

North West Cambridge University's Development Community Group

**Minutes of meeting held on 26^h June 2012
at Wolfson Court, Girton College, Cambridge**

Those present:

John Chaplin, Storey's Way Residents Association (JC) CHAIR
Rev Janet Bunker, The Parish of the Ascension (JB)
Cllr John Hipkin, Cambridge City Council (JH)
John Gant, Girton College (JG)
Aaron Walker, NAFRA (AW)
Richard Latham (RL)
Cllr Thomas Bygott, South Cambs District Council (TB)
Helen Hutchinson, Windsor Road Residents Association (HH)
Bob Dawson 19 Acre Field Residents Association (BD)

Apologies

Anne Mullinger
Brian Walker

Project Team (PT)

Roger Taylor, North West Cambridge Project Director (RT)
Brian Nearney, North West Cambridge Commercial Director (BN)
Rosanna Law, AECOM (RL)
Katie Fleming, Communications Team, North West Cambridge Project. (KF)

1. Introductions were made and the minutes of the last meeting agreed.

2. RT gave an update on the application process and next steps for the project.

The group asked the following questions - answered by RT.

Q: You talked about an architectural design competition? (TB)

It's not a design competition – we have gone through a detailed process to select architects but it is not design.

Q You were talking about university accommodation and leasing it to colleges what is the latest on a new college? (TB)

The focus of the project is on getting the postgraduate student accommodation built. However the University is considering a range of options for a new College. Lord Wilson is leading this work but it is still ongoing.

Q What determines the length of the build out – it sounds like it could be a building site for a long time? (JH)

The key thing is the absorption rate – that is the number of market houses you can expect to sell at a time. We are looking at about one per week per developer rising to closer to four in the future. Clearly we need to balance the need for the land receipts to build University buildings. We also have to be mindful of the Council's 60/40 ratio we need to build a balanced scheme.

Q Is the absorption rate you are quoting a result of the current economic conditions? (JH)

Partly and it depends on the number of developers which are working at any one time. (BN)

Q You mentioned joint management of Storey's Field and the community facilities. What is the nature of that partnership and is it the standard section 106? (JH)

There will be a newly established charity between the City Council and the University. The University will grant a lease to the charity and fund for the first 12 years, after that it will be 50/50.

Q Where do the District and Girton Parish Council fit in? (TB)

The facilities sit within the City boundaries.

Q But there is still other provision in the Section 106 for the other parks etc (TB)

Yes, of course

Q Will the GP surgery also provide facilities for NIAB? (BD)

No each will have their own separate provision. The idea of a super surgery came forward too late in the planning and both NIAB and the University preferred to have their own provision rather than having to rely on provision elsewhere.

Q Will it be a satellite of an existing surgery or a new one? (BD)

It's not up to us but we gather the PCT is trying to persuade a central Cambridge practice to relocate.

3. There was then a presentation on Phase One of the scheme by Rosanna Law followed by questions.

Q What size will the hotel be? (BD)

130 rooms.

Q The first development will set the tone, we are keen to get sight of the design values when will we know what it is likely to look like in design terms? (BD)

There will be public consultation on reserve matters. The general timescale is towards the end of this year and early next.

Q Who will have overall control of the architecture – will the University determine the style? (JCh)

The University has developed a sophisticated system to remain in control including the Quality Control Panel which consists of independent experts as well as experts from the University. The University is determined to get the best quality design for the cost.

Q During phase one you mentioned ironing out issues – are they design or procedural? (AW)

This is about design and us ensuring that all the elements we are considering will fit and work together, for example the trees lining the streets working with the infrastructure like the underground bins – it is part of the process.

Q The site looks to be the same density the whole way across I understood it was be more dense around the local centre? (TB)

It is more dense around the local centre. The densities are about 20-30 dwellings per hectare backing onto the houses on Huntingdon Road up to 150 dwelling per hectare around the local centre – mostly apartments.

Q I thought that the houses backing onto Huntingdon Rd had 20m back gardens or bigger? (TB)

They are no less than 20m and that is generous for new houses.

Q What about the height of the houses backing onto these houses? (TB)

They are no higher than two storeys – we have been through this in detail with the 19 Acre Field Residents Association.

Q There will be nine different architects on nine different plots you could easily end up with nine different visions. West Cambridge is a real warning about what can happen if there is not one overall vision. (JH)

Yes. We are very aware of this and we have selected architectural practices on the basis of their abilities to work together and we know how important it is to create something coherent. The landscape architects will also have a role in this too as obviously we need to make sure one side of the street is coherent with the other.

Q Will the University oversee and govern the developers planning applications to the Council? (AW)

Yes, they will not be allowed to make applications without University consent.

Q The budget is a key factor here and the cost of quality are the architects being governed in terms of materials they can use etc? (JH)

We purposely have not opted for all star architects we have selected a range from young practices to those more renowned ones. We have also kept a close eye on local talent and interest. As part of the tender process we have indicated the value of each package. However for years developers have been squeezing the sizes of residential builds so we are adopting the Mayor for London's design guide on residential buildings. This is usually 10% more.

Q How long will Phase One take and will there be an overlap with Phase Two?

We will break ground in Q2 of 2013 and be selling the first market houses 2015-17. The University accommodation will be available from summer 2015. It is very difficult to say whether we will be able to begin Phase Two before the completion of Phase One it will depend on the University's decision at that point in time.

However we are planning to ensure that the frontage on the main route from Huntingdon Road to Madingley Road is complete and that people are not living in a building site.

Q Which phase will the housing near 19 Acre Field be developed in and what sort of time scale are you working to for that area? (BD)

Probably Phase 3 or 4 and that will probably be around 2018-19.

Q What size will the community centre be? (JB)

500-600 square metres has been agreed with the planners – this is a hall for about 200 people plus some extra meeting spaces.

Q Do the supermarket, shops and community centre need a critical mass of customers to be viable?

Yes, however in the case of the supermarket it has been designed to supply more than just the site and the people in the surrounding areas are just as important. The customers who will be living on the site are just one section of the customer base. However the supermarket is also not huge – it's smaller than the Waitrose in Trumpington.

The unit shops are a bit different and designed to be entirely local so they are unlikely to be used as shops in the first instance instead they may be used for community facilities temporarily.

Q How much of the supermarket's customer base is likely to come from customers travelling there in cars. What are the car parking facilities like, that will give an indication of the expectation. (JH)

The car parking will be lower than the supermarket and a maximum capacity of 200. It will also be a mixture of parking for the supermarket and general car parking for the other facilities locally.

There will also be about 20-30 mother and child and disabled spaces and a little on the street.

4. It was decided that the next meeting should take place in September and that KF should circulate some dates and possible topics for discussion.