

Cambridge Past, Present & Future

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FAO: Susan Smith

8 February 2012

Dear Susan,

Hills Road - CONSULTATION DRAFT - Cambridge Suburbs and Approaches

CambridgePPF welcomes this study and considers enhancement of this road as important. With reference to the above study our internal Heritage Working Group has discussed the appraisal and has the following comments to make:

Chapter 1

- 3rd/4th para - **important to stress the rural setting and edge of Cambridge and that this area is within the Green Belt.**
- **Character Areas 2 and 3 - have a largely villa character with large front and rear gardens;** interspersed with hospital, collegial and school buildings (part purpose built part change of use)
- last para - reference to Conservation Appraisal made - ensure this one is updated, too.

Chapter 3

- para 3.1-3rd para - please note **it has never been the Cambridge Preservation Trust** - was Cambridge Preservation Society now CambridgePPF (please can the consultants update their standard template text as this error has come up repeatedly - are comments made actually forwarded to consultants?).
- para 3.2 - **was there any section used as a drove road** (to cattle market)? Where exactly was the turn pike?
- page 7 details **description of art work to Kett House** - update draft CA appraisal. Same para - it is **Royal Albert Almshouses**.

Chapter 4

Character Area 1 - note road planting / hedge to SW verge has high amount of ornamental non-native shrub and tree species thus sub-urban character.
Both Character Areas 2 and 3 - has a strong villa character which is interspersed with schools (language and public schools) and collegial, hospital and research buildings at odd locations.

- para 4.2 - **rural setting to edge of Cambridge needs stronger description and needs to mention designation of area as Green Belt.**
- para 4.2 - last para - the Catholic Church is a **landmark building.**
- para 4.3 - **hedgerow** - see earlier comment that this includes a **high percentage of non-native species** and does not conform to the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines: A Manual for Management and Change in the Rural Landscape 1991
- para 4.3 - last para - **note changes will occur due to large junction proposals to new development at Bell School** and will have an adverse impact on this section of the road.
- para 4.5 - para 3 - **Mistake of high timber- panelled fence with no front garden/ access (3 new houses at junction with Cavendish Avenue) should not be repeated** as this has an adverse impact on the character of the road.
- para 4.6 - **Character Area 4** - in the past had some, in recent years a lot (Belvedere, Cambridge Leisure) and in future will have even more commercial premises at ground-floor level (The Screen Building at Brinton Site) and as such **the nature of the road is changing to a much more commercial character.**
- para 4.7 - first para - **retail uses commence much earlier ref Character Area 4;** second para - **CambridgePPF considers that Conservation Area designation to east/ south of CB1 should be retained** as an important new city quarter requiring high quality development and quality upkeep of the new green space and buildings when under private management company (rather than the council(s)). **Area in front of public entrance to Botanic Garden** (junction with Station Road) **requires improvements** and a new square is in planning as part of the Botanic House development.
- para 4.7 - No 24 Hills Road has been refurbished and **now soft landscape of front garden area lost** albeit sculptural cycle racks installed creating a positive front garden feature.
- para 4.7 - **update text** - the tree screen to north of alms houses along Botanic Garden has been removed and is currently being replaced with semi-mature trees and shrub underplanting.
- para 4.7 - Bulls Dairies/ Annabelle's Sandwich Shop. **This building relates to grazing on commons** (Coe Fen etc) and old dairies on Panton Street. **Probably Bulls Dairies was the one of the commercial outlets for local people.**

Chapter 5

- general - last para - **update key on map as unclear** - see comments below under mapping.

General

- **any post boxes/ telephone booths need listing?** Please check.
- **Recently the first mile stone near junction with Station Road has been listed by English Heritage upon request by CambridgePPF** (frontage of new Botanic House/ lens Building at edge of future square). Currently it supposed to be just behind the hoarding in front of Botanic House under protection and is to be restored as part of the redevelopment works. Opportunities to search for missing 2nd and 3rd mile stone along route and/or where missing re-install new ones as part of art and way-finding projects.
- **Street Furniture** - there is a lack of street furniture in the area and this needs to be addressed within the area. See also comments made under the various Suburb and Approached Road studies - Hills Road and Trumpington Road. A large enough group walks to work, to shop and/ or for recreation. Seats are essential to ensure the needs of less able (including elderly and disabled) walkers to enjoy their city. During the economic down-turn and increasing costs of fuel more emphasis on

sustainable access to the city centre should be ensured. Designs should be integrated which provide seating with arm rests and back rests but prevents anti-social behavior. The city-wide plan and management of street furniture should be revised and the various responsible departments at the City and County Councils should be co-ordinated to avoid loss of street furniture, ensure adequate design appropriate for a conservation area and City of Cambridge on the whole.

- **Street lighting** - areas need to be updated to include lighting strategy within the Conservation area. Description should also highlight areas where historic or special lighting should be kept. Along Hills Road there is a hotch-potch of different lighting columns and new ones have been placed between junctions of Cherry Hinton Road and Station Road . The current PFI-contract should be updated and County and City Council funding allocated accordingly and to phases of improvement works and to create a strong identity along this well used road by those traveling using vehicles or more sustainable transport modes.
- **Tree Planting** - opportunities for new street tree planting should be included and close liaison with County Council's Tree planting as well as City Council's Parks and Recreation Department and private land owners is essential. Some major trees act as focal points and could be highlighted on the map as landmark features and new land mark locations can be found to integrate feature trees.
- **References - add** - Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines: A Manual for Management and Change in the Rural Landscape 1991

Mapping

- annotation 'Green Area' is confusing as designated/ protected green spaces are not shown (such as Green Belt, Historic Park & Garden, Protected Open Space, City/ County Wildlife Site etc).
- important views are not highlighted.

Listed Buildings

page 21 - Milestone - note stone should be still in place (see comments made earlier).

CambridgePPF considers that as part of these studies the overall threats and opportunities need to be pooled together to form useful design guidance ensuring the enhancement of one of Cambridge's main access roads.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me or my colleague Nigel Bell.

Kind regards



Carolin Göhler
CEO - CambridgePPF

Encl - none

Cc - English Heritage - note listing of 3rd Milestone is essential.

Cambridge Past, Present & Future — a local charity with over 1,700 members working to keep Cambridge and its surroundings special by positively influencing planning developments,

delivering environmental education and managing the green spaces and historic buildings in its care – for the benefit of all.

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