

University of Cambridge

West Cambridge Community Group

Minutes of the Meeting

15 November 2017 in the Hauser Forum Seminar Room on the West Cambridge site.

Attendees:

Harvey Bibby, Lansdowne Road resident (Chair)
Matthew Danish, Cambridge Cycling Campaign (part)
Dai Davies, North Newnham Residents' Association
Henry Day, Conduit Head Road
John Evans, Cambridge City Council
Humphrey Gleave, North Newnham Residents' Association
Eddie Powell, Clerk Maxwell Road Residents' Association
Hugh Purser, Clerk Maxwell Road Residents' Association
Karen Wiemer, Madingley Road Residents' Association (part)

Heather Topel, University (West Cambridge)
Matt Allen, University (Estate Management)
Mark Parsons, University (Estate Management)
Biky Wan, University (West Cambridge)
Jim Strike AECOM
Jonathan Hill, AECOM
John Hopkins, Peter Brett Associates

Apologies:

Nicky Blanning, University Accommodation Service - West Cambridge Apartments
Nick Brooking, University Sports Centre
Angela Chadwyck-Healey, Madingley Road Residents Association
Sue Davis, University Childcare Services
Penny Heath, North Newnham Residents Association
Chris Ewbank / Susie Wood, St John's College

1. WELCOME, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed the group. Introductions and apologies were made.

2. MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING

Biky Wan raised a point on behalf of Karen Wiemer who questioned the point about St John's land being an objection site. Technically the site is an omission site.

The other action points will be included in the presentation material this evening.

3. UPDATE ON THE WEST CAMBRIDGE OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION, CAVENDISH III AND SHARED FACILITIES HUB

Heather Topel introduced the speakers for this evening who would summarise information about the submission of material for the Outline Planning Application, plus the submission of the detailed planning application for the Cavendish III and Shared Facilities Hub.

Jim Strike and John Hopkins gave a presentation on the changes to the Outline Planning Application which was submitted in October 2017.

Mark Parsons gave an update on the Cavendish III and Shared Facilities Hub planning applications, which were also submitted in October 2017.

4. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION

Hugh Purser stated that there were differences between the material on the documentation on the West Cambridge website vs the Planning Application Portal. Heather Topel said that the material should be the same. John Evans said that the submission that is on the City Council website is the one which should be referenced. Heather Topel offered assistance with signposting through the documents which could be made through the team. [Post-meeting note: following the meeting Hugh Purser on behalf of the Residents Association sent correspondence to the team to say that the differences were not significantly different and documents that were thought to have been missing such as the cover letter were now on the University website].

Hugh Purser said that the Residents Association was still worried about the car park and accessing it from Madingley Road / Clerk Maxwell Road. He also noted that there is no certainty on the construction access and if that will be from Clerk Maxwell Road. Further comments will be made by the Residents Association in response to this to the formal consultation.

Hugh Purser said some wording in the planning application is baffling. He asked if there could be a meeting to talk through various points quite quickly as the consultation deadline was imminent (22 November). Heather Topel asked if the list of items could be shared beforehand and we could talk through them in detail. She offered the same assistance to other interested groups and was mindful that now the formal consultation period was underway that the City Council (John Evans) would remain aware of any such sessions.

ACTION: A further meeting between Clerk Maxwell Road Committee Members and the team to be arranged to talk through particular items to enhance understanding of particular issues or documents.

Matthew Danish stated that he had received correspondence to say that the deadline had been extended to 29 November. John Evans confirmed the consultation deadline extension. [post-meeting note: John Evans confirmed that the consultation deadline had been extended again 6 December 2017].

Harvey Bibby asked if the energy centre flue to the west of the site had been reduced and was still in the location as planned. Jim Strike said that the proposals remain the same, but there may be other options in terms of energy provision for the site.

Harvey Bibby commented that the heights had been reduced, which is much better.

Harvey Bibby commented that it was positive that cycle improvements off-site were being made and asked if that would include the north side of Madingley Road which has pinch points. John Hopkins said that the areas for improvement are resolving the existing road safety issues for cyclists at the junctions of Madingley Road at Grange Road and Storey's Way, and the delivery of the cycling zebra adjacent Lady Margaret Road. The main focus for off-site cycling mitigation for Phase 1 is the delivery of cycling and walking improvements on the section along the Coton Path to Burrell's Walk.

Harvey Bibby raised the point that an accident on Madingley Road / JJ Thomson Avenue had happened recently with a cyclist being injured – he asked if this informed any proposals and if changes might 'pretty up' the access? Hugh Purser added that the Residents Association would like to have more evidence on accidents that happen – accidents are more common on the footpath and junction and the residents haven't noted the date and times yet but the general feeling was that an increase is being felt as an impact of volume and use. John Hopkins said that the road safety data was obtained from the County Council via the Police who record road personal injury data, but not car damage - only collisions. The number of incidents at the JJ Thomson Avenue in the five year time period was only one, lower than the national average for this type of junction and flows.

Hugh Purser said there was concern for cyclists at the High Cross junction for Eddington as people jump the lights. Heather Topel said that there had been an issue with the signals when they were first operating but the County's signal engineers had been on site to address the problems.

Eddie Powell asked if the bridge would be widened and the trees cutback at Cobbett's Corner area of the Burrell's Walk link. John Hopkins said that the proposals for this area had to be sensitive to the existing Cobbett's Corner environment, but that the City Officers felt that the proposal for the bridge to be widened [from 1.8m to 3.m], with the approaches widened further, were quite acceptable and appropriate. The proposals also remove unnecessary street furniture. With respect to the blind bend, it had been concluded that by restricting visibility cyclists would approach with more caution – acknowledging there is a balance between slowing cyclists down and managing safety. The trees form part of the area's essential environment which requires the sensitive treatment.

Eddie Powell asked if there will be a bridge along Madingley Road as a safe route for cyclists to accommodate the number of cyclists. Heather Topel said that the University will monitor the crossings and consideration for improving crossings is open for discussion. The challenge is that Madingley Road requires height restrictions for occasional tall ships/vehicles which would require the bridge to be high, this would then require long or corkscrew ramps, which are not desirable for cyclists. It is also a costly intervention, which the University would consider but would want to ensure that they are used.

Eddie Powell asked if the access for the multi-storey car park was from Clerk Maxwell Road. Heather Topel said there is a car park proposed for north-east corner. It is smaller than what was originally proposed. There is also willingness to make this smaller in the future if possible. John Hopkins said that the University committed to review accesses including other parts of the site. John Hopkins confirmed that the junction capacity assessments in the Transport Assessment confirmed minimal effect at this junction, and that slow moving traffic often sees people give way. Eddie mentioned that cars turning right from Madingley Road will block the road causing congestion. The potential houses to be located on the tennis courts will also cause traffic. John Evans confirmed that the planning application for development of the tennis courts did not have planning status and were not part of this application.

CAVENDISH III AND SHARED FACILITIES HUB

Henry Day thanked the team for taking into account earlier comments from the submission, but was still concerned about the vehicle access. Conduit Head Road has the benefit of having a refuge along the middle of the road but the plans will have no benefit and will have a narrow turning. Conduit Head Road should be kept out of harm's way and this would be a serious hazard. A deceleration area was suggested. In future access from High Cross with dedicated two-way highway along Charles Babbage Road would be provided to the Lime Avenue. We would live with the access for a year or two, if you can see a way to achieve this, but for the long-term it doesn't make sense. This will be reflected in comments to the planning application. Mark Parsons agreed that vehicles can't wait on the carriageway so it is left turn in and out. The tracking of the turns in and out has been made. There are amendments to the existing entrance for the turns to be made and we can look at those with the engineers.

Harvey Bibby asked if Madingley Road can be a lowered speed limit. John Hopkins confirmed that as part of the mitigation, the University will fund the reduction of the 40mph speed limit to 30mph, but in two stages – the first relocating the limit to High Cross; the second to further west to the M11 as development extends. The change in the speed limit to 30mph is in line with the first phase of West Cambridge plans. Heather Topel added that these changes are caveated with any proposals that the County might want to undertake on Madingley Road.

Matthew Danish raised a point that there is no provision for walking or cycling at the junction where the Lime Tree Avenue ends and there should be a provision. Along Madingley Road, walking and cycling is problematic and there are no improvements planned so people going to Eddington also have no provision. Other junctions on Madingley Road such as JJ Thomson Avenue see no provision for cyclists and they are squeezed in the road. A segregated path could have been provided. There is also concern that segregation of cycleway is removed within the site. Along Storey's Way the plan is to repaint what is already there and putting cyclists back on the carriageway. The deeper problem is that it should be bi-directional but the layout doesn't reflect this with a safe crossing of Storey's Way with priority. The lack of drop curbs at Storey's Way mean that cyclists have to go on the carriageway across the junction rather than on the segregated path. The Cycling Campaign will be

objecting to the revision of the Outline Planning Application as the segregated cycle ways have been removed. The diagrams indicate that cyclists should be on the carriageway which would be fine but the buses in both directions at the volumes of 15 buses every hour will be a recipe for a tragedy. It is understandable that segregated cycleways will be brought in over time, but it makes sense to have segregation. We would like to move towards the Dutch model. John Hopkins responded to say that the Storey's Way improvement was to respond to the existing road safety issue made worse by cyclists being squeezed as the road space narrows – hence the refuge islands are to be removed and the segregated cycle lane markings to would be continued.

Harvey Bibby asked if the red line included the north side of Madingley Road. Jim Strike confirmed that Madingley Road is within the red line planning application boundary.

Karen Wiemer mentioned that there are lights across all of the development and wanted assurances that there are no roof lighting. Mark Parsons said that designers design to E2 standard which is the standard for outer urban areas. We understand the sensitive lighting area with the Observatory to also be considerate of. Lighting controls will include sensors.

Karen Wiemer asked how big the lecture hall would be. Mark Parsons confirmed that the large lecture theatre will be 300 people. NB. Post meeting this figure was checked and it is 385 people.

Karen Wiemer asked about if the courtyards are meant to be green as in the pictures shown as they vary in height. Mark Parsons said that the courtyards vary in size and are not at ground level, they are elevated and will receive light.

Karen Wiemer asked if the buildings are accessible and consideration for cycles as cyclists will just park their bikes wherever is convenient. Mark Parsons said that future proposals will include additional cycle hubs and that the Shared Facilities Hub has the ability to adapt with additional spaces in the future.

Karen Wiemer asked if the University was aware of a problem near the brook recently. Matt Allen said a small quantity of arisings from the bore holes for the ground source heat pumps went to the brook. The Environment Agency was notified and the incident dealt with. (NB. The arisings were believed to be inert clay).

Karen Wiemer asked about the Cambourne to Cambridge proposals and if there is the flexibility to run the service through the site. Heather Topel said that the University supports public transport through the site. Consultation on this was relaunched on Monday. The original submission to consultation was submitted two years ago. Routes that serve the west forum or the east forum are to be encouraged. All roads to be retained within the University's ownership and 20mph through the site is to be promoted. It is our understanding that the consultation is about the hard infrastructure. This does not dictate the routes that the bus operators will use. A formal view has not been made lately.

5. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting to be planned by circulation.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was raised.