

**DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

25 January 2017  
4.30 - 6.50 pm

**Present:** Councillors Gawthrope (Vice-Chair), Avery, Baigent, Smart

Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport: Councillor Blencowe

**Officers:**

Planning Policy Manager: Sara Saunders

Principal Planning Policy Officer: Joanna Gilbert-Wooldridge

Planning Policy Officer: Frances Schulz

Senior Urban Designer: Sarah Chubb

Democratic Services Officer: Daniel Snowdon

**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**

**16/72/DPSSC Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillor Bick and Sarris. In the absence of the Chairman, Councillor Gawthrope acted as Chairman for the meeting.

Councillor Sargeant attended as an alternate.

**16/73/DPSSC Declarations of Interest**

Item Number	Councillor	Interest
16/76/DPSCC	Sargeant and Smart	Personal: Both have provided homestay accommodation to students.

**16/74/DPSSC Minutes**

The minutes of 6 December 2016 were agreed as a correct record

**16/75/DPSSC Public Questions**

There were no public questions.

## **16/76/DPSSC CAMBRIDGE LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION – FURTHER PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS FOR STUDENT ACCOMMODATION, GYPSIES AND TRAVELLERS, AND ACCESSIBLE HOMES**

### **Matter for Decision**

To consider and comment before decision by the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport**

- To agree that the further proposed modifications and the Sustainability Appraisal be submitted for consideration by Full Council on 23 February 2017 and approved for submission to the Inspectors examining the Local Plan;
- To agree the findings of the Assessment of Student Housing Demand and Supply for Cambridge City Council (Appendix C);
- To agree the findings of the further work on provision for Gypsies and Travellers (Appendix D);
- To agree the findings of the further work on Accessible Homes in Cambridge (Appendix E);
- To agree that the documents attached to this report as Appendices C, D and E be submitted as part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan;
- To agree that the documents attached to the report as Appendices C, D and E be endorsed as a material consideration in decision making;
- To agree that delegated authority be given to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development to make any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes, in consultation with the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport, Chair of and Spokes of Development Plan Scrutiny Sub Committee.

### **Reasons for the Decision**

As set out in the Officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee received a report from the Principal Planning Policy Officer.

Dr Gemma Burgess and Michael Jones, consultants, were invited by the Chairman to assist with the answering of Member questions on the report.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Highlighted student accommodation within the city that did not meet the needs of students with limited study and communal areas that was expensive and beyond the means of most students reliant on grants and loans. As a result the accommodation was not being filled and in one instance rooms were being advertised on the internet as a hotel.
- ii. Questioned the lack of growth projected for Anglian Ruskin University.
- iii. Drew attention to student car parking arrangements and raised concern regarding parking controls.
- iv. Highlighted the importance of the connection between the developer and the University and questioned whether there was national legislation regarding the maintenance of accommodation.
- v. Drew attention to the national position regarding accessible homes now being weaker resulting in the amendment of the emerging Local Plan to account for the changes.
- vi. Questioned the link between constructing purpose built student accommodation and residential houses becoming available on the open market.
- vii. Questioned whether there was a danger of over provision of student accommodation if there was a decline in the higher education sector.
- viii. Asked whether there were examples of policies that ensured accommodation was used for student accommodation.
- ix. Questioned whether a developer could build accommodation that housed 6 students or fewer.
- x. Noted the need to identify accommodation for language schools and summer schools, and questioned how accommodation for homestay students and language students worked.
- xi. Questioned the assessment of Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs.
- xii. Expressed disappointment with the required ratio of accessible homes, noting that disability affects people of all means

The Principal Planning Policy Officer said the following in response to Members questions:

- i. Confirmed that work was continuing with Development Management colleagues to investigate compliance with planning permissions and legal agreements at specific sites.
- ii. Confirmed that Anglia Ruskin University was not seeking to expand its Cambridge site following a period of growth. There was uncertainty within the sector following the result of the European Union referendum and there was a focus on Anglia Ruskin University's other campuses outside Cambridge.
- iii. Confirmed that work would take place to identify whether there were schemes in operation in other parts of the country that could be adopted regarding car parking controls.
- iv. Explained that work was ongoing nationally regarding licensing of shared accommodation which could impact positively on maintenance of accommodation for students. If introduced through the licensing regime, this would be addressed by Environmental Health and Housing colleagues.
- v. Explained that the Council's Gypsy and Traveller Working Group had reviewed the evidence base, which concluded that there was no identified need for provision of pitches for Gypsies and Travellers. However, there was flexibility within the criteria-based policy if need arose in the future.
- vi. Advised that the changes to accessibility standards for new housing were made by the Government and that the Council could not seek to go beyond the national standards. It was noted, however, that the national standards represented an improvement on the accessibility requirements in the 2006 Local Plan.
- vii. Explained that while residential properties may become available if purpose built student accommodation was constructed, there was not necessarily a clear link between the two properties in terms of ownership. It was likely that many houses would return to the rental market as housing in multiple occupation.
- viii. Explained that although the higher education sector as a whole was shrinking, the market in Cambridge remained buoyant with postgraduate and contract/research staff.
- ix. Confirmed that accommodation with 6 or fewer students would be classed as housing in multiple occupation and would therefore be addressed by a different policy within the Local Plan.
- x. Explained that policies 44 and 46 addressed specialist colleges and courses of a year or more. Accommodation could also be utilised by students of other institutions outside term time when accommodation was available.

- xi. Advised that there were Gypsies and Travellers living in Cambridge in bricks and mortar accommodation. Engagement with these families was attempted. Unfortunately, no contact was made.
- xii. Advised that the requirements for accessible accommodation were set by the Government and Councils were required to work to that requirement. The first accessible home for the wheelchair housing standard (M4 (3)) was required on the 20<sup>th</sup> affordable home constructed. If it was determined that under-provision of homes had taken place to avoid the requirements, the Council could address this as part of the application process.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

### **Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)**

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

### **16/77/DPSSC Mitcham's Corner Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document**

#### **Matter for Decision**

To consider and comment before decision by the Executive Councillor for Planning Policy and Transport.

#### **Decision of Executive Councillor**

- To agree the responses to the representations received during public consultation and the consequential amendments proposed to the Mitcham's Corner Development Framework;
- To approve the Mitcham's Corner Development Framework in anticipation of the adoption of the Local Plan, and to agree that it should be carried forward for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document at the same time as the Local Plan.

#### **Reason for Decision**

As set out in the Officer's report.

#### **Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

## Scrutiny Considerations

The Committee received a report from the Senior Urban Designer.

Richard Preston from Cambridgeshire County Council City Deal Team was invited by the Chairman to assist with the answering of Member questions on the report.

The Committee made the following comments in response to the report:

- i. Noted that the Mitcham's Corner gyratory was effective in managing the movement of vehicular traffic but was poor for pedestrians and cyclists. It was also difficult for people travelling by bus as there were a number of bus stops spread over the area. Members questioned the need to create a shared space for all road users.
- ii. Questioned how the project would be funded.
- iii. Questioned what safeguards there were to prevent a developer from constructing something that was contrary to the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- iv. Drew attention to the dangers faced by pedestrians and cyclists that travelled around the gyratory. Members noted that there was no data on cycles or pedestrian movements and suggested that a comprehensive survey was carried out of pedestrians and cyclists to inform the design of Mitcham's Corner.
- v. Expressed concern regarding the funding of the project. The City Deal could not be relied upon as the objectives were not entirely the same and more consideration should be given to alternative funding streams.
- vi. Highlighted the importance of capturing the views of students who travelled to college by bicycle.
- vii. Drew attention to the representation made by Bidwells regarding the redevelopment opportunities of the Barclays Bank site and requested that the Council take a more proactive approach.
- viii. Expressed concern regarding the modified wording on page 53 of the SPD that appeared to water down the linkages from Chesterton Road to Grasmere Gardens.
- ix. Queried progress regarding the Tivoli public house.
- x. Emphasised the importance at not only looking at what was happening with regard to cycling and pedestrian movements within the area, but also setting out the vision for what the area could be in terms of movement. –.

Has to handle a certain degree of traffic movements. It is an important transport link and a place.

- xi. Suggested that an application be developed for use on people's smart phones that could track their movements that could inform any survey of pedestrian and cycle movements across the city and inform the design of the gyratory.

The Senior Urban Designer said the following in response to Members questions:

- i. Explained that the stage of the design where cycle lanes should be routed has not yet been reached and that the design process should inform the most appropriate solution. Drew Members attention to the key objectives for remodelling the gyratory set out on page 34 of the Framework.
- ii. Drew attention to potential funding available in tranche 2 of the City Deal. The City Deal had expressed an interest in contributing toward the cost of the project but it would require a clear business case for the investment that demonstrated improvements to transport and the public realm.
- iii. Advised that planning application would be assessed in accordance with the current Local Plan and linked to the emerging Local Plan. The adoption of the Framework would also demonstrate the Council's position with regard to the development of the area.
- iv. Welcomed the suggestion of a survey of pedestrian and cycle movements and would discuss further with City Deal officers regarding a city wide study.
- v. Explained that opportunities for alternative funding sources for the project were limited such as Section 106 funds or Community Infrastructure Levy. The City Deal provided a great opportunity that was unlikely to be available again in the future.
- vi. Advised that a meeting would take place with Bidwells following the Committee meeting.
- vii. Explained that the wording on page 53 of the Framework was amended to reflect land ownership issues.
- viii. Advised that the specific guidance was contained within the Framework to enhance and repair the frontage of the Tivoli. A pre-application meeting had taken place between officers and representatives of JD Wetherspoon regarding the site.
- ix. Welcomed the innovative suggestion for a smart phone application to be developed to assist with surveying pedestrian and cycle movements and would discuss it further with consultants.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendations.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendations.

**Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)**

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

The meeting ended at 6.50 pm

**CHAIR**