

Minutes of NAILSWORTH CLT BOARD Meeting

11am Wednesday 23 December 2015.

Present:

Board - Ian Potts, Liz Francis, Keith Angus, Mike Levett, Ian Crawley.

Aster Homes- Karl Hine, Wyn Bevan.

gcparchitects - Colin Powell.

Apologies: Wendy Gerard, Jonathan Duckworth, Stephen Robinson.

Purpose of Meeting . This special Board meeting was arranged to review the design of the Lawnside scheme in the context of Aster Homes concerns about the construction costs and the management and maintenance costs (m&m) and the 11th January 2016 CRTBO submission date.

1. Introduction by Aster.

1.1. Wyn is the Development Manager based at AH's Wells office. Last year he was responsible for the construction of 200 new homes for Aster, as part of Aster's annual 800 home development programme. Once CRTB consent is obtained, Wyn is responsible for delivering the construction project. Wyn outlined the recent process within Aster, whereby a Technical Panel which included the Regional Architect and the in-house QS, reviewed the design and suggested changes to reduce construction and m&m costs. For example, the removal of the bin store reduces the service charge by approx. £2 per home per week. The changes were incorporated in the proposal drafted by Karl to the Investment Panel who agreed to proceed with the project to CRTBO submission, at an estimated cost of £35K, subject to offsetting income via the locality Community Buildings Project grant. Wyn noted that the completed scheme would be managed and maintained from either Devises or Wells, each 90 minutes away. The project has a 40 year payback period and a detailed maintenance schedule assuming key dates for, e.g. bathroom and kitchen replacements.

1.2. Karl noted there was a new doubt about HCA grant, assumed to date at £42K per property for this project . This was due to the Government announcements about capital investment in new affordable homes and the uncertainty this engendered for Housing Associations as to what grant will be available . Karl stated that if HCA grant was reduced or no longer available AH would consider meeting the full cost of the scheme via cross-subsidy from homes for sale AH was building elsewhere.

2. Introduction by NCLT.

2.1. Ian P noted that in the context of the valuation of the site at £130K for freehold sale to a Housing Association by Ark Consultants on behalf of SDC and the increase in the number of homes from eight to ten proposed for the site, the Board was surprised at Aster's changes to reduce construction and m&m costs and the consequent design changes from the proposal that was the subject of consultation. The Board wished to have explained the revised financial model for the scheme and the sensitivity of the design changes Aster were seeking to the construction and m&m costs.

2.2. Ian P noted the Board were happy with the changes to the southern site, particularly the removal of the side path and the larger private gardens, as this reduced management issues and shared maintenance costs.

3. Discussion of Board's key concerns (not in order).

3.1. Footway on the north side. Karl noted that Aster wished to minimise the risk of not achieving the CRTBO consent, by accepting the GCC Highways advice. Ian P highlighted that the pedestrian desire line was best accommodated by a raised surface at the junction of Lawnside and Fieldways, enabling the footway to be removed, the block to be moved forward and savings to be made.

Action: Colin to redraw the scheme for comment and draft the submission to explain why the footway was not included. Agreed to keep open the option of re-introducing it if the Examiner considered it was required.

Action: Colin and Karl to meet Mark Sweet of GCC Highways asap to discuss his advice.

3.2. Off-street parking on the bend and the road surface for the hill out of Fieldways. Agreed removal of one off-street parking space on the bend on the north side and introduction of anti-skid surfacing. **Action: Colin.**

3.3. Dormers on northern block and increase in the roof height. Agreed would be retained with previous roof height. **Action: Colin.** Noted these could be the subject of a value engineering exercise, if the construction cost become critical.

3.4. One or two northern blocks? Karl noted that a single block enabled savings from the construction of a single wall instead of two (which also gave residents savings in heating costs) and from the movement of the building away from the house to the west and thereby eliminating the need for a retaining wall. Agreed to leave as single block.

3.5. External Finish. Ian P outlined the Board's desire for the scheme to look modern and not replicate the current housing in the immediate area. Having timber cladding could be part of achieving this. Wyn noted the concern of Aster Property, their maintenance arm, about the longevity of timber cladding; and that the cheapest finish was block with render. Liz noted that there had been no specific consultation response on timber cladding either way. Agreed external finish would be left for a condition from SDC, thereby leaving the decision for when there was greater clarity on other costs.

3.6. Access to outside space for the first floor tenants. Wyn noted that Aster followed the standard HCA approach of providing a rail over the bath for internal drying. Agreed not to have any external drying area for the upstairs tenants, as they could also choose ground or first floor, subject to availability.

3.7. Floorspace of the apartments. Wyn noted that whilst there had been a small reduction from 47.5 to 45.5 sq.m, this was still above the private sector average of 40 sq.m.

4. Next Steps on CRTBO submission. Action: Colin to provide full draft submission for NCLT Board comment. **Action: Ian C** to provide Colin with completed Parking Report, with or without SDC garage letting information, within one week.

5. Scheme Risks.

5.1. Wyn noted that angled roughly west/east below the site were the mains water pipe and two mains foul water pipes. These would need to be relocated.

6. Final Project Costs.

6.1. After discussion it was agreed that the costs would be determined by the outcome of each of the following key stages:

- * CRTBO Submission and Examiner's Recommendations.
- * Ground Conditions Study
- * Severn Trent Agreement on mains relocation, site drainage and consequent development levels.
- * Width and height of retaining walls required.
- * Outcome of tender process.
- * Outcome of construction, e.g. whether days lost to bad weather .

7. AOB

7.1. Locality Community Building Project Grant. Ian C confirmed the application had not yet been made. **Action:** Karl to provide details of further costs to be incurred before and after (in separate lists) March 2016 for which grant would be sought by the CLT. **Action Ian C** to make application.

7.2. Visits to recently completed Aster Homes developments. **Action:** Karl to arrange for the spring.

Author: Ian Crawley/NCLT Secretary/24th December 2015

Circulation: Those present; NCLT Board; SDC (Richard Hanman); NCLT website.

Signed Ian Potts Chair.