



**Ashland Estate Completion – Residents meeting
Hosted by Simpson and Ashland Parish Council
Notes of meeting held on 13 September 2017 at 8.00p.m., Simpson Village Hall**

Speakers:

Julian Frost, Senior Specialist – Public Land, South East, Homes and Community Agency (HCA)

Charles Amies, Head of Public Sector Land, South East, Homes and Community Agency (HCA)

John Sullivan, Area Manager, Paul Newman New Homes (PNNH)

Cllr, David Pye, Chair of Simpson and Ashland Parish Council (SAPC)

14 residents from Ashland Estate attended.

Ward Councillor Peter McDonald attended.

Welcome and outline of meeting

David Pye, welcomed everyone and noted that the purpose of the meeting was for residents to hear about the plans for the completion of the Ashland estate. The disappointment at the delays in completion were noted and HCA and PNNH colleagues acknowledged that completion was overdue.

Each of the three organisations present gave a short set of opening remarks regarding their role in the completion of the estate.

David Pye - SAPC has no legal or statutory powers to ensure the completion of the Ashland Estate, but what the Parish Council has tried to do is to be a conduit for resident views and get those views heard by all the relevant agencies. The SAPC role has been to work with all these agencies and bring them together to get this development completed.

Julian Frost - explained that HCA is the government's housing delivery organisation, working with private sector developers to deliver housing. HCA remain the landowner of Ashland, where the land has not already been adopted or transferred to another agency or transferred to home owners. He noted that it was PNNH responsibility to complete the programme of works as approved by HCA/Milton Keynes Council (MKC). Julian recognised resident frustrations with the delays and that it was essential that the works are completed as soon as possible. Stated HCA will continue to work with PNNH, MKC, SAPC and all relevant agencies to get this estate finally complete and adopted. It was noted that HCA now have step-in-rights to ensure that the estate is completed as per the plans. Charles Amies added that he was attending in his capacity as Head of Public Land for the South East to hear the concerns of resident's first hand.

John Sullivan, Paul Newman New Homes (PNNH) – noted his frustration with the delays and is keen to get the estate completed by the end of December 2017. John circulated a map of the PNNH development and confirmed that a plan and timetable had been agreed with HCA/MKC. John provided the following update:

Phase 1 (Green area on the circulated map – see last page) – All complete.

Phase 2 (Pink area on the circulated map – see last page) - Due to be complete by end of October 2017. John Sullivan noted that there would be some disruption to access to

and from the estate at times as Phase 2 included raised ironworks (i.e the metal manholes and drains). Phase 2 activity was focused around Kelsale Chase, Lexham Road, Wetheringsett, Langham Road, Genesis Green and part of Shesley Avenue up to Genesis Green. In addition to the works to the roads, the street lighting will also be put in place in phase two and an order has been placed for this.

Phase 3 (Blue area on circulated map – see last page) – Work due to begin in late October 2017 and be completed by end of December 2017. Activity for phase 3 included work on Lanham Road, Lexham Road, Fenlandia leading into Yearlstone Square and Heywood Gate. PNNH are currently awaiting a price from L R Brown (a reputable local contractor) for the phase 3 works. The street lighting contractor will be commencing the survey for street lighting requirements week beginning 18 September 2017 for phase 3.

Once all the works are completed to each phase the adoption process (on phase by phase basis) will commence with snagging and quality checks being carried out by MKC with final adoption around September 2018.

Other key points:

Play areas – Two play areas in the development. PNNH are meeting with MKC week commencing 18 September to sign off the plans and once signed off L R Brown will complete this work. Langham Way play area will be the last to be completed as this is currently used as a storage area and also contains a mound of soil, which will either be used on the estate or taken off site.

John ended by stating there are legally binding agreements between PNNH and HCA backed by funding to get this work completed. HCA has a monitoring surveyor visiting site regularly to monitor progress and report back to HCA. As noted if there is any default on the agreement by PNNH, HCA can step in to ensure completion.

There followed a set of small group discussions and a question and answer session. The following were the key issues raised by residents:

- **Resources, financially and on the ground** – are there enough resources and funding to ensure the estate is finally completed?
- **Step-in-rights** – how will this work and if enacted will this cause a delay in the completion of the estate?
- **Funding** – has funding been guaranteed to ensure the full completion of this estate?
- **Timetable** – how confident is PNNH that they can complete on time, and how will residents be kept informed of progress and possible delays or issues?
- **Contractors working periods** – what are the official working start and end times for contractors and will residents be kept informed if out of hours working is required?
- **Landscaping of Open/Green Spaces** – where grass verges and planting are already in place, whose responsibility to maintain and where allowed to overgrow and get out of control, will these areas be tidied up and possibly be replanted before adoption? Query raised as to whose responsibility for landscaping along Lexham Road down to tree lines? Will the planters on Yearlstone Square be planted up?

- **Play areas** – what are the plans for these areas? Will they be play areas for children including equipment and will they be fenced in? When will the plans be finalised and will residents be informed of decision? The Play areas have been under discussion with MKC for over many years as there has been some debate as to whether they should include play equipment and now concerned that it sounds like the original plans including equipment now look to be implemented without resident involvement. Question raised as to some residents not wanting the play areas to have equipment provided.
- **Rubbish, excess materials, graffiti** – prior to completion of the work will all rubbish, excess material be removed, any damage put right and graffiti removed?
- **Lack of Footpaths on some roads in Ashland** – why is it that in some areas there are no footpaths along the road meaning pedestrians have to walk in the road?
- **Adoption process** – why does it take six to nine months to complete instead of being adopted once work has been completed?
- **Parking on streets** – concern raised that once roads have been completed and adopted will it be clear as to where cars can and cannot park?
- **Quality of work** – understand timetable is to complete by end of year but raised concerns that the quality and standard of work will not suffer as a consequence?
- **Excessive delay in finalising this estate** – concern was raised regarding the excessive time it has taken to complete this estate and why HCA allowed this to happen?

Response from HCA and PNNH:

Resources, financially and on the ground, Step in rights, Funding and timetable Julians changes

PNNH stated they are using L R Brown as contractor and this company was approved by HCA. There are legal contractual arrangements in place if issues arise and HCA have step-in-rights, which means should there be any issues with completion of the site and depending on the circumstances HCA will step in and appoint a contractor to deliver completion.

Funding is in place for completion and PNNH have given HCA assurances that will ensure the estate is completed.

HCA stated the only time the timeline may change is if there are issues with the sub-contractor which would then mean undertaking a tender process to appoint a new sub-contractor. However, both HCA and PNNH are committed to getting this development completed. The only other possible impacts on achieving the target end date could be to do with weather or a delay in materials being supplied.

PNNH will keep SAPC informed if any delays in order that residents can be kept up to date.

Contractors working times

PNNH said working day should be starting at 8am. Noted concern that some staff had been starting at 7am. However, it is a fine balance if PNNH and its contractors may at times start earlier if the work is to get completed and the estate is finished on time.

Landscaping of Open/Green Spaces/removal of rubbish, etc

PNNH confirmed that where the estate had not yet been adopted it was their responsibility to maintain. All areas will be restored and completed to a standard agreed with MKC. Rubbish will be removed and any excess materials, graffiti etc will be removed.

PNNH confirmed they will be speaking with the Parks Trust concerning the area from Lexham Road down to the Parks Trust tree lines to discuss maintenance responsibilities.

Play Areas

PNNH stated in 2011 were asked to redesign the play areas but recent discussions indicate that MKC wish to revert back to the original designs. PNNH understands concerns of residents but if changes are wanted to how these areas are completed, this needs to be discussed with MKC urgently. PNNH stated should note if there are to be any significant changes this could mean a delay in their completion. PNNH are not keen to see any further delays.

Lack of Footpaths on some roads in Ashland

This is part of a planning obligation.

Adoption process

HCA confirmed MKC's usual adoption period is twelve months but agreement had been made to reduce this to between six to nine months. The reason for this is that there has to be a period of bedding in and to check for any faults that require remedial work. At the end of that period if all is okay adoption will then take place. Until that time PNNH remain responsible for maintaining it.

HCA will keep SAPC informed of when the adoption process is completed.

Parking

PNNH confirmed once final surfacing completed it should be clear as to where cars should park.

Quality of work

Both HCA and PNNH confirmed the work has to be completed to a standard agreed with MKC or will not be signed off for adoption. HCA has a monitoring surveyor to check all works are completed in accordance with the agreed programme and MKC also have an inspector to ensure the work is completed to a standard for adoption.

Both PNNH and HCA understand residents frustrations and are working together to now achieve the completion timetable of year end.

David thanked the speakers and everyone for coming and their contribution and confirmed that SAPC will remain a conduit between residents and the agencies.

**Simpson and Ashland Parish Council (SAPC)
September 2017**



LEGEND

- Phase 1
- Phase 2
- Phase 3

Site Plan Paul Newman New Homes Ashlands

Shelsley Avenue