

WEST / CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE

21 June 2011
7.30 - 11.00 pm

Council Members Present:

City Councillor for

Castle (John Hipkin, Simon Kightley and Phillip Tucker)
Market (Tim Bick, Andrea Reiner and Colin Rosenstiel)
Newnham (Sian Reid and Julie Smith)

Co-opted non-voting members:

County Councillors: Belinda Brooks-Gordon (Castle)
Lucy Nethsingha (Newnham)
Sarah Whitebread (Market)

Officers Present:

Development Control Manager: Sarah Dyer
Environmental Improvements Manager: Andrew Preston
Technical Officer: Declan O'Halloran
Committee Manager: Toni Birkin

Also Present:

Richard Preston: Cambridgeshire County Council, Head of Road Safety and Parking.

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

11/31/WAC Election of Chair and Vice Chair for 2011/12

Councillor Kightley proposed and Councillor Hipkin seconded the nomination of Councillor Smith as Chair.

Councillor Bick proposed and Councillor Reid seconded the nomination of Councillor Kightley as Vice Chair.

Resolved (unanimously) that Councillor Smith be Chair and Councillor Kightley be Vice Chair of West/Central Area Committee for the ensuing year.

11/32/WAC Discussion on Start time of Future Meetings

The Chair suggested that the members consider changing the start time and the agenda order of future meetings.

The following points were raised:

- I. Making planning decisions late at night might not produce the best results.
- II. The needs of those with small children and how convenient or otherwise an earlier start would be.
- III. The current arrangements that require planning applicants to wait to the end of the meeting, which could be very late, was unfair.
- IV. The waste of officer time for a planning officer to wait to the end of the agenda.
- V. The need to keep a consistent start time for the main agenda items.

Resolved: (by 7 vote to 0) to make the following changes for a two meeting trial period:

- I. The meeting will start at 7.00pm
- II. Planning will be the first substantive item on the agenda and continue to its conclusion
- III. The remaining agenda will not be considered before 8.00pm

11/33/WAC Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillor Cantrill.

11/34/WAC Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 28th April 2011 were approved as a true and accurate record.

11/35/WAC Matters and Actions arising from the Minutes

Members requested clear action points to be included in the minutes in future. An on-line action log would be available in the near future.

A member asked if the minutes could be available to the public in a more timely fashion. The Committee Manager confirmed that the target for publication is 10 working days.

11/36/WAC Declarations of Interest

Councillor Reid declared a personal interest in item 11/40/WAC (Grantchester Street Zebra Crossing) as her mother lives close to the proposed crossing.

Councillor Bick declared a personal interest in item 11/40/WAC (Prospect Row).

Councillor Smith declared a personal interest in item 11/44/WAC as a Fellow of a College which owns similar properties in the area.

Councillor Smith declared a personal interest in item 11/40/WAC as trustee of Cambridge University Catholic Association, whose premises, Fisher House abut Fisher Square.

11/37/WAC Open Forum

1) John Lawton – Richardson Candles – I note that some candles are now listed. Can you please tell me who did this and what about other lights that have not been listed. What is their fate?

a) Councillor Reid responded. The Head of Planning, Patsy Dell, was working with the County on street lighting and would be asked reply to Mr Lawton's question.

Action: Head of Planning

Councillor Rosenstiel suggested that the problem with the lights is that, while they are attractive, it had not been possible to upgrade them to meet modern lighting requirements.

The Head of Road Safety and Parking Services added that whilst the lights had historic value they would no longer been seen as the primary light source. Budgets did not allow further engineering work to upgrade them.

Councillor Reid asked if future County Council decisions on street lighting could be reported to this committee.

2) Dick Baxter (Chair FoMC) At the April meeting of this Committee, I sought assurances that the Council would stop illegal driving and parking on Midsummer Common, especially outside the Fort St George pub. The Executive Councillor for Arts and Recreation acknowledged the issue and in a private meeting explained how he wanted the gate to be made secure and enforcement made effective. Yet here we are 2 months later and the gate is still left open and unlocked and staff and customers persist in parking on the Common outside the pub. Why has the Council failed to correct the problem?

a) Councillor Smith read out the following response on behalf of Executive Councillor for Arts Sport and Public Places, councillor Cantrill.

The Council sent a letter too both properties on the 25th May and this detailed that :-

Vehicles are permitted to drive from the access gate along the path to the Fort St George public house and stop outside the property in order to make deliveries or service the building, parking is not allowed. The gate must be closed immediately after use.

Under the Law of Property Act 1925, it is a criminal offence to drive a vehicle on common land without lawful authority. Parking on your own property is of course permitted.

The Council has adapted the gate and fitted combination locks for the properties use. Both properties have been given the access codes. Both the area manager of Greene King and the owners of Midsummer House have been made aware of the need to ensure the gate is locked and that parking is not permitted on the Common.

The gate continues to be left open by those accessing the properties by car.

Officers have considered the use of clamping companies to enforce no parking, and are in discussions with service providers.

The Council has adapted the gate and made provision for these properties to maintain their right of access. The gate continues to be left open and vehicles belonging to staff of the Fort St George are parking on the Common.

The Council has made every concerted effort to accommodate the properties needs. The properties have failed to stop unlawful entry and parking.

Mr Baxter will ask supplementary questions at the next meeting when Councillor Cantrill is present.

3) Richard Taylor – Tree planting on Jesus Green. Why has Jesus Green Association posted a notice saying they are unhappy with the location of some trees the Council has planted?

Peter Constable of the Jesus Green Association, confirmed that they were unhappy as trees have been planted near park Terrace and this was not what they had understood had been agreed. They are concerned that a tree has been planted very close to a memorial tree.

a) Councillor Rosenstiel supported their point of view and shared concerns for the memorial tree. Alistair Wilson (Green Space sManager) will be asked to look into this.

Action: Green Spaces Manager

4) Richard Taylor – Licensing Application for the Jam House. The application as published on the website does not include details of the representation.

a) The application has been published in line with guidance. The representations include personal information that cannot be redacted. Councillor Smith (Chair of Licensing Committee) will ensure that as much information as possible is made available to the public.

Action: Councillor Smith

11/38/WAC Parkour

The Technical Officer introduced the item on Parkour.

Four members (Tom, Sox, Zac and Jack) of a local Parkour group, Cambridge Movement Training were present. Their group has around 25 members and meets at the Howard Mallett Centre. They explained the difference between Parkour and Freerunning. Parkour is about moving from one place to another in the fastest way possible. It does not include the tricks used in Freerunning.

They asked for support for the growth of organised Parkour groups and facilities. The equipment needed was very basic such as crash mats, rails and boxes. The Arts and Entertainments team are working with the group to investigate potential Parkour spaces in the City.

Members were invited to visit the Howard Mallet Centre and watch the young people in action.

11/39/WAC 20 MPH Limit in City Centre

The committee received a report from the Head of Road Safety and Parking seeking comments on the 20 mph speed limit in the City Centre area.

Members raised the following points:

- I. Low-level signage has limited the impact of the new speed limit.
- II. Painting the speed limit directly on to the road surface might help.
- III. The statistics showing average speeds are not helpful as crawling traffic at peak times reduces overall speed averages.
- IV. Seasonal trends and weather conditions also impact on the statistics.
- V. Members were disappointed that the limits appeared to have had no impact.
- VI. There was a need to raise public awareness.
- VII. Police attitudes were changing and increased enforcement would help.
- VIII. Members requested more information on the numbers of observations.

Action: Head of Road Safety and Parking

Councillor Rosenstiel suggested that Maid's Causeway was a cause for concern as the wide road invited speeding. He suggested that village style flashing speed warnings would be helpful.

Council Bick (Executive Councillor for Community Development and Health) that it was too soon to see this project as a failure. It might take several years for the benefits to be realised. Other options, such as traffic calming, would not be possible due to budget restraints.

Members discussed the possibility of a City-wide 20 mph zone. Recent changes to national legislation mean this was now possible. Including areas such as Victoria Avenue might increase public awareness of the new limits and add consistency across the area.

1) John Lawton (Brunswick and North Kite Residents' Association) – Members of the Residents Association have had Speedwatch Training and equipment and are currently the only active community speedwatch group.

The Head of Road Safety and Parking agreed to take the members comments back the Area Joint Committee (AJC). County members would feedback the committee's views to the AJC). He would feedback comments from the AJC to the County Council Cabinet Member to assess the potential for any further expenditure on the scheme on safety grounds.

Action: Councillors who are members of AJC & Head of Road Safety and Parking

11/40/WAC Environmental Improvement Programme

The committee received a report from the Environmental Projects Manager regarding the Environmental Improvements Programme. Members first discussed the items requiring decisions.

Grantchester Road Traffic Calming

Councillor Reid spoke in support of the request for additional funding.

1) Kate de Courcy – It is disappointing that more local resident were not here to comment.

a) There had been some changes to the original scheme and these had been made to address residents concerns. Residents had been notified.

2) Public Question – Speed cameras in the area would produce better results.

a) Cameras can only been installed to address accident black spots.

3) Why was the City Council funding this project?

a) The County Council is unable to fund this project as it does not meet the necessary criteria to be prioritised for funding.

RESOLVED (by 8 votes to 0) to agree the additional £7,500 budget required for this scheme and to approve it for implementation subject to positive consultation and highway authority approval.

Park St, Union Society Wall

Members discussed the long history of this project. It was regarded as regrettable that no solution could be found. Councillor Rosenstiel was unhappy that no improvement could be made to an unsightly area of the Historic City Centre.

RESOLVED (by 6 votes to 2) to reassign the budget for this scheme to new schemes in the 2011/12 Programme.

Councillor Rosenstiel requested that his objection to this decision be noted.

Mud Lane Lighting

A final line of investigation is currently being pursued and therefore this decision deferred at the suggestion of the presenting officer.

RESOLVED To defer the decision until all relevant information is available.

Members discussed the progress of approved schemes as follows.

Manor Street and King Streetcycle Parking - Agreement has been reached with King Street Housing Society.

Prospect Row – It was suggested that the work be timed around the construction work to Brandon Court to avoid damaged by contractors.

Histon Road Shops – The Environmental Projects Manager clarified the costs which are spread over two years and are £2,500 in total. Councillor Smith would contact to the Co-op as Chair of this committee in an attempt to encourage the Coop to approve the installation of the remaining bollards following the lack of response to date.

Action: Councillor Smith

Members discussed proposed Environmental Improvement Schemes for 2011/12.

The Environmental Projects Manager tabled an additional document regarding Huntingdon Road 30mph extension. The cost of this project would be shared with Girton District Council.

Central Mobility Crossings – Councillor Bick expressed concern that there was no Highways Authority programme to address these issues. It was suggested that the Disability Forum should be consulted to help identify the most pressing projects.

North Terrace Gates and Cutter Ferry Bridge Cattlegrids and Gates – members supported the gate work as the gates need to be wider to be DDA compliant. It was suggested that the sheer volume of use causes Cutter Ferry problems.

Gough Way Path Bridge – Members suggested the work was needed to enable cycles with trailers to use the bridge.

Canterbury Street – members were unhappy that this scheme came to them with no estimate for the cost. The Environmental Project Manager stated that he was bringing the project at an early stage to allow members to consider all the projects before allocating funds. The costs would be an estimated £15,000.

Jesus Green and Midsummer Common Paths – Members debated the cost of this scheme, as there is not enough money in the budget to cover all the schemes. Jesus Green footpaths have been a long-standing problem.

Granchester Zebra Crossing – Members felt that this proposal needed further consideration before a decision could be reached.

RESOLVED (Unanimously) the adoption of following Proposed New Schemes for 2011/12 Programme:

5.1 Central Area Mobility Crossings - £10,000

5.2 North Terrace Gates only - £5000

5.3 Gough Way Path Bridge - £25,000

5.4 Canterbury Street - £15,000

5.5 Jesus Green and Midsummer Common Paths (Jesus Green paths only) - £23,786 (not for implementation this year)

5.7 Huntingdon Road 30mph Extension - £2000

Members noted that cycle racks had been installed in Fisher Square. However, it was further noted that bins had also been proposed at an earlier meeting. Members had not rejected the idea but rather the specific bins proposed at that time. Andrew Preston undertook to pursue this matter.

Action: Environmental Projects Manager

11/41/WAC Planning Applications

11/42/WAC 11/0263/FUL - Parkside, Cambridge

The committee received an application for full planning permission for a three year extension to the planning permission for a temporary bus supervisor's kiosk in Parkside, opposite Warkworth Terrace.

RESOLVED (unanimously) to approve the application for the following reasons:

1. This development has been approved, conditionally, for a period of three years because subject to those requirements it is considered to conform to the Development Plan as a whole, particularly the following policies: East of England plan 2008: Policies SS1, T1, T13, ENV6 and NV7 Cambridge Local Plan (2006): Policies 3/1, 3/4, 4/11 and 8/1

2. The decision has been made having had regard to all other material planning considerations, none of which was considered to have been of such significance as to justify doing other than grant planning permission. These reasons for approval can be a summary of the reasons for grant of planning permission only. For further details on the decision please see the officer report online at www.cambridge.gov.uk/planningpublicaccess or visit our Customer Service Centre, Mandela House, 4 Regent Street, Cambridge, CB2 1BY between 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday.

11/43/WAC 11/0439/FUL- 32 Woodlark Road, Cambridge

The committee received an application for full planning permission for the erection of a new cycle shelter.

The committee received representation from the applicant (Jason Smith) who made the following points:

- I. Family believed it was doing the right thing in providing cycle storage
- II. Property has no rear or side access
- III. The scale of the built is in keeping with the house

- IV. Screened from the street
- V. Offering a reduced height from the existing building.

Members felt that the existing building was of an acceptable size and design. Neighbours had not raised any objections. Councillor Hipkin had visited the site and reported that other gardens in the area are equally cluttered due to urban nature of the area.

It was suggested that officers could be authorised to accept a retrospective application for the existing structure.

RESOLVED:

- I. (by 0 to 8) to reject to officer's recommendation to refusal the application.
- II. (unanimously) to approve the application and to give officers delegated authority to accept a revised application, which could match for the existing structure for the following reasons:

The following reasons for approval were agreed:

1. This development has been approved because it is considered to generally conform to the Development Plan, particularly the following policies:

East of England Plan 2008: ENV7

Cambridge Local Plan 2006: 3/4 and 3/12.

2. After representations had been made by both the applicant and the Planning Officer, and with knowledge of the local area, Committee took the view that the cycle shelter as constructed is not an intrusive and visually dominant form of development and does not cause demonstrable harm to the character and appearance of the locality. The Committee thought that the development responds positively to the site context and relates satisfactorily to its surroundings. Therefore the development could be regarded as in compliance with East of England Plan 2008 policy ENV7, Cambridge Local Plan (2006) policies 3/4 and 3/12 and advice on design in Planning Policy Statement 1 (2005).

The decision has been made having had regard to all other material planning considerations, none of which was considered to have been of such significance as to justify doing other than grant planning permission.

These reasons for approval can be a summary of the reasons for grant of planning permission only. For further detail on the decision please see the officer report by visiting the Council Planning Department.

11/44/WAC 11/0627/FUL - 2 Barton Close

The committee received an application for change of use from a dwelling to student accommodation.

The committee Christopher Lawrence (Bursar of Wolfson College) who raised the following points on behalf of the applicant:

- I. The change of use does not represent an increase in student numbers
- II. Property was gifted to the College many years ago.
- III. The time lag in change of use was due to the sitting tenant.
- IV. It has always been viewed as part of the college.
- V. The students who would occupy it would be freeing up rented accommodation elsewhere in the City.

RESOLVED: (Unanimously) to accept the officer's recommendation and to refuse the application for the following reasons:

- I. The proposal would result in the loss of family residential accommodation, contrary to policy 7/7 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006.
- II. The proposed development does not make appropriate provision for open space or waste storage facilities, in accordance with policies 3/8, or 3/12 of the Cambridge Local Plan 2006 and policies P6/1, P9/8 and P9/9 of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan 2003; and as detailed in the Planning Obligation Strategy 2010.

Delegated powers were granted to officers to negotiate the completion of a s106 Agreement to address reason for refusal 2 in the event of an appeal including the consideration of additional information in relation to whether there are sufficient open space facilities within the college campus to meet the needs of the future occupants of the development thereby negating the requirement for commuted payments towards off-site provision of open space.

The Committee noted that the application cannot be formally determined until 1st July 2011 and that if letters from residents were received prior to that date then the application will be brought back to the West Central Area Committee in August for further consideration.

11/45/WAC Planning Enforcement - Planning Contravention Report

The committee report from the Development Control Manager regarding a Planning Enforcement – Planning Contravention Report.

Members made the following comments:

- I. The long term future of the site is uncertain and it is currently unsightly.
- II. The current fence offers some screening from an unattractive site.
- III. Fencing also protects from water spray of car wash activities.
- IV. Reducing the height of the fence would offer no positive value to the area.

RESOLVED: (by 5 to 3) to reject the officer's recommendations that the Head of Legal Services issued an Enforcement Notice.

RECOMMENDATION NOT SUPPORTED.

The Committee considered that enforcement action should not be supported on the grounds that a reduction in the height of the fence would reduce the level of screening available to the car wash operation to an unacceptable degree. However the Committee requested that officers give consideration to other appropriate means for improving the appearance of the site.

The meeting ended at 11.00 pm

CHAIR