



18th June 2019 Public Meeting Q&A

Introduction

On 18th June 2019, The Chorlton Community Land Trust held a public meeting to launch the CLT and to debate the future of Ryebank Fields.

The event was advertised through the CLT website, facebook and twitter and around 1,800 leaflets were delivered to homes in the local area. The event had a capacity of 80 places, all of which were reserved, and 75 people attended on the night. Attendees included the three Chorlton Councillors.

Following a presentation from the Chair introducing the CLT, each of the 11 tables of guests were invited to write a list of questions to ask the CLT panel and in the time available each table was able to ask two questions.

Those questions that were written down on the night have been collated by subject matter and the CLT has provided an answer, to the best of our knowledge at the time of writing, for each category that seeks to address all points on that subject.

1. The Development Framework

- When will the Development Framework be out?
- How set in stone will the Development Framework be?
- Are you going to reconvene when the framework is published?
- What is the link contact point between CLT and MCC?

At the time of writing (3rd July 2019) the Development Framework has not been published. The responsibility for the production of the Development Framework was delegated to the Planning and Development team at MCC by the Council Executive in July 2018.

It is being produced by MMU (the landowner) for adoption by MCC and we understand that there

will be no further consultation on the content of the Framework. Once published we understand it will become a formal planning policy document, against which any planning applications for the site will be judged.

The CLT has not been involved in the production of the Development Framework, although we have been lobbying for greater community involvement in the development and adherence to our aims and vision. Our contact with MCC has primarily been through the Chorlton Councillors but we have also met with Jon Sawyer (Director of Housing) and Suzanne Richards (Executive Member for Housing) to promote our aims for the site.

The CLT will consider organising a members' meeting to discuss the framework and its implications once it is published and we will share a link to the Development Framework and post our thoughts on it on our website and social media for wider discussion.

2. Timescales

- What time frame is envisaged? Will the development be phased?
- What's the anticipated time frame and process?

The first step is for the council to publish the Development Framework. Thereafter, the landowner will market the site and select development partner who the CLT hope to work with. There will then be a process of site survey and design, followed by a planning application. If that application is successful, then the development could start soon thereafter. The length of the construction period will depend on the type of construction methods used; however, the CLT's preference is for modular construction, which significantly reduces the amount of time on-site.

3. Development

- This group has already spoken to 3 developers?
- Why would developers work with CCLT?
- Has CCLT planned what they would build?
- Will the RF development pay for the development on the 2 other sites?
- What about the peripheral properties on the site?
- How will the development impact on infrastructure issues i.e. schools and health?
- Who will select the H.A and what criteria will be used?
- How much is MCCs Urban (Zero Carbon) Goal (2038) likely to influence this development?

Our vision for Ryebank Fields is currently very broad, and the detail would only be developed in accordance with the Development Framework and working alongside the landowner and the chosen development partner. We would like to see a mix of sustainable affordable and open market homes, a co-housing development, a community building and shared open green spaces and we would work with all parties to try and achieve this.

The CLT has held meetings with three developers and a Housing Association with a view to informing them of the CLT's aspirations for the site in terms of affordable housing, sustainability and

community focused design. We have not entered into any agreement of any sort with any developer or housing association. The selection of the preferred developer is the responsibility of the landowner although we would like to influence their choice as much as possible. The housing association, if any is involved, will be likely to be selected by the landowner, and the developer; and hopefully, the CLT will be involved in that discussion.

We believe that the CLT offers some very important benefits to developers and landowners. Firstly, the CLT aims to gather and listen to views in the community and use this information to help develop plans that meet the needs of the community as far as possible. We would then hope to work with the developers to discuss the plans with the community and gather additional feedback, hopefully generating support for the plans. The CLT also has the ability to obtain grant or low-cost funding that commercial developers do not have access to, which makes it possible to pay for things that would otherwise not be delivered by a developer. Also, as the CLT would not take out any profit from developments, there would be more money left in the development pot to spend on affordability, build quality and sustainability.

A key feature of the CLT's ambitions for the site is to deliver homes with the highest possible environmental standards. As well as designing homes to need minimal heating, we would install low and zero carbon technologies as well as electric vehicle charging points. We believe the development should be an exemplar in terms of sustainable building and should lead the way towards Manchester achieving its zero carbon goals.

In terms of impact on local services, it is a requirement at the planning application stage for developers to consider their impact on local services. Where the local authority identifies a need to increase (e.g.) the number of school places or GP capacity because of the development, the developer can be made to pay a contribution that is secured through a Section 106 legal agreement. This would be discussed with MCC at the planning stage. We are not aware of any requirement for the development at Ryebank Field to pay for the development of other sites in Chorlton in this way.

4. The Landowner

- Can there be confirmation of the right of MMU to own and sell the land?
- What is the value of the site?
- Can pressure be placed on MMU to develop to reduced financial advantage.
- Are MMU going to gift the land to CLT?
- What criteria do MMU have for selling the land?
- Can you influence the choice of developer when bids are put forward?
- What will happen to ownership of the land?

We have not seen any deeds of ownership or anything to confirm MMU's ownership of or right to sell the land, but we have been working on the assumption that they are the legal owners.

MMU has not shared its valuation of the land but the notes of SRF's meeting with MCC stated, we believe, that they were told that it is expected to be between £8-10m. Land value is calculated on the basis of what is built on it. The calculations are based on the total sale value of the properties minus the design and all building costs, minus developer profit; this leaves a 'residual land value' which is the value of the land. So, the price paid to MMU will depend on these variable factors and is not a fixed number.

We are lobbying for MMU to put a greater emphasis on social value when considering bids for the land and not just go for the highest bidder. MMU will not be gifting the land to CCLT or anyone else as far as we are aware even though the land was gifted to them from MCC as part of the transfer of all the old Manchester Polytechnic assets and then the Incorporation of Universities (which some CLT members actively opposed). We understand that, as a charity, MMU now legally have to achieve 'Best Value' and we continue to argue strongly that should include a large percentage of social value, including environmental, social housing, age friendly and other issues of concern to the community. We do not know what MMU's criteria are for selling the land but if we have any say we would like it to include all these concerns.

5. Housing

- How intensive will be the housing?
- How many abodes?
- How many people will be housed there?
- How will the new houses be allocated?
- What would the criteria be for applicants for houses?
- Where will new residents come from?
- What type of affordable housing do you envisage?
- What range of properties are going to be built?
- Is there room for further discussion about quantities/ types of housing?
- How can we ensure that the development reflect all the community and is age friendly?
- What will be the proportion of building to green space?
- Who will be involved in deciding the infrastructure and layout?

We are awaiting the publication of the development framework which we anticipate will indicate the likely number of homes for which the council will give planning permission. We believe that this will be greater than the original 70 executive homes proposed in the first draft development framework but will now include a mix of open market and affordable homes. Our evidence for this comes from the notes we have seen on social media from a meeting with the Save Ryebank Fields group and the Council.

The Chorlton Community Led Housing group (as was), like many others, responded to the initial consultation in November 2017. We indicated that we would like to see a range of different types, sizes and tenures of homes and that we would like to have ongoing influence over types of affordable housing. There are a number of options for affordable housing at Ryebank Fields, which could include social rent, "affordable rent" and affordable home ownership but this is to be determined through discussions with key stakeholders and further informed by housing need survey. We would also like to see a cohousing development on the site for people aged over 50 and would include some shared community space. Further information on cohousing can be found on the following website: <https://cohousing.org.uk>

In response to the question about how homes will be allocated, owner occupied homes would be sold as usual on the open market. The CLT hope to have some control over affordable home ownership although this requires further detailed consideration. We would be looking at a local lettings policy for rented housing to be agreed in consultation with CLT members and following

discussions with a housing association, if involved, and the Council. Local lettings policies give flexibility in letting social housing to meet local needs and circumstances.

A developer would be involved in drawing up plans which would cover layout and infrastructure. We anticipate that the development framework will give some indication as to the amount of green space (our information that this would be the case comes again from published notes from a meeting between the Save Ryebank Fields group and the Council). The key point here is that we want to CLT to be in a position where it is influencing the above and representing views of community as far as possible. This will include the CLT pressing for the design and layout of the development to be age friendly.

6. Site Selection

- Why have CCLT accepted the view that building will take place?
- What proof do we have that the site will be built on?
- Why are they building on this land?
- Why this location?
- Why not consider other locations?
- Could this plan be implemented on one of the other Chorlton sites?
- Would you consider moving your plan to another site?
- How much brown field site do we have in this area? Why not build on another?
- Why are you not focusing on the other 2 sites and the old DSS building?
- When will this development be linked to other Chorlton developments?
- Why aren't you promoting your vision for the whole of the proposed Chorlton developments?
- Will the CLT be interested in part of the site if that's all the offer?
- Why not just build a few houses on Longford Rd (giving greedy MMU some profit) and save the rest for wildlife?

The CLT grew from the Chorlton Community Led housing group, which formed very soon after the November 2017 Consultation. The members of the initial group, and this remains largely the case, were mainly interested in Ryebank Fields. Also, the indication given at the time was that Ryebank Fields would be the first site to be developed.

There is no "proof" that the site will be built on, but it was made clear that MMU intended to sell the land for housing, as evidenced by MMU launching the November 2017 consultation event saying exactly that. This intention was endorsed by the Council Executive at a meeting in July 2018, where the Council made clear its intention to support the building of homes at Ryebank Fields and to formalise this through the production of the Development Framework. At that point it became clear that the site would be developed, and it therefore became a case of influencing the form and function of development rather than stopping it entirely.

The location has not been chosen by Chorlton CLT. We believe that the Development Framework will pave the way for the land to be built on and, by not being involved, the community would have much less of a say over what was built by a commercial property developer. It is not in our gift to decide

the extent of the site being offered for sale and, in this instance, the CLT is trying to directly influence what is built on the site rather than taking control of the site completely.

If we were to focus our efforts on other sites this would mean that the developer would have a free hand to build what they wanted on the site, within the parameters of the revised development framework. Manchester City Council would be highly unlikely to refuse planning permission for an application which complies with its framework. If planning permission was refused by the council, the developer would be likely to appeal, and we believe that a planning inspector would be likely to rule in favour of the developer, as the council's decision would have been taken contrary to its own planning policy. Therefore, the CLTs view is that it is better to push for the best possible development for the community as set out in our vision and aims rather than let developers pursue their own agenda in isolation.

We don't know if there will be any linkage with other Chorlton sites. It was indicated during the 2017 consultations that the section 106 contributions from the delivery of executive homes at Ryebank Fields might be used to support affordable housing at Chorlton baths. We hope that the requirement for affordable housing will be clarified in the Development Framework.

The CLT has a long-term ambition for all of the development sites in Chorlton to be considered collectively for the good of the community and that they are not simply sold off to individual developers and developed in isolation. We have had meetings with the GM Pension Fund over the precinct development and are meeting the Co-op over the funeral-care site. We are also monitoring activity on several other sites in Chorlton and would be happy to help develop strategies for other sites where we can be of assistance and have the support and resources to do so.

7. Funding

- When will investment funding be sourced for the Land Trust?
- How has funding been made available/ accessed?
- How will the development be funded?
- Who is funding you?
- How are CCLT proposing to be able to afford to buy the land?
- How does it have the ability to raise money to own land?

Currently the CLT has no funding except for a membership share capital (£1 shares) and some modest cash donations. We have had some initial adviser time paid for by The National CLT Network and GMCA, which also paid for the CLT's incorporation as a Community Benefit Society.

We have applied for a grant of £4,000 from 'Community Led Homes' for start-up costs and we hope to hear during July if we have been successful with our application.

In relation to purchasing the land, our assumption is that we would work with a developer who would purchase the land (or come to some other legal agreement with MMU as to payment for the site) and build the homes. As the developer would be taking on most of the risk through their financial investment, they will need 'first charge' over the land and therefore the CLT is not proposing to buy the land from MMU. We would explore the options for the CLT's involvement in the

management and long-term stewardship of some or all of the developed land with the key stakeholders.

There is the potential for a housing association to purchase some or all of the affordable homes from the developer who would be responsible for building them. A similar model could apply for cohousing, where the Chorlton Cohousing Company may buy their prospective homes from the developer. If the CLT raises sufficient investment, then it may also agree to purchase some of the affordable homes from the developer to offer accommodation to people in need of housing.

The role of the CLT could be to bring in other finance to the overall development to help ensure that more affordable, sustainable homes and other elements that benefit the community can be provided than would be the case if a developer was the only body involved. The benefit of bringing in funding through the CLT is that the CLT would not require a developer profit on any of this investment. This means that money that would otherwise be paid as developer profit can be spent on increasing the affordability and quality of homes.

The CLT is looking at three options here in relation to funding:

1. **Grant funding** from various sources including the Homes England Community Housing Fund and Community Led Homes fund.
2. **Loan finance from social investors** specialising in community businesses, such as the Community Developers Fund administered by GMCVO, which often come with additional non-repayable grant funding attached.
3. **Community shares** – CLT's can sell community shares in the society to invest in its projects, enabling the CLT to retain land and property in permanent community ownership.

Funding is available at multiple stages of the development process, from seed corn funding to cover start-up costs, funds to cover running costs, business planning and promotion of membership, funding to support the design and planning process and capital grants and loans to cover the costs of construction. We have identified a range of appropriate investment partners and funds that we hope to work with on the Ryebank Fields project.

8. Contamination

- When will the site be examined for contamination?
- What plans do you have to mitigate toxic landfill?
- How can it be economically viable to develop the land (on landfill) and create affordable homes?
- How would the site be cleaned below ground to be suitable for housing?

We understand this can be an expensive process and will probably only be done once there is a high degree of certainty of a development going ahead. In all probability, the developer who buys the land will carry out a series of surveys, including for possible landfill and contamination, after the land has been purchased and well in advance of finalising any development proposals. At that stage a technical proposal for addressing these issues would be worked up. In some cases, landfill can be excavated and removed, although this is unlikely as it is extremely expensive, or capped and

contained in various ways depending on the type, degree and extent of contamination. The development itself would, we understand, be designed so as to ensure structural stability and mitigate any potential risks and all works would be subject to local authority and Environment Agency oversight.

9. Drainage

- What are the plans to deal with the water table?
- What plans for drainage?
- What do you intend for Longford Brook?

The development in and of itself could not address a wider issue of a rising water table, if this is supported by the evidence. However, it can aim to minimise any further impacts on the water table and drainage systems. The issue of drainage and hydrology is a fundamental one and would be factored into the designs and costs of any development proposals, along with other risks such as contamination. The proposals can mitigate the impacts of this new development and avoid further exacerbating the situation through a number of measures which might include: conserving a significant area of greenspace and existing trees; planting more trees of appropriate species; maximising areas of permeable paving; reopening the culverted Longford Brook; incorporating sustainable drainage systems - potentially using a wetland system - to hold excess run off and enable it to percolate slowly into the ground rather than have further impacts on the main drainage system. All of these ideas will need to be tested by designers once full surveys have been carried out and will need the approval of bodies such as the Environment Agency.

10. Community Participation

- When will a community partnership be formed?
- At what stage might we be included in the consultation?
- How do you justify being representative of the community?
- How can we be sure that you represent the community as a whole?
- How does CCLT continue in the long term to represent the community?

The community has been and will continue to be included in consultation about Ryebank Fields and other future projects. We have held 4 public meetings over the last eighteen months and each time we have worked hard to ensure that we reach as many people as possible by leafletting and through social media. No one can ever say that they truly represent the views of the whole community and we have never made that claim. However, consultation and participation are a priority and we want to hear a range of views which will shape what we do in the future. In the long term we will remain committed to community involvement through surveys, meetings, events and social media and hope that we will enable people to have a voice in matters that affect them.

We are keen to work with other groups and have liaised with a range of local organisations. As for a Community Partnership, we are currently involved in early stage discussions with others over the

formation of an umbrella group that aims to bring together all of the various community groups in Chorlton so that community efforts can be co-ordinated to best effect.

11. Ecology

- What measures can the CLT come up with to mitigate loss of wildlife and habitat?
- Is there a possibility of turning part of Longford Park into a wildlife area to mitigate loss of land?
- What trees would you save? Tree tunnel?
- How do we protect wildlife and fauna?
- What are your plans to protect the Nico ditch, current trees, wildlife and local school children?
- Will there be joint work with the park?

Along with the vast majority of the community, the conservation – and, where possible, enhancement – of the ecological value of the site is a central aim for us. We believe that it is possible to develop the site for housing whilst safeguarding much of its existing ecological value. We aim to work with the eventual developer to ensure this is at the heart of any design proposals. We are not specialists and would aim to collaborate with ecologists, arboriculturalists, landscape architects and other consultants to achieve a net gain in vegetation and habitat diversity. We would aspire to achieve this as far as possible within the site itself but would also aim to work with The Friends of Longford Park and Trafford MBC to develop proposals for planting and management changes to adjacent areas of Longford Park to replace some of the lost elements of Ryebank Fields, such as the grasslands. In addition, specific proposals we would like to see, would include:

- Preserving the majority of the perimeter trees/woodland and in places adding to them through further planting;
- Identifying the precise location and distribution of younger, self-seeded trees of value within the body of the site and trying to work around as many as possible of these in developing a layout;
- Carefully transplanting other younger trees to unbuilt parts of the site and/or to Longford Park;
- Planting an appropriate range of mainly native new tree species in greenspaces and gardens within the proposals;
- Potentially create a central wetland area newly created ponds, reedbeds, and aquatic marginal plant species. This would require careful study of the ground conditions and hydrology but should be achievable and would add considerable ecological diversity to the site;
- Include other means of support for wildlife, wherever possible, such as bird and bat boxes, bee and insect habitat, green roofs and walls, etc.
- We would want to engage with archaeologists to support the protection of the Nico Ditch and protect it as a valuable historic feature

12. Traffic

- Traffic on Longford Rd is very heavy, do you think there is a better way to organise traffic flow?
- Traffic is a multi-faceted issue because of pollution and safety
- Could there be a construction plan that minimises pollution and traffic during construction?
- As the second exit from the site will be into Trafford, have you engaged with Trafford Council?
- Will there be a through road?
- Our councillors have promised to oppose any development which adds to traffic issues – how will you manage this?
- Where would access to the site be?
- There are issues with Longford Park and surrounding roads.
- How do you propose to alleviate traffic and congestion if more houses are built?
- How can the CLT ensure that building traffic is managed over the 2-3 years of the development?
- Why build in an area where there is already heavy traffic congestion?

We completely agree as a group that the issues of traffic must be addressed. However, this must be part of a much broader proposal for the wider neighbourhood which makes all streets in Chorlton and Firswood much safer and cleaner.

Some of the main traffic issues are related to St John's school and to a lesser extent Oswald Rd school, at school drop off and pick up times. These should be addressed now, regardless of any development on Ryebank Fields. As far as we understand, St John's school are already taking some measures in consultation with local Councillors. We would support work with schools, Walk/Ride Chorlton and others to address the problems and remove as much traffic as possible.

Equally, the traffic problems associated with events at Longford Park need to be addressed sooner rather than later by those who run the park and the events, and we would be happy to support this where we can.

In terms of development related traffic, we aspire to deliver a development which sets the highest possible standards for clean air and car reduction and are hopeful that the development can set a new benchmark for further such housing developments around the city.

Ideas include potential for:

- Diverse housing types and sizes to generate a mixed community which will reduce car ownership and also spread car movements across the day rather than concentrating them all at peak hours
- Use of home zones or car-free streets in parts of the site to minimise car use and incentivise use of cycling, walking, public transport, etc
- Use of a carpool for the community
- Integration of site within networks of cycle and walking routes
- Two access points into site to reduce impacts on roads at each end
- No direct through-route for cars between two ends of Ryebank Road
- Electric vehicle charging points to all properties
- Use of modular technologies to shorten build time and minimise site traffic

- Consideration (working with transport consultants, councillors and both Local Authorities) of one-way systems and residents parking permits

13. CLT Governance

- What legal form does the CLT take? Is it a charity?
- How does the CLT work and what is its structure?
- With a CLT who takes ownership of the land and makes decisions?
- Who is on the steering group and what is your experience?
- Are you going to properly elect a committee from your membership?
- Does the constitution state that no members can get work out of the development or one of the properties?

Chorlton CLT is registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 as a non-charitable Community Benefit Society, registration number: 8102. As such, Chorlton CLT has legally binding Objects and Rules but is not at present a charity. It is however a not for profit organisation.

A Community Benefit Society such as Chorlton CLT carries out its business for the benefit of the community. Any profit made by a Community Benefit Society must be used for the benefit of the community. Unlike a co-operative society, profits cannot be distributed to members of a Community Benefit Society.

If a Community Benefit Society is sold, converted, or amalgamated with another legal entity, its assets must continue to be used for the benefit of the community and must not be distributed to members. This lock on the assets of a Community Benefit Society can be reinforced by adopting the prescribed wording for a statutory asset lock, which Chorlton CLT has done.

Community Benefit Societies normally have members who hold shares and are accorded democratic rights on the basis of one-member-one-vote; this is true of Chorlton CLT. The Rules of Chorlton CLT make no reference to members being employed by the CLT or living in any affordable homes built by the CLT. However, members, including Board members, will not obtain preferential treatment in respect to allocation of homes or job opportunities.

Chorlton CLT can acquire land and property as a CBS. All CLTs act as long-term stewards of land and housing, with the aim of ensuring that any affordable housing remains so not just for now but for every future occupier.

The Chorlton CLT Board is currently made up of some of the members of Chorlton Community Led Housing Steering Group who became members of Chorlton CLT. Margaret Manning, Steve Goslyn and Chris Peacock were the founding Board members of Chorlton CLT. At a Chorlton Community Led Housing Steering Group meeting on 28 May, a further six members of Chorlton CLT were elected to the Board. They are Dominic Stanger, Steve Landamore, Simon Hooton, Helen Buckle, Sian Richards and Eddy Fox. The board members between them have a wide range of skills and experience in working in or with community organisations, urban design, planning, community engagement,

housing, environment, landscape architecture, cohousing, surveying, carbon reduction, mediation and dispute resolution, social impact, IT and other areas. The current Board will serve until the first AGM, at which point some/all of the current Board will stand down and may choose to stand for election again.

14. Membership

- What does it mean to be a member of the CCLT? Voting rights? Like a friendly society?
- How do you join the CLT?
- How many members do you have?
- What other groups can be involved in the process?

The constituted Chorlton Community Led Housing Group took steps early in 2019 to incorporate and become a Community Benefit Society operating as a Community Land Trust. The first members of Chorlton CLT were drawn from the Chorlton Community Led Housing Group, but membership is growing steadily from people who support the Vision and Aims of the CLT. As of 2 July 2019 Chorlton CLT had 51 members.

Anyone aged 18 and over who supports the Vision and Aims of Chorlton CLT can apply to become a member of the Community Benefit Society by completing a paper or electronic application form and purchasing a £1 membership share. Members must abide by the Chorlton CLT Member Code of Conduct.

When applications for membership have been approved by the Board in accordance with the Membership Policy, the member's name and address is recorded in the CLT's Register of members. Each member has one vote at General Meetings, including the election of Board members at the Annual General Meeting. Members are encouraged to take an active part in the work of the CLT. This might be through joining a working group or helping out at community events, for instance.

A member can be the nominee of an unincorporated body, in which case the CLT's register will contain the name and address of both the member and the unincorporated body. A corporate body can also be a member and can appoint an individual to exercise its rights. The name of the appointee will be given to the CLT's membership secretary in writing.

15. Community Land Trusts

- How much do we know about the lifespan of other CLT developments?

Information on the history of CLTs and several case studies can be found here:

<http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/what-is-a-clt>