

**22/03615/REM: Reserved Matters Approval for the access, appearance, landscape, layout and scale in respect of improvement works along the A1301 including new and upgraded junctions, carriageway realignment; new footways/cycleway, pedestrian crossing points; lighting, surface water drainage infrastructure; utilities and infrastructure works; improvements to existing agricultural accesses; associated engineering and land remodelling and tree removal, including the demolition of existing close boarded timber fence and replacement with metal estate railing and brick and flint wall. (Outline reference: S/4329/18/OL)**

Thank you for consulting Hinxton Parish Council ('HPC') on the above application. The matter was considered at our meeting on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022, and the following comments have been endorsed on behalf of HPC.

We have various detailed comments on the proposed design (3. below), but would start by setting out our serious concerns about the lack of meaningful engagement with HPC during the evolution of the scheme and its relationship to the emerging proposals for two bridge crossings.

### **1. Lack of meaningful engagement with HPC**

This application involves significant changes to the A1301, and DLA's cover letter 4<sup>th</sup> August 2022 makes clear the extensive pre-application discussions between Greater Cambs Planning (Greater Cambs), U&C and CCC. Seven meetings took place, essentially monthly, between November 2021 and July 2022 and pre-application letters were issued by Greater Cambs in March and July 2022.

However, we only became aware of the emerging proposals for the A1301 at a meeting with U&C on 5<sup>th</sup> July 2022, just four weeks before the application was validated on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2022.

We are disappointed that the discussions between Greater Cambs Planning and U&C evolved to the point of application without any significant involvement of HPC. In practice, we have had no ability to influence the design, even if can be perceived positively by 'greening' the A1301 and making it more welcoming to pedestrians and cyclists.

We are told of U&C's commitment to "meaningful community engagement"<sup>1</sup> but this is not evidenced in practice; designs are being presented to HPC at a very late stage and with apparently no real prospect of taking account of the Parish's views before an application is made, let alone determination.

We are certainly prepared to engage positively and constructively with U&C if we are given sufficient time to do so, and they reassure us that designs are not being presented as a *fait accompli*.

### **2. Relationship to the emerging proposal for two bridges**

The current debate over the bridge crossings is a case in point, and is a real opportunity for U&C to build more trust with Hinxton village.

The suggestion of two bridges was first raised by U&C at the 5<sup>th</sup> July meeting, when we were surprised at seeing advanced designs which were not part of the outline permission and had not been previously discussed. This was followed up by our letter of 29<sup>th</sup> July 2022 (attached), our key concerns being that the bridges are significant, over-engineered structures detracting from the rural character of the

---

<sup>1</sup> [See page 31, Urban&Civic plc Annual Accounts 2021](#)

village, with the northern bridge being too close to New Road and to the Grade 2\* listed church. These concerns have been re-iterated to U&C several times subsequently (emails also attached).

We are pleased that U&C have now committed to attend a meeting with the Parish on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2022, but as set out above, this must be entered into with a genuine willingness to respond to our views, even if key aspects of the design consequently need to be revisited.

We note U&C's view that Historic England "support the principle of the bridges" (cover letter, p.11) but this was not in line with the views of their representative expressed to us at a meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> August, who at the time was awaiting significant additional information and was keen to explain that no formal stance had been taken. Please provide evidence to support this assertion.

HPC is not necessarily opposed to a single bridge *per se*, and CamCycle's suggestion of a single bridge in a more central or Southerly location between the two A1301 roundabouts is one that we may be prepared to support. It is a more obvious location and there would be less impact on Hinxton's rural character, but it would need to be in the context of a comprehensive proposal making Hinxton more attractive to cyclists and pedestrians.

There is nothing we have seen to date that really justifies the need for two major road bridges in such close proximity, or for the elaborate spiralling footways that define the Northerly bridge (which reads as a feature of an urban landscape and which to be honest is completely impractical). We also note the observations of SCDC / Greater Cambs under their referenced 28 March letter following a pre-application meeting of 16 March, where they note the considerable height of the bridges (7 metres above ground) and ask whether tunnel crossings have been considered, as in the Netherlands where bike tunnels are commonplace.

We acknowledge CCC's stance regarding the 30 mph / 40 mph speed limit through the area. We support the view that the inclusion of a non-light controlled at grade crossing should be part of the solution (even with a single bridge) since it would naturally regulate speeds through as the A1301 passes through the expanded campus area. This idea is also supported by CamCycle.

We note with interest that the Local Highways Authority in their consultee comments (paragraph 7) are not in fact guaranteeing a speed reduction to 40mph in the expanded campus area, presumably given concerns over traffic congestion in this corridor (see our related comments on New Road and traffic in the villages below).

Pulling all this together, there are clearly many loose ends surrounding the relationship between the A1301 upgrade and the bridges, and we therefore do not understand why this application is being progressed now in the absence of a settled position on the bridges. The A1301 road infrastructure assumes the bridges consent will be granted in the form currently contemplated.

The two concepts are inextricably linked, and the current application is therefore premature unless and until the bridge proposal has detailed approval as part of a comprehensive package. Procedurally it creates an odd situation where in this application there is extensive bridge related narrative, even though the bridges are not the subject of this application at all. We ask that Greater Cambs do not fetter their discretion in the later evaluation of the bridge proposal. This is a problem of the applicant's own making, given the bridges do not form part of the outline permission.

### **3. Detailed Comments**

HPC welcomes the overall objective of greening the A1301 corridor, the setting further back of building lines from the highway and the acknowledgment by U&C that it should not try to replicate

the “City in the Countryside”<sup>2</sup>. HPC therefore supports large aspects of the landscape works. Our particular comments on the design are focused on New Road / Hinxton Village, cycle ways and the street lighting:

- **Northerly Roundabout – A1301**

We remain of the view that the new Northerly roundabout is too close to New Road and that access to and egress from New Road will be complicated by its introduction, with traffic accelerating off the roundabout heading North and queuing to get on to the roundabout heading South towards Saffron Walden. We don’t want to find that the village is saddled with traffic lights at the top of New Road in the future, to mitigate those impacts even if that is not currently envisaged.

Further if a Northerly bridge were introduced, it remains unclear to what extent the sight lines in a Southerly direction along the A1301 are prejudiced. Particularly as the local highways authority are not in fact guaranteeing to reduce traffic speed to 40mph in that A1301 corridor.

- **New Road**

We note the proposed tree thinning, new pedestrian path and the estate railing to replace the existing close board fencing (600-CTF-13-XX-DR-L-10003 Rev02) and the commitment to design quality is welcomed. However, the proposed work needs careful management. It is noted that the path is designed to be ‘no dig’ to minimise the impact of the proposals on the mature trees here, which contribute significantly to the character of this area. We would like reassurance that appropriate methods will be employed to ensure that the work will not jeopardise the future of these trees and that no mature trees will be cut. A concept drawing would assist.

We remain concerned that any traffic delays on the A1301 (whether during construction or later) will increase rat running down New Road via Ickleton and potentially also through Hinxton Ford, in each case to get back to J10 of the M11. We consider that the A1301 highways proposal should include measures to mitigate those consequential impacts, including a 20mph speed restriction and traffic calming through Hinxton Village and further speed and vehicle weight restrictions on New Road. This needs proper discussion with Ickleton and Duxford villages also.

- **Cycle Ways**

We are concerned at the width and colour of the cycleways. 3m wide feels excessive (running the risk drivers confuse it as another road). The current cycle path North of Hinxton is no more than 2 meters wide and accommodates cyclists, runners and walkers without difficulty. We understood from the Community Liaison group meeting that some reduction in size might be possible in consultation with highways (2.5 meters was mentioned). We also oppose the use of red tarmac as not in keeping with the rural environment. We understand Historic England share that concern and that it is not in fact a point of obligation.

---

<sup>2</sup> Wellcome Planning, Design and Compliance Statement (August 22) paragraph 4.8.

- **Street Lighting**

If it is not carefully specified, the new lighting has the potential to profoundly change the character of the area. Whilst extensive technical information is submitted, the actual effect of the new lighting in layperson's terms has not been provided. We therefore request further clarity on this, and confirmation that the proposals would accord with the previous commitment to an E1 lighting zone in the land closest to Hinxton. We are also concerned that the responsibility for achieving this should be driven forward by U&C; currently, there is an apparent over-reliance on achieving the adoption standards of the Local Highway Authority, which may result in far more light pollution.

#### **4. Other Matters**

- **Road Safety Audit**

We note the comments of CCC as the highways authority that a Road Safety Audit Stage 1 has not been incorporated as required by Condition 13 of the outline consent, and without it the application should be refused.

Has this now been provided?

- **EIA screening**

The cover letter suggests the application may require screening under the EIA regulations. Have Greater Cambs now confirmed that the environmental information already before it is adequate to assess the significant effects of the development on the environment, in accordance with 9(2) of the regulations?

- **Implementation Timescale**

The cover letter also urges Greater Cambs to determine the application expeditiously, with commencement of the works targeted for January 2023. This rather confirms our fear that the consultation process is not a meaningful community engagement.

Clearly, these timescales are not achievable if U&C are genuinely committed to the comprehensive changes outlined above which we think are necessary.

30 September 2022

Hinxton Parish Council

Chair: Sam Nichols

## **HINXTON PARISH COUNCIL (HPC)**

**Acting Chairman:** Chris Elliott

E-mail; [chris.elliott@hinxton-pc.org.uk](mailto:chris.elliott@hinxton-pc.org.uk)

**Address for correspondence:** The Parish Clerk, Hinxton Parish Council, 10 Duxford Road  
Hinxton, Cambs, CB10 1RB

E-mail: [clerk@hinxton-pc.org.uk](mailto:clerk@hinxton-pc.org.uk)

29 July 2022

Caroline Foster  
Project Director  
Urban & Civic plc  
50 New Bond Street  
London  
W1S 1BJ

By Email

Dear Caroline

### **A1301 Road Infrastructure and Bridges**

We write further to the A1301 road improvements workshop on 5 July and to Helen Pearson-Flett's follow up email of 11 July (16.15).

The new emphasis on a landscape led corridor along the A1301 is generally welcome. While we are happy to meet and discuss the A1301 reserved matters application, you explained that the application is now ready for submission, such that it is probably better we respond to the application itself when submitted (it being too late for HPC to influence the design development). We remain of the view that the new Northerly roundabout is too close to New Road and that access to and egress from New Road will be complicated by its introduction, with traffic accelerating off the roundabout heading North and queuing to get on to the roundabout heading South towards Saffron Walden.

As regards the introduction of the proposed introduction of the bridges, we were admittedly taken by surprise by your drawings, given that they are not part of the outline consent and have not been previously discussed. We would like you to come and consult with the village on the bridge infrastructure and the wider master plan as soon as possible and before the concept designs are progressed. There are a number of potential concerns:

- Over engineering: in a relatively short stretch of road we would be left with two major roundabouts and two substantial bridges, which looks like over engineering to facilitate site access, pedestrian

access and cycle movement. It appears that the two bridges are not much more than 100 meters apart. We don't see why two bridges are needed within such close proximity.

- Scale: these bridges would need to be large enough for an HGV to pass underneath and as drawn are incredibly wide. With HGV heights around 5 meters the underside the bridge will presumably be somewhere between 6-8 meters high and the upper side closer to 10 meters. Then those structures would no doubt be illuminated at night. Remember your commitment to an E1 lighting zone in the land bordering the village.
- Rural Character: we are concerned that the Northerly bridge in particular would detract from the rural character and feel of the village itself and is simply too close to New Road and to the grade 2\* listed church just beyond. That it would materially change the rural environment in which the village exists, even if the bridge is "greened" with planting.
- Other options: to the extent that a Northerly crossing is need at all, we ask whether you have assessed the viability of an underpass, which would be more low key and in sympathy with the landscape.

We look forward to discussing these issues with you in the village hall and with the people of Hinxton and surrounding villages in the near future.

Yours sincerely

*(Signed)*

Sam Nichols  
Hinxton Parish Councillor on behalf of Hinxton Parish Council

cc. by email

Helen Pearson-Flett [hpearson-flett@davidlock.com](mailto:hpearson-flett@davidlock.com)

Nigel Hawkey - [nhawkey@arc-planning.co.uk](mailto:nhawkey@arc-planning.co.uk)

'Fiona Bradley' [Fiona.Bradley@greatercambridgeplanning.org](mailto:Fiona.Bradley@greatercambridgeplanning.org)

Peter McDonald <[peter.mcdonald@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:peter.mcdonald@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)>

Edward James and Sheila Stones – Historic England