

Development Plan Steering Group – Tuesday 20th January 2009 @ 9:30am

Councillors Present: Reid (Chair), Baker, Ward (Vice Chair), Blair (Alterative), Blencowe

Also present: David Roberts (Head of Policy & Projects)
Sara Cass (Planning Policy Manager)
Emma Davies (Planning Officer)
Nancy Kimberley (Senior Planning Officer)

1. Minutes

The minutes from the 16th December meeting were not available but will be available in paper form for the next meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Holness.

3. Declaration of Interest

Cllr Ward as his wife works for the University and he is a member of the University.
Cllr Reid as her husband does some occasional work for the University Estates Department.

4. Public Questions

None.

5. Mill Lane SPD

Emma Davies provided a brief introduction to the report and outlined the key elements of the SPD.

Cllr Ward welcomed the document and thanked officers for drafting such an interesting document which was different from the usual items discussed at DPSG.

Cllr Reid highlighted that there were different definitions of the boundary and asked for these to be reconciled.

Figure 12 was tabled for discussion and officers explained that the University were keen to discuss some minor amendments to the diagram prior to consultation in order to ensure that it is consistent with the vision. It was agreed that Chair and Spokes would agree any amendments prior to the start of the consultation period.

Cllr Reid also raised the general concern around the junctions in this area and the need to look integrally at this site. Accessibility is important and this site should not be seen as an island away from the rest of the City. The potential scope for improvements to the junctions outside the site boundary were discussed. Officers suggested that this could be raised with the County Council before the consultation in order to inform the County's response to the SPD. It was agreed that a meeting should be set up with the County Council and the SPD

should make it clear that it is an aspiration to improve the junction arrangements in this area but it's not within the City Councils remit as the planning authority. Instead this falls to the County Council as the transport authority. Cllr Blencowe was keen that this distinction was clearly made and that expectations were not raised through the SPD given that the City Council is not responsible for transport improvements.

It was agreed that Cllrs Reid, Baker and Blair will attend the meeting with the County prior to the start of the consultation period and Cllr Blencow is also welcome to attend.

In terms of consultation, all County Councillors for the City need to be consulted as well as the new parish council at Orchard Park and Transition Towns.

Cllr Ward queried why Histon Parish Council were being consulted and officers explained that its one of the glitches of the LDF system that requires us to consult with all the surrounding Parish Councils.

6. Retail Study

Nancy Kimberley introduced the officer report and highlighted the key findings of the retail study.

Cllr Baker queried why Wulfstan Way had not been identified in paragraph 3.11 of the report given that it needs a considerable uplift. Officers explained that all local centres had been assessed, although the retail study only highlights key opportunities.

Cllr Reid suggested that the detail included in the assessment of the local centres may be inaccurate and should be double checked and sent to ward members. It was agreed that it was important to develop our own view as to what the priorities are for each local centre. Officers suggested that this work could be combined with the local centres shopping survey and would feed into future policy development in the development control policies DPD. It was agreed that officers will:

- Consult with Ward Councillors as they have good local knowledge
- Agree questions that we will ask Ward Councillors at DPSG
- Ask Ward Councillors to consider the boundaries of the centres and names of the centres.
- Identify centres that need environmental improvements
- Develop a City Council view as to what the priorities and key opportunities are.

Cllr Reid referred to the capacity forecasting on page 5 and did not find the forecasting to be particularly clear. The general view was that the conclusions needed to go further in terms of implications for policy. Officers agreed to hold a separate session on retail at DPSG in the future to discuss the development of retail policy in the various Development Plan Documents.

Concern was expressed about the transport issues and that people shop where they live.

There was also concern over the term 'deeper discount' used in the retail study and that this was inappropriate. Cllr Reid was keen that shops that fall into the category should be viewed positively and are a good model for local shopping.

It was agreed that some of the detail in the retail study is not necessarily accepted and the

recommendations need to be more explicit in acknowledging that it only forms part of our evidence base. Cllr Baker referred to paragraph 3.27 of the report and asked for clarification if the study will be material or may be material consideration. Officers agreed that the retail study may be a material consideration and agreed that recommendation 2.2 should be rewritten.

It was agreed that recommendation 2.2 needed to be written more clearly, as follows (new text is underlined):

'To agree that the Cambridge Sub-Region Retail study forms part of the retail evidence base for the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) forming the Local Development Framework and that it may form a material consideration in respect of the determination of retail planning applications'.