

THE REGENERATION OF THE GRAFTON CENTRE (23/02685/FUL)

Summary of community and stakeholder engagement

Stage 1: Consultation on the concept masterplan (November 2022 to January 2023)

- 4-page newsletter distributed to 3,883 homes and businesses
- Briefing sent to ward and neighbouring ward councillors, county councillor, Member of Parliament, Cambridge BID, Chamber of Commerce and Camcycle
- Consultation website launched with full information on the proposals
- Community helpdesk set up to respond to questions from residents
- Individual letters sent to immediate neighbours inviting them to a drop-in consultation session
- Memo distributed for Grafton Centre shop staff and managers
- Meetings held with ward councillors and other stakeholders
- Online webinar held – attended by 72 people
- Display boards placed prominently in the Grafton Centre

Stage 2: Consultation on the hotel and leisure quarter (March to April 2023)

- Leaflet distributed to 1,774 homes and businesses in the vicinity of East Road
- Further letter sent to residents living within the red line of the Grafton Centre updating them on the proposals
- Briefing sent to ward and neighbouring ward councillors
- Consultation website updated to include information about the hotel and leisure quarter
- Individual letters sent to immediate neighbours inviting them to a drop-in consultation session
- Second online webinar held to discuss the hotel and leisure quarter, and answer questions

Stage 3: Further detailed consultation before submission (April to May 2023)

- Two meetings held with Camcycle to discuss issues including cycle storage and routes
- Dedicated consultation event organised for residents of Christchurch Street to discuss the interface between the southern end of Christchurch Street and northern edge of the regenerated centre
- Letters sent to the 207 residents of Christchurch Street inviting them to consultation session
- Pre-application Developer Presentation held for members of the planning committee
- Meetings held with ward councillors

Stage 4: Engagement following submission of the planning application (July 2023 to January 2024)

- Letters sent to ward and neighbouring ward councillors following validation of the planning applications
- Written update sent to residents of Christchurch Street informing them of further changes to the application in response to feedback during the statutory consultation
- New website launched with updated images and full details of the proposals
- Updated display boards placed prominently in the Grafton Centre
- Regular updates provided for ward and neighbouring ward councillors and further meetings held with Camcycle, Chamber of Commerce and Cambridge Riverside Residents Association

Changes made as a result of post-submission engagement

“Camcycle and the applicant have engaged in meaningful and productive discussions, resulting in a significantly enhanced planning application. These improvements not only elevate the cycle experience for future employees and visitors accessing shopping and local facilities, but also introduce new and improved routes benefiting the entire city.”

Letter of support from Camcycle, January 2024

Since submitting the planning application in July 2023, Pioneer Group has continued to engage with local people and stakeholders as well as statutory consultees. Amendments to the application as a direct result of ongoing engagement, include:

- The wall at the south of Christchurch Street will now be retained at the request of the street’s residents, along with ‘cycle calming’ measures around the gate to Christchurch Street.
- After ongoing work with Camcycle, changes were made to create new safe routes through and around the centre, and to ensure that the 1,257 new cycle parking spaces have the best level of accessibility, including for non-standard cycles.
- Part of the northern edge of the building will be set back to create a sheltered colonnade for pedestrians, which increases the width of the footpath and cycle path to reduce the pressure of this existing pinch point.
- The connection to the new public square at the centre of the retail area has been made wider and more spacious, to improve connectivity across the site by creating a route from north to south for both pedestrians and cyclists.
- Visibility into the life science areas from the public square has been increased, so residents can see what happens inside the building.
- The architecture and materials of the top storey of the development have changed, to improve the look of the building from key long-range views.