

Placemaking Strategy for Clevedon

Castlewood Design Workshop

Wednesday, 13th April 2022

Aims of the workshop – To explore the potential of the Castlewood Site in Clevedon taking on board what has been set out through the Two Towns vision and strategy workshops and considering options for refurbishment and redevelopment.

The questions/challenges considered were:

1. Reuse of existing building or new build accommodation – how can we meet zero carbon ambitions?
2. A landscape led development – how can we ensure the site is not dominated by cars?
3. Access to the Land Yeo – should/could this be made fully accessible to the public?
4. Provision of commercial space on the site – how much and what type?
5. Who is this new housing for?

General points about the site opportunities:

- A gateway to Clevedon – contributing to the sense of arrival in the town.
 - Opportunity to create something adventurous.
 - Potential to improve street presence to the north and address the river to the south.
 - Potential to 'open up' the site and improve walking and cycling routes to the river and on into town/out to the countryside.
 - Important to keep outside green space in the development, such that people have access to greenery on their doorstep.
 - Consider impact on school provision and routes to school.
 - Consider predicted flood depth. If shallow and could probably be easily overcome with some small scale raising of the finished floor levels. If needed use the ground floor for workspaces or parking.
 - Considering energy efficiency, and the problem of the costs of the site currently would like to see energy efficiency and green energy where possible used in development. Could the site be designed to generate its own energy – e.g., ground source heat pumps?
 - Keen to see development reflecting the architecture and character of Clevedon, although not necessarily the nearby developments.
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- Preference in the group for using natural materials in the build (e.g., stone). The group suggested that Golden Acres might be a good reference point for any development, although they discussed that Castlewood could be bolder.
 - Whether old or new, the new development should be architect-led and be well built, with good quality materials.
 - Consider further public engagement (rather than stakeholder) on the options.

1. Reuse of existing building or new build accommodation – how can we meet zero carbon ambitions?

Two Options were explored:

Retaining/adapting the existing Building

- Broadly supportive of the idea of re-use from a net carbon perspective but concerns about energy efficiency of existing building.
- Need to better understand the full carbon impacts of replacement/reuse of the existing building.
- Need to balance the reduced CO2 impacts of retaining the building against the cost of adaptation and future running costs.
- Consensus on the existing building being ‘bland’ in appearance.
- Scheme proposals are constrained by the existing building.

Replacing the existing building

- Need to understand the CO2 (embodied carbon) cost of demolition compared the CO2 savings of providing a more energy efficient new building.
 - New homes could be more energy efficient (Passivhaus) making up for the loss of the building.
 - Better flexibility of layout in new build option.
- o More flexibility in range of housing types allows blend of different residents.
 - o More subtle if not the original large building – more attractive.
 - o Opportunity to change geometry of site and to open more to the river and Mendips.
 - Apartments were accepted, but with the replace option explore/suggest that lower density / more spaced out might feel more in keeping with the local area.

2. A landscape led development – how can we ensure the site is not dominated by cars?

- The **river front aspect** should be used more.
 - The landscape to include **public gardens** that are easy to maintain.
 - With **well-integrated play/games area** – table tennis table etc for residents living in apartments and adjacent neighbourhood.
 - Also, social spaces **somewhere to enjoy outdoor space with neighbours** e.g., picnic area
 - SUDS/flood mitigation - integrate landscaping **swales and raingardens that are multi-functional.**
 - Remove cypress trees that overshadow the site.
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- A balanced approach to parking that acknowledges the need for cars in a town with poor public transport links, and action on the climate emergency. Note younger demographic may own cars less in future.
 - Look to minimise parking – 1 space per household – as part of integrated strategy as site shouldn't be overly car dominated.
 - Consider **bus integration** or hub, **access to electric charging and car clubs**. Car club an opportunity as none in Clevedon yet.

3. Access to the Land Yeo – should/could this be made fully accessible to the public?

- **Public access considered to be a good thing**; ecologically, socially, and commercially. May require bridge or path through trees to the west to give access to riverside.
- Include a **cycle track and cycle hub** meeting places for cyclists and access to ebikes – site is near Bristol cycle routes.

4. Provision of commercial space on the site – how much and what type?

- Why are continued commercial uses not considered for the main use of the site? Is there no demand for this? Has the option of keeping the building for ongoing commercial use been properly considered?
- Could the site re-provide for the current tenants and for small start-ups?
- Is residential use here not counter to the local plan?
- While it might be unlikely that an employer of sufficient scale could take the site given workplace trends, though they would like to see a viability appraisal.
- Should have some commercial there, the sort of managed workspace model for **small/micro businesses** (the commercial managed workspace in Clevedon is full up) provides amenities for residents.
- Could the proposal include a hotel?
- Could act as a transfer point or gateway to Clevedon – although this would use land needed for public open space.
- Opportunity to include the Mazda site.
- Jack Hazeldine Foundation interested in potential opportunities for community hubs in Clevedon.

5. Who is this new housing for?

- Generally housing considered to be a good use of the site.
 - This could provide some much needed smaller/lower cost housing and help ease housing pressures, especially on young people.
 - Can also address need for affordable/low-cost starter and family homes (good site close to schools).
 - Concern that if left entirely to a developer this might be replaced with higher cost homes.
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- Also concern about 100% affordable housing not being diverse enough with many people in need not eligible for waiting lists.
 - Consider routes to meet needs of young people with affordable/ low-cost rented housing or rent to buy – team with landlord like Legal and General or deliver part as co-housing.

Attendees:

Jason Ramlugon	AHMM Architects
Juliet Bidgood	Design West
Anna Rutherford	Design West
Daniel Widdowson	Design West
Jane Faram	Design West
Rachel Lewis	Heritage and Design Manager, NSC
Jenny Ford	Head of Placemaking and Development, NSC
Luke Johnson	Graduate Trainee, North Somerset
Olivia Stephens	Support Officer, NSC
Cllr Geoffrey Richardson	Councillor, North Somerset
Cllr Hannah Young	Clevedon Town Council
Tom Vaughan	Clevedon BID
John Tranter	Clevedon Civic Society
Petra Mansour	Curzon Cinema and Clevedon Skatepark
Cllr Barry Cherokoff	Clevedon Town Council
Cllr Judith West	Clevedon Town Council
Phil Curme	Clevedon Pier & Heritage Trust

Maureen Ni Fiann

Clevedon Live Music

Apologies:

Cllr Caroline Cherry

Clevedon Town Council

Cllr Richard Westwood

Clevedon Town Council

Ruth Gofton

Sustainable Clevedon

Suzannah Shaw

Curzon Cinema

Cormac Farrelly

AHMM Architects

Nicki Winstone

Jack Hazeldine Foundation
