



University of Bristol
Long Ashton development proposals
October 2009 Consultation- Summary Feedback Report

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Introduction

The University’s proposed development site is on 170 acre (69ha) green belt land to the south of Long Ashton village, bounded by the railway to the north and the A370 to the south. It is within the proposed South West Bristol Urban Extension area of search, which also includes the proposed Ashton Park, Barrow Hospital and Bristol City Football Club sites.

The South West Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) is recommending 10,500 new homes for this area (1,500 on Bristol City Council land and 9,000 on North Somerset land). Planning workshops were held in March 2008 – involving Bristol and North Somerset councils and the local parish councils. Broadway Malyan has since prepared an indicative masterplan for the whole area on behalf of North Somerset Council.

In relation to the University of Bristol’s site at Long Ashton, the masterplan produced by AWW Architects for the University indicates that around 1,000 new homes and a small amount of new commercial space could easily be accommodated on the site in an attractive way whilst protecting existing areas of landscape/wildlife and without spoiling key views. The University believes that this level of development would be a way of augmenting the existing character of Long Ashton Village, and would involve retention of a swathe of greenbelt between the Long Ashton village/the site and the Bristol Urban Extension.

There is also scope to improve existing pedestrian and cycle links to Long Ashton Village and the possibility of using Wild Country Lane as a means of accessing the site complemented by a direct access from the A370. Initial talks have also taken place with First Group and Network Rail regarding the potential to open a new rail station to the north east of the site providing a link to Bristol and further afield.

The University has already had initial discussions with North Somerset Council and Long Ashton Parish Council and is keen to share its proposals and take the project forward involving key stakeholders, local residents and other interested parties such as adjacent land owners/developers.

As part of the ongoing planning and development process, University of Bristol appointed Avril Baker Consultancy (ABC) as an independent advisor to draw up and coordinate stakeholder/public consultation during the preparation of a planning application. The aim being to guide the work of informing and engaging with individuals, groups and organisations who either live or work nearby or who have a direct interest in the site. It should be noted that ABC has no connection to the Baker Associates involved in the Ashton Park development.

An initial round of public consultation took place in September 2009 involving a stakeholder workshop and a public drop-in exhibition. The aim of this second round of consultation was to show how the team had responded to feedback received and how this has influenced the emerging scheme design.

Consultation Events

Key Stakeholders:

A 'Stakeholder Workshop' was held on **Thursday 29th October** at Long Ashton Royal British Legion. Invitees included councillors and officers from local and county councils, service providers including Avon and Somerset Constabulary, the local surgery and North Somerset Primary Care Trust, representatives from groups and organisations within Long Ashton which included schools and churches, the tennis, bowling and cricket clubs, scouts, local history group, Transition Long Ashton, Women's Institute and Mothers Union. In addition, other organisations with an interest in the site including Avon Wildlife Trust, Natural England, CPRE and English Heritage, as well as representatives of commercial developers bringing forward planning proposals on neighbouring sites, were also invited to attend.

From a database of some 140 names a total of 10 individuals attended the October stakeholder event, with a number of others choosing to attend the exhibition that followed. Others responded that they would like to be kept informed. Attendees included representatives from North Somerset PCT, Long Ashton Parish Council, Transition Long Ashton, Long Ashton Local History Society, Long Ashton Junior Football Club and All Saints Church.

The session comprised formal presentations on the proposed development (*see Appendix A*) incorporating feedback from the 10th September consultation into the design development. This was followed by a general discussion and question and answer session. An exhibition of development proposals (*see Appendix B*) was on display with members of the team on hand to discuss aspects of the scheme.

Workshop format:

ABC welcomed those present on behalf of the University of Bristol, and outlined the consultation process and agenda for this session, before handing over to the project team who presented their feedback from the September consultation and related design development. (see Appendix A for a summary of the presentation and the accompanying powerpoint slides)

Alder King began by setting the site context in relation to its location, next to Long Ashton village and its broader inclusion, within Bristol's proposed South West Urban Extension. The site covers an area of 70 hectares within which 1000 homes are being considered for development. This number is a reduction from 1,200, outlined at the last consultation meeting in September.

The proposals presented in September drew a number of comments and feedback and these have been grouped together as follows:

- 1) Loss of Village Community
- 2) Traffic – A370/Long Ashton Road
- 3) Scepticism about train station
- 4) Pedestrian/cycle routes
- 5) Sustainability
- 6) Drainage
- 7) Allotments/orchards/facilities
- 8) Bats
- 9) Sale of LARS to Wimpey
- 10) Why the hurry?

Alder King set out how each of these points had been considered and how these had been addressed in the emerging proposals.

The presentation concluded by showing how the latest new proposals aim to link in with the aspirations of the Long Ashton Parish Plan. The proposed development will aim to:

- retain administrative and physical separation from Bristol
- contribute to and support transport improvements to relieve traffic congestion into Bristol
- provide more employment opportunities
- provide affordable housing and accommodation for people with limited mobility
- address the lack of a recognisable centre
- provide a community club
- provide improved youth facilities (youth club and scout hut, sports pitches)
- create safe cycle/footpath routes

The University proposal supports the principle that the wedge of green corridor between Bristol and Long Ashton is necessary. The density of the proposed new development, at 35 homes per hectare, is similar to that of the current village. Changes made following the September consultation include the following:

- larger school, with two form entry
- station car park has moved east to create a wider green corridor along Ashton Brooke
- a new T-junction
- new playing fields to be created - at the expense of housing near the employment areas

Following the presentation there was an open question and answer/discussion session (see *Appendix G*) after which the meeting adjourned so that individuals could continue with one-to-one discussions around the exhibition boards.

Topic areas discussed included:

- Use of good agricultural land for proposed development and links to local and national self sufficiency and food security issues. Also the links between this development and the need for additional homes at the expense of some productive land.
- transport issues, including the newly proposed T-junction, likelihood of a new train station, good cycling and walking links to Long Ashton village, access to the proposed rapid transit service and the recent news of another bus service between Bristol and Weston-super-Mare being removed.
- Size of the green belt buffer proposed and its current representation in project plans and representation
- Timing of RSS nationally and affect on local schemes.
- Future proposed planning process for this development. A discussion around potential links to the Ashton Park planning process and timings of planning related to next year's general election.
- Healthcare resources and the likely impact on local provision due to the proposed development.
- whether the sustainability of the proposed plans is in line with the latest thinking and visioning for eco homes and associated infrastructure plans

Wider Public:

Following the stakeholder workshop a public exhibition took place over three consecutive days at the Royal British Legion in Long Ashton.

Notifying public

Some 600 postcard invitations (see *Appendix C*) to attend the exhibition were hand-delivered to local occupiers and residents in streets/roads close to the proposed development site (see *Appendix D*). Local businesses on Long Ashton Business Park were also mailed an invitation.

Posters advertising the exhibition were put up on public notice boards and an invitation and overview information was posted on both Long Ashton Parish Council and Long Ashton village websites. Information was also published on the University of Bristol website (see *Appendix E*). A number of community venues, including the local library, Long Ashton Community Centre and Long Ashton Junior Football Club were mailed A5 flyers and a poster advertising the event with a request that the flyers and poster be displayed in their premises for the duration of the exhibition.

The event was further publicised in the local press via a Public Notice in the Bristol Evening Post and an article in the Mercury 29 October 2009. (*Appendix F*)

Public Exhibition

The exhibition was open to view on **Thursday 29 October** (2.30 – 7pm), **Friday 30 October**, (2.00 – 6pm) and on **Saturday 31 October**, (11am – 5pm).

Members of the public were invited to drop in at their convenience to view the exhibition and representatives from the project team were on hand to talk individuals through the display material and to answer any individual queries.

Over 135 individuals passed through the exhibition over the three days, the majority of whom chose to sign in and/or leave contact details to receive further information. In addition to local residents those attending included members of Long Ashton Royal British Legion, Long Ashton Scout Group, Long Ashton Parish Council, and Long Ashton Football Club.

Copies of the display material were also made available at Long Ashton library for the duration of the consultation. Library staff indicated that around 40 people in total came and looked through the consultation material over this period.

Feedback

Attendees to both the workshop and the exhibition were invited to provide general written feedback on comment forms which were handed out at the time. The consultation material and the comment form were also available to view and download from the University website.

Comments could either be posted in the comments box on the day or sent through by post or email. It was requested that those wishing to comment on this round of consultation return their forms by 13 November 2009.

The following analysis has been compiled through both written and verbal feedback following discussions with team members at the consultation events. In addition to the completed comment forms four detailed letters and one e-mail have been received (*see Appendix I*)

Breakdown of respondees

Up to the deadline of 13 November 2009, 103 feedback forms had been returned; about half of which were received following the consultation event with the other half sent as hard copy, with approximately a quarter delivered by hand.

In terms of identifying status, of those individuals who chose to provide further details, 74 are local residents, 12 of whom also work locally/have businesses in Long Ashton, with 10 persons identifying themselves as other, 2 of which identified themselves as members of Long Ashton Junior Football Club. Interestingly over three quarters of respondees indicated that they had not taken part in the University's consultation in September 2009.

Analysis of comment form responses

A significant number of those who returned comment forms did not complete all the questions. This was particularly noticeable by those that had been returned by individuals associated with the Long Ashton Junior Football club. Many of the latter responded 'undecided/no opinion' to the opening questions, completed Q3 relating to their preference for new sports pitches and then did not complete any further questions.

Generally it is clear that the majority of respondees are still opposed to any further development in the area and/or were concerned about the overall level of development proposed around Long Ashton. There were however some marked differences this time regarding responses in that a number of people indicated : *'I don't want to see this development happen, but if it is to go ahead then...'*

Q1: The opening question asked if, based on the information displayed at the exhibition, the University had made progress in indicating how it will address the challenges raised in the previous consultation and made best use of the opportunity to create something special for Long Ashton.

Yes	Yes, with some concerns	No	Undecided/No opinion
10	23	19	37

Generally feedback was more positive than in September (when 70% had indicated that they were opposed to the principle of development.) This time some 10% agreed that the University had made progress from the last consultation, whilst a further 25% agreed but with some concerns. 20% of respondees indicated that the University had not made any progress in general, whilst over 40% were undecided or of no opinion.

Q2: The key principle of the development proposals is to ensure that Long Ashton maintains its identity and remains separated from the larger expansion of Bristol being promoted south of the A370. In effect, a 'green corridor' would be maintained/ created, providing a buffer zone preserving Green Belt separation between Bristol and Long Ashton. The second question asked whether this approach was supported.

Yes	Yes with some concerns	No	Undecided/No opinion
29	34	5	18

Only around three quarters of people chose to respond to this question. Just over a third of respondees (33%) agreed with this approach and 40% agreed but with some concerns. Approximately 5% were opposed with 20% undecided or of no opinion.

Q3: Within the proposals a number of key features were set out in the masterplan. Individuals were asked to rank, between 1-8, which they saw as the most important to the village, 1 being most important and 8 of least importance.

The key features were ranked as follows:

Key features	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Improvements to roads	24	5	10	11	9	3	5	6
New railway station/halt	11	4	9	7	9	10	9	14
Footpaths /links across railway	14	6	18	12	7	13	5	2
Extra primary school places	27	13	15	7	4	3	0	4
More open spaces & community facilities	39	19	10	4	2	2	1	2
Access to existing village shopping centre and small scale facilities on site	8	9	7	19	14	7	4	4
Scale & density similar to existing village	14	12	9	7	6	8	4	14
New community park and playing fields/area	54	7	7	4	2	2	1	2

There was a difference in the way that individuals answered this question. Some ranked the eight features from 1 – 8 with only one feature receiving each number; whilst others gave more than one feature the same ranking.

From the responses it can be seen that a majority of individuals ranked ‘new community park and playing fields/area’ (54) and ‘more open spaces and community facilities’ (39) higher than any other key features. This, in part, correlates to the significant number of responses (over 50) received from individuals associated with the Long Ashton Junior Football Club.

It is interesting to note that the new railway station/halt was not indicated by many as a high priority, considering support for this in written comments. This may be aligned to people’s concerns that the station may not happen. Other key features indicated as important were improvements to roads and extra primary school places.

Q4. The latest proposals show a new link to the A370 to the east of the site with a traffic-light-controlled junction designed to improve the flow of incoming and outgoing traffic. Individuals were asked whether they thought this would improve the present traffic arrangements and help prevent rat running through the village.

Yes	Yes with some concerns	No	Undecided/No opinion
3	21	38	27

Responses to this question reflect the wide concerns about traffic infrastructure, brought up within additional comments to this question and feedback contained in detailed letters received. 3% thought that these proposals would improve the present traffic arrangements, with another 24% responding positively but with some concerns. Nearly a half (43%) of the respondees thought that these proposals would not improve the present traffic arrangements. 30% indicated that they were undecided or had no opinion.

Q5. Individuals was asked whether the proposed network of cycle and pedestrian routes would help link the site with the village and link into the wider cycle network.

Yes	Yes with some concerns	No	Undecided/No opinion
20	32	14	22

The majority of respondees (58%) were broadly in agreement with the proposed network of routes, 36% of whom said yes but with some concerns. 16% indicated that they were of the opinion that they wouldn’t link the site to the village and into the wider cycle network. A quarter of respondees, were undecided or had no opinion in this matter.

Q6. Sustainability, landscaping and ecology issues have been given careful consideration within the proposals, including protection for a Site of Nature Conservation interest, provision of allotments, play areas, cycle ways/footpaths and new employment space. Individuals were asked whether they thought the proposals would contribute to the sustainability of the development and provide benefits to residents and the wider community.

Yes	Yes with some concerns	No	Undecided/No opinion
18	37	11	16

Nearly two thirds of respondees, (65%) were in overall agreement, that the proposals would contribute to the sustainability of the development and provide benefits to residents and the wider community. Over 20% of respondees were in full agreement, with a further 45% having broad agreement with some concerns. This does not correlate to further comments received within forms received and in additional letters and emails, where many people raised concerns about the sustainability of the proposals. Approximately 13% thought that the proposals would not contribute, with a further 19% undecided or of no opinion.

Respondees were invited to comment on each question. In addition to this we received other feedback within some comment forms, letters and e-mail. The main issues and/or themes to emerge from these comments, letters and e-mails are set out in summary below.

Issues/main themes: (numbers of comments in brackets)

Football pitches, other sports and recreational facilities (53)

Over 40 feedback forms were received from individuals associated with the Long Ashton Junior Football Club (LAJFC) many of which had only been partially completed. A further ten forms were received that strongly lobbied for football pitches, both all weather and grass, for young people.

As a result of this lobbying by individuals associated with LAJFC, over half the feedback forms received concentrated on highlighting the importance of recreational facilities as listed in Q 3.

In particular, there were recommendations for the provision of:

- All weather pitches and football/cricket/rugby pitches
- Cricket pitches, skateboard park, cycling proficiency area
- Provision of Astroturf and playing fields for Long Ashton Junior Football Club
- More playing fields/Astroturf for school use
- Football pitches within Long Ashton as local children are having to use pitches outside the village e.g. Failand
- Ideally floodlit sports facilities with a clubhouse
- Sports facilities, as it is a great way for children to learn to work with each other, and communicate. Facilities to keep them "out of trouble" outside of school hours are vital.
- Purpose built Scout Hut for the Long Ashton Scout Group

Sustainability proposals (28)

Many comments were received about the sustainability of the new proposals. One individual gave a detailed response as to what sustainability for Long Ashton looks like - Community, Connectivity to the city via cycle and public transport links, Local energy production, Local food supply, Access to the countryside for recreation on foot and by cycle, Employment.

It was also commented upon, by a few individuals, that Long Ashton has a relatively new Transition Group that is growing in size and interest.

The issues and concerns received have been put into three sections:

i) Opposition to any development of the site:

- would prefer the land to remain as agricultural land.
- allowing new developments to happen, creating more congestion, in itself not sustainable. It opens the door for more development every 20 years or so.
- access is not currently needed to this area, key features described are not needed. It is only as a result of the development that they will be required. There is already enough open space and the park is not needed if the fields are retained.
- Find plans insulting and indicate that the project team has no concern about ecology.
- I do not believe the proposals will make Long Ashton more 'sustainable' (this is a buzz word of astronomic proportions and should not be used lightly...many of us in the know can see straight through it so beware!!)".

ii) Recommendations to improve sustainability of the proposals:

- Interest in planting of useful trees for timber and food, in the proposed community orchard as well as on streets and open spaces e.g. sweet chestnut, walnut, hawthorn varieties, possibly bamboo.
- a community orchard and allotment space
- allotments need to be planned nearer to the existing village, for easy access and for these to be made available early on in the development of the site. The narrow piece of University land to the north of what will be the new football pitch, off Keeds Lane, would be ideal, as part of a planning gain from the development.
- Another piece of land should be given by the University to plant a memorial woodland to show the level of commitment the University has to Long Ashton
- Larger green areas around the village protecting woodlands and watercourses
- Hedgerows and tree bank lines should be strengthened
- Larger open spaces in the eastern end of the site where the allotments and football pitch are planned for. Less building and more open space at this end of the site.
- Lake area should remain less developed to allow more natural appearance and lower visual impact on approaching village from east.
- To become a sustainable village Long Ashton requires activities, employment opportunities, and retail outlets in a higher proportion than exists at present.
- University proposals will not necessarily affect the current level of involvement in village life, it may add more people to take part and use the existing facilities more intensively...this should be encouraged rather than setting up new ones.
- Improve bus and rapid bus, more work space, land to support community led activity e.g. Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) and allotments, retail area
- Good architectural and environmental standards combined heat and power (CHP) should be considered, get core landscape features completed within phase 1.

- Conserving energy, using less, insulating homes, building to zero carbon standards, investigating renewable resources, producing food locally and producing energy locally.
- Good to see SUDS drainage is incorporated, consider grey water systems
- Why not fit a substantial proportion of solar panels, both hot water and photovoltaics?

iii) The University's potential as a visionary role model for sustainable development:

- Could there be consultation with the Agro forestry Research Unit at Dartington? This would make a great continuing contribution to the University's research in Long Ashton
- Regret that the research station no longer exists particularly at the present time when there is a greater need than ever for research into maximising world food production and renewable energy sources. I hope nonetheless that the University will by other means continue to contribute in these fields.
- Links to Solar Sense based in Long Ashton, provide genuine employment – University could carry on research in Long Ashton in a different and very vital way.
- Use skills and information at University to meet the needs of present and future society – the development could be an exciting education for us all

Traffic & transport

A number were in favour of the transport proposals with a couple of people commenting that the ideas were good. Comments were also received that:

- A junction onto the A370 was essential
- The diagram for traffic calming also shows how the centre of the village could be made attractive, thereby encouraging the local shops, surgery and village hall
- An additional Park and Ride is needed before commuters reach Long Ashton

Proposed T Junction

There was criticism of the proposed traffic light controlled T-junction with the A370 towards the north east of the site. Some were opposed to the junction proposal all together. Others cited consequences such as:

- Probable increase to rat-runs on Wildcountry Lane and Yanley Lane by commuters and the new development causing cars to find other routes through the village
- Extra peak hour traffic chaos
- Direct increases to Cumberland Basin and A370 traffic
- Any new junctions must be much better designed. Current Long Ashton link to A370 (near Ashton Park) is an accident hotspot.

Alternatives to the proposed junction with the A370 were put forward by a couple of individuals

- Wildcountry Lane – currently two separate entrances off Wildcountry Lane onto the University Development site: one at Fens woods Farm Buildings and the second at the farm field gateway onto level farmland further along Wildcountry Lane. With two access roads at this end of the University Development, this will allow better vehicle flow out of Wildcountry Lane.

- The planning application should include a major upgrade and alignment of Wildcountry Lane to main road status from Weston Road, Long Ashton to the Bridge over the A370 ByPass. Include street lighting, wide pavements and a pedestrian footbridge over the railway line.
- T-junction onto the A370 ByPass - provide slip road junctions in both directions, similar to slip road junctions at the junction to the B3128 to Long Ashton Road and Clevedon and to the Ashton Vale Park and Ride. At the western end of the A370 by-pass, similar slip way junction at Cambridge Batch where the B3130 Barrow Gurney to Nailsea road intersects the A370.

Co-ordination of wider transport proposals

There were several requests to co-ordinate transport proposals with other nearby proposed developments, such as Ashton Park.

Other comments asked that full transport considerations be made to support any new development in the area, including that the A370 as it stands will not be able to take all new traffic originating from all new development. Others commented that other recent changes, including Park and Ride, have not improved traffic congestion. One individual commented that the proposals don't take into account any of the traffic control that could arise from the proposed new stadium in the area.

Proposed train station

A number of individuals see a train station at Long Ashton as essential. A few comments reinforced the thinking that this would not happen and was a vague offer, as the University cannot promise to deliver a station. One individual, commented, "provision should be a pre-condition for planning approval". It was welcomed, by one individual, that "the University will champion this local facility".

Bus services

Concerns about bus services especially given that another bus service is to be relocated from Long Ashton village at the end of November 2009. Several individuals want bus services improved including a more frequent service with lower fares and stated that traffic flow will only improve if people leave their cars behind and go on bike or bus. One comment that the rapid transit would be good if it were properly linked to the village, which is not currently planned and that it should stop at the Park and Ride as well.

Traffic

The general level of traffic originating from the proposed development gave some concerns. One comment that, "a rat-run already exists along pear Tree Avenue and Perry road by traffic commuting to and from the office block complex at the southern end of pear Tree Avenue. I fear this will be further compounded by the proposed new development".

One individual commented that a path across the railway (near Birdwell School) was shown on the plans, as being available. Network Rail closed it 30 years ago and refused to reopen 7 years ago unless council/developer paid for upkeep and repairs needed now.

Loss of green belt and village 'sense of place' (23)

There is still significant opposition to the proposed development being built on Green Belt land. Some more positive comments however indicated that the plans had moved on but as one individual said that the displays did little to document what 'will be special for Long Ashton'. One view was that as long as it (the proposals) "is kept to the valley bottom, which appears to

be what is planned” then that is OK. Another individual commented that they were happy that their view wouldn't be spoiled by the development.

Of those who oppose the development views included:

- Plans are worse than I imagined
- We will no longer be a village
- Still opposed
- Development of Green Space is not acceptable
- We are not really left with what the 'sense of place' will be like
- Long Ashton does not need 1000 new homes
- This is green belt land which should be retained
- It is being destroyed by this development
- All the above (key features Q3) are sweeteners. We don't want buildings on Green Belt.
- A few small concessions on your behalf will not compensate for spoiling of our village

A few individuals commented that the plans are making the green belt narrower and that it should be retained as it is, not as a “thin corridor.” There was also a concern raised that once the plans move on embankments may be proposed either side of the A370 and that the Land Trust Development will not reduce its size, encroaching further into the green belt. It was felt by a few individuals that to keep any sense of 'green separation' and to maintain the feel of the rural edge to South West Bristol, these negotiations are critical.

Several commented that the proposals were completely inappropriate for Long Ashton and the area as a whole. This related back to concerns about traffic congestion, the South West Urban expansion, loss of village identity and impact on quality of life. Some further commented that the site should be used for alternative uses – like a Farming College to work the land. Whilst others proposed that although current facilities do need some improvement, the village has plenty of open spaces and footpaths without any developments taking these over. One suggestion that brown field sites within the Bristol area should be considered before plans go ahead. The scale of the proposed development was of concern to a number of individuals with one comment that it “is so large that it cannot possibly be seen as integrating into the village. It would be a separate entity, detracting hugely from our sense of living in an identifiable single village”.

Cycling and pedestrian improvements and integrating village links (13)

Many who commented agreed with the proposed network of pedestrian and cycle routes through the proposed new development, that they are a priority. Some were however concerned that the network wouldn't be properly integrated into the present village network and that what is proposed should be as accessible as possible to encourage people to use the paths and cycle ways – in one case an individual suggests that all pedestrian routes should be cycle ways as well.

Some comments were made on how the proposals link to the national cycling network and one reference to the fact that the current wider network within North Somerset is patchy and not substantial enough to deal with current cycle use. This links to other comments about the fact that increased road traffic, resulting from the proposed development, will make cycling more dangerous in the area and therefore there is even more need for safe routes to be provided for pedestrians and cyclists.

A request for the network to extend all the way into Bristol was made with extra suggestions about linking the University site to Long Ashton Rd and then feeding it into Ashton Court or allow cyclists to head into Bristol via Ashton Road and Clamage Road and then to Cumberland Basin via the tow path and back to the Create Centre.

One individual wants assurance that the University will make sure a pedestrian rail bridge is created irrespective of whether the station is developed or not. One other comment was made suggesting an extension of the cycleway alongside the railway line.

A few individuals commented that the new routes would destroy the character of existing footpaths and that the network proposed would not connect the existing village, so altering its character entirely. Individuals want to see the existing routes retained and that routes created should provide access to places that people want to go to, like the shops, school and village centre. Another suggestion was that routes traversing the railway and pathways and cycle tracks need to be improved to connect the development to the village and concern was raised, by one individual, that the planned use of the lake/community facilities, may not be enough to draw existing residents into the new development.

The University as developer (12)

A number of comments related to whether or not the University has explored other uses for this site. In a few cases it was suggested that there is a need to retain the good agricultural land found on the site, for local food production and nature conservation. A number of individuals feel that the University should not be building on Green Belt land that they own.

A few individuals consider that the University is more concerned with turning a big profit from the site rather than considering the needs, now and in the future, of the Long Ashton community.

The relationship that the University has had with the village, over time, is regarded as important by a few respondees and that the University should put back into Long Ashton what they have taken from it.

Several people asked that the University keep better control of this development in Long Ashton, than the last one, all the way through to completion. There was a recommendation about keeping specific control of planting/conservation and local growing possibilities as well as one recommendation to manage the lake from now on. With one comment suggesting that "I...still have great doubts as to the management of the project by the University in the future. I expect some 'Green Bits' will be sold off later".

A point that was picked up again within the 'Sustainability of proposals' was that some respondees would like to see the University "as a body, with a department of climate change, investing in sustainability measures beyond planning regulations of the day".

One comment was made that the last Long Ashton development carried out by the University had meant that new households of "troublemakers from Weston Super Mare" have moved into the area and that they would not want more of this as it will change the character of the village, make it feel less safe and less desirable.

Need for business premises within new development and within Long Ashton village as a whole (10)

A couple of individuals commented that there was a need for a whole village view of the provision for convenience/retail/food/business units and that best use of the opportunity provided by the new development should be taken, or look into the option to invest in existing village centre, if most viable.

Some individuals commented on whether there was any need for the additional business premises proposed on the new site, citing the opinion that there are lots available in the Bristol area and that other offices in Chancellors Park are still unoccupied. And other comments were made about the positioning being excessively prominent and possible screening of the business units by deciduous trees along the railway cutting should be considered.

There were some concerns about the areas of industrial use and housing proposed at the east end, that is further degradation of the site and is extremely visible from the village. One further comment was that the employment space at the eastern end of the site - "would not be compatible with the view from Long Ashton. It would appear a carbuncle when viewed from say, the golf course".

Affordable and retirement housing provision (2)

A couple of individuals stressed the need for private, retirement home and sheltered housing for over 60s and that it should be given high priority. A suggestion was made that previous promises by the University that McCarthy & Stone type development and bungalows would be provided have not been honoured. It was suggested that the elderly age-profile of the village be taken into account when planning the type of accommodations offered.

Consultation

Several comments were made about the consultation process, the content of the exhibition material and the mechanism for feedback.

One view was "that it is asking what people least object to from a range of highly objectionable options". Another that by responding to the consultation it is "giving tacit acceptance" of the proposals.

Another person said they hadn't been notified. Two people said they couldn't find or access the pages on the website and two more found the feedback form hard to handle.

A number of people asked whether Avril Baker Consultancy was connected to any part of Baker Associates. There is no connection between these two companies.

Response to consultation feedback and next steps

The team has carefully considered the views and comments expressed and will be responding as follows:

- i) Regarding the extent of development at the eastern end of the site the decision has been taken to pull back development in this area. This will have a beneficial effect in terms of the impact on Green Belt and key views
- ii) Is suggesting that open space and recreational uses would be best located at this eastern end

- iii) Recognises the need to make available more land for allotments/community orchard/memorial orchard
- iv) Will consequently look at the potential to provide other land which the University has north of Long Ashton village for this purpose
- v) Will investigate the 'closed' bridge further
- vi) Will look at the opportunity to provide another pedestrian bridge, in the location of the train station (irrespective of whether this goes ahead), subject to discussions with Network Rail.

As a point of information the University does still undertake food production and renewable energy research within a single operation at Rockhampstead.

Appendices – included as separate pdf

- Appendix A – Stakeholder presentation
- Appendix B – Exhibition boards
- Appendix C – Postcard invitation/flyer
- Appendix D – Catchment area for mail drop
- Appendix E – Website postings
- Appendix F – Public Notice, Bristol Evening Post, 23 September & Mercury 29 October 2009
- Appendix G – Stakeholder workshop Q&A matrix
- Appendix H - October Consultation comments form
- Appendix I –Detailed letters in response to consultation