

Stimulus Package Social Housing Community Consultation Forum – Development of Land in Chapman, Kambah and Rivett Record of Discussion

Date: Tuesday 8 August 2009
Time: 7.00pm – 8.40pm
Location Weston Creek Community Centre

Attendees

David Collett - Housing and Community Services
Bronwen Overton-Clarke – ACT Stimulus Task Force
Theresa Fekete – Housing & Community Services.
Susan Conroy – Consultant
Peter Collins – Collins Caddaye Architects
Brendon Baxter – David Clark Architects
Marcus Graham – Colin Stewart Architects
Pam Rearins
Pat Wheeler
R Book
B Pritchard
L Childs
Sara Ollerenshaw
Matthew Obst
Beverley Keayes
Len Keyes
Reverend Donald
Syd & Gwenda West
Ron & Mary McLeon
George Rona
Murray Charlton
Peter Milne
Graeme & Janet Ireland
Denis & Dean Stubbs
Charmaine Savage
Felicity & Andrew McWilliam
Nozz Tregoning
Robyn Lewis
Chris & Josie Braddick
Tim Dalton
Tom & Evoul Ellis
Wally Conlon
Charlotte Hearder
Gaelene Pyke
Louise Frodyma
Chris & Warwick Costin
Carol Sharman

Barbara & Robin Brinton
Janice Paull
Simon & Natalie Robertson
Helen Wilson
Ann Olovson
Matilda Bonner-Zwar
Sue Wright
Margret West
Simon Hearden
Susan Chilvers

Background:

A short introduction was provided by David Collett:

- under the new Commonwealth Nation Building Stimulus Package, \$87M will be allocated for the construction of over 300 dwellings.
- the Stimulus Package is seeking to reduce homelessness and the public housing waiting list.
- The work is being undertaken in 2 stages. Stage 1 projects are already underway. Stage 2 includes proposals from community organisations, developers and the use of community facility land.
- Identification of the sites had been subject to discussions with the ACT Planning and Land Authority, Chief Minister's Department and the Department of Treasury.
- Canberra's population is ageing. There are in excess of 3000 public housing tenants that are 65 years or older. The intention is to encourage public housing tenants to move from existing homes into contemporary 2-bedroom adaptable homes that are designed to allow them to 'age in place'.
- the land at Chapman, Kambah and Rivett allows supportive housing which will be used for older public housing tenants.
- The homes will be energy efficient (6 star minimum), have water tanks (plumbed to the toilet/laundry) and include energy efficient appliances.

General questions and comments regarding the proposed developments:

- Is the decision made to forge ahead with these developments? What about resident consultation?

The land is not gazetted open space, it is community facilities land which allows supportive housing to be built on the site. It is important to consult with the community. Local knowledge can improve the design and layout of the units on the land.

- Will there be a manager?

The level of support provided to residents will be through Housing Managers and support officers. Other services will be brought into the complex to support the older tenants.

- What will the tenancy composition of the complexes be?

The residents of each complex will be aged 65 or over and be either current or eligible public housing tenants.

- Concerns were raised regarding the prior notification of the meeting and the inadequate size of venue.

Concerns were noted and apologies were given for the size of the meeting room. The interest in the meeting had not been anticipated and the venue was selected the venue because of its central location.

- Possible reduction in sale prices of private housing – will the government compensate for any losses?

Housing ACT has substantial holdings in some of the most established suburbs in Canberra such as Ainslie and Yarralumla, and that the assets had not negatively affected property valuations and sale prices of private properties. No question of compensation is proposed and the amenity of the new sites and the management of the adjoining green space is likely to increase the value of adjoining properties.

- It was noted that the majority of support services (such as medical services) are out of the area. Won't this negatively affect the tenants?

It was noted that the residential composition of these complexes will be of tenants who were able to live independently and are unlikely to require a high level of medical support.

- Is there a provision for a community bus?

At this time it is not possible to be specific about the services that will be put in place but tenants may, for example, be able to use the community buses that are organised through the regional community services.

- Right to appeal – is there no right to appeal any later than 10 days after notification?

This is correct. Third party appeals to ACAT are not permitted for Stage 2 Housing given the timeframe from the Commonwealth Government to deliver the housing before December 2010..

- Tim Dalton of the Weston Creek Community Council noted that his office would be happy to upload the proposed plans for the three sites on their website.

Mr Dalton's offer was appreciated and it was suggested that a link to the Housing and Community Services website www.dhcs.act.gov.au/supportivehousing also be added to the WCCC website.

- Two residents advised that they were very happy with the proposal, and that the development in Chapman would help remove a current eye sore (vandalised wall).

Rivett

Mr Collett advised that in 2008 a GHD study was undertaken which recommended:

- the two existing tenancies be retained and refurbished
- the remainder of the existing primary school buildings be demolished.
- The site to be used for residential aged care and supported accommodation.
- part of the block adjoining the primary school tenant and the existing car park may be subdivided and released for the purpose of a childcare centre.
- a landscape master plan for the former school site and adjoining open space be prepared.
- the mature trees be retained.

Mr Graham explained some of the features of the complex including that the complex is low density, the site context, orientation, analysis, permeable design, landscaping and green spaces.

The units including larger garage facilities and individual driveways at each unit to accommodate visitor parking. Of the 73 dwellings approximately 67 will be two-bedroom and 6 units three-bedroom, with the third bedroom situated in the attic. All units will be of single level design. The two access points to the complex were also identified.

Issues:

- How would access to the attic be gained considering the residents would be elderly?

The provision of an attic bedroom is mainly to house any in-house carers or family members who may chose to stay. Access to the attic bedroom will be via a stairwell which complies with the Australian Standards.

- Concerns were raised regarding the entry point to the west of the site (there are two entry points) which is close to a bus stop and traffic from Casuarina Street.

Traffic studies have been undertaken and they confirmed the access points. The engineering reports will be examined in detail.

- Shepherd Centre – the proposed development may be disruptive for the centre's users.

The current tenants are aware that the remainder of the site will be developed.

- Noah's Arc – where would this be situated at the conclusion of the proposed development?

There is currently construction work being undertaken on the west side of the site and this is where Noah's Ark will be situated.

- How would access be gained to the BBQ area in the nearby park? Where will people who attend the park be able to park their vehicles?

There will be pedestrian access through the complex and to the BBQ area. Parking will be situated on-street.

- Concerns were raised regarding parking at Noah's Ark, and that the suggested amount of parking spaces would not be sufficient to the centre's needs.

Residents concerns were noted and a commitment was given to investigate the possibility of increasing the number of parking spaces for employees and clients' of Noah's Ark.

- Concerns were also raised regarding sufficient parking for the residents and their visitors.

Each unit is allocated individual parking spaces and there is dedicated visitor car parking on the north of the complex and space around the internal roads that will provide adequate parking for the site in accordance with the parking guidelines imposed by the ACT Planning and Land Authority.

- Would the school hall factor into the design of the complex and surrounding area?

The Government had selected particular halls and community areas throughout the ACT and this hall was not one of those selected. The hall has been demolished.

- How would access to the shops be gained?

Using the current pedestrian areas, however connections to these maybe required and this will be investigated.

Kambah (Mount Neighbour)

Mr Collett advised that the GHD study in 2009 recommended low density, low rise supportive accommodation on the site.

Mr Baxter reported that the bottom part of this school is currently being developed as a public park. Some of the features of the complex including that

the development is low density, the site context, orientation, analysis, permeable design, landscaping and green spaces.

Access to the complex will be gained using the existing driveway to the site which would result in two single driveways coming off the main road. The site will be composed of 40 dwellings.

Issues:

- Open sewerage pipe to the east of the site (??) – Currently very smelly, has this been looked at?

This was not identified in the original site study and will be investigated.

- Preservation of large gum trees around the site, and maintenance of these trees.

Concerns were raised about the sustainability of the large gum trees on site and the safety to residents from falling branches and debris. This will also be investigated and significant tree lopping undertaken if required.

- Mr Baxter asked for suggestions about either relocating the basketball court or leaving it in its current position.

Any suggestions should be forwarded to peter.johns@act.gov.au.

- How will the units be comprised ?

The proposed composition of the complex will be 36 two-bedroom units and four three-bedroom units, with the third bedroom located in the attic.

- How will pedestrian access be gained throughout the complex?

There will be pedestrian paths throughout the complex.

Chapman

Mr Collins explained some of the features of the complex including that the complex is low density, the site context, orientation, analysis, permeable design, landscaping and green spaces.

Mr Collins noted that access to the complex will be gained off Streeton Drive. There are a number of additional constraints including regulated trees. As a result of this the complex will be low density comprising 28 two-bedroom units and 4 three-bedroom units, where the third bedroom would be positioned in the attic. All units will have a north facing courtyard.

Issues:

- What materials will be used to construct the units?

A variety of materials will be used – the intention is that these properties will blend in with other dwellings in the suburb.

- When would construction commence and how long will it take?

Construction is expected to commence prior to Christmas or shortly thereafter and will take approximately 9 to 10 months to complete.

- Provisions for community facilities such as communal vegetable gardens.

Noted. The inclusion of a community garden will be investigated.

- Concerns were raised regarding traffic congestion and modification of existing road.

Modifications to Streeton Drive have just recently been completed and the constant road works to the area bordering the roundabout is an embarrassment. Residents' concerns will be raised with the traffic engineers.

- Concerns were also raised regarding the provision of units for private aged tenants – if new units are required for this market where will they be built? There is limited affordable accommodation available for older people.

Noted. Other aged accommodation options are being considered. A site in Stirling was sold for residential aged care in December 2008 to the Amity Group, and Mirranjani at Weston has recently increased its numbers by 66 and will be available from early to mid-2010.

- Current access to the shops is unsafe, will this be looked at?

Yes, but the amount of off-site works that can be undertaken is limited.

- Will there be access to the complex for non-residents and will the complex be fenced?

The complex will not be fenced and non-residents will be able to walk freely through the complex.

- What sort of rubbish and waste management facilities will be provided?

A waste management plan is being developed. There will be sufficient road space for rubbish trucks to enter the site.

- Quires were raised regarding the signage on the site. As yet no sign has been erected.

A sign will be erected shortly.

- Is there any chance that the proposed make-up of the residents may change?

The complex is targeted at housing the elderly. DHCS is not able to guarantee this as a future government may change its position. The complex is being built for aged people and the site only allows for supportive housing. The use of the land for people other than public housing tenants will be considered at the larger sites.

- Concerns were noted regarding medical assistance and care for those living in the units; has this been taken into account?

It was noted that the residential composition of these complexes will be of tenants who were able to live independently and are unlikely to require a high level of medical support.

- Have provisions been made for water saving measures?

Yes. Rainwater tanks will be provided to each unit, as well as water harvesting at a site level.