

## **Appendix 2: Main Issues raised during Consultation**

### **Key issues discussed at Development Plan Steering Group (DPSG) (19<sup>th</sup> May 2009)**

#### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 In relation to the draft Old Press/Mill Lane SPD and representation made during consultation, ten key issues were discussed at DPSG. Following the DPSG meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> May 2009, officers have carried out further assessment and have held discussions with the University of Cambridge about a number of issues. The vision and masterplanning issues were also discussed at Design and Conservation Panel on 25<sup>th</sup> November 2009. The issues discussed below have fed into officers' responses to representations and amendments to the SPD.

#### **2.0 Key Issues 1 and 10 – Vision and Phasing**

2.1 Linked to the representations received from Design and Conservation Panel, it was considered that the document failed to convey the time and essence of Mill Lane. The vision needed to set out the aspirations for the site more clearly as the proposed area contained the possibility of creating a useful quarter for the city. As a result of discussion at DPSG, officers have worked on the vision with the University in order to retain the distinct character of the area and enhance problem areas.

2.2 With ongoing uncertainty regarding the University's detailed aspirations for the site and the phasing of development, it is considered that the vision should remain at a relatively high level and that the detailed development of the site should be furthered through the development of a Masterplan for the site with a phasing strategy within the overall Masterplan. Detailed planning applications will then be brought forward in line with the Masterplan. As such, it is considered that paragraph 5.1 and chapter 7 should be deleted and replaced with the following:

“As a result of the identified opportunities and constraints, a vision has been formulated to guide the future development of the site:

**The Old Press/Mill Lane site provides an opportunity to create an area with a distinctive character that combines high quality buildings, streets and spaces, and responds well to its context through sensitive enhancement. It will contain a mix of uses that complement the City’s historic core and its riverside location. Development will support the creation of a more attractive, accessible, safe and sustainable environment.**

In progressing the vision for the site towards fruition, the site will need to be subject to detailed masterplanning work. The Masterplan for the whole site will be submitted with the first significant redevelopment proposal and will consider the whole area covered by the SPD. This Masterplan will be tied to the first significant application, but will also be applied to other applications within the site boundary of the SPD. In order to progress the different parts of the site and their different scales of redevelopment and refurbishment, it is considered that the Masterplan should sub-divide the site into discrete parcels. Those parcels will consist of areas where development is likely to come forward at the same time. The relationship between the parcels is vital in achieving good co-ordination of development and a high quality environment. One area, which could form a parcel is the entire street block enclosed by Mill Lane, the river, Silver Street and Trumpington Street. The SPD identifies this area as the location with the greatest potential for redevelopment, subject to robust and detailed justification. Masterplanning and phasing is discussed at greater length in Chapter 7.”

- 2.3 This vision and supporting text is followed by the development objectives for the site.

- 2.4 In terms of masterplanning and phasing, it is considered that the existing chapter 7 should be deleted and replaced by the following paragraphs in order to clarify the future approach to the development of the site:

Policy 3/6 of the Local Plan (Ensuring Coordinated Development) states that the development of a site or part of a site will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that due consideration has been given to safeguarding appropriate future developments on the remainder of the site or adjacent sites. It is felt that a well-prepared, clear and informed Masterplan for proposed and future development of the Old Press/Mill Lane site is vital in ensuring coordinated development.

The purpose of the Masterplan is to add detail and provide the basis for the determination of future planning applications for this site and the phasing of development. The Masterplan would be secured through a Section 106 agreement. This approach has been taken on a number of other sites in the city, such as the University of Cambridge's West Cambridge site and NIAB site, where Masterplans were submitted with planning applications.

The Masterplan for the whole site will be submitted with the first significant redevelopment proposal and will consider the whole area covered by the SPD. This Masterplan will be tied to the first significant application, but will also be applied to other applications within the site boundary of the SPD. The first significant application is categorised as the first application, which will materially affect the character of the Conservation Area. This will require discussion with the City Council.

Prior to its submission to the City Council, the Masterplan should be the subject of extensive consultation with stakeholders and residents.

Development proposals are unlikely to be delivered simultaneously for the entire Old Press/Mill Lane site as a result of the timing of the relocation of University uses to other sites and the challenges of developing a constrained City Centre site. The availability of different parts of the site will be a principal factor that will dictate the phasing of development. In order to progress the different parts of the site and their different scales of redevelopment and refurbishment, it is considered that the phasing strategy within the Masterplan should subdivide the site into discrete parcels. Those parcels will consist of areas where development is likely to come forward at the same time. The relationship between the parcels is vital in achieving good co-ordination of development and a high quality environment. One area, which could form a parcel is the entire street block enclosed by Mill Lane, the river, Silver Street and Trumpington Street. The SPD identifies this area as the location with the greatest potential for redevelopment, subject to robust and detailed justification.

The University is currently working on its Estate Implementation Plan, the outcomes of which will feed into the development of the Old Press/Mill Lane site. The phasing strategy within the Masterplan should be prepared in sufficient detail to meet the requirement of Policy 3/6 of the Local Plan and allow detailed planning applications to come forward on individual sites on a phased basis, forming part of a more comprehensive strategy for the whole site and making an appropriate contribution to the wider objectives of the SPD including improvements to public realm and accessibility.

All applications should be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, which will state how the proposal relates and contributes to the vision and objectives set out in the SPD, the wider Masterplan and the opportunities and constraints that the site presents.

### **3.0 Key Issue 2 – Building Significance**

- 3.1 English Heritage raised concerns about Plans 3 and 9 and the building significance designation given in Paragraph 3.9.3 and on Plan 10. They discussed the values assigned to individual buildings and groups of buildings and suggested reasoning behind amendments to Paragraph 3.9.3 and Plan 10. Cambridge Past, Present and Future and the University of Cambridge also raised concerns regarding the significance designations for some buildings on Plan 10. However, limited justification was provided for these suggested changes.
  
- 3.2 At DPSG, Members agreed with the officers' suggested approach to representations on building significance. The approach recognised that whilst English Heritage, Cambridge Past, Present and Future and the University of Cambridge may hold differing views on the values attached to buildings and spaces within the document, due to the subjective nature of the subject matter, it would prove difficult to achieve full consensus. The Historic Environment Analysis is an independent piece of work that was commissioned to inform the drafting of the SPD. It was carried out by Beacon Planning, who specialise in the historic environment field, particularly in Cambridge. Notwithstanding the challenges of achieving consensus, it is considered that substantial changes to the significance levels of buildings assigned in the draft SPD would give rise to major differences between the SPD and its evidence base. Not only would this have implications for soundness, it would also create additional complexity in the planning application process as developers would be uncertain as to the values attributed to different buildings.
  
- 3.3 Whilst it was recognised that there may have been some value in attaching significance designations to the buildings adjoining the site, the analysis was limited to those buildings and spaces potentially subject to development. Any development within the site will need to

work well within its context, both within and outside the site. This is recognised in Paragraph 6.2.1 of the SPD.

#### **4.0 Key Issue 3 – Building Heights**

- 4.1 Respondents, including the Bursars' Environment and Planning Sub-Committee, Darwin, Queens', St. Catharine's and Pembroke Colleges and the University of Cambridge raised concerns that the 4 storey limit for new buildings expressed in Paragraph 6.1.5 of the draft SPD lacked foundation and precluded the development of taller, potential landmark buildings.
- 4.2 Cambridge Past, Present and Future voiced concerns regarding the graduation of building heights across the site and the need to recognise that the levels on the river end of Mill Lane were lower than at the junction of Mill Lane with Trumpington Street. Providing the setting of the Pitt Building tower was protected, Cambridge Past, Present and Future did not take issue with small towers reaching 5 storeys in height.
- 4.3 At DPSG, Members agreed the officers' suggested approach to representations on building heights, which resulted in no changes being made to the SPD in this respect. The 4 storey limit expressed in Paragraph 6.1.5 relates to the existing building heights within and adjacent to the site and the need to maintain views, both long and short, of the Pitt Building, the Emmanuel United Reformed Church and other significant buildings beyond the site, including King's College Chapel. It is considered that the third sentence of the paragraph does not preclude the possibility of creating buildings that have significant townscape qualities specific to this locality. It is recognised that there may be circumstances where 4 storeys may be excessive. Given the Conservation Area designation of the site, it is considered that reasoned justification of the height, scale and massing of any new buildings in relation to adjacent buildings and the wider townscape of

the Conservation Area will need to be provided as a part of any planning application.

## **5.0 Key Issue 4 – Redevelopment/Conversion of Buildings**

- 5.1 English Heritage, Cambridge Past, Present and Future and the Cambridge Design and Conservation Panel raised concerns regarding the demolition of buildings to create a new space on the river frontage. Cambridge Past, Present and Future objected to any demolition of buildings on either side of Laundress Lane as these buildings strongly reflect the traditional and utilitarian use of the river embankment for storage, trading and brewery purposes. In view of retaining Laundress Lane and its buildings in their entirety, they consider that an opportunity should be taken to create a square to the south/east of the Oasthouse/Malt Kiln. The Design and Conservation Panel's main concerns about this area related to the importance of a high quality scheme with new space of sufficient area and buildings of real quality.
- 5.2 The Cambridge Design and Conservation Panel commented that within the Panel there was a divergence of views on the retention of the Anchor public house. Its relationship to Silver Street Bridge is clearly unsatisfactory and the impact of its bin storage on Laundress Lane is unacceptable. Cambridge Past, Present and Future suggested that the Scudamore's boathouse on Granta Place could be removed and replaced with a better building and some open space.
- 5.3 Cambridge Past, Present and Future and the Colleges also supported some element of façadism. The Colleges gave an example of a flexible approach to the Pitt Building and the buildings immediately to the East with retention of the façades of the buildings with modern accommodation provided behind retained façades.
- 5.4 The Council notes the concerns regarding the demolition of buildings on either side of Laundress Lane, given the former trading character of this area. Whether accommodated around a public space or on one of

the existing street frontages, it is considered that a number of the uses mentioned in Cambridge Past, Present and Future's representation could be appropriate for the site, but that their delivery will be highly dependent on market conditions and the specific aspirations of developers. The SPD specifically supports the development of creative industries on the site in Paragraph 6.3.7.

- 5.5 At DPSG, Members commented that the proposal for open space next to the river presented a great opportunity for a high quality development. Members agreed not to remove the references in the SPD to the opening up of the river frontage.
- 5.6 The Cambridge Design and Conservation Panel's concerns were noted. With reference to bin storage, whilst it is noted as a problem in the area in Paragraph 3.7.5, an additional paragraph has been added to Section 6.5 to read "Given the constrained nature of the site and difficulties in servicing, any development will need to consider refuse storage facilities at an early stage in the planning process and will need to submit details at the planning application stage."
- 5.7 The potential that the Scudamore's boathouse on Granta Place offers in terms of public realm improvements has been acknowledged on Plans 12a and 12b with the scope of the new public space increased to include this area.
- 5.8 Members agreed at DPSG that the Council does not support the approach to façadism suggested by Cambridge Past, Present and Future and the four Colleges. It is hoped that buildings will be reused appropriately and that significant proportions of existing buildings should be retained wherever possible. Whilst we recognise the Colleges' aspirations for growth, this site requires a careful balance of conservation and sensitive change. No change to the plan has therefore been suggested in this respect.



## **6.0 Key Issue 5 – Residential and Student Residential Development**

- 6.1 The Bursars' Environment and Planning Sub-Committee and the Colleges (Darwin, Pembroke, St. Catharine's and Queens') support the development of a mixture of uses on the site, but have raised concerns regarding the amenity of proposed and existing uses within the site and beyond. The impact of development upon the nearby Colleges must be considered carefully, although the site itself offers a unique opportunity for appropriate levels of student accommodation, which could support the vitality and vibrancy of the area.
- 6.2 At DPSG, Members agreed with the officer's suggested approach to representations on residential and student residential development, which noted the Bursars' Environment and Planning Sub-Committee and the Colleges' concerns regarding the amenity of adjoining Colleges. The final sentence of Paragraph 6.3.5 of the SPD has been amended to read "In order to minimise adverse effects on the amenities of residents within and in the vicinity of the site, the focus of any such uses will be around any new public spaces created within the site, adjacent to the Mill Pit and on Mill Lane."
- 6.3 In terms of the concerns raised by the four Colleges, it is considered that the SPD makes a number of references to the opportunities afforded to the Colleges. It is not the role of the SPD to set rigid requirements in relation to land uses.

## **7.0 Key Issue 6 – Retail and Commercial Development**

- 7.1 The four Colleges and the Bursars' Committee did not support the indicative amount of 6,500 square metres of new commercial space in the draft SPD. Apparently, such developments will not find favour with tenants versus superior edge of City locations with better access and parking. Student accommodation provision in the traditional City Centre should be increased which will reduce traffic and parking volumes.

7.2 Officers have undertaken further work on the proposed level of commercial development. There are a number of buildings, which are currently in University-related uses and are earmarked for future commercial use. Their floorspace is approximately 6,000m<sup>2</sup>. As such, it is recommended that the proposed floorspace for commercial development (in addition to the existing 1,000m<sup>2</sup> in Miller's Yard) should be limited to no more than 6,000m<sup>2</sup>. If the developer requires a significant increase on this level of commercial floorspace, they will need to justify this in any planning application. As such, the table below paragraph 6.3.1 has been amended to reflect the reduction in floorspace and paragraph 6.3.7 has been amended to read:

“There is scope to introduce a wider range of commercial uses (Use Class B1) within the site including office and research and development type uses. Given the location and nature of the site, creative industries, including craft workshops, are considered to have particular potential to support the enhancement of the area. Up to 6,000 square metres of commercial uses could be accommodated. This is likely to be principally through the adaptive reuse of existing buildings. If the developer requires a significant increase on this level of commercial floorspace, they will need to justify this in any planning application. New development and applications for change of use for existing buildings will need to meet the approach to the selective management of the economy indicated in the Cambridge Local Plan and its successor documents and the Regional Spatial Strategy.”

7.3 A number of respondents, including the Parochial Church Council of St. Mary the Less, asserted that new retail units should not be provided on the site in view of the ongoing economic situation and the number of vacant retail units in the City Centre. The Cambridge University Press have questioned the viability of reinstating the ground floor units of Nos. 16 – 21 Silver Street as retail units given the additional pedestrian footfall on a street with narrow pavements and the static traffic generated. English Heritage, the Cambridge Past, Present and Future,

the Cambridge Design and Conservation Panel and other respondents also questioned the benefits to be obtained by providing retail frontage on the ground floor of the University Centre.

- 7.4 The draft Old Press/Mill Lane SPD issued for consultation suggested that the site could include up to 2,500m<sup>2</sup> of retail floorspace. In the light of local concerns and the altered global financial situation, it was agreed at Development Plan Steering Group in May 2009 that the proposed retail floorspace at the University Centre be deleted. As a result, the overall figure for retail development was then reduced to 2,300m<sup>2</sup>. Members asked for further consideration of this issue. Officers have considered the level of existing retail floorspace on the site (approximately 1000m<sup>2</sup>) and have looked at the scope for further retail floorspace. In the light of the economic climate and representations, it is recommended that the SPD states that there should be no significant increase on the existing level of retail floorspace on the site. If the developer requires a significant increase on this level of retail floorspace, they will need to justify this in any planning application in terms of the need for such floorspace and the contribution that this form of development will make to the area's sense of place. As such, the potential quantum of retail development has been removed from the table below paragraph 6.3.1 in the SPD and the following paragraph has replaced paragraph 6.3.5:

“There should be no significant increase on the existing level of retail floorspace on the site. If the developer requires a significant increase on this level of retail floorspace, they will need to justify this in any planning application in terms of the need for such floorspace and the contribution that this form of development will make to the area's sense of place. Where new retail units are introduced, they should be small scale to encourage a mix of different types of retail and other uses. In order to minimise adverse effects on the amenities of residents within and in the vicinity of the site, the focus of any such uses will be around

any new public spaces created within the site, adjacent to the Mill Pit and on Mill Lane.”

## **8.0 Key Issue 7 – Hotel Development**

- 8.1 Respondents, including Darwin, Queens’, St. Catharine’s and Pembroke Colleges and the Emmanuel United Reformed Church, raised concerns that the provision of a hotel on site may give rise to additional access and servicing requirements, which will increase the burdens on the limited road network in the area. Members agreed with these concerns. The Executive Councillor stated that she was content with the inclusion of a hotel subject to re-drafting the proposal to address the issue of parking and access. As such, paragraph 6.3.8 on hotel development has been amended by the insertion of the following sentences:

“Such a use will only be acceptable where on-site parking is restricted to a very limited number of spaces for use by guests with disabilities, and it can be demonstrated that access and servicing for the hotel can be accommodated satisfactorily within the existing road network of the area. Given the City Centre location, guests should be encouraged to use sustainable modes of transport, where possible.”

## **9.0 Key Issue 8 – Public Realm**

- 9.1 Respondents, including Darwin, Queens’, St. Catharine’s and Pembroke Colleges, the Cambridge University Press and Cambridge Past, Present and Future raised issues regarding the need for another through route behind the Pitt Building.
- 9.2 Cambridge Past, Present and Future raised concerns regarding the restrained access point over the Old Mill foundations. The creation of a separate broad bridge close to/south west of the Old Mill foundations should be considered to better segregate the cycle route (with speed reductions at conflict points) with the creation of a broad paved area as relaxation space for pedestrians.

- 9.3 Cambridge Past, Present and Future also raised the need to enhance the setting of Stuart House and designate the space to the frontage as public green space/small park of high amenity fully accessible to the public.
- 9.4 Members at DPSG agreed that the cut-through to the rear of the Pitt Building is currently used informally by people cutting the corner. Whilst it is not envisaged to be a major route in the future and its existence is dependent upon the future use of the Pitt Building, the courtyard and surrounding buildings, the route remains worthy of recognition for enhancement.
- 9.5 With regard to the Cambridge Preservation Society's concerns, it was agreed that the restrained access point over the Old Mill foundations is highlighted on Plan 12b as requiring enhancement. However, with reference to the creation of an additional bridge, it is considered likely to introduce further pedestrian/cyclist/vehicular conflicts at a series of points either side of the river at Granta Place and Laundress Green. Whilst the Mill foundations are a recognised pinch point, they act as a speed reduction measure, particularly for cyclists.
- 9.6 Members agreed the officers' suggested approach to Stuart House. The setting of Stuart House is discussed in Paragraph 3.7.7 and the need to enhance the setting is referred to in Plan 12b. In order to highlight the importance of improving this space, Section 6.5 of the SPD will make specific reference to the need to remove cars from the frontage, improve the layout and appearance of the cycle parking and enhance the soft and hard landscaping. Given the private ownership of the space to the frontage of Stuart House, it is not considered appropriate to designate this area as public green space or as a small park of high amenity fully accessible to the public.

9.7 At DPSG, Councillor Baker hoped that the opportunity would be taken to provide new public toilets given that those of Silver Street were outdated. Officers have raised this issue with colleagues in Environmental Projects to progress improvements.

## **10.0 Key Issue 9 – Colonnading Silver Street**

10.1 Respondents, including Darwin, Queens', St. Catharine's and Pembroke Colleges and the University of Cambridge supported the concept of colonnading Silver Street, but wished for further clarification on the viability of such a scheme. The Cambridge Design and Conservation Panel; Cambridge Past, Present and Future and English Heritage raised concerns regarding the potential impact of this proposal upon the townscape of Silver Street and the wider Conservation Area. Cambridge Past, Present and Future has raised concerns regarding the loss of the Anchor public house, although they recognise that it may be possible to establish a high level boardwalk adjacent to the river.

10.2 It is recognised that Nos. 16 – 21 Silver Street are currently being considered for listing by English Heritage. The buildings have significance within the streetscene, due in part to their completeness, lack of alteration to the Silver Street façade and views of the corner turret at the junction of Silver Street and Laundress Lane. In the light of the concerns raised during the consultation process, it was agreed by the Executive Councillor following discussion at DPSG that any reference to colonnading or arcading should be removed from the draft SPD.

10.3 A number of incremental changes to Silver Street are suggested, which could take place independently of each other at different times or together. These changes could involve demolition of the unsympathetic extensions to the Anchor public house in order to widen the pavement at that point on Silver Street and the creation of a boardwalk from Silver Street in front of the Anchor public house down to the Mill Pit.

The loss of this part of the Anchor public house would need to be the subject of detailed justification for the works proposed in the context of current policy and guidance on such matters as referenced in Paragraph 6.2.1 of the draft SPD. As a result of development within the centre of the northern block, a further change could involve the enhancement of the archway and pedestrian route through Nos. 19 and 20 Silver Street and the existing car park serving the laboratories on Mill Lane. Whilst these changes on their own could bring about minor public realm improvements to parts of the site, the greatest potential for change relates to the gradual closure of Silver Street to vehicular traffic. It is recognised that a tidal flow system is already in operation, but the City Council welcomes Cambridgeshire County Council's recent representation which confirmed that:

*“The County Council welcomes the emphasis given to the needs of pedestrians and cyclists in this SPD. The design and management of highway space within and around the Old Press/Mill Lane area has the potential to significantly enhance the area. Silver Street and Trumpington Street are currently subject to traffic demand management measures and further restrictions on car-based access may need to be considered through the Local Transport Plan process to enhance access for sustainable forms of transport. Linked to further traffic restraint measures, there is an opportunity to consider significant changes to the streetscape in these streets to achieve greater road space allocation for pedestrians and cyclists, in particular. Within the Old Press/Mill Lane area itself, the layout of the highway is still, in parts, dominated by vehicular access requirements and the opportunity exists to consider a new streetscape design based on a shared surface design approach. This is particularly true of Mill Lane and Granta Place. Opening up the various non-highway links through the area could also enhance the permeability of the site for pedestrian movement.”*

Given the concerns expressed by a number of consultees regarding the potential for colonnading Silver Street, it is considered that the opportunity to develop further traffic restraint measures on Silver Street is a more viable option, which would not only enhance the experiences of pedestrians and cyclists, but would allow for greater appreciation and safeguarding of the historic environment in this area of Cambridge. The SPD has been amended to reflect this in Section 6.6.