Minutes of Meeting

Title: University of Bristol – Stoke Bishop Campus: Parking on Shaplands
Meeting Held at 6.00pm at Badock Hall on Thursday 10 September 2015

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Checked by: Roger Key
Reviewed by: Roger Key

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1. The meeting was attended by 17 people.

2. The meeting was opened with a brief introduction by Roger Key (RK) of Key Transport Consultants (KTC), followed by Simon Bray (SB), Director of Residential and Hospitality Services at University of Bristol who provided an update to residents on the commitments he had made at the previous meeting in July 2015. In summary SB reported that:

- The University had contacted the Office of Fair Trade (OfT) to seek a view on the use of the language in the previous tenancy agreement regarding students not being allowed to park on the public highway within two miles of the Stoke Bishop Campus. The OfT confirmed that preventing students from parking on the local public roads was potentially unfair and that if challenged the University would probably be unable to defend this policy.

- The University had investigated suggestions that the Oxford and Cambridge Universities were able to bring sanctions against their students who brought a car to University and parked it on the Public Highway. There was no legal power established to underpin this policy. Also SB made it clear that the University has no way of identifying the owner of a vehicle and no power to sanction a driver for parking on the highway. However, if the University was made aware of inconsiderate or illegal parking on the neighbouring roads they would report this to the Police or Bristol City Council who do have powers to tackle nuisance parking.

- The University has introduced a new parking permit system for the Stoke Bishop Campus. Parking permits will be controlled by Residential and Hospitality Services team for the SB campus, but it is hoped that eventually this would be handled by the security department who control parking permits elsewhere in the University estate. Residents were advised at the previous meeting that the University was reviewing the charge for parking permits and SB advised that a charge would be reintroduced from September 2015. Student parking permits would cost £99 per year. In the past two years there has been no charge for parking permits in an attempt to encourage students to apply for a permit on campus and not park on the public highway. Based on KTC survey results and other observations it was decided that this measure had not been effective. Free parking permits were also considered to undermine the sustainable travel message being promoted by the University. The application process for student parking permits sets out a number of criteria against which an application will be judged, including whether the applicant is a blue badge holder, a primary carer, or requires a vehicle to undertake their course.

- The University have repeatedly informed students that they should not bring a car to University and that they do not need to bring a car to University due to the excellent travel options available to them. This message has been repeated on a variety of media including emails and text messages. The University spends around £800,000 each year providing student bus services to enable students to study without needing a car. The Students’ Union has also introduced a cycle hire scheme, allowing students to rent a bike during their time at University.
• SB confirmed that the Estates department are looking at the planting scheme to bolster the existing hedge along Shaplands.

3. The meeting was then opened up for residents to ask questions regarding SB’s feedback.

4. In response to the commitment to improve the hedge, one resident noted that the hedge had been trimmed down to less than 2 meters and that it was still possible to pass through the hedge near the 20mph sign on Shaplands.

5. Residents also asked why the pedestrian gate next to the emergency access on University Close was still not locked, as this encouraged students and commuters to park and walk through the campus. Other residents said that they use that route and would not like to see it blocked off.

6. Residents were concerned that the reintroduction of a charge for the parking permit would exacerbate the issue, particularly as the charge was so high. One resident suggested that the parking permit charge was previously £15, but was corrected that it used to be £120.

7. Residents complained about the ‘chaos’ they had experienced on Shaplands over the summer months with contractors parking to work on the Library block, and a number of large vehicles making deliveries in the road. SB apologised for any inconvenience, but reminded residents that there was only a short window of opportunity for undertaking construction work. SB said that the work should be completed within a week.

8. SB left the meeting at this point.

9. RK then gave a brief history of previous work looking at the issues of on and off-street parking around the campus undertaken over the past few years.

10. Early in RK’s recap, Paul Davies said that he did not see the point of the meeting, that the current parking restrictions on Shaplands were sufficient and no further restrictions should be introduced.

11. Another resident complained that the double yellow line scheme originally agreed had not been implemented correctly, as residents living on the bend had asked to have double yellow lines outside their house. The resident suggested that this resulted in parking on the corner which required westbound vehicles to pass onto the opposite side of the road when going around the inside of the bend, and that this was dangerous and had resulted in many near misses. RK questioned whether the current situation could be considered dangerous due to the low speeds likely to be involved at the end of a cul-de-sac.

12. RK continued to recount the steps that were taken, resulting in the introduction of double yellow lines along the north side of Shaplands and around the turning area to the west. RK then quickly summarised the findings of KTC’s most recent surveys. These recorded that there were 20-25 cars parked on-street at the beginning and end of the survey during term time and around 11 at the beginning and end of the survey during the Easter break. Some residents disputed the figures and suggested that outside term time there was barely a car parked on the street, while others suggested that the 11 vehicles must have been contractors working on the nearby housing development.

13. RK then laid out three options available to move forward: the introduction of waiting restrictions on the south side of Shaplands; the introduction of a residents parking scheme; or doing nothing.
14. One resident questioned the financial burden that would be placed on them if a residents parking scheme was introduced. Another resident suggested that the University had previously offered to pay for their permits, although others recalled that the offer was for a limited period only. It was suggested that whether the University did or did not contribute toward the permit costs initially, the residents would eventually have to pay to have such a scheme.

15. One resident asked if the signage at the entrance to Shaplands could be updated to inform drivers that the road was a cul-de-sac, as they had witnessed a number of drivers including those in HGVs attempting to pass along Shaplands to avoid congestion on Parry’s Lane. [Post meeting note: having looked at Streetview images from 2012 it would appear that a dead-end sign was part of the road name plate. Since then the name plate has been moved to the south side of Shaplands and the dead-end sign removed.]

16. Residents confirmed that if a waiting restriction was introduced they would want to see a 1 hour restriction in the middle of the day that prevented parking between say 11am and 12noon. RK reminded residents that anything less than a very strong majority supporting the introduction of a waiting restriction would likely fail to see the restrictions introduced.

17. A show of hands was taken. 13 residents supported the 1 hour restriction, one resident was against and three abstained. A similar show of hands was taken for a residents parking scheme. This resulted in nine votes for, three against and four abstentions.

18. MM pointed out that the introduction of a 1 hour parking restriction in the middle of the day may have a limited impact on the use of the parking spaces by students, as the survey results showed that very few vehicles were being left on street all day. One resident suggested that a similar restriction on the roads near Parkway Station was very effective at preventing commuter parking.

19. The question of enforcement was raised. Residents asked whether any parking restriction introduced would be enforced by Bristol City Council. It was agreed that the one hour parking restriction could be easier to enforce than a longer waiting restriction, as the former could be enforced with a single visit of enforcement officers.

20. It was agreed that following approval from the University, RK would seek to arrange a further meeting with BCC and a group of residents representing the street, to try and progress the introduction of waiting restrictions on the south side of Shaplands.

21. The first meeting closed at 19:00.