

Agenda Item 4

Public Questions: Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee: 19th March

Q1:

Sabina Maslova and Gemma Burgess had an academic paper titled:

"Delivering human-centred housing: understanding the role of post-occupancy evaluation and customer feedback in traditional and innovative social housebuilding in England"

at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01446193.2022.2111694> on 23 Aug 2022.

In the abstract, they state:

"The paper argues that UK housebuilding in the social housing sector can benefit from re-purposing post-occupancy evaluation (POE) from only measuring customer satisfaction and detecting defects, which is currently the case, to using it to improve housing design and construction quality."

Furthermore, Dinah Bornat of ZCD Architects gave evidence to the House of Commons Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee on Monday 26 February 2024 on Children, Young People, and the Built Environment. Specifically she outlined the shortcomings of post-occupancy evaluation. (Have a watch at <https://parliamentlive.tv/event/index/2a4c75a2-4f8e-43d4-9fb2-2d25ceaf8b2d?in=16:58:58> from 16h58m58s). You can also read her written evidence referenced CBE 0106 at <https://committees.parliament.uk/work/7981/children-young-people-and-the-built-environment/publications/written-evidence/>

Given their recommendations, please could you ask officers if it is possible to ensure that post-occupancy evaluation is:

- 1) a mandatory component/condition of planning permission for all developments above a minimum - for example the number of properties where affordable housing must be included, along with commitments to share summaries of the evaluations,
- 2) that copies of such evaluations are submitted to the council - even if on a commercial in confidence basis, and for formal archiving even if under restricted access for a long time period,
- 3) that developments backed by council funding, the evaluations cover not just individual homes but also the wider urban design of neighbourhoods (Eg crime, wellbeing) and their suitability for children.

Q2)

My question is a follow-on to the question I asked at this committee on 16th January about item **11** on the **Agenda of the Planning Committee** meeting held on 10th January 2024: 22-02066-FUL **Owlstone Croft Planning Process Overview Report** – and as reported at Pages 6 & 7 of the minutes in today's Agenda pack.

I am grateful to the Executive Councillor for her response and reassurance about the Councillors' concerns.

This item was held in **secret** due the Judicial Review application made by Friends of Paradise.

Following the refusal by a High Court judge to allow the Judicial Review of the Inspector's decision to proceed, I understand that Friends of Paradise have sadly taken the decision that they are not able to fund an appeal against the judge's decision.

So the Judicial Review process is now at an end.

There remains widespread concern among residents about this **complete and catastrophic** failure of the planning system and it now seems that the road is clear for residents and local organisations to provide details of their concerns about what went wrong that could feed into an open, transparent and independent review of this planning process fiasco.

Question:

Can the secret report from 10th January now be published along with the minutes of the committee's discussion of that report?

Q3)

In order to make things marginally more straightforward for cyclists, the Greenways Project Team want to move the light-controlled Barton Road crossing by Grantchester Rd. closer to the junction. This will require in addition moving the off-road bus stop outside Wolfson College on to the road, where it will considerably obstruct traffic, sometimes for a not insignificant period whilst a bus waits for its scheduled departure time. Does the committee consider this quite unnecessary plan acceptable?

Q4)

I often cross the road at the end of Grantchester Rd. The plan is to narrow the road and *remove* the pedestrian island (an essential safety feature in my opinion).

A new raised crossing further down the road will simply not be used. Young people (many coming out of the language School situated right where the traffic island is now) will simply risk crossing **Page 2** at the end of the road where they currently do. Does the committee believe that the proposed changes to the

Grantchester Road/ Barton Road junction will make it more safe for pedestrians?

Q5)

"We, the Fanshawe and Davy Neighbours Group, have met with the Assistant Director and Project Manager of Development at Cambridge City Council and we seem dependent on their answers to our questions with regards to the Fanshawe Road development. We were shocked and disturbed that no social rents are going to be provided at the new development, especially when 22 council tenants were moved out presumably some or all of them paying social rents. How can it be justified or ethical to move on social rent paying tenants to make room for affordable rent tenants who will be people of greater financial means?

Is the same being planned for Davy Road now? Shall we inform the tenants there that they won't be able to afford to move back in (if that is offered as a persuasive tactic as it was with the Fanshawe Road tenants)?

In the context of building during a climate and ecological crisis, the council has publicly recognised that the green spaces in front and behind the Fanshawe Road flats are protected, which means protected from development, so how is it possible that the council themselves now propose to build on that protected green space?

Further, the Project Manager of the Development tells us that: "An ecology survey has been undertaken to assess the quality of the existing biodiversity. They use standard metrics to quantify what is at the site, and landscape designs are measured against this to assess the proposed net gain or loss. The proposals for this particular site are shown to provide a net increase of 35% compared with existing. Expert advice is sought on biodiversity, including the assessment of existing species, how a development might impact them and how this can be managed."

We are still confused and upset by the lack of detail into the important local ecology and justification for removing established healthy trees and pouring concrete on green space. We are no clearer on how 'biodiversity net gain' is calculated and lack confidence in whatever it promises. Is it possible for said experts, the Ecology Consultants, to come and speak with the Fanshawe and Davy Neighbours Group to explain to us in detail what it means and how it can be used to justify building on protected green space?"

Q6

Darwin Green BDW 2

Following the complete removal of around 90 incorrectly constructed foundations and related underground spaces and structures built at Darwin Green BDW 2, in advance of the introduction of new Building Regulations on

15th June 2022, has Barratt David Wilson Homes confirmed the replacement dwellings will be built in accordance with the new regulations which provide for better ventilation, conservation of fuel and power and mitigation of overheating?

Q7

Darwin Green BDW 2

Is the Council's shared Building Control service - as the enforcing body - receiving the full co-operation and timely support of Barratts David Wilson Homes, in response to its requests to inspect and check whether the foundations of the 13 dwellings to be retained at Darwin Green BDW 2 were built in compliance with the approved design?