

**Cambridge City Council
Disability Consultative Panel**

Tuesday 31st March 2015, Lucy Cavendish College

Notes of the meeting

Attendees:

Mark Taylor	City Council
Jeremy Miller	Resident
Elizabeth French	Resident
Sue Imrie	Cambridgeshire Hearing Help
Gary Reed	Cambridge University Estates
Jean White	Shopmobility (Retired)
Jane Renfrew	Resident
Pauline Brown	Hearing and visually impaired
Nicholas Hellowell	Resident/Camsight
Rosalind Bird	Architect/MS Society
Sue Simms	Cambridge City Council Housing (retired)/Friends with Disabilities.

Apologies – Polly Macartney

Notes of the last meeting Tuesday 24th February 2015 and matters arising.

Notes agreed. Officers will look further into the procurement of a portable induction loop in the new financial year.

Presentation - North West Cambridge - Market housing lots M1/M2. The pre-application proposal for 241 units on behalf of Cambridge University.

Presentation by Joanna Thorndike from Hill Residential with Alexis Butterfield of PTE Architects, John Lawlor of Alison Brooks Architects and Dawn Purves of RM Associates (Landscaping). Introduction by Heather Topel of Cambridge University Estates.

The lots are located south of the new homes on Huntingdon Road and north of the proposed new neighbourhood/dense urban centre to the south accessed from Madingley Road. The proposal emphasises strong pedestrian connections between these new homes and the urban centre with linear parks running north/south. All homes to be built to Lifetime Homes standard.

Specific features include swales to restrict surface water, accessed via a series of bridges marked by kerbed edges and the use of texture and colour contrasts as indicators. Surface textures and colour will also delineate entrances etc. Shared zones will include 'safe zones' segregating pedestrians from any traffic.

The Panel's comments are as follows:

Swales. The Panel expressed some concern as to the possible risks associated with crossing these water channels. Although the generous 3m bridge width is noted, the Panel would recommend handrails on all the bridges and at steps/level changes as even a fall of a shallow distance can cause injury. The need for contrasting textures and colours of surface material is emphasised.

Lighting strategy. The Panel note that full details on lighting arrangements are not yet available, but that the majority of roads will be managed by the University, not the County Council.

Car parking (visitors). 18 accessible bays will be provided across the site. The Panel would like to stress that residents with disabilities need 24/7 short stay parking provision as close to their homes as possible in order to receive deliveries or visits by carers at any time of the day or night. This should be a key consideration when arranging parking provision in relation to accessible units.

Lifetime Homes. The Panel would stress the need for internal walls to be built to accommodate hoists, as corrections or adaptations made retrospectively can be costly.

Some general concerns were expressed in terms of Lifetime Homes and wheelchair accessibility, as although internal spaces are described as flexible and adaptable, garage spaces did not appear to be sufficiently generous to accommodate a vehicle and turning space for a wheelchair user as well as the usual storage requirements.

The architects are requested to examine accessible standards code BS8300 which provides helpful guidance on access from a disabled user's perspective.

Conclusion.

A generally commendable proposal that could be improved with some additional work.

Presentation - Cambridge Biomedical Campus - Circus, Piazza and High Street.

This is the proposal for the public realm that will link Francis Crick Avenue eastwards into the Addenbrooke's Hospital Site. It will be flanked by the new Papworth Hospital, AstraZeneca, The Forum and the ACRC unit. It will provide for public open space as well as for connectivity, including the Guided Busway.

Presentation by Eugenia Grilli of Gillespies Landscape Architects with Rupert Biggin of Buro Four (Project Management).

Features of the proposal include segregated pedestrian routes with resin bonded surfacing and an emphasis on de-cluttering the streetscape with bollards minimised and clear views and site lines for seating at regular intervals. Cycle routes will be shared with the Guided Bus.

The Panel's comments are as follows:

Metal tactile studs/strips at key crossing points. The design team are encouraged to consider alternatives as these are hazardous for pedestrians with walking sticks and are often slippery in wet weather.

Lighting strategy. The Panel welcome the appointment of a lighting consultant but would encourage the inclusion of colour contrasts for the benefit of the partially sighted and that columns are designed to inhibit cycle parking clutter.

Scented planting. To minimise the impact on allergy sufferers, the Panel would recommend that areas of sensory planting are clearly marked.

Cycle parking. The Panel note that cycle parking provision will not be included in the public realm as the individual buildings will provide their own covered and secure parking areas. Cycle stands will be provided along the CGB route and discreetly in the more functional, hard landscaped area. The Panel also note that cars will also be restricted; accessing only the parking bays provided by the buildings away from the open spaces.

Conclusion.

A very thorough and well-considered proposal.

New Applications.

**15/0450/FUL - Inglis Building, Department Of Engineering
Trumpington Street, Cambridge.**

Alterations and extensions to Inglis and Baker Buildings, including erection of pedestrian link bridge, installation of new bay window in the Inglis Building, replacement windows in the Baker Building, and insertion of ventilation louvers in the Baker Building.

Comments: Gary Reed gave a summary of the accessible features to be included in this proposal including provision for disabled lecturers and appropriate lighting and handrail for the stairway. The welcome inclusion of a fire evacuation lift should eliminate the need for refuge points. A very good scheme.

**15/0165/FUL – Abbey Stadium, Newmarket Road (R Costings).
Erection of club office and shop following demolition of old club office/shop (retrospective).**

Comments: It is not clear from the plans that the cabin is wheelchair accessible or whether the interior layout could accommodate wheelchair turning circles. A low counter section and hearing loop are recommended if not already installed.

**15/0398/FUL - 8, 10 and 10A Cheddars Lane, and 351-355
Newmarket Road Cambridge.**

Erection of student accommodation with 321 student rooms (following demolition of existing buildings), together with ancillary accommodation comprising common/study rooms, porters lodge, laundry room, plant room, bin and bike enclosures, landscaping and associated infrastructure including a sub-station.

Comments:

Accessible unit. The bedroom and bathroom should be located next to each other in order to accommodate an overhead or manual hoist. The shower appears to have a level threshold but is not of the correct dimensions and does not include handrails. No room has been provided next to the pedestal for transfer and the basin is poorly located. Doorways also appear compromised (sliding doors are recommended if space is limited) and doubt was expressed as

to the accessibility of the study room cooking facilities and suitability of the storage area, with also no indication that the desk height could be adjusted.

In the Panel's view this is one of the worst schemes ever submitted in terms of accessibility. The design team are advised to seek expert advice before a thorough re-examination of the scheme.

The Panel invite the designers to attend a future meeting in order to obtain some expert advice on appropriate accessible features.

15/0430/FUL - Garage Block 1- 34 Fulbourn Road, Cambridge. The demolition of existing 34 garages and erection of 8 affordable residential units (2 two-bed houses, 2 three-bed houses and 4 one-bed flats) with associated car parking and private and shared amenity space.

Comments: Although quoted as being of Lifetime Homes standard, internal layouts appear awkward with access to the WC appearing difficult. With baths proposed in all bathrooms, the Lifetime Homes standard requires these to be wet room adaptable with appropriate drainage. The provision of any accessible parking bays was also questioned.

The Panel would recommend further work on this scheme. As so many wheelchair users are currently in need of accommodation that suits their needs, the Panel would urge that at least one of these units is made wheelchair accessible for immediate use.

15/0427/FUL - 5 St Andrews Street, Cambridge. Conversion and refurbishment of existing commercial property to student accommodation. (First, Second and Third Floors only). Extension to rear following demolition of existing 1st floor extension.

Comments: As the site is owned by nearby Christ's College, the Panel felt if it could not be adapted to be wheelchair accessible, this facility could be suitable to hearing impaired or graduate students with different disabilities who could benefit from living independently from the college but at a convenient, central location. With this in mind, the shower rooms could benefit from being re-designed to include outward-opening doors and clutch bars etc.

Any Other Business.

Disability Needs Assessment - a Cambridge City Council survey (closes 31st May 2015). It asks local people their views on what they think about living in the City. This will mean the Council and voluntary sector know about what issues need to be addressed.
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XTBBSWX>

If anyone would like assistance in completing the survey or would like it in a different format, please contact Ariadne Henry at Cambridge City Council on 01223 457876 or by email Ariadne.Henry@cambridge.gov.uk

St Andrew's Street zebra crossing linking the bus station with the Lion Yard. This was never installed following the completion of the bus station and remains unresolved. The crossing from Emmanuel Street has also been removed.

ACTION: Mark to write to the County Council's Head of Road Safety and Parking Services Richard Preston re. pedestrian crossings in central Cambridge.

**Papworth Trust hustings 21st April, 4pm-6pm.
A ticketed event giving prospective candidates the opportunity to respond to questions from an audience of disabled voters.**
<http://www.papworthtrust.org.uk/campaigns/hustings-event-cambridge-city>

All agreed politicians generally had very little awareness of disability issues.

**Date of next meeting – Tuesday 28th April, 2pm (same venue)
Apologies in advance from Elizabeth French.**