



STOKE BISHOP NEIGHBOURHOOD OPEN FORUM Wednesday 29th January 2014

Present: Councillor Peter Abraham (PA), Councillor John Goulandris. Officers:, Andrew McGrath, PC Sarah Bond, PCSO Claire Fisher. Ward Representatives: Alan Preece (Chairman), Gay Huggins and Mark Baker. Stephanie French (Tree Champion)(SF), David Mayer (WOT Rep)(DM). Alan Aburrow (WOT Rep) and approximately 70 members of the public.

Apologies:, Peter Hobbs, Wendy Hull, Mr Schroff.

Welcome: Alan Preece (AP) welcomed everyone and made introductions. He was delighted with such a large turnout. He outlined the agenda for the evening.

Updates:

- a) 20mph rollout – Mark Baker would update later.
- b) Town & Village Green (TVG) – David Mayer would update later.
- c) No 40 bus – Route has been re-instated with effect from 2nd February.
- d) Community priorities – Following questionnaires Hayley Ash had established the main priorities for our area as parking & obstructions on pavements, cycling on pavements, toilets in Canford Park, litter and dog fouling.
- e) AP reminded everyone that the next Open Forum on the 9th April would include elections. Wendy Hull was standing down due to her other commitments, and Mark Baker would need to stand for election as he had been co-opted, so we are looking for another candidate, who is available to attend meetings and work for the benefit of the community.

Local Developments & Projects:

Roger Gamlin, Co-convenor, Stoke Bishop Residents' Planning Group : –

1. The Hiatt Baker site – There was a problem with car parking on site as many spaces had been lost. The bus hub was also causing problems. Shaplands would have parking restrictions installed. The work was now due to be finished by August 2014. Progress was well behind schedule on the lower part of the site. Lower part was due to be handed over by the end of July, and the upper part by the end of May. The landscaping and tree planting will be done in the Autumn. The University had withdrawn their application to plant the trees in Woodland Road, where trees already planted would now be paid for by them. The Warden's House should be finished shortly. The No 16 bus ran during term time to the City Centre and back. Following the decision not to install a bus lane on Parrys Lane, the University are meeting with the Council on Wednesday next week to try and sort the access problems in and out of the site. There is a temporary road on the complex which was due to be closed after 3 months of completion. The University has asked for this to be extended to 12 months and this has been granted. We must ensure that this is removed by the end of July 2015.

2. Dairy Crest site – At previous Open Forums, the unanimous decision was that the 3 houses by the entrance should face Parrys Lane, but the Council had turned this down. Tony Hoare advised us that Shepperton Homes were appealing and there was a public enquiry to be held on the 5th February at the Colston Hall at 10am. The vote from the audience was unanimous that the houses should face outwards, and he would report this to the enquiry.

3.69 Coombe Lane – another application had just gone in which was very similar to the previous one, but changing the use of the garage to an office instead of accommodation. People were asked to comment direct to the planners.

Tree Issues – SF had produced a report as attached. She proposed the proposal by the University to plant 70 trees as detailed in this report and it was agreed unanimously.

More trees were available from the development on 3 Stoke Hill, which would replace existing tree stumps within the 1 mile radius. She was asked about putting trees on the Downs. The Downs Ranger had indicated that the trees on the Downs had to be horse chestnuts, but PA felt the Downs Committee might be open-minded to alternatives.

AP then introduced Dr Adrienn Tomor, Senior Lecturer & Bridge Engineer, working for the University of the West of England. She gave a short presentation of her plans to build a pedestrian/cycle bridge over the top of Bridge Valley Road. There is an Open Day on 22nd February in Engineers' House, The Promenade, from 10am – noon. PA felt that, as cycling was not permitted on the Downs, the bridge should be for pedestrians only. (See details at end of report).

Section 106 money – There was £117K from Hiatt Baker, to be spent within 1 mile radius. AP outlined the present 4 projects that had been suggested, as follows:-

- 1) A toilet at Canford Park, separate from the changing rooms and accessible when the pavilion was closed. Cost £13,700
- 2) Old Quarry Park, Henleaze, an accessible access from Henleaze Terrace suitable for disabled and better fencing. Cost £30,000
- 3) Stoke Lodge – build a footpath for access to the playground and sports field adjacent to the car park, and redesign the car park with marked parking and resurface. Cost £36,300.
- 4) The Sneyd Park Nature Reserve had put in a bid to update the access for pedestrians and vehicles. Cost £23,000

These would be discussed at the Environment Group meeting on the 6th February and submitted to the NP Committee meeting on the 10th March for approval. The organiser of Shirehampton Colts FC stated that the change in pitch layout due to the playground meant that they sloped and at present were waterlogged so he wanted the money to be spent updating the pitches, and for the changing rooms. AP suggested he submitted a draft proposal to be considered at the Environment meeting to Andrew McGrath and Gary Brentnall. The general opinion was that the changing rooms were now covered by the lease to Cotham School and were now the responsibility of Cotham.

Stoke Lodge: Malcolm Willis (Headteacher) and Sandra Fryer (Vice-chair of Governors) addressed the audience about their concerns regarding the health & safety of their pupils using Stoke Lodge in conjunction with dog walkers. The changing rooms were very poor and drainage of some pitches. Dogs were defecating on the pitches and running around amongst the pupils. They felt there was a need to find a solution to this problem as they now had 1400 pupils. They felt dog use had increased. SF pointed out that the Stoke Lodge Preservation Working Group (SLPWG) existed and Cotham had never bothered to attend.

Ian Woodward quoted the National Playing Fields Association that facilities for walking dogs are just as important as for playing games.

Robert Walters – Cotham objected to the TVG so there could hardly be a partnership now.

David Lindsay – how long was the lease – 123 years left, and they do not pay anything for it.

Peter Weeks – There was a common interest between community and school. Cotham should be prepared to work with the community.

Martin Bennett – He walked across the field every day with his daughter to school and there was much less mess and litter from users thanks to the new bins. It was a matter of educating.

Jill Clarke – She walked across it a lot. Sad to see so much antagonism but felt Cotham were exaggerating the dog problem. Clearly dogs could be kept on the lead when children are there.

Stoke Lodge – TVG: David Mayer, Chairman of Save Stoke Lodge Parkland (SSLP) and Chairman of SLPWG, had met with Cotham at the Council House and at 2 other meetings, but had never been approached by them requesting their attendance at SLPWG meetings.. If they want dialogue then please attend these meetings. The lease was signed **after** the TVG was in, and the application states repeatedly that we will share the facilities. The changing rooms were excluded from the TVG, and if it is registered, then any development on an alternative site will be prohibited **by law**. We excluded the changing rooms so that they could be upgraded, so please do it! DM voiced his fears that, because of Cotham's views on health & safety they will want to exclude areas of Stoke Lodge by fencing. The weather has been exceptional, so the fact that pitches are flooded now does not mean they are flooded always. No Downs matches have been played for at least 3 weeks. It is one of the cleanest pitches in Bristol. Litter from sport users was, in the past, picked up by the community users but now the bins, paid for by the community, have made a great improvement. The new footpath proposed will provide safe access to the parkland as well as the playground.

PA – As Chair of the Planning committee he has to remain impartial but he hoped a decision would be made within 2 months. If it does become TVG you will have to work together.

Stoke Lodge playground: DM stated that work would start in March.

Well Being Fund: Gay Huggins had produced a list of the achievements with the money from this fund. All monies had to be spent by the end of the financial year. SB only had about £3000 left and several applications had been received. It was hoped a further £10K would be available from April so if anyone had any ideas for the spending of this, to contact her. There were no questions.

Feedback and Priorities:

- a) PC Sarah Bond reported that crime was down 3%. There had been 8 dwelling burglaries, but an increase in shed break-ins, particularly for bicycles. There had been no distraction burglaries, but an increase in theft from motor vehicles. She asked for people to report any suspicious persons hanging around or parked in cars, and to hide valuables in cars in the boot. There was an increase in shoplifting. PCSO Claire Fisher wanted to reach Neighbourhood Watch groups in the area. She asked if people wanted Ringmaster emails to let her have their email addresses. The police had been carrying out cycle safety on the Downs and to University students, giving advice and particularly those going through red lights which applies to them as well as cars. Speedwatch – not done much as it needs daylight but this will increase when appropriate. Avon & Somerset have started a voluntary cadet course for 14-17 year olds. Mike Huggins mentioned the bullion van which parks on the new pavement on Whiteladies Road.. He had been advised by the Council that this was a police matter. This was only the case if they were causing an obstruction. PA asked him to forward the emails to him. Korky Davey asked for a vote of thanks to the Officers for their work.
- b) Reports from the NP Working Groups were attached to the paperwork.

20mph update: Mark Baker reported that it had come into force in Redland/Clifton and Cotham. For our area, the consultation had closed and the next stage was the publication of the TRO which would be at the end of February. This gave people a final chance to object in total or in part, and the

Council had a legal obligation to look at them. There was a 6-week objection period. The roll-out would take place in our area at the end of August.

Sue Mayer spoke about Coombe Lane. Although it had been voted at a previous Open Forum to be 30mph (en bloc with all others suggestions) and this had been agreed by the Council, she felt it was a residential road and is used as a rat-run to avoid Falcondale Road. When the planned bus lane is introduced from Cribbs Causeway to Falcondale Road, there will be even more traffic using this road. She had asked for traffic calming such as islands but the Council had said it was too narrow, although it was too wide to be 20mph! PA felt we should be careful about what we say if you put in an objection which cannot be proved. Does it meet the criteria for 20mph, such as school or perhaps the sports centre? Perhaps that area could be reduced to 20mph. When the 20mph is in place in our area, it may need to be looked at from both perspectives, and perhaps 30mph reinstated in some places. The Transport Working Group had identified areas where improvement was needed at the junction of Coombe Lane and Canford Lane.

New Community actions and priorities: None were raised.

Any other Business: 1) Mr Walters raised the problem of no bus service from this area to Southmead hospital. It required 2 or 3 buses to get there, taking at least 1 1/2 hours. The 504 along Canford Lane was mentioned, though they only ran once an hour and you would have to park in Canford Lane to catch it, or catch a 41 which was unreliable. A shuttle bus would be good. This matter needed to be taken up with First Bus as the Council do not control the buses.

2) June Preston – The Open Gardens Trail, which was very successful last year, will be run again on Sunday 29th June, and this year hope to raise money towards the hanging baskets in the village. Please note the date!

3) AP was pleased to announce that Alan Aburrow has been awarded the Lord Mayor's Medal for his work in the community.

4) Andrew McGrath mentioned the Local Sustainable Transport Fund which gives grants of £500 to £3,000 to projects that get people out of cars and on to local transport.

Date of Next Meeting: 9th April 2014. The meeting closed at 9.00pm.

APPENDIX 1

A. Tree Report to Stoke Bishop Forum January 2014

- B. The University Estate department and the SB Planning Group and I met on 21st January to discuss the application to discharge the Planning Consent Condition No 25 reference Hiatt Baker Hall and the replacement trees.

We were presented with new plans drawn up by the University Estates Officer and their Landscape Architect.

Following their first application to discharge Planning Consent Condition No 25 which included some planting outside "this" Conservation Area, which was withdrawn following some very heated debate, we were shown these new plans in great and courteous detail.

All the new planting sites were shown to us on large scale drawings and the siting choices explained with regard to the longer term aims of canopy cover and species blend and mix, maintaining habitats and environments. Particular regard has been paid to maintaining the integrity of the wooded/tree'd boundaries of the Halls of Residence and with due regard to future loss of the older trees along the boundaries – so that there will be some infill and "third line" planting, so maintaining the boundaries when the older trees are eventually lost. This

also means that the public will get to see many of the new trees develop over the years when they use roads and footpaths around the campus.

The university staff drew particular attention to the wooded nature of the boundary of Hiatt Baker Hall with Parry's Lane, and described how this had remained intact for over 100 years, and that maintaining this into the future was very important to the University. We were pleased by that, but could not help but comment upon the fact that the integrity and health of this had been under threat in the early part of the application to develop the site. Apparently the landscaping part of the Estates Department is "back in control" now. I do not want to describe every tree to you now; the plans are available to look at tonight but not to take away. There will be 70 trees planted on the Hiatt Baker campus, 17 trees in the Badock campus, 21 trees in the Churchill campus and 25 trees planted in the Wills campus.

The SB Planning Group and I are happy to recommend this new planting scheme to the SB Forum and we hope you will approve it.

The University is waiting for your approval before submitting to the Planning Department of BCC the application to discharge the condition! They hope to start the planting in October 2014.

We did sneak in a quick "Why did you not do this in the first place?"

I shall report much the same to the NP in March and also report your decision tonight.

This is really a SB matter but we did get a lot of support from the NP Resident Reps and Councillors when we mounted our objections to the University's original plans and we are sure that helped us to overcome the University's plans and force the withdrawal of them.

- C. The situation reference Street Tree Planting Schemes put forward by TreeBristol in 2011 and on which we did so much work in Henleaze (Ward No 1 in our NP)(target re-vamps) remains as previously reported. All Tree Money in Bristol other than s106, CIL and individual corporate and private sponsorship, and tree replacement for trees lost due to development (those are replacements therefore, and not "new" trees) has been diverted by the Mayor to the Tree PiPs Scheme. Those trees will be whips, and very very unlikely to be planted in streets. They will not be protected other than in exceptional circumstances and they will not be maintained other than by the children who planted them. Some have predicted a 50% loss. The Scheme has been allocated £300,000, and once that money has run out there is no mention yet that the Tree Budget for trees in Bristol will be restored to the more usual situation – larger trees, maintained and protected for 3 years, planted in Parks and Streets. So where next for Bristol? There is a possibility that after Tree PiPs there will be no further tree planting in Bristol and also a possibility that all the work done in recent years in Parks and Streets will fall (literally) into ruin because there is no funding for tree maintenance other than the statutory requirements to keep bus routes clear and the public safe. Thus there is a risk that all the work done and the money spent in the last 5 – 7 years will have been wasted. So – if the original plans were still operative I should be going amongst you now asking you which streets in Stoke Bishop and Westbury you want the Council to spend money on putting in larger protected trees to re-vamp the tree'd streets, but I am afraid it would be a waste of your time and mine so I am not starting it. That is a dead scheme, already nailed to its perch.
- D. There is £2307 of s106 money to be spent on trees within 1 mile of 3 Stoke Hill. I am busy talking to the Street Tree Officer looking for stumps to replace. I am not sure if we are permitted to replace Street Tree Stumps with s106 money, but as the spending is now supposed to be at the discretion of the Neighbourhood Partnership we could try. If anyone has got any ideas for sites (other than the Downs) then please let me know. Green spaces are cheaper. We'd get 88% of a tree if we wanted a new pit in "hard standing". We would get 7 large trees

or 13 smaller trees in existing sites as stump replacements or new sites in green verges. I only got the map on Monday (stumps and verges) so please be patient.

- E. There has been a further application by the owner of 69 Coombe Lane which is an alteration to plans for a house extension/re-modelling which had already been given planning permission and which involved a loss of trees for which replacements were required as part of the Planning Consent granted. The new submission does bring further iconic “amenity” trees under threat, and I have made representations again.

APPENDIX 2



Bridge Valley Road foot bridge proposal

Open day

Saturday 22nd February 2014, 10am – 12noon

Engineers' House, The Promenade, Clifton Down, Bristol, BS8 3NB

The junction Bridge Valley Road, Clifton Down and Ladies Mile is a dangerous crossing for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles. A pedestrian and cycling bridge has been proposed to

- provide a safe crossing for pedestrians and cyclists
- complete the last missing link in a historical, environmental circular route
- provide a quality, highly sustainable long-lasting bridge with low maintenance needs
- maximise benefits to the local area (e.g. re-learning historical skills, training and career opportunities, educational resources, academic research, enhancing local tourism.)



Dundas Aqueduct - Example of a classical stone bridge

History and evolution of the proposal

1993: The need to create more protected pedestrian and cyclist movement around the peripheral routes of Downs was stated in *The Conservation Area Enhancement Statements November 1993 – Bristol Local Plan Advice Note*.

2010: The need to “create a safe circular path allowing people to access the Gorge from the Downs” was identified in “*A Management Plan for the Bristol side of the Avon Gorge, 2010-2015*”. Top of Bridge Valley Road was identified as a key location and a missing link in the circular pedestrian path around the Downs.

2010-11 Bridge Valley Road was closed to traffic due to engineering works. A traffic survey identified marked increase in pedestrian traffic across the top of Bridge Valley Road during the road closure.

June 2011: The Friends of the Downs and Avon Gorge (FOD+AG) proposed a pedestrian bridge on the top of Bridge Valley Road to the Downs Committee. The Downs Committee warmly supported the initiative.

2011: An engineering consultancy was approached for designing a pedestrian bridge for Bridge Valley Road, but no further significant positive action was forthcoming.

2012: FODAG approached Dr Adrienn Tomor from UWE who volunteered to help putting a design proposal together with UWE backup. FODAG proposed the idea of a stone pedestrian bridge to the Downs Committee. The proposal was reported by the BBC and Bristol Post

Oct-Nov 2013: A Pre-application enquiry was submitted to the council and a positive response received.

18 Nov 2013: Downs Committee “agreed in principle to support the request for a stone pedestrian bridge over Bridge Valley Road with a separate cycle lane”.

Currently consultation process is being carried out with various Council departments, Downs Committee, merchant Venturers, SUSTRAINS, Natural England, local community groups, etc. There has been no funding for the project at all. Professionals from UWE and other organisations have been working entirely voluntarily to develop the scheme. If planning permission is granted applications will be submitted to a range of funding sources. Completion of the bridge is hoped for 2015 to coincide with the “Bristol Green Capital” award as a highly sustainable unique structure. Success of the project is however dependent on funding and a number of other factors.

For more information please contact bridgevalleyroad@uwe.ac.uk or Dr Adrienn Tomor Adrienn.tomor@uwe.ac.uk

Website: <http://bridgevalleyroad.wordpress.com/about/>