

Lache Vision: Public Meeting 19th October 2022

Review Process & Next Steps October 2022

Presentation by
Helen Pakpahan
Economic Growth Programme Manager (Borough Wide)
Cheshire West and Chester Council

1

How did the Draft Vision emerge? October 2021- April 2022

Initial first phase (October and December 2021) – 454 people engaged (320 children)

- A 6- week online survey with press & social media promotion
- Pop-up open event at Lache roundabout with press & social media promotion
- School workshops x2
- Youth club event
- Stakeholder workshops (Key organisations from public, voluntary and housing sector including NHS & Schools who work directly in Lache)

Second phase (February and March 2022)

- Event to present the draft findings of the initial stage (71 people attended)
- Displays at Lache Library and Lache Community centre (with online feedback) – 3 weeks

Publication of the draft consultant's report (April 2022) with their suggested recommendations (26 projects)

2

What happened after Consultant's report published?

Third Phase of Consultation (May-October 2022) – Review of Consultants suggestions

- Published on line – so everyone can read and give feedback <http://chester.westcheshiregrowth.co.uk/projects/lache-masterplan/>
- Leaflet circulated to residents (July 22) to raise awareness of Consultants report – 3000 distributed
- Series of meetings with Stakeholders, local residents and other partners to discuss their views and understand viability and deliverability of consultants suggestions (August- September 22)
- Public meeting to share findings from this phase

What happens next?

Share the overarching findings – in a range of methods - so that as many local people as possible can be engaged - with the purpose of ensuring that identified way forward is supported by residents, local businesses and people who work locally

Subject to this – undertake more detailed investigation into each key project taken forward – this would include consultation at every step

Look for funding to help deliver aspirations

3

So what did People say about the Consultant's report?

- Some ward residents, particularly in the Saltney area felt that insufficient engagement had taken place at first stage and would like to have chance to put forward their ideas to make the ward a better place;
- Some of the suggestions for new housing sites (if land became vacant), didn't take account of need to retain sites a space for local businesses – which creates local employment
- Two of the proposals suggested housing to fund ecological improvements – but hadn't fully considered cost, impact on nature and local views on importance of green spaces
- Some of the ideas for roads or alleys, if funded, could be expensive to deliver and maintain – and could deteriorate quickly
- Consultant's suggestions for over twenty-six separate schemes, would be difficult to deliver- need to focus on key projects which the community feel will make the biggest impact to their area

Do you agree with these findings? Anything you want to add?

4

What is the emerging way forward?

From the messages we have heard from residents and stakeholders – our direction of travel is:

- To focus on four priority projects – which will all need further development, consultation and refinement as they develop
- To drop/not progress with some of the consultants suggestions
- To ask organisations/teams responsible to taking forward of some of smaller ideas as part of their normal work
- Further investigations/consultation on one or two other suggestions next year – and come back to public meeting/steering group to consider in 2023.

5

Ask of the you today?

Do you think that the 4 projects identified as priorities for more investigation, reflect your view on what will make the biggest difference for Lache Ward?

If you are happy with these suggested priorities, Do you think the next steps identified are the right ones?
Anything else you would like to add or suggest related to these 4 emerging projects?

Is there anything else you would like to see?

How do you think we should engage with local residents on this emerging way forward?

This is just the first step in talking to residents about this emerging way forward – we plan to display and send it out after the meeting – so you will have time to think about it – and talk to friends, neighbours and colleagues

We welcome any feedback on on-going basis – you aren't missing having your say if you need a bit more time

6

The Emerging Way Forward....



7

Lache Ward : Proposed Priority Project 1

Lache Park (Sycamore Drive)

What: Proposal for new play equipment, 'learn to cycle route' and 'friendly benches' in revised layout.

Why: Strong support from consultation for facilities for young people; Current facilities tired, poor surfacing deters usage & no accessible equipment for children with disabilities
Potential to leverage funding to support delivery (perhaps in 2-phases)

Next Steps: Develop a costed initial sketch plan – which can then be shared for review/community comment– and appropriate funding opportunities sought
Alongside this consider a 'crowd funding' campaign to buy one or two pieces of equipment potentially led by Friends of Lache

Question:

1. Do you think this should be a priority for Lache ward?
2. Do you have any comments on idea?
3. Do you have any comments or suggestions on next steps?

8

Lache Ward : Proposed Priority Project 2

The Baccies/LAPA field nature park

What: Proposal for re-development of 'The Baccies' as a nature-led amenity with improved loop pathway and enhancement to biodiversity. Would involve some clearing of self-seeded shrubs to enhance visibility (and perceptions of safety). Project could also consider some kind of light touch BMX route subject to further consultation.

The project would not take forward Consultants suggestion of co-development with 50 homes – the housing suggestion would be completely dropped.

Why:

- Support from consultation for nature led proposal and strong opposition to housing;
- Level of contamination – means that housing would be limited to area which is most ecologically rich and with least accessible access route – so no benefit to ecology from any funding which might arise from housing.
- Enhancements to biodiversity (clearing of self-seeded shrubs) would support continued presence of some rare species
- Access to green space amenity seen as a valuable way of supporting local residents well-being.
- There is potential to find funding directly to support both delivery and maintenance of a wildlife led proposal – which didn't exist a couple of years ago

9

Lache Ward: Proposed Project 2

The Baccies/LAPA field nature park

Next Steps:

1. Develop a biodiversity led sketch plan together with community representatives – to capture ideas and understand appropriate cost
2. Share initial sketch plan for additional community consultation especially with adjacent householders and reviewed against funding opportunities.
3. Undertake an in-depth biodiversity survey in May/June 2023)
4. Refine proposals following consultation and results of biodiversity plan
5. Look for funding for delivery

Question:

1. Do you think this should be a priority for Lache ward?
2. Do you have any comments on idea?
3. Do you have any comments or suggestions on next steps?

10

Lache Ward: Proposed Priority Project 3

Active travel & safer streets: Poplar Road, Cliveden Road and Hawthorn Road)

What: Traffic Modelling to consider

- Ways that route from Cliveden Road (Downfield Road, Hawthorn Road, Poplar Road East) could be made safer for pedestrians and help to reduce congestion especially at school times
- Consider re-moving roundabout at Poplar place to improve appearance and pedestrian safety
- Consider other ways cycle safety could be improved/linked to wider area and reduce rat-runs.

The project would not take forward Consultants suggestion for coloured surfacing, parking bays on Hawthorn Road or introduction of ad hoc street furniture as they deteriorate quickly and require high levels of maintenance.

Why:

- Consultation identified dominance of cars, congestion and safety fears which deter residents from walking or cycling to key destinations including schools, health centre and community centre, park;
- People thought Poplar place roundabout is ugly and austere –could be improved with soft landscaping but with some retention of short stay parking to support shops;
- Wider proposals to improve bus routes and cycle use across Chester city – need to include Lache ward – and this could help leverage funding

11

Lache Ward : Proposed Project 3

Active travel & safer streets: Poplar Road, Cliveden Road and Hawthorn Road)

Next Steps:

Secure funding to do some traffic modelling which could identify options to address the issues of congestion and improve pedestrian safety- This would include engagement with householders and property owners in immediate vicinity to understand issues and impact.

Subject to above – consider development of design options for a Highways compliant scheme

– which funding can then be sought towards

Question:

1. Do you agree that we ask Highways to look at options to improve pedestrian and cycle safety and reduce congestion as a first step?
2. Do you have any comments on idea?

12

Lache Ward : Proposed Priority Project 4

Lache Community Centre Refurbishment

What: The proposal would be to investigate design options to refurbish the community centre – as well as look at how it links to car parking and walking routes from adjacent schools, Health & Church

This would include considering how new uses could be perhaps brought into the centre – to share costs of running it – as well as environmental improvements which would make building more energy efficient.

The project would not take forward Consultants suggestion of demolition of Health and Community centre and re-building with housing on upper floors as this would block access/visibility of St Claire's and at present not priority for co-investment by NHS.

Why:

- Consultation identified centre as a valued place for the community (including young people) but need for investment to enhance facilities, thermal/energy efficiency, and layout – especially pedestrian linkages between public buildings.
- The existing community centre is not financially sustainable and there is a clear challenge that additional usage to try to reduce deficit is likely exacerbate Highway congestion/parking demand - so sub-letting some space in revised layout could both bring in new services but also additional income to subsidise centre over long term

13

Lache Ward: Proposed Project 4

Why (cond)

- Re-modelling and refurbishment of the centre would be more cost effective and better for the environment than demolish/new build – and improving the thermal efficiency of the building will reduce running costs.

Next Steps:

1. Car park usage survey (underway)
2. Carbon/energy audit
3. Seek funding to look at layout and design, including how centre could be used in the future and layout options and consultation with adjacent primary schools, Church, NHS, and Highways as initial step.
4. Further Community consultation on findings of above

Question:

1. Do you agree with a refurbishment led way forward?
2. Do you have any preferences on what kind of additional uses could be in the centre?
3. Any other comments

14

Further investigation in 2023

Saltney Sidings

What: Further site investigation into ecology and development options is undertaken with no presumption of development.

Why:

- The site was previously proposed for development (western relief road) but no longer required for this reason so could be considered for a range of future uses – from retirement or mixed market/social housing, allotments, small business units or a green corridor or left as current (a ‘no-nothing’ scenario).
- While new development might not be most popular choice – the need for need for housing – particularly for single/older people was identified in consultation (and this can free up family sized homes for younger families)
- Need to undertake ecology assessment as development of any kind may not be financially viable

15

Further investigation in 2023

Next Steps:

1. Undertake a Biodiversity assessment in May/June 2023, which would benchmark current level of ecology on disused site and inform viability of any development;
2. Review constraints and opportunities in light of biodiversity report
3. Undertake further consultation on options later in 2023 once these have been considered

Library – The Consultants suggested relocation of library – but there hasn’t been sufficient consultation with users or assessment of how this could work in single site.

Question:

1. Do you think its right to keep an open mind to development/no development on Saltney Sidings until further investigation completed?
2. Do you have any comments on options
3. Any other comments

16

Projects progressed by CW&C or Organisations

The vision document suggested a number of smaller projects e.g. finding a tenant for an empty shop; letting Hawthorn House to interested party; and wildflower planting on small verges/central grassed areas as part of phase 2 delivery of wildlife strategy, development of allotment site - suggest that these are led by organisations/teams as part of normal work

Lache Loops - no real need for physical infrastructure as strong community awareness of pathways - although some consideration could be given to small distance markers or some 'distance-marker' mapping, as a means of promoting walking for health.

Questions

Are you happy with approach to focus on 4 identified projects and ask Organisations or Council teams responsible for these to lead on these smaller ideas?

Any other comments or suggestions?

17

Projects not to be taken forward

- Proposals for small housing sites on privately owned land occupied by businesses – clearly if they were to become vacant, can look at all opportunities as they arise – but maintaining business and jobs is a priority to help address low income levels in some parts of the ward
- There are organisations interested in taking the tenancy of both Little Laches & Hawthorn House – which would provide services and jobs – so proposed to retain for these uses and only consider residential options as a last option
- Additional car parking bays, surfacing on St Mark's road - often deteriorates quickly and limited potential for traffic calming measures
- Housing proposals for Baccies/LAPA field

18

The suggested proposals reflect what local residents and stakeholders have told us over the last few months - Do they reflect your views ?

Anything taken forward would be subject to additional consultation at every step – would you like to be involved in any project?

Over the next few weeks we propose to ask residents if they like this emerging way forward? – how best to do you think we should do this?

Send Feedback comments to

chesterlocality@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk