

**WEST CENTRAL AREA COMMITTEE**

4 September 2014

7.00 pm - 10.50 am

**Present:** Councillors Tucker (Vice-Chair), Bick, Cantrill, Hipkin, Holland, Ratcliffe, Reiner, Smith (Chair), Cearns, Hipkin and Nethsingha

**Officers Present:**

Head of property Services: Dave Prinsep

Principal Planning Officer: Toby Williams

Anti-Social Behaviour Investigator: Danae Evans

Committee Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe

**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**

**Re-Ordering of the Agenda**

Under paragraph 4.2.1 of the Council Procedure Rules, the Chair used his discretion to alter the order of the agenda items. However, for ease of the reader, these minutes will follow the order of the agenda.

**14/46/WCAC Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Reid.

**14/47/WCAC Declarations of Interest (Planning)**

None were declared

**14/48/WCAC Planning Items**

**14/48/WACa** 14/0967/FUL: Cambridge Rugby Union Football Club, Volac Park, Grantchester Road.

The Committee received an application for full planning permission.

The application sought approval for the erection of replacement changing rooms, replacement dug-outs and retention of the existing temporary changing rooms for a period of three years.

The Committee received representations in objection to the application from Mr Heywood.

The representation covered the following issues:

- i. The building would further encroach into the green belt beyond which the Club previously had planning permission for.
- ii. Would have an adverse impact on the area which is in a conservation area.
- iii. The position of the dug-outs was unsightly and should not stay in its current position but relocated.
- iv. The changing rooms were unattractive.
- v. Each time a new planning application is submitted, it seeks an extension to the temporary building and these buildings in effect become permanent.
- vi. Advertising boards were installed without the correct planning permission.

Mr McGahey (Applicant) addressed the Committee in support of the application.

The Committee:

**Resolved (unanimously)** to grant the application for full planning permission in accordance with the Officer recommendation, for the reasons set out in the Officer report, subject to the conditions recommended by the Officer.

**114/48/WACb 14/0978:FUL:** Former Auckland Road Mental Health Centre, Auckland Road

The Committee received an application for full planning permission.

The application sought approval for the erection of four semi-detached dwellings and one detached dwelling (following demolition of existing buildings), together with associated infrastructure.

The Committee received representations in objection to the application from Ms Bates.

The representation covered the following issues:

- i. Would have preferred a Community Centre on site which would have met the demand for one in the area.
- ii. Acknowledged that the development was an improvement on the previous application.

- iii. The scale and mass of the development would be overbearing on a small site.
- iv. The development would overlook into neighbouring properties on Parsonage Street.
- v. Has issues with the window treatment proposed to address the overlooking issues.
- vi. Overlooking would be more prominent into Brunswick Cottage.
- vii. There would be significant overshadowing to the neighbouring properties.
- viii. Retention or replacement of the existing foot wall around the north and west side of the site which would retain security.
- ix. Questioned if wooden fencing would offer the same protection in place of the brick wall.
- x. The boundary wall between Brunswick Cottage and the site should be retained due to its historic significance.
- xi. The new development would be dark and not in keeping with the neighbouring properties.
- xii. Too many bedrooms have been included into the development.
- xiii. Lack of resident parking on the development
- xiv. Trees would be lost.

Mr Bainton (Agent) addressed the Committee in support of the application.

The Committee:

Resolved (**unanimously**) to grant the application for planning permission in accordance with the officer recommendation, for the reasons set out in the Officer's report, subject to the completion of the s106 Agreement by 31 December 2014, subject to the conditions recommended by the Officer and an additional condition relating to archaeology and an informative relating to liaison with the construction of the Synagogue site nearby to read as follows:

'No development shall take place within the site until the applicant, or their agent or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: To ensure that an appropriate archaeological investigation of the site has been implemented before development commences. (Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policy 4/9).

INFORMATIVE: The contractors are advised that there is a nearby development for a Synagogue on Auckland Road. The Local Planning Authority encourages regular dialogue with those contractors to minimise disruption and disturbance to local residents arising from deliveries and construction activity'.

**14/48/WACc** 14/0646/FUL: 26 Newmarket Road

The Committee received an application for full planning permission.

The application sought approval for the erection of bin and cycle storage enclosures and internal alterations to the upper floors. The alterations would enable the creation of two new flats, one on each floor, by the insertion and removal of walls.

Mr Whitfield (Applicant) addressed the Committee in support of the application.

The Committee:

Councillor Bick proposed that an additional condition should be included in relation to cycle parking to match the number of units.

**Resolved (unanimously)** that the new flats shall not be occupied until cycle racks in the form of Sheffield hoops (or another style rack to be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority) to accommodate the parking of 6 cycles (one for each flat) of the development have been installed within the rear courtyard area.

Reason: In order to ensure the full provision of cycle parking relative to the number of occupants living within the altered planning unit (Cambridge Local Plan policy 8/6).

**Resolved (unanimously)** to grant the application for planning permission in accordance with the Officer recommendation, for the reasons set out in the Officer report, subject to the conditions recommended by the Officer and the additional condition.

**14/48/WACd** 14/0908/FUL: The End House, 53 Owlstone Road

The Committee received a retrospective planning application for part change of use.

The application sought approval for a part change of use of residential property to provide Bed and Breakfast Accommodation

The Committee received a representation in objection to the application from Mr Whitehead.

The representation covered the following issues:

- i. The report understated the impact that the bed and breakfast has on the next door property.
- ii. No other properties are used for commercial use.
- iii. Noise travels through the party wall.
- iv. The Officer's report states that there are no advertising signs on the front or side elevation of the premises stating the premises is a bed and breakfast guest house. This is incorrect.
- v. The entrance door is at the side of the house and guests regularly knock on the next door property house.
- vi. All guests do not arrive on foot or taxi and there is insufficient parking to accommodate guests.
- vii. The application goes against 6/3 of the Cambridge Local Plan.

Mr Clover (Agent) addressed the Committee in support of the application.

#### The Committee:

The Principal Planning Officer proposed the following amendment to condition 3 of the Officer's report in relation to the number of bed and breakfast rooms (original text struck through and new text underlined).

~~The premises shall retain at least one of the rooms as private residential accommodation for the proprietor.~~ No more than three rooms shall be used as bedrooms for bed and breakfast purposes. The remaining rooms shown as private on the approved drawings shall be retained for private residential use only.

Reason: To ensure there is no loss of residential units, and to limit the possible intensification of the use of the property given its size and local parking pressures within surrounding streets. Cambridge Local Plan 2006 policies 3/4 & 6/3.

**Resolved (unanimously)** with amendments to condition 3 of the Officer's report.

**Resolved (6 Votes to 1 Vote)** to grant the application for planning permission in accordance with the Officer recommendation, for the reasons set out in the Officer report, subject to the conditions recommended by the Officer and the amended condition.

**14/48/WACe** 14/1134/FUL: 28 Warwick Road

The Committee received an application for full planning permission.

The application sought approval for a single storey front extension (following demolition of existing porch).

The Committee:

**Resolved (unanimously)** to grant the application for planning permission in accordance with the Officer recommendation, for the reasons set out in the Officer report and subject to the conditions recommended by the Officer.

**14/49/WCAC      Declarations of Interest ( Main Agenda)**

None were declared

**14/50/WCAC      Chairs Announcements**

The Chair paid tribute to Peter Cowell, a long-serving former Councillor who served as Mayor on four separate occasions in the 1980s and 1990s, following his death.

A minutes silence then followed.

**14/51/WCAC      Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2014 were approved and signed by the Chair.

**14/52/WCAC      Matters and Actions arising from the Minutes**

**13/58/WCAC**

The Committee Manager informed the Committee that a request had been sent to the Head of Arts and Recreation to ask that information be placed on

the Council's website indicating which facilities were available for community use that included the Cambridge University Sports Centre.

It was suggested that the matter be addressed by Councillor Cantrill.

**ONGOING.**

### **14/29/WCAC**

Councillor Reiner updated the Committee on the temporary planning permission for a Coach Station Kiosk on Parkside. The City Development Manager had advised the Planning department were waiting for further information from the County Council as it impacted the Highways and a report will be taken to the Joint Area Committee.

The application would be considered by the Planning Committee later in the year and not the Area Committee due to the recent changes of the removal of planning at Area Committees.

Councillor Reiner stated that she spoken with the Head of Planning Services to discuss if the application could be brought back to West / Central Area Committee as an exception and this was being looked at.

**ONGOING.**

### **14/30/WCAC**

Councillor Cearns informed the Committee that the Project Delivery and Environment Manager at Cambridge City Council had confirmed that the plan to fund higher quality street lighting in the City Centre would continue in conjunction with the County Council. This would mean that the West / Central wards would lose the heritage lighting, apart from a few which had assigned to keep, such as those in New Square.

The County Council and Belfour Beatty would hold a public meeting or attend a West Area Committee Meeting sometime in Autumn with the proposals for the layout and design for new street lighting in Market Ward.

**CLOSED.**

### **14/9/WCAC**

Councillor Nethsingha stated that she had received an e-mail from Officers at Cambridgeshire County Council who have advised that the junction could not be changed. However with regards to the cycle crossing on Madingley Road in relation to the North / West City development there will be a proposal to install

a cross roads nearer to the City to assist cyclists crossing the road safely. No further details had been released.

**ONGOING.**

### **14/9/WAC**

Councillor Hipkin queried if Councillor Bick, as former Leader of the Council could provide information on the Business Improvement District rather than invite representatives from the Board.

Councillor Bick advised that it would be preferable to have a presentation from BID representatives.

An invite would be sent to BID representatives from the Chair asking they could attend the October meeting.

**CLOSED.**

### **14/9/WAC**

Councillor Cearns expressed disappointment that representatives from the developers of the University Arms Hotel did not attend the meeting. Discussions were still ongoing regarding the use of Parker's Piece for the Developer during the development. It was hoped that representatives would attend the October meeting.

**ONGOING**

### **14/53/WCAC      Open Forum**

**Colin Rosenstiel:**

**It is now September, why has half of Christ's Pieces had no street lighting for two months now, which is dangerous for the public, with no sign of action from Balfour Beatty and their contractors, UK Power Networks. What action can the Area Committee take to get the lighting fixed?**

Councillor Cearns agreed that there were difficulties with UK Power Networks. This would be taken back to Officers and Balfour Beatty to ask for a date when the installation of the street lights would take place. Councillor Cearns explained that this problem was across the City.



**Hugh Kellett:**

**What can be done to reduce the level of HCVs infringing 7.5t weight restriction? A low level campaign by residents, which involved meeting with serial offenders such as M&S, Bidvest and Boots, and aided by letters from the police, has resulted in some compliance, but there are still between 5 and 10 vehicles illegally using Maids Causeway per hour. These are mainly vehicles servicing local pubs, shops and restaurants in the centre of town and are simply using the street as a cut through. I ask that some thought be given to police considering a few days of action a year to clamp down on offenders. What other measures might councillors consider? Would a local name and shame web site or twitter account might bring offenders to book? Or whether traffic wardens might be able to take on this task, presenting drivers with a warning?**

Acting Inspector Wragg advised that Operation Safe Passage was being run as a Police priority and explained that each week there was bid for additional resources (road police unit, dog unit etc) to support this operation in order to carry this forward.

Councillor Bick added that it was impressive to see and hear the work that the residents had undertaken to highlight to these issues.

Councillor Holland asked if this was a planning condition and whether enforcement action could be undertaken? **(ACTION)**

**Mal Schofield:**

**Is the Committee aware the river that runs through the City is polluted. We need to do something about it. Recently the City of Cambridge Triathlon was cancelled over safety concerns relating to the swim element of the event. The river is an asset. Sport and recreation in the City needs to be encouraged.**

Councillor Reiner agreed with the comments made. With no additional knowledge it would be interesting to know the results of the tests and what would be done to improve the quality of the river.

**Jim Bellingham:**

**I am rather frustrated by the number of times I have to get out of the way of people cycling the wrong way in the St John's St/Trinity St/Market Hill/Sidney St triangle. But on looking more closely, I do think the signage is inadequate. If you are coming into that triangle from a side street, or setting off, it is often not obvious that these are all one way streets. The signs seem few, and they are often lost in the clutter of a very busy streetscape. Perhaps one step might be signs painted on the**

**road? They might have to make it clear that this rule applies to bikes as well as cars.**

Councillor Cearns advised that he had raised the same issues with Cycling Officers and acknowledged that the issue had been raised at previous committees. At the top end of Sidney Street it was planned to install additional signage. Over the next couple of months there would be noticeable changes.

**Jim Bellingham:**

**A second signage point: On the Barton Road/Newnham Road junction. As I understand it, if you are approaching this junction from the west (Barton Road), in a car, it is compulsory to turn left at the lights into Newnham Road. Going straight on into Driftway or right into the street with the Co-op, is illegal (and certainly dangerous). But the only indicator seems to be the small white arrow on a blue roundel that is part of the traffic light. I have some sympathy with the drivers who don't grasp this, and then attempt an illegal manoeuvre, rather than driving up to the Fen Causeway roundabout and coming back to the junction from Newnham Road, when all the options are available. Could it be made clearer, or have I misunderstood?**

Councillor Cantrill advised that Officers had investigated looking at improving the signage but had advised that they were constrained by Highway rules and regulations. A larger sign would obstruct the cycle lane so could not be installed.

Councillor Nethsinga advised that herself and Councillor Cantrill had requested funds to be put towards a feasibility study. Work is underway to look at how the whole junction could be improved.

**Bev Nicolson:**

**When will the re-surfacing work in Short Street start?**

Councillor Cearns advised that work should begin over the next few weeks.

**Bev Nicholson:**

**I reported on 'Fix My Street' that the damaged bike racks on Sydney Street required fixing. They are still not fixed after a month. Are the Committee aware of other bike racks in the City that required fixing and do they think this length of time is indicative?**

Councillor Cantrill replied in his experience it was quicker to report issues direct to the relevant Officer. There were two bike racks in Newnham which had been reported three times on 'Fix My Street' and were still had not been fixed.

Councillor Cearns encouraged members of the public to contact the Highways department following the County's reporting procedure or contact their local Councillor.

### **14/54/WCAC Policing & Safer Neighbourhoods**

The Committee received a report from Sergeant Misik and Sergeant Wood regarding Policing and Safer neighbourhood trends.

The report outlined actions taken since the West Central Area Committee of the 24 April 2014 on the priorities that had been set. The current emerging issues/neighbourhood trends for each ward were also highlighted (see report for full details).

#### Members' Comments on Anti-Social Behaviour:

Councillor Hipkin asked whether was possible to produce figures to show the number recorded crimes, prosecutions and convictions. This would show what action had been taken following reported crime.

Acting Inspector Wragg advised that these figures were problematic to produce for each quarter due to the varying length of time the legal process took after an arrest had been made. Therefore the information would not be timely. There was also information which could not be made public during this process that added to the difficulty of producing additional reporting figures.

Councillor Cearns asked if there was there evidence of deprivation concerning individuals who had been arrested for persistent begging who lived in their own accommodation, or was it a situation of abusing an opportunity. What was being done to offer those people an alternative lifestyle to one that that found themselves in?

Sergeant Misik confirmed that the majority of individuals were drug or alcohol dependent. Information would be passed to the Chronically Excluded Adult (CEA) Team or hostels in the City to work with those individuals to try and address their behaviour. It was important to note that this was not always enforcement lea but it was important to give a consistent message.

Councillor Smith noted that over the Summer there seemed to be an increase in persistent begging from individuals who appeared to be vulnerable, which she had not been observed before. Where there more individuals on the street who required help or enforcement, or was it just a perception?

Sergeant Misik replied that there was always an increase at certain time of the year with individuals arriving in the City for Summer festivals. Usually they stayed for a period of time before moving on. In reality many of the individuals did have a degree of vulnerability which are observed by the Police and reported back to the various agencies.

#### Members' Comments on Operation Safe Passage & Vehicle obstruction of pavements:

Councillor Bick stated he was pleased to note the work being done on the vehicle obstruction of pavements, but the problem was still ongoing. He had witnessed the problem on Victoria Street with the further obstruction of wheelie bins and bikes on the pavements. Councillors had also received reports of a damaged manhole cover on the pavement on Victoria Street which could possibly be caused by vehicles parking on the pavement. This priority should be continued as it required on going attention.

Sergeant Wood acknowledged that the Committee's last priority setting of Operation Safe Passage & Vehicle Obstruction of pavements did merge together. He explained his team were in charge of the pavement obstruction while the Road Police team were responsible for traffic offences. His Officers had been instructed to talk with the registered owner whose vehicles were obstructing pavements and identify if they were local to try to change their behaviour. The transient visitors were not as easy to talk to as they were not in the area on a long term basis.

Sergeant Wood concluded that he was investigating possible strategies such as improving the markings, street furniture, educating local cyclist and vehicle users.

Councillor Hipkin questioned if the Police would agree it was deemed acceptable to park on a pavement, as in some parts of the City it was encouraged. However when causing an obstruction it then becomes an offence, but causing an obstruction to whom and what? Measurable criteria would be welcomed.

Sergeant Misik advised that there was no wrong or right answer and it would be a judgement call by the Officer.

Sergeant Wood replied that every situation is judged on its own merit and reiterated that pictures of the vehicle causing an obstruction could be sent to via e-mail. He would expect that a push chair or wheel chair should be able to be pass vehicles which were parked on the pavement.

E-mails had been sent from Hackney Carriages to show civilian parking in taxi ranks. Warning letters had been issued to the registered owners, if the same offender persisted more than three times enforcement was taken. A similar approach would be taken on the issue that had been raised by Mr Kellett in the public forum earlier in the meeting.

Councillor Cantrill enquired whether the Police would issue a warning letter if pictures of coaches illegally parked were e-mailed to them?

Sergeant Misik stated that best way would be to ring 101 in this instance.

Councillor Cearns agreed that there were also problems with taxi's parking in the City Centre where they should not be. A meeting had been arranged with Sergeant Wood the following to discuss all the City Centre issues that had been highlighted.

#### Comments from Members of the Public

**Could you explain how the enforcement of vehicle excise duty will happen with the planned removal of the paper tax disc?**

Sergeant Wood responded that the impact on the Police was unknown. If an individual did not register their vehicle or apply for an off road notice, the registered keeper would be fined. The DVLA kept a data base of all registered keepers and automatic number plate recognition would also play a role in determining if the vehicle was taxed or not.

**What is the law for those vehicles parking close to the junction and raised junctions, such as that on the corner Wilberforce Road, with cars parked half of the pavement and half on the road and should those vehicles be reported via the 101.**

Sergeant Wood advised that there were two types of traffic legislation which could be used, the Road Traffic Act and the Road Traffic Offenders' Act.

However a common sense approach should be taken, however if a vehicle was parked within ten metres of a junction this was an offence. If a vehicle was parked on the zig zag on the approach to a cross roads, evidence of the offence would be reported to the central ticketing office who would determine the best way to deal with the individual. If a vehicle was parked inappropriately then it was best to call the Police.

Councillor Smith reported that she and Councillor Cantrill attended a meeting with County and City Officers to discuss possible installation of double yellow lines in Newnham which included the junction of Adams and Wilberforce Road.

#### Members' Comments on Future Objectives:

Councillor Bick welcomed the statistics referenced in the report and suggested that a better benchmark would be to compare the figures at the same point of the previous year rather than the last quarter.

Councillor Nethsingha noted that there had been an increase in cycle theft, compared to the last summer and the last quarter. When this had been a previous priority cycle thefts had been reduced.

Councillor Cearns asked whether it was possible to have joint partnership working with the Police to extend 'the vehicle obstruction of pavements' to 'pavement obstruction' to include individuals who obstruct the pavements, such as ticket touts, peddlers, buskers and so forth.

Acting Inspector Wragg advised that issues such as peddlers and buskers were matters for the Council's Enforcement team but the Police would be happy to provide support if and when they were required and able to do so.

Councillor Smith highlighted that there were large numbers of punt touts that were touting for unlicensed punts which needed to be addressed. It was agreed that a separate meeting would be organised to discuss this issue further.

#### The Committee.

Councillor Bick proposed that the offered recommendation in the Officer's report of the next Police priority as 'Acquisitive crime in the Newnham ward' be removed and replaced with the continued priority of vehicle obstruction of pavements.

Councillor Cearns proposed that that the vehicle obstruction of pavements should extended to the obstruction of pavements which would include vehicle obstruction, cycle obstruction, etc.

Councillor Nethsingha proposed that the addition of cycle theft be included as an additional priority.

**RESOLVED (unanimously)** to prioritise the following:

- i. Operation Safe Passage
- ii. Street-based ASB in City Centre
- iii. Extension of Vehicle Obstruction of Pavements expanded to include other physical obstructions such as cycles, etc.
- iv. Cycle theft.

#### **14/55/WCAC      Frequency of WAC Future Meetings**

The Committee were asked to consider the frequency of Area Committee Meetings for the remainder of the municipal year 2014/15.

Councillor Hipkin requested that figures for public attendance at all future meetings be recorded.

Councillor Cantrill suggested that figures for public attendance should be recorded for all meetings.

Councillor Cearns recommended that Committee should think about the structure of the meetings, the start times, when the meeting take place and the items that are placed on the agenda.

#### Comments from members of the public.

- i. The public must be encouraged to engage more in the discussion rather than sit and listen.
- ii. Would encourage Councillors to site with the public to listen to what they want from the meetings.
- iii. The Committee must continue as they are part of the democracy process.
- iv. Discuss issues that are important to the community.

The following items for future meetings were put forward:

- i. University Arms Hotel development.
- ii. Business Improvement District.
- iii. The Management of tourist Coaches.
- iv. The future of the long distance bus station.
- v. Environmental Improvement Projects updates at every meeting.
- vi. Updates on S106 spending at each meeting.

Councillor Smith suggested that a 'brain storming' session took place with members of the public to discuss what could be done to encourage public attendance and participation.

The Committee:

Resolved (**7 votes to 2 votes**) to keep to the current schedule of meetings October 2014 – April 2015 as follows:

- i. 29 October 2014.
- ii. 7 January 2015.
- iii. 5 March 2015.
- iv. 23 April 2015.

The situation would be reviewed in New Year 2015.

The meeting ended at 10.50 am

**CHAIR**