

**ENVIRONMENT
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**10 July 2007
(9.30am – 3pm)

PRESENT: Councillors Armstrong, Baker, Durrant, Holland, Holness, Newbold, Shah, Upstone, Ward

Also Present: Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth: Sian Reid
Executive Councillor for Environmental & Waste Services: Colin Rosenstiel

And: Councillor Bradnack for minute numbers 07/Env/46; 07/Env/53; 07/Env/54
Councillor Herbert for minute number 07/Env/51
Councillor Kightley for minute number 07/Env/42
Councillor Smart for minute number 07/Env/50

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL07/ENV/37 **MINUTES**

The minutes of 20 March and of the Special Meetings on 15th and 24th May were approved and signed as a correct record.

07/ENV/38 **APOLOGIES**

None.

07/ENV/39 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors declared the following personal interests:

In minute number 07/Env/42: Councillors Baker, Upstone and Ward as members of the University; Councillor Holness as an employee of the University and as her husband is on the North West Cambridge Committee.

Councillor Reid as her husband does some consultancy work for the University Estates Department.

In minute number 07/Env/50: Councillor Armstrong as an employee of the Co-op.

07/ENV/40 **PETITION**

The text of the petition signed by more than 431 residents reads:

“We the undersigned are concerned voting residents of Cambridge. The Ashwell scheme for high density offices and up to 1400 small flats in buildings up to 10 storeys high, little public space and enormous traffic problems for a wide area, is unacceptable. We urge the Council to maintain its rejection of these plans without concession so that the development of the city's Station area complies with the democratically agreed local area plan. We look to our Council to protect the city's heritage from any and all forms of over-development.”

Mr Ron Clifton, Chairman of the Brooklands Avenue Residents' Association and Mrs Barbara

Bell, Chairman of the Glisson Road/Tenison Road Area Residents' Association spoke to the petition. They spoke on behalf of the Residents' Committees closest to the proposed revised development of the Station Road Area and other council tax payers who registered their objections at public meetings they had promoted. The full texts of their statements are attached to these minutes.

As, under the rules of procedure, members of the Committee were allowed to ask questions of the petitioners, the Chair summarised the legal advice given by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. Members were advised to avoid asking questions or having a discussion about the merits of any new application or passing judgement on anything that they might have heard about any new application, in view of the fact that a planning application was likely to be submitted later in the year and preliminary discussions were going on with the applicants.

No members of the Committee wished to ask a question.

The Director of Environment & Planning thanked the petitioners for their contributions and affirmed that it was vital to ensure that all components of any new application achieved the objectives of the Local Plan. Transport which was effective and sustainable was a critical component. He said that a first draft of a new application was expected in October 2007. This would be assessed fully against the Local Plan and the County Council would be required to provide clear guidance on the transport needs.

Councillor Reid as Executive Councillor also thanked the petitioners saying it was important that the public gave their views. She asked that it be minuted that the County Council be sent the statements provided by Mr Clifton and Mrs Bell along with the text of the petition.

Action: Cttee Manager

07/ENV/41

PUBLIC QUESTIONS

Mr Roger Akester addressed the meeting. He had understood that a report on the Conservation Area Appraisal Programme for 2007/08 was to have been considered at this meeting but had been withdrawn. He asked to be given the reasons for the item being withdrawn, about what procedures would be followed from this point on and that the Storey's Way Conservation Area be approved as a matter of urgency.

The Chair explained that the report had sought to allocate priorities to the different areas and to outstanding requests. When he had questioned officers at the briefing that was held on the draft papers, it became clear that some Residents Associations (not in the Storey's Way area) who might be expected to take a view on these priorities had not been consulted. It had been decided (by himself, the Executive Councillor, and the officers present at the briefing) that it was right to consult more widely, and that it was not practical to consult before the committee meeting, and that the report should therefore be delayed until the next meeting. He also explained the importance of maintaining a balance between speed and quality of decision making.

The Director of Environment & Planning also explained that there had been some delay due to the sickness absence of a member of staff. Such staff were specialist officers and so it was not possible to employ temporary staff. The project still had high priority, the additional

consultations would be carried out over the next months until September and the report would be brought to the next meeting in November.

Councillor Holland asked whether there were sufficient resources allocated to this section.

Councillor Reid as Executive Councillor said that this could be evaluated for the coming financial year in the budget considerations which took place between November and February next year.

Action: Simon Payne

The Chair said that officers would reply to Mr Akester about the procedures.

Two members of the public wished to address the meeting in relation to the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan and so the Chair altered the order of the agenda and took that item next. The agenda was also re-ordered for later items and these minutes reflect the order in which items were considered at the meeting rather than the published agenda order.

07/ENV/42 **NORTH WEST CAMBRIDGE AREA ACTION PLAN – RESPONSES TO ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION** *(see also record of decision 07/ENV/31)*

After the officer had introduced the report, Mr Paul Milliner on behalf of the University of Cambridge and Mr John Hipkin a resident of Castle Ward addressed the meeting. The full texts of their statements are attached to these minutes.

Councillor Kightley, ward councillor for Castle Ward, also addressed the meeting. He mentioned the empty quarter between the American Cemetery and Huntingdon Road. He thought the 20m contour was arbitrary and he had no objections to the development being below the contour line.

The officer recommendations to the Executive Councillor were:

To recommend:

1. a site footprint and revised Green Belt boundary as set out in paragraphs 3.2.2 to 3.2.5 and informed by Paper 1 of the officer report.
2. responses to the Issues and Options document and the preferred approach to the Area Action Plan as set out in Paper 2 of the officer report.

The Chair referred members to an amendment to the recommendations in the officer report being tabled by the Executive Councillor.

Councillor Reid explained that she was tabling an amendment to these recommendations to set out her aims which were not the same as those in the officer recommendations to her. She explained to the Scrutiny Committee the dilemma that her own preferred option for the site plan (10.1) was not the one preferred by South Cambridgeshire District Council and that the Area Action Plan process required a joint Plan to be put forward. She asked the Scrutiny Committee to give her a steer about whether or not the City Council should reserve its position on the final site footprint until after the period of public consultation on the options had taken place.

The Executive Councillor then tabled the following amendment to the recommendations in the report:

1. That the City Council is not sympathetic to the report's analysis of the landscape setting nor to the imperative of preserving the setting of the city in the manner recommended in the report. Furthermore, the City Council does not accept that such considerations override the needs of the University or the urban design requirements set out in the criteria. In particular, the City Council is keen to ensure that achieving green space internal to the development, and shielded from the visual and auditory impact of the M11 Motorway, should be a primary objective. Nevertheless, the City Council acknowledges the strength of the South Cambridgeshire District Council feeling on the landscape setting issue and the City Council recognises that the only way to proceed is reluctantly to endorse the site footprint and Green Belt boundary as set out in paragraphs 3.2.2 –3.2.5 and shown in the map of Option E.
2. Responses to the Issues and Options document and preferred approach to the Area Action Plan subject to (1) above as set out in Paper 2.

The majority of the Scrutiny Committee welcomed the amendment, although there were concerns that the minutes of the North West Fringe Member Reference Group (NWFMRG) at which Option E had emerged were not available.

The Director of Environment & Planning confirmed that the minutes of the NWFMRG were not yet available due to the short time between the two meetings. He advised that there had to be a joint plan put forward under the regulations and that the main difficulty was the differences between South Cambridgeshire District Council and the City Council.

Several members expressed concerns that rushing into a compromise might be counter-productive in the long run and that supporting Option E was to support the lowest common denominator between the councils. It was more important to take the time now to get the right decision. Members were concerned about the university's wish to progress as quickly as possible to the Examination in Public (EiP) and the idea of letting the inspector adjudicate. The question was raised as to whether two Area Action Plans could be put forward for the Inspector to decide on their respective merits.

The Urban Extensions Project Manager explained that a preferred joint Action Plan was required under the regulations and that all the rejected options would be presented in an appendix. This would mean that members of the public could still comment on the rejected options.

The Executive Councillor raised concerns about whether officers would be able to represent the amendment at the EiP.

The Director of Environment & Planning said that the issue of defending the plan at the Examination in Public was one that could be managed.

Following this debate, the amendment was passed by 6 votes to 1.

An amendment proposed by Councillor Baker to point 1 of the substantive motion was passed by 5 votes to 0. It read (additions in bold):

“That the City Council is not sympathetic to the report’s analysis of the landscape setting nor to the imperative of preserving the setting of the city in the manner recommended in the report. Furthermore, the City Council does not accept that such considerations override the needs of the University or the urban design requirements set out in the criteria. In particular, the City Council is keen to ensure that achieving green space internal to the development, and shielded from the visual and auditory impact of the M11 Motorway, should be a primary objective. Nevertheless, the City Council acknowledges the strength of the South Cambridgeshire District Council feeling on the landscape setting issue and **that, while** the City Council **is in favour of Option 10.1**, it recognises that the only way to proceed is reluctantly to endorse the site footprint and Green Belt boundary as set out in paragraphs 3.2.2 –3.2.5 and shown in the map of Option E.”

The Director of Environment & Planning advised that, if Option 10.1 was endorsed without South Cambridgeshire District Council support, there would be no joint plan and it would not be possible to move forward to the EiP.

The Chair asked the two public speakers if they wished to take up their right to come back with supplementary statements.

Paul Milliner for the University said that they did not wish to risk the collapse of the AAP as they wanted to get to the EiP as soon as possible.

John Hipkin was still concerned about the fact that the City Council seemed to be losing out to South Cambs.

Members were still concerned particularly about the new planning regulations.

After further extensive debate, a further amendment (highlighted in bold) to the substantive motion was proposed by the Chair, Cllr Ward, as follows:

“That the City Council is not sympathetic to the report’s analysis of the landscape setting nor to the imperative of preserving the setting of the city in the manner recommended in the report. Furthermore, the City Council does not accept that such considerations override the needs of the University or the urban design requirements set out in the criteria. In particular, the City Council is keen to ensure that achieving green space internal to the development, and shielded from the visual and auditory impact of the M11 Motorway, should be a primary objective. Nevertheless, the City Council acknowledges the strength of the South Cambridgeshire District Council feeling on the landscape setting issue and that, while the City Council is in favour of Option 10.1, it recognises that the only way to proceed is reluctantly to endorse the site footprint and Green Belt boundary as set out in paragraphs 3.2.2 –3.2.5 and shown in the map of Option E, **subject to taking legal advice about the planning law relating to joint working after which the final decision as between favouring Option 10.1 or Option E will be taken by the Executive Councillor following consultation with the Chair and the Spokesperson of the Scrutiny Committee.**”

This amendment was passed by 6 votes to 0.

The Executive Councillor approved this substantive motion.

Councillor Reid thanked members for also raising some of the transport issues which needed

to be addressed – concerns about the proposed orbital route, access to public transport, only one access to the site ie from Huntingdon Road, the absence of a link to Madingley Road – and reminded members about a briefing on the results of the Traffic Investment Fund study on the 16 July. She suggested these points be taken up at that briefing.

The officers also indicated that there would be more about the transport aspects in the report to the Special meeting of Environment Committee in September at a date yet to be confirmed.

Councillor Reid requested that representatives of the County Council be invited to that meeting.

Cttee Manager

07/ENV/43 **2006/07 REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN, CARRY FORWARDS AND SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES – ENVIRONMENTAL & WASTE SERVICES** *(see also record of decision 07/ENV/20)*

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 6 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

07/ENV/44 **REPORT ON COMMERCIAL WASTE CARDBOARD RECYCLING & COMMERCIAL MIXED GLASS COLLECTIONS** *(see also record of decision 07/ENV/21)*

In response to questions from Councillor Holland, the Executive Councillor clarified that collection of trade waste was a contractual matter between each business and its respective contractor. Unlike the collection of domestic waste for which the council had a statutory duty, for trade waste, a number of contractors including the Council were involved. If individual businesses had too much waste for their bins, it was their responsibility to ensure these were emptied.

Councillor Holland expressed concerns particularly about the businesses at Quayside, the University Centre in Mill Lane and Wetherspoons in St Andrews Street where she thought there were problems of overflowing bins.

The Head of Waste & Fleet said that, if any of these businesses had a contract with the City Council then they had only to ask for more calls to remove their waste. If not, they had to arrange this with their own contractor.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 7 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

07/ENV/45 **TAXI LICENSING**

Councillor Newbold outlined the reasons for asking for a review of the impact of delimitation

of taxis which had been implemented in 2001. He asked that the report consider whether delimitation was addressing what the Council wanted especially in relation to transport criteria.

The Chair asked if other members had additional issues they wanted the report to address.

The Executive Councillor asked whether the absence of on-street hailing had an impact and for a review of the provision of the non-street taxi rank at the station and the fact that the on street rank in Station Road was really a feeder for the non-street rank.

The Committee agreed that a report be brought to the November meeting.

07/ENV/46 **APPOINTMENT TO OUTSIDE BODY AND CITY RANGER STEERING GROUP** *(see also record of decision 07/ENV/22)*

Councillor Bradnack addressed the meeting about the Labour Group's concerns about the changes which were being introduced in the way appointments were made to outside bodies. The Labour Group were requesting that a report be prepared for the September meeting of the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Committee and asked that this meeting defer the making of appointments until after that meeting. While there was some common ground in relation to the Council's own internal Working Parties, such as the City Ranger Steering Group, they also had concerns about these.

When deferral was not agreed, Councillor Bradnack indicated that the Labour Group would not be putting forward nominations at this time.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and agreed with the Executive Councillor's decisions:

1. To appoint Cllr Colin Rosenstiel to the Waste and Environment Forum (formerly Cambridgeshire Councils Association Waste Forum),
2. Not to appoint formally to the Cleaner Cambridge Campaign but to encourage interested volunteers to join,
3. To appoint Councillor Baker to the City Rangers Steering Group and the Labour nominee when that is received.

07/ENV/47 **2006/07 REVENUE AND CAPITAL OUTTURN, CARRY FORWARDS AND SIGNIFICANT VARIANCES** *(see also record of decision 07/ENV/23)*

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 5 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

07/ENV/48 **EAST PIT**

Councillor Durrant had asked that a report come to committee. The purpose was to establish the status of the current negotiations with the owners, Gonville & Causis College, regarding the proposal for the Pit as a Travellers Emergency Stopping Place and to consider progress for the development of the Pit as an extension to the Spinney Nature Reserve.

He said that the proposal in relation to the nature reserve was in the Conservation Strategy but he wanted to understand more about the plan to use it as a Gypsy and Traveller site and how that related to the use as a nature reserve.

The Executive Councillor clarified that the Leader was responsible for all matters to do with Gypsies and Travellers.

The committee agreed that a report be brought to the November meeting.

07/ENV/49 **REVIEW OF TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**
(see also record of decision 07/ENV/24)

Members expressed a number of concerns about the review:

- The approach to the review was conservative especially in relation to the use of the internet
- Concern about the low risk strategy for accommodation booking services
- Income generation was required and providing an information service did not bring in income. In addition, the public did not value this as a service provided by the Council.
- A business plan was required.
- More clarity required about central Overheads/Recharges and the basis on which these are calculated

The Executive Councillor explained that this report was a first step and was to address on-going issues rather than being strategic. She acknowledged the need to put the service on a more commercial footing and the plan would allow both the Tourism Service and City Centre Management to work more closely with key partners.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 5 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

Councillor Shah in the Chair for the remainder of the meeting

07/ENV/50 **DEVELOPMENT BRIEF FOR PROPOSALS SITE 7.12 (MILL ROAD)** (see
also record of decision 07/ENV/27)

Councillor Smart spoke on behalf of residents in Romsey. She said that there had been considerable consultation with the local area and many residents had participated. Section 3.3 of the officer report gave a good summary of their concerns. She highlighted the concerns about 3 storey buildings being too high, about possible domination by cars and the very strong desire of the local community for houses and flats rather than institutions such as a residential home or student hostel. A 100-bed residential home was too big for the site. There were really three elements to the site – the two which the Brief covered and the neighbouring Brookfields Hospital site. Should the latter come on the market a separate brief might be required. She referred to the Local Plan which said that student hostel accommodation could (not should) be included on this site. Accommodation for those who

lived temporarily in the city needed to be distributed throughout the city. The local community hoped that the layout proposed might allow in the longer term for a way through to Wycliffe Road and Seymour Street.

Members raised the following and the officers responded (A):

- Concern that the use of roof spaces, which was essential to meet the council's housing aspirations, might become uninhabitable in future with the impact of global warming; thus a general policy to cover this might be needed for all development sites.
- A request to strengthen the first paragraph on Parking Standards on page 26 of the Brief eg encouraging 1 car per household or to be a car free site.

Councillor Smart said that a car free site was not realistic due to the lack of a 7-day reliable bus service.

- A preference for not using the photograph on the bottom of page 22 showing cars parked.
- On page 20 of the Brief under Housing Mix, to substitute in the second sentence the word "requires" for "will seek".
- In the last paragraph of page 20 what did the phrase "greater proportion of family accommodation" refer to? What was the comparison being made?

A: The officers explained that the comparison was with flats for single persons rather than family housing.

- The wording of the first sentence on page 27 of the Brief required re-wording.

The Executive Councillor asked for these drafting points to be addressed including the selection of pictures. She asked whether it was possible to include more pictures of examples of good practice for example in relation to parking.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 6 votes to 0) the recommendation for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendation.

07/ENV/51

AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) *(see also record of decision 07/ENV/29)*

Councillor Herbert addressed the meeting. He appreciated the work the officers had done but said it was a political decision about which figures to use. The report was clear about the need for affordable housing but there was no need for further assessment. He also noted that there was no target for social-rented housing as part of the overall affordable housing target. Other councils such as Huntingdonshire London, Edinburgh and other district councils in England had a minimum target of 70%. Braintree DC had a target of 80%. There was an opportunity now to set such a target and to shut the loophole that existed when the Belvedere development was built.

Councillor Armstrong spoke on behalf of Councillor Smart who was unable to be present for this item. She presented 6 main points:

1. The 40% affordable housing was very important but it was equally important to have no mono-tenure estates but to mix them.
2. Off-site financial contributions (commuted sums) were very much second best.

3. The possibility of employers' mitigation ie employers providing housing because they are attracting people to the area, was an interesting new aspect to explore.
4. Student hostel accommodation should be spread across the city
5. The sub-regional housing strategy was an advance and to be welcomed; the travel to work area was bigger than the city.
6. Consultation was essential.

Members of the committee made the following points to which officers responded (A):

- Endorsed what Councillor Herbert had said but also that a further assessment was necessary to establish the correct balance in the provision.
- A target for social-rented affordable housing was needed.

A: Referring to paragraph 40 of the draft guidance, there was to be no blanket target but a mix of tenure. This was to strengthen the guidance.

- Paragraph 40 was not really guidance; need to start with a minimum target; 40% was defensible and then 70% of social-rented housing was 28% of the total affordable housing provision.
- Community ownership of land should be addressed.

A: It was a question of what could reasonably be done and the proposed wording took account of the potential differences between sites.

- Concern about the wording of paragraph 5.10 of Annex 1 which said "Key worker housing should be located within a 30 minute drive time of their place of employment". This did not fit with the aspiration to reduce the reliance of people on their cars.

A: Agreed to address that by a revised form of wording.

The Executive Councillor stated that she was happy to set a target of 75% for social-rented affordable housing and she wished to be assured that this figure was in the SPD. She also asked for clarification about the policy relating to commuted sums and that that policy might be included in the consultation.

It was agreed that some revised wording for social rented housing be included in the SPD following consultation with the Executive Councillor and the Labour Spokes. The following wording (changes highlighted in bold) was subsequently agreed and included in the Record of Decision:

"Agreed Mix of Affordable Housing

39. The agreed affordable housing mix in each development will address local need in terms of its:
 - Provision of social rented and intermediate housing.
 - Provision of affordable supported housing.
 - Provision of flats and family houses categorised by number of bedrooms.

The City Council resolves to achieve 75% social rented housing on qualifying sites in accordance with the provisions of the Cambridge Housing Strategy except as may otherwise be indicated by Annex 2 of this SPD."

Councillor Herbert raised concerns about developers selling on land and about the importance of buy to let.

The Executive Councillor said those were issues to do with the housing market rather than affordable housing as such and she suggested that they be addressed as part of the Core Strategy.

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 6 votes to 0) the recommendations for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendations.

07/ENV/52 **PLANNING FOR GYPSY & TRAVELLER ACCOMMODATION IN THE EAST OF ENGLAND: ISSUES & OPTIONS CONSULTATION DOCUMENT** *(see also record of decision 07/ENV/30)*

The Scrutiny Committee agreed (by 5 votes to 0) the recommendation for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendation.

07/ENV/53 **APPOINTMENTS TO STEERING GROUPS** *(see also record of decision 07/ENV/25)*

Councillor Bradnack's submission at minute number 07/Env/46 applied also to this item.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and agreed with the Executive Councillor's decisions to appoint the Lib Dem members to the Steering Groups and to accept the Labour nominees when they are proposed.

07/ENV/54 **APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES** *(see also record of decision 07/ENV/26)*

Councillor Bradnack's submission at minute number 07/Env/46 applied also to this item.

The Scrutiny Committee considered and agreed with the Executive Councillor's decisions to appoint the Lib Dem members to the outside bodies and to accept the Labour nominees when they are proposed.

07/ENV/55 **CONSULTATION STRATEGY FOR PLANNING IN CAMBRIDGE (STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT)** *(see also record of decision 07/ENV/28)*

The Scrutiny Committee agreed the recommendation for the Executive Councillor.

The Executive Councillor agreed the recommendation.

07/ENV/56

DECISIONS BY EXECUTIVE COUNCILLORS

The Committee noted the decision made by the Executive Councillor for Climate Change & Growth since the meeting of the Scrutiny Committee in March:

- To Let a Contract for Cash Collection Services for Car Parking and other Council Services

An urgent decision taken by the Director of Environment & Planning was also tabled.

- Waiver of the Contract Procedure Rules in relation to GIS Solution Phase One

The relevant part of the Constitution states:

“Urgency Action

33. Each Chief Officer is authorised to act on behalf of the Executive or the Council (after consultation, if practicable with the relevant Executive Councillor or, in respect of non-executive functions, the relevant Chair or, in either case, the Chief Executive) in relation to matters within his/her area(s) of responsibility in cases of urgency or emergency. Any such action to be reported as soon as possible to the relevant Executive Councillor and Scrutiny Committee or, for non-executive functions, the relevant committee or sub-committee.”

The Committee noted the decision and the reasons for it:

Agreed a waiver of the requirements of the Contract Procedure Rules in relation to the Environment & Planning GIS Solution Phase One implementation to allow the Council to continue with its existing supplier and take advantage of a price freeze. In the circumstances, this represents good value for money, having regard to the Council's existing investment in ESRI and CAPS software.

The meeting ended at 3pm.

CHAIR

BARRA : CHAIR R. CLIFTON

It has now become fairly clear to Cambridge residents that some mistakes have been made in the planning process during the past few years, both in allowing developments which are unsuitable and in failing to ensure that enhancements to infrastructure, particularly traffic infrastructure, are actually in place before new developments are occupied. But it is also clear that the planning officials, Planning Committee members and other Councillors are learning from these mistakes, and giving new applications more critical scrutiny.

The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Structure Plan, and the most recent version of the Cambridge Local Plan, have been formally accepted after careful public scrutiny and consultation. Developers have had a chance to provide input to these plans. It is important, therefore, that any scheme approved for the station area, whether by Ashwell or other parties, can be shown to comply fully with these plans, and in particular with the Area Development Framework, with whose terms Ashwell at least are fully familiar.

Cambridge's architectural richness exists because, throughout its history, it has been able to build and preserve the best features of contemporary design, and to ensure that there is a proper and sympathetic blend between different styles. The current trend for utilitarian and monolithic buildings, especially around the station, has gone far enough. Such buildings undoubtedly have their place in a suitable environment, but Cambridge isn't it. An important part of the city's attraction is its relatively small scale, as major cities go: this gives it a cohesion which many larger cities, with disparate communities in more clearly defined suburbs, can only envy. This more human scale facilitates the continuation of a sustainable community throughout the city, and it needs to be retained.

We should not lose sight of this need, even in the face of Government and social pressure to build more and more residential units – homes, as they should be – in the South East. Brownfield sites, such as the area around the station, are prime situations for mixed development including

significant elements of housing, shops and offices. Cambridge people will welcome a solution for the station area which will meet the City's transport, housing and other needs well into the future – to 2020 at the very least – so planners need to take projected growth fully into account. A superior transport interchange which will work in 2010, but not ten years later, is no solution.

Of course, this involves integrating the City and County plans with improvements by Network Rail and the train and bus operating companies, and it is not always easy to synchronise such developments, but we have only one chance in a generation to get it right.

The Residents' Committees closest to the proposed revised development of the Station Road Area are representing the ongoing concerns of their many members who signed the petition which we are presenting today. We also speak for many other council tax payers who have registered their objections at public meetings we have promoted.

The previous scheme was rejected on 26 counts and we are grateful for that. They reflected:

- the lack of consideration of the opportunity to create a fitting 'gateway' to our historic and cultural city
- the effect on amenity of the existing community and the over-development of too many one and two bedroom apartments aimed at yielding maximum return for the developers which would attract commuters and buy-to-let exploiters but fail to meet the needs of family and community oriented provision
- lack of provision for a transport system which will serve the community and visitors and provide for the extremely large and unwanted increase in population which is being imposed upon us.

We applaud the developers' and their architects' new approach which tries to provide for input from local people in re-developing their scheme.

However, the necessary work of creating suitable infrastructure and relating the development to the wider area which will be affected, needs to receive priority and any new scheme has to accommodate related activity and needs for redevelopment. **We are not confident that this is being given due attention.**

- The railway station needs an entrance from the south to reduce unnecessary traffic over Hills Road bridge, Hills Road and Station Road. It needs a better platform system with underpasses or bridges over to provide better access for passengers. It needs more trains to accommodate the present commuter traffic, the tourists and the inevitable increase in need from a 25% increased population.
- The surrounding areas need a proper approach to the inevitable increase in traffic which will affect a wider area. Main roads and small roads connecting them, which are already rat runs, cannot cope now with traffic movements nor those caused by the proposed concentration of housing, offices and retail outlets of this development
- A Section 106 on the developers cannot be expected to solve these problems nor to totally finance them. **The City and County Council must take responsibility, and influence the railway authority, to sort out these ongoing and potentially dire problems before the developers proceed.**

How can we prevail on you to respect the Local Plan and ensure Cambridge takes this prime opportunity to create a fit for purpose, practical and attractive solution and soon? With 55k visitors at weekends and an enlarged population for Cambridge it is essential that we have a first class transport system which will see us into the mid-century at least – the tinkering with small changes is not going to meet that need.

Thank you for allowing me to speak at this meeting.

Some of you will have heard my colleague Mr Dane speak at the recent Joint Member Reference Group meeting on 29 June. A copy of his script has been circulated.

At that meeting Option A was recommended for approval by Officers. The Option was accompanied by an Illustrative Masterplan. Even though the previous four months had been available to jointly test options, and negotiate an Option acceptable to all parties, this Masterplan has been prepared without any involvement or discussion with the University or local communities. This is not the same spirit of joint working shown by the University, and falls far short of the collaborative process used to design the University's draft Masterplan.

Option E has now been submitted to this Committee. Although prepared as an amendment to Option A, with a wider Girton Gap, it still has largely the same shape as the Councils' Masterplan.

The University will now undertake detailed testing of that plan, to inform our response to consultation on Preferred Options. We have some immediate and obvious concerns, however:

- the thin ribbon of development land in South Cambridgeshire would not allow for a quality development
- the masterplan shows blocks of development immediately adjacent to existing residential properties in Huntingdon Road and Storeys Way
- a relatively small amount of open space is shown within the built footprint
- the plan is therefore misleading as it indicates a greater amount of development than could realistically be achieved
- it is unlikely that viable public transport services could be sustained through the thin ribbon of development land
- there is no direct orbital road link to Madingley Road, as required by the County Council
- a significant part of the development edge would be defined by a radial road

The Option recommended to you has clearly been designed with the primary objective of protecting the landscape setting as seen from the M11. The 20m contour is identified as the development boundary. This is not however a clearly identifiable landscape feature, and its use compromises the quality of development.

The difference in development footprints in Options A to E would be barely noticeable from viewpoints other than the M11, and there only momentarily by people travelling at speed.

With regard to the M11, it should be recognised that the motorway is a dominant feature in the landscape, has already reduced the quality of the Green Belt setting, and dislocates the development site from the rest of the Green Belt.

We accept that landscape setting is an important issue, but it is not the overriding issue. It is at least equally important that proper regard be had for the quality of environment that will be created for the thousands of people that will live and work on the site. An appropriate balance requires an alternative development boundary to the 20m contour.

Elsewhere in the papers you are advised that Options A and E have similar land take to Option 10.2 and must therefore be acceptable. What you are not told, however, is that the University *objected* to Option 10.2, partly because the configuration of development land was unsound. The same applies to Options A and E.

To conclude, the University will test Option E, but is unlikely to support it. Nevertheless we urge you however to take a decision today, to keep the process moving and avoid further slippage in the programme, as we wish to reach the public examination as quickly as possible. In the meantime we are willing to continue to work with the Councils, in the hope that an appropriate footprint can be agreed by all parties by the submission stage.

Thank you.

First, may I remind you that the University's preferred option 10.1 (now appearing as Option C in your papers) came into being as the result of a number of masterplanning workshops undertaken by stakeholders and local residents.

These workshops were, it is generally agreed, excellent examples of co-operative planning between developers and citizens. Speaking as a local resident and as one in touch with local opinion, I can assure you that it is generally believed locally that the 10.1 option is to be commended because of its balanced and sensitive intermixing of buildings and open space, its obvious reference to the character and needs of the surrounding communities, its clear definition of the city's NW urban edge, its cardinal principle that well-designed buildings do not spoil a natural landscape but can enhance it, and its respect for the notion that the urban extensions are not outcrops of the city centre, but rather independent and sustainable quarters in their own right with a wealth of community amenities and services available to the ten thousand residents who will live within a mile of the new development's central park.

They will be enormously disappointed that the University's preferred option is opposed by the two district councils and may well be substantially modified if they get their way

Second, I am disturbed to learn that the city council comes to this committee with a recommendation for Option E which only emerged a few days ago and which the University has had little time to evaluate or discuss internally. This point is underlined by the presence here today of University representatives addressing you under the item of Public Questions, having to appeal to you, as I am sure they will, not to approve an option which neither they nor, I suggest, the district council officers, have had time properly to consider.

The NW Cambridge development should not be carried forward on the basis of ad hoc initiatives or crude horse trading between the city council and S Cambs but on the basis of careful planning and the consensual engagement of the principal partners. For this reason I hope members of this committee will demonstrate their independence of mind and respect for scrutiny by rejecting the first of the recommendations to the executive councillor.

Third, I should like to refer to the vexed question of how far down the slope toward the M11 the development should be permitted to extend (we might call this the green belt question) since this is the principal bone of contention between S Cambs and the University with the city council in the same bed as S Cambs although trying to keep under the covers.

Stand as some of you have and some of you haven't with your backs to the M11 looking across the site toward Girton College and the backs of the splendid gardens of the upper Huntingdon Road houses and what sort of a landscape do you see.

On the horizon a backdrop of lush trees surmounting the entire view. These will remain in sight. Secondly a gently undulation toward towards Washpit brook which is itself tree-lined for much of its length.

Finally an upward slope toward the artificially raised contour of the M11. Frankly the brook and its woodland margin constitute a much more authentic edge to the site than the arbitrary and invisible 20 metre contour favoured by S Cambs though I hasten to add that the University's preferred option footprint falls far short of the brook.

With a careful gradation of building heights and green gaps between them the ascent toward Girton would offer a firm edge to the city, a fine setting for that edge and a retention of the most agreeable longer views.

I urge any member of this committee who has not been to the site and who is not aware of the landscaping issues not to support a scheme which in their hearts they know they are not able properly to assess.

In this connection members of the committee should bear in mind that the more tightly the green belt edge is drawn the greater will be the squeeze on the site footprint, the greater the likely loss of green space and the denser the built part of the development. Thus the push up the slope may well impact upon dwellings backing onto the site, may involve loss of amenity space for community use within the site and involve the raising of building heights to achieve viability. None of this should be countenanced without the most thorough consideration of effects.

Finally, I am disappointed that the city finds itself at odds with the University over this matter. The University of Cambridge is one of the great engines of the national, regional and local economies. Its record of design and architectural excellence is unsurpassed. It is the natural ally of the city of Cambridge. I hope that over the coming weeks a new spirit will permeate discussions between the University and the district councils, that the University will not be treated as a supplicant at the doors of the municipal authorities but as a valued partner in the realisation of a vision befitting this great city. Thank you for your attention.