fund the social homes. Jonathan Rees of HTA had explained the different approach being taken by MKC, and SCSG asked Lizzie to provide further explanation.

Lizzie explained that Milton Keynes has a different housing market to north London. Projects in London benefit from greater grant funding, and MKC will generate less profit from private homes than London councils. Unlike Dollis Valley, MKC does not need to sell private homes to make the Lakes regeneration work, financially.

#### Procurement of builders

MKC is committed to involving Lakes residents in the procurement of the builders of the new homes. Tpas has proposed a way of involving residents in scrutinising and scoring the builders' bids, on certain subjects such as resident liaison, health & safety and components. Tpas has experience of training residents to take part.

**Action LB:** MKC procurement team to meet with Tpas and DS to explore how residents can be meaningfully involved and discuss the timeframe.

#### Local Lettings Policy

One workshop has been held with SCSG to look at the LLP template. MKC has been working on 2 policies (Allocations and Decant) and they must be in place by February 2020. The policies will inform the Serpentine Court LLP.

**Action LB:** SCSG workshop to be organised as soon as the draft LLP is ready.

#### Rents and welfare benefits workshop

Lizzie acknowledged that SCSG had requested the workshop some time ago and apologised for the delay in setting it up. The Head of Finance at MKC has been modelling the rents and would like to be able to present accurate figures at the workshop. It should be possible to run the session at some point between November 2019 and January 2020.

4. Action LB: Organise workshop.

#### **Feedback on Lakes Consultation Event & Dollis Valley Study visit**

There was no further feedback on the Lakes consultation event, and SCSG has requested more details about the drainage and how MKC intends to consult the wider Lakes community over the proposals for a lake.

SCSG members who attended the Dollis Valley study visit ran through the key learning points (see appendix 2). Jan gave a photo presentation and a discussion was held with Lizzie present. SCSG will use the learning to guide them through their own project. Jan was thanked for taking a set of useful photos.

**Action (KF):** Send SCSG report to Lizzie and HTA

5. **Tpas – Independent Advisor report**

#### Residents Charter

Kevin took SCSG through the responses provided by MKC with Lizzie present. SCSG agreed all the changes provided by MKC and asked Lizzie to pursue an answer to item 24 which is still outstanding.

Kevin reported that the Leaseholder Group continues to meet regarding the Leaseholder section of the charter and is in ongoing negotiations with MKC.

**Action (KF):** Mark up the charter with the wording agreed by SCSG and send to LB.

**Action (LB):** Clarify MKC's position on item 24 – disturbance payments

6. **Any other business**

SCSG has been invited to the Regeneration Strategy Consultation, to be held at the Council Civic Chambers on Wednesday 6 November, 18.30 – 20.30. Consultation on the strategy will close on 19 November.

**Action (KF):** Organise a briefing for the November SCSG meeting.

7. **Date and times of future meetings**

Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> November - 6.30pm – 8.00pm at Spotlight

## **Appendix 1. Lakes Estate Planning Timeline 2019 / 2020**

<b>September</b>
Tree Survey required by HTA in order to progress detailed Warren Park proposals.
Commercial Space requirements required by HTA/ITP in order to progress outline servicing strategy, which acceptable transport strategy is contingent on. MKC to appoint expert and share information.
Draft information for next pre-application meeting to be prepared by design team.
HTA to issue proposed development site plans to ITP for review in advance of meeting with Phil Caves.
ITP review information issued by HTA for highways compliance, including refuse strategy.
Design team to finalise design proposals and prepare information for final resident consultation on 28/09.
ITP to arrange detailed meeting with MKC on highways matters.
MKC to confirm chosen energy strategy option.
Final resident consultation to be held prior to planning application submission. To share proposed house types, proposed environmental improvements, proposed infill site layouts, proposed Warren Park plans.
MKC to sign off RIBA Stage 2 report issued by design team.
<b>October</b>
Final info for pre-application meeting to be issued to MKC Planning (2 weeks ahead of meeting date).
Pre-application meeting with MKC Planning held to agree detailed highways/drainage items, outline servicing strategy, and extent of proposed inclusion of environmental improvements.
<b>November</b>
Formal written feedback from MKC, including full consultee comments following pre-application meeting.
Design team to finalise and issue design freeze drawings.
<b>December</b>
MKC and all relevant stakeholders (SCSG, Town Council, Estate Management) to review design freeze drawings.
MKC and stakeholders to confirm acceptability of proposed design freeze drawings.
Final resident exhibition to be held to share proposed planning application submission contents. Date TBC
Design team to prepare final planning application reports.
Final pre-application meeting held to agree final planning application submission and finalise S106 contributions
Design team and consultants to finalise Planning Application Submission
<b>February</b>
HTA Planning to review final planning application submission information prior to submission and finalise submission forms etc. MKC Final Internal sign-off required
Planning Application to be submitted 4 <sup>th</sup> February Cabinet
<b>March</b>
MKC Planners to obtain responses from internal and external consultees.
MKC to share internal consultee responses and resident comments with applicant
<b>April</b>

MKC planners to assess application
<b>May</b>
MKC Planners to share committee report
MKC planning committee to be held. Date TBC
S106 to be finalised and decision notice to be issued

## Serpentine Court Steering Group

### Dollis Valley Field Trip

#### Key Learning Points

#### Leaving existing homes

- Skip days were held so that residents could dispose of unwanted household items before they moved.
- Alternatively, residents could leave household items in their old home and pay a fee to have it removed.
- Security guards are on duty 24/7 to protect the blocks due for demolition, and guardian tenants have been installed at low rent to keep an eye on the blocks.
- As the blocks emptied, scavengers would enter and take away piping etc

#### Lettings policy

- Tenants were given 3 choices and the lettings process was staggered so that not every tenant in a block was made an offer at the same time. The tenants SCSG spoke with thought the process had worked well.

#### Appointing a developer and builder

- Residents were involved in the procurement of the developer/builder.

#### Leaseholders

- Leaseholders who chose to buy a new property under the Shared Ownership scheme do not have to pay the rent element.

#### The new homes

- The houses have been provided with sheds which make the area look neat and tidy.
- The bin store doors are opened using fobs, which helps to control who uses the store.
- The area had a lot of CCTV coverage and residents pay service charges for the service and cleaning, caretaking etc.
- The Dollis Valley residents reported that their energy bills had plummeted since they had moved into their new homes.
- There is one way in and out of the blocks and no fire escapes.

- The balconies were described by SCSG as 'spot on' for the size of the flat, and SCSG members would be happy with the same size in their new flats. There was plenty of room for tables and chairs.
- Some SCSG members felt that the kitchens in the 2-bed flats were quite small. The high ceilings were a good feature and the lighting was a mixture of spotlights and pendants.
- Across the estate, windows were large, and the blinds were vertical uniform, which made the area look neat. Residents were given a choice of 4 kitchen worktops and tiles.
- In phase one, the builders supplied built-in wardrobes. However, this service was abandoned in phase two as trying to meet residents' demands proved too complicated and time-consuming
- The blocks were only 3-floors, but they had lifts. The communal areas were small and easy to clean. The flooring was non-slip and durable.
- L&Q, the housing association which manages the estate does not allow tenants to have door mats, due to fire safety and trip hazard concerns.
- Overall, SCSG members really liked the building design: the brickwork was attractive; the windows looked stylish and the blocks had spacious balconies. The mix of building materials created a range of textures using metal, brick and paint colours.

#### The external environment and landscaping

- The new estate is well maintained and looked very clean and tidy.
- Although the landscaped play area looked attractive, SCSG members didn't think it looked practical.

#### Caretaking

- There is a mobile caretaking/cleaner team that is based off-site.

#### Community hub

- The hub included a café which seemed to be critical in making the place viable. SCSG members would like to see the same type of set-up on the Lakes. Although the hub was quite small the space could be used flexibly by adjusting the concertina doors.

#### Shops

- There were some small shop units on the estate and one unit was used as a bakery.