

Birley Fields Community Forum
Thursday 5th March 2015 @ Birley

Attendance

Gary Hughes	MMU (Chair)	GH
Damian Smith	MMU Capital Projects	DS
Poppy Humphrey	Manchester Student Homes	PH
Cllr Nigel Murphy	MCC	Cllr NM
Lee Ann Igbon	Manchester Young Lives	Llg
Helen Green	Loreto College	HG
Dan Aris	Libralato	DA
Frank Shenoda	Hulme and Bentley TRA	FS
Cath Keane	MCC	CK
Dave Barlow	MCC	DB
Ian Roberts	Meridian Square	IR
Andy Nixon	Meridian Square	AN
Jessica Cheung	Manchester Student Homes	JC
Sue Powell	MMU	SP
Insp Andrew Smith	GMP	AS
Amy Barber	MMU	AB

Apologies

Liz O'Neill	Z-Arts
Saskia Metcalf	Z-Arts
Connor McAlorum	MMU
Paula Dalziel	MMU
Val Butcher	MMU
Dean Luby	MMU
Chief Insp Helen Caldbeck	GMP

1. Overview

GH opened the meeting to welcome everyone and highlighted that he will be chairing future meetings following Mary Heaney's retirement. Updates will be provided on construction, the residents parking scheme and Transport Working Group. In addition Dave Barlow from MCC will discuss the Kew Gardens Grow Wild Project in Hulme.

2. Matters arising from previous meeting

None.

3. Construction updates

DS provided update on the progress on site.

Student Accommodation

Phase 1 of the student accommodation is now complete, GBBS are finishing external gardening works ie. BBQs and bin stores. All blocks apart from Block A are fully occupied.

Pedestrian Link

Work began on 2nd December 2014 on a pedestrian link between the Territorial Army Barracks and Victoria and Briarfields Halls, to improve access between Birley and All Saints. Due to a gas leak work has been delayed by four weeks and the expected completion date is now mid-April. Contractual working hours are Mon-Fri 8.30am-4.30pm. Operatives will commence on site from 7.30am with high noise levels commencing after 9am.

Public Realm

The public realm was handed over to SRM from GBBS on 2nd February 2015. A phased programme of landscaping will continue into Spring 2015 with an expected completion date of mid-May. Working hours are 7.30am-5.30pm, Mon-Fri. Residents will be notified in advance if any work is scheduled outside of these hours. George Parr Road is due to re-open around Easter.

Comments and Feedback

Cllr NM raised concerns over lighting in public realm. DS to report back to MMU Capital Projects.

Cllr Murphy suggested councillor surgeries should start when all works completed and the campus fully accessible.

AN commented on the lack of recent communication to local residents regarding ongoing construction works. GH apologised on behalf of MMU and a further update will be circulated.

Llg raised issue of contractor parking on Stretford Rd, Royce Rd and Birley St, this is more of an issue since hoardings have come down. DS to report to Capital Projects - contractors need to show more consideration to local residents.

Drainage on Royce Road and Bonsall Street still an issue. Cllr NM confirmed this has been reported. This is the responsibility of MCC, CK to follow up with MCC Highways.

It was highlighted that the Birley website needs updating with construction timeline outlined by DS. AB to update as soon as possible.

DA commented the pavements on Old Birley Street are uneven and need to be renewed. CK will report this to MCC Highways.

4. University Update

Retail Units

GH provided an update on the retail units on Stretford Road. Morrisons have pulled out of negotiations and the units are currently being re-marketed by agency DTZ. It is hoped the units will be fully occupied by summer 2015, ready for the new academic term. MMU are keen to lease to a local retailer / supermarket that will provide services including a cash point. This is the same tendering process as before.

It has been confirmed that Café Grano will occupy one of the units. The coffee shop is scheduled to open in September 2015 ready for the new academic term.

New SU Building

MMU's new SU building is now open on Higher Cambridge Street. Facilities include bookable meeting rooms, media suite, dance studio and state-of-the-art venue space. The official opening of the building will take place on Friday 20th March, 12pm-1pm. The SU are keen to develop local links with the community and GH invited members of the forum to the official opening. An invite has been sent to forum members, contact AB for further information.

Residents Parking Scheme

CK provided an update. Work is still in progress and is expected to be complete by 20th March with enforcement from 23rd March. CK will send out further info shortly and will include information on business permits.

CK apologised for delays. Cllr NM confirmed that the delays are due to various factors including the legal process involved and Dept for Transport guidelines which changed just before the implementation of the scheme, objections received which needed to be considered and practical issues such as line marking when cars are parked and need to be moved.

Transport Working Group

The next meeting is Wednesday 25th March. This will include a presentation from the Living Streets Project and a discussion on how this can link into the working group. CK urged members of the forum to attend if they can, contact CK for further information.

FS suggested current parking areas could be refreshed, MCC and City South could partner to lift the areas. Would also like to see more space to safely store bicycles, especially around Bonsall Street. CK to report these issues to the Transport Working Group.

Engagement Update

MMU would like to organise a community event in summer 2015. GH welcomed suggestions on timings, type of event and what members of the forum would like to see. A provisionally date has been set as 20th or 27th June, subject to confirmation.

Comments and Feedback:

- Cllr NM suggested a weekend / evening event that gave residents a behind the scene tour of Birley and the student halls. Involve the faculties and student volunteers.
- A weekend showcase was suggested that highlights the facilities / expertise of the faculties.
- DA suggested making use of the public realm to attract residents into the area.
- FS commented could include face painting, music and local food stalls.
- PH suggested creating a working group of local residents, student volunteers and MMU staff.
- Llg would like to see an event that welcomes old and new residents. Suggested a celebration of the regeneration of Hulme culminating in the opening of Birley.

GH to set up working group to look into type of activity/event, timings and budget.

5. Kew Gardens Wildflower Project, Dave Barlow, MCC Environmental Strategy Team

DB updated the group on the Kew Gardens Wildflower Project in Hulme. Grow Wild was awarded funding for four flagship wildflower sites across the UK. The English flagship site is a partnership between Manchester and Liverpool and will launch in summer 2015. Wildflower landscapes will be planted along the Central reservation of Princess Parkway and Parkway Subway under the Mancunian way.

The project is split into three phases:

- Phase 1 will be from Feb to July 2015
- Phase 2 from August to October 2015
- Phase 3 from Feb to June 2016 (end of the project)

A community open day took place at Hulme Community Garden Centre in February and a further community-planting day is scheduled for Sunday 29th March 2015 at the Parkway subway.

Llg raised concerns about the lack of consultation and communication to local residents around planting and issues of maintenance. Residents also suggested community members will have an issue attending a planting day in the Subway Areas.

DB to liaise with Llg and look into location of community planting day, possibility of moving from subway to Hulme Park. Signage will be put in place along the Parkway to communicate further information.

AB to organise meeting with Dave Barlow and colleagues within MMU.

6. AOB

AN requested a construction update on student accommodation opposite Hornchurch Court. GH to update.

PH gave the dates of the next Manchester Student Homes Community Forums. These are Thursday 14th May, 6pm-8pm in Fallowfield and Tuesday 1st September, 6pm-8pm at Birley. Locations are to be confirmed, contact PH if you would like to attend.

PH encouraged residents to get involved in a Manchester Student Homes exhibition regarding memories of the area. PH also encouraged forum members to get involved in the summer campaign for the British Heart Foundation. **PH sending AB further info for minutes.**

Residents raised concerns around levels of personal security, particularly mobile phone theft. PH reported this is a continued problem in the area and the Oxford Road Corridor. PH to update Student Strategy Board and Student Communications Group.

Insp AS highlighted that PCSO's have been working with local residents and students to raise awareness of personal safety issues. An ad bike is also circulating key messages around the area.

Residents raised concerns over the December newsletter. MMU to look further into why the newsletter was not distributed as intended. Another newsletter will be distributed as soon as possible. If you would like any events or positive work please email Carla Nuttall.

FS highlighted held the first residents association meeting will be held at Birley on Thursday 5th March.

Summary

GH thanked everyone for attending and their comments and ideas.

Date of next meeting

May 2015. Details to be confirmed.