

University of West of England June 2009 Consultation Summary Feedback Report

Introduction:

As part of the ongoing consultation process for the masterplanning of the new UWE Campus, a week of consultation events was organised at Frenchay Campus during the week of Monday 8 June 2009. These events followed a series of initial workshop events which took place during the week of Monday 27 April 2009.

A stand alone exhibition of the latest proposals (*see Appendix A*) was set up in the Hub Area, near Main Reception, for staff and students to visit from Monday 8 June to Thursday 11 June. 'Meet the team' sessions were also organised over lunchtime on the Monday and Thursday to allow those with specific questions an opportunity to discuss proposals with team members. The exhibition provided an opportunity for staff, students and visitors to review revised design options made to the masterplan following initial consultation events in late April and to again invite feedback on specific elements of the design options to help inform and guide the masterplanners.

The exhibition was followed by a workshop for key external stakeholders held on the morning of Friday 12 June in the Street Cafe, S Block. This was followed by an open exhibition for near neighbours and businesses during the afternoon/evening of Friday and on Saturday.

The aim of this round of consultation was to update key external organisations on progression of revised proposals and to provide members of the local business community and those living close by with an opportunity to view and comment on the emerging options and talk to members of the project team bringing forward the plans.

These events form part of a full programme of consultation events, which will run over the coming months. Through this process the University wishes to engage and involve staff and students plus the local community in shaping the future plans for the whole campus. The consultation events are part of a wider communications exercise, including using a dedicated web site, e-communications, University publications and public leaflets, to ensure that anyone interested knows what is going on and can respond to and be part of ongoing discussions as the masterplanning project progresses.

Exhibition for UWE staff and students: invitees

Information about the exhibition and 'meet the team' sessions were widely communicated to staff and students across the University. This included emails, updates on the website and posters and banners on all campus sites.

As the team recognised that this consultation was taking place when many staff and students were involved in exams or off site the exhibition material and feedback form were also posted on the project website and individuals encouraged to participate and respond online.

The exhibition remained as a stand-alone display from Monday morning through to Thursday evening. Approximately 78 people took advantage of the opportunity to speak to the masterplanning team at the two 'meet the team' sessions. As the exhibition was not staffed outside these times it is not possible to say how many people in total may have visited during the week.

Those who came to the exhibition were able to fill in a feedback questionnaire (*see Appendix B*) either as hard copy or they could refer to the website and complete this online.

External Stakeholders 12 June Stakeholder Workshop

Invitations to attend a follow up workshop were issued to the same key stakeholders invited to attend the previous event plus some additional names. The list included local councillors and council officers, service providers including police and health trusts, representatives from nearby residents groups, utilities and local transport representatives as well as other organisations with an interest in the site including commercial developers bringing forward planning proposals on neighbouring sites.

From a list of 93 invited stakeholders a total of 23 individuals/representatives attended on the day. Attendees included representation from South Gloucestershire and Bristol City councils, Avon & Somerset Police, The Environment Agency and Lockleaze Voice

Representatives from the team present included:

David Hunter, Stride Treglown – masterplanners and designers
Nick Tyrrell and Karl Scholz, Alder King – town planners and strategic planning advisers
Jeff Troake, Colin Buchanan – wider transportation issues
Dan Hammond, Hyder - transportation within the site
Justin Spencer, Hoare Lee – sustainability
Jerry Wheatcroft, MACE – project managers
David Hopes, UWE
Avril Baker, Carolyn Jones – Avril Baker Consultancy

Event format

On arrival stakeholders were encouraged to view the exhibition boards and talk informally to members of the University and the project team.

The UWE masterplanning team then presented firstly a summary of feedback from the previous consultation events (*see Appendix C*). Stride Treglown then ran through the latest emerging proposals as shown on the exhibition boards. (*see Appendix A*)

The meeting was then opened up to general questions and answers.

Summary of key issues raised at the general Q&A session

Wider community

- Disappointment from South Gloucestershire Council that despite comments made at the last Stakeholder workshop the proposals still do not show real integration with the wider community and that the masterplan is inward looking.
- Importance of detailed planning now with Redrow, Crest and other developers before masterplan proposals are finalised.
- Interest by Lockleaze residents in being included in the wider community discussions.

Shared facilities & Amenities

- Possible location of a shared facility such as a swimming pool and whether locating off site would make it more attractive/accessible
- Consideration of the significance of key new facilities within region/sub region not just locally
- Scope for new playing fields south of site

Transport & movement

- Ways of overcoming the barrier of the ring road for cyclists and pedestrians
- Improving way finding and access through Campus e.g. from Lockleaze
- Ensuring access across campus for those with disability or mobility needs

Exhibition for near neighbours

After the stakeholder workshop the exhibition was opened up to near neighbours and was open from 3 - 7pm and on Saturday from 10 – 2pm. Members of the masterplanning team and a representative of the University were on hand to talk to visitors face to face.

Notifying neighbours:

Some 660 printed invite cards were hand delivered/mailed to both residents and business in the local area. This included residents in Stoke Park and Harry Stoke Lane, businesses in the Bristol Business Park and other major employers in the local area. Stakeholders who had been invited to the Friday workshop were also notified of the drop-in exhibition and the event was posted in the project website and mentioned in local press & media coverage.

A total of 57 individuals attended the drop-in exhibition the majority of whom were residents from Stoke Park. Others included residents from Harry Stoke Lane and Lockleaze, several people who worked locally and the ward councillors for both Stoke Gifford and Lockleaze..

Consultation Feedback:

The aim of each round of consultation is to encourage ongoing dialogue and provide an opportunity for feedback and creative input from representatives both internally and externally at an early stage in the masterplanning process. Feedback is extremely valuable in helping to identify key issues, areas for consideration and innovative ideas which all help to inform the project.

During the June consultation feedback was received through a number of channels. This includes discussions at the stakeholder workshop, from attendees at the week-long exhibition with both verbal and written feedback and through online activity. Online activity has in turn included those who have completed the questionnaire through the website plus individuals who have posted specific comments or responses on the forum.

Online feedback

There have been over 6,000 visits to the website in the first month. Over 140 people responded to initial Frenchay 'Campus thoughts' questionnaire first posted in May. There has been significant input on the forum with some 20 actively commenting and over 900 views. Topics include a new swimming pool, a creative media centre, suggestion for a design guide and issues around parking. There are also two Facebook groups up and running, one lobbying for a swimming pool and the other for a new student union facility.

A range of communications tools have been used to drive online traffic. Links to new Campus website (www.uwewcampus.com) have been established on the main UWE website, the UWE Student Union website and the two Facebook groups. The You Tube UWE Channel is also carrying the Vice Chancellor's update video encouraging people to go to the new Campus website. E-newsletters have been sent out to all students as well as to Alumni and UWE's partner organisations.

Of the 329 June questionnaires returned by 18 June - 87% were completed online.

Exhibition feedback:

A single comment form was used for all respondees. A deadline of 18 June was given for comment forms to be included in the summary report. A total of 329 feedback forms have been received either as hard copy, via email or completed online. Any forms completed after this date will still be considered by the masterplanning team.

The Principle of Development

The opening questions asked if there was **support for the key development principles and whether these covered the right areas.**

More than three quarters of respondees (77.2%) supported the principles (11.2% not in agreement and 11.5% no opinion/undecided) and furthermore 64.7% felt that these covered the right areas (14.9% not in agreement and 20.4% no opinion/undecided).

Many comments raised issues that are picked up in more detail later in the questionnaire particularly around transport and parking problems, the need for travel plans, consideration of cyclists and pedestrians plus ideas for additional amenities.

Other comments raised included a wish to see sustainability as an aim and a suggestion that the development principles should be converted into a statement of intent with priorities. Also a concern that the masterplanning team is not yet considering timetabling of academic activities as opposed to room hosting and mention of the gap in finance between international and local students in terms of accommodation.

Summary of Development Opportunities

When asked their views about the four key design elements that are informing the emerging design options, more than 80% were in favour of the north/south pedestrian route, the east/west landscaped corridor and a new public entrance with slightly fewer (64%) in favour of a new focal heart.

Vehicle Entrances & Parking

When asked **Which entrance should become the new formal/public way into the new Campus and why?**

There were 249 responses to this question, with the majority of respondees (153) indicating that they favoured the idea of using the former HP entrance to the North of the site as opposed to 43 who suggested maintaining Coldharbour Lane as the main entrance. 19 respondees felt that both entrances could be used with perhaps one for students and staff and another for general public depending on where public facilities are located.

There were questions raised about why there should be just one public entrance instead of everyone using both entrances to help take the pressure off Coldharbour Lane. Those in favour of using the former HP entrance felt that this would provide a more direct access off the ring road and be nearer for Parkway Station plus it would be more visible and welcoming and give the University a higher profile. It was also said that this entrance would bring people more quickly and easily into the heart of the new Campus. Some concerns were however raised about necessary traffic management measures required for this entrance to work and to avoid creating more congestion.

In response to the question **Where should student/staff car parking be located?** Just over half (51.7%) thought that car parks should be spread around the site (21.3% were not in agreement and 27% gave no opinion/undecided) whilst slightly fewer (46.2%) wanted car parking located at the periphery (27.7% not in agreement and 26.1% giving no opinion or undecided).

There were a number of issues raised. Some recognised the benefits of putting car parks on the edges in terms of creating a more attractive environment whilst others cited the practicalities of having to carry belongings a long way from distant car parks into buildings. They said that this would add further to the already long travelling times and suggested possible set down areas. Also raised were the needs of older or less physically able people as well as disabled and issues around people having to walk back to car parks during anti social hours.

Rapid Transport

When asked **Which route the RT should take through the Campus?** just under half (46.8%) favoured Option 1 - the route running through the centre of the Campus, with far fewer 18.2% favouring Option 2 - the route skirting the south of the site and running up Coldharbour Lane. Just over a third (35%) were undecided/no opinion.

A number of people expressed cynicism about whether the RT system would ever happen and if so when? There were concerns about whether the central route might cut the campus in half but this has to be balanced against increased permeability. Several people commented that it would be useful to have a board showing all bus routes in the vicinity to better understand how the RT routes could complement existing services.

Others commented that the current bus station would be too far from the HP part of the campus. There was also the comment that better links should be made through to Abbey Wood and Lockleaze. There is however a concern from Lockleaze residents about the impact of any increased frequency and numbers of vehicles on Romney Avenue.

Pedestrian links & Cycle Routes

Nearly three quarters of respondees (72 %) agreed that **The proposed network of pedestrian and cycle routes could improve movement and connections and help to 'knit together' the two parts of the new campus?** with just 5.5% not in favour and 22.5% undecided/no opinion.

In response to the question **Are there any other routes that could be created or enhanced?** there were several suggestions for more cycle facilities and secure cycle parking on site and generally the need to improve cycling routes to and from the Campus. Others raised the issue of

separating cyclists from pedestrians for safety reasons. Several Stoke Park residents highlighted that cycle routes are shown going through residential areas and if so they would need to be clearly signposted.

Landscape & recreation

When asked whether they preferred a **building or a boulevard to help connect the two halves of the campus** 67.8% favoured a boulevard against 12.4% who wanted a building whilst 19.8% were undecided/no opinion.

There were comments about the value of green space given how crowded the current campus is with suggestions that there is an opportunity to create new spaces for people to enjoy. There were also suggestions that a mix of a boulevard and building could connect areas better. Several people were concerned about protecting the wildlife, trees and hedgerows. One person was concerned about security issues at night if there is a large central space and suggested contacting Reading University for advice.

Similarly when asked **Should the new focal heart to the Campus be a building or a landscaped plaza?** a majority (63.5%) prefer a landscaped plaza (10% not in favour 26.5% undecided/no opinion) whereas only 31% would prefer to see a prominent new building (24.9% were not in favour, 44.1% were undecided/no opinion).

As above there were suggestions for having a combination of a building and a plaza to maximise use in all weathers. Likewise several people commented that any prominent new building should include an internal or covered plaza area for year round use. Others wanted to see outdoor spaces with potential for staging concerts, market and exhibitions or just a place to meet. The need for quality was emphasised.

Neighbouring uses

In response to the question **What additional facilities and amenities could UWE encourage other organisations to provide for students and staff** there were many suggestions some of which were then repeated in the following responses.

The most popular suggestion was for more sports/recreation facilities ideally in a new complex including a 50m swimming pool, if this is not provided on campus, plus playing fields. Others wanted to see a leisure centre with a cinema and restaurants/bars and community facilities. Several people commented that Bristol does not have a major concert venue/public arena and felt that this could be provided in the area particularly with the access off the M32. Others were more concerned to see improvements in public transport such as a park & ride service and improvements to cycle lanes.

Public Facilities

More than three quarters of respondents (75.4%) were aware that UWE already makes some facilities available to the public (19.7% were unaware 4.9% undecided/no opinion). 66.9% however felt that the Campus could have a greater role in the local area by providing more shared facilities and amenities (14.6% not in agreement and 18.5% undecided/no opinion).

In response to the question **Could the campus provide more shared shops, services, amenities and community facilities** responses were sought under headings; retail & leisure, sports, cultural and community services and finally student-only facilities. In each case the majority of people favoured more facilities and amenities with the most popular being the option for more sports facilities.

62% wanted more **retail and leisure outlets** (9.1% were not in agreement 28.9% undecided/no opinion)

Generally people thought that there was scope to provide more shops and facilities and that sharing these with the local residents would encourage public use of the Campus and better integration. Reasons some respondents gave for not opening up the Campus were security for students and whether car parking could cope.

Several people suggested more choice of outlets but there were divided views as to whether these should be independent or run by the Student Union with concerns that these might impact on other retail in the area or for example if there was a pub that this would affect the income for the Student Union.

There was strong support from students for more facilities on site as it was felt that current food outlets are expensive and not always available plus if there will be more students living on campus these will be needed even more. Several people were concerned about having a pub on site whereas popular ideas were for a post office, a hair dresser, a better book shop and more choice of banks.

70.5% wanted more **sports facilities e.g a swimming pool and playing pitches** with just 2.1% not in favour and 27.4% undecided/no opinion.

This category was the most popular with virtually all respondees. A general comment was that better sports facilities would also support UWE's drive to be a health university and enable the University to host more competitions/matches.

The overwhelming suggestion was for a swimming pool which could be for both University and community use. Several people commented that this was a benchmark against which UWE would be compared to other universities. Specific comments included that this should be a 50m competition standard pool with an area for children. Staff and students were concerned that they should have priority booking. Local residents wanted this to be available to the local community at a discounted price and suggested that there should be allocated slots for local schools and groups.

Other suggestions were for more facilities for community sports with scope for after school and holiday clubs. Also floodlit pitches, maybe including outdoor basket ball and scope to liaise with the Dings Rugby club in Lockleaze.

59% wanted more **cultural facilities such as a new performing Arts Centre, Creative media Centre and improved library** with just 3.9% not in agreement and 37.1% undecided/no opinion

Suggestions fell into two main categories those who wanted more arts/performance facilities and those who preferred to see investment in better library facilities. There was strong support for an improved arts & performance space including rehearsal rooms, film centre, music and dance facilities as well as exhibition areas perhaps attached to restaurants/cafes/bar. Warwick Arts Centre was particularly mentioned as a model. There were suggestions for having a venue that could also be used for degree shows and graduation ceremonies whilst others wanted this linked to an outside performance space. Several people mentioned scope to link this into courses such as media.

Others were more concerned that the focus should be on improving library facilities with scope to include some community use. Also the need to look at investing in IT and online resources to support different ways of teaching and distance learning.

67.2% supported more **Community facilities such as a post office, health care facilities and community meeting rooms** with 3.9% not in agreement and 28.9% undecided/no opinion

The most popular suggestions were for a post office plus better health facilities, including a pharmacy and/or a GP surgery with possibly a physiotherapy service attached to the Health & Life Sciences faculty. Some pointed out however that there is already a pharmacy at Sainsburys and/or were concerned that anything new should not detract from the provision of proper health care facilities in the wider community.

Other suggestions included reinstating the chaplaincy and/or providing a multi-faith area.

Several people mentioned that the location of such facilities was vital if they were to be for local community use as well as University.

63.35 agreed that there should be **Improved facilities for students** with 4.9% not in favour and 32.8% undecided/no opinion.

Several residents stated that they were not familiar with this area but there were widespread comments that the present Student Union facilities are cramped, in grim buildings and are poor compared with other Universities. Respondee cited Cardiff, Reading and Queens Belfast as good examples. There were comments that there is no incentive for students to stay on campus and that it is too far to travel into Bristol.

There was one suggestion that there should be more facilities for mature students. Another comment was that noise could become an issue.

When asked **Where in principle should such shared public facilities/amenities be located?** opinion was divided. Nearly half (46.8%) favoured these being at the edges of the site (18.5% against and 34.7% undecided/no opinion) whilst 37.7 % wanted these centrally located (23.7% not in favour, 38.6% undecided/no opinion).

Several people made the suggestion that amenities and services mainly used by staff/students should be centrally located with those that might be shared with the public should be placed more towards the edges of the site. Again some people commented that shared use of facilities was a good way of better integrating the University with the community.

Other general comments:

The issue of most concern for many residents from Stoke Park, which was widely mentioned, is the continuing problem around parking in their streets. They question what can be done now to help sort out inconsiderate parking, blocking access etc before looking at the implications of the masterplan which they believe will exacerbate the situation. Residents' views are that measures such as charging for parking has little affect as students won't pay to park if they can park for free in Stoke Park. One positive suggestion was for a car club for students living on campus to help reduce the need to bring cars to Frenchay.

A selection of other comments made include:

There should be more focus on sustainability, more about principles such as UWE becoming carbon neutral, evidence of use of renewable energy and energy efficiency. Several people were interested in plans for the eco village another felt that UWE should become a beacon for sustainability.

A number of respondees were keen to see well designed high quality new buildings and spaces. There were also comments about not overbuilding and keeping the landscape and wildlife.

Several Health & Social Care students mentioned that their shift pattern and term time is different from other students and were concerned about compatibility with other students if living together on site. One person also suggested establishing an outreach programme with Frenchay Hospital.

There was a suggestion that St Matts could be retained as a conference venue or a post graduate centre. Another wanted an English Language Centre which would help support international students.

A couple of respondees wanted to see more focus on sorting out the existing campus and buildings first such as rectifying problems in the Student Village. Another wanted to see more investment in new technology to support existing faculties.

There were several comments about wanting to be kept involved in the emerging plans as they progress.

Engaging with staff and students has also provided increased opportunities for people to raise other issues outside the masterplanning brief such as concerns about cuts in language courses and the closure of the St Matts nursery. Local residents have also understandably used this consultation as a forum for again raising strong concerns about existing parking problems and are asking what the University can do in the short/medium term to help manage this.

Breakdown of respondees to date to end of 18/6/2009

329 forms were completed by the 19 June deadline. The majority of forms (86.9%) were completed online through the website with 13.1% received as hard copy or email.

In terms of identifying status, a number of those responding classed themselves in more than one category (eg local resident, student and work locally)

Of those individuals who classified themselves in *one category only*:

41 are local residents, 127 are UWE staff, and 98 are students. 41 individuals identified themselves as alumni.

Of those students who responded with more detailed information:

70 were full time, 9 part time.

6 are based at Bower Ashton, 100 at Frenchay, 5 at Glenside and 18 at St Matthias with a small number of respondees above indicating that they studied at more than one campus.

Not all UWE staff chose to indicate their full or part time status, but of those who did respond 58 were full time, and none indicated that they were employed on a part time basis.

4 are based at Bower Ashton, 118 at Frenchay, 17 at Glenside, and 9 at St Matthias with a small number of respondees above indicating that their work took them to more than one campus.

Next steps:

Those who were not able to take part in the recent consultation can view the latest proposals and comment on the project website www.uwenewcampus.com.

Following this round of consultation, a number of options will be presented to the UWE Board of Governors in July. The Board may indicate a preferred option or elements from more than one option. The masterplanning team will continue to work up their proposals ready for public consultation during the summer.

A public consultation exhibition will be held from **16 – 18 July on the Frenchay Campus** (in the Street Cafe, New Redland Building/S Block) with a follow up event in October.

Once the University has considered the draft masterplan, the Concept Statement will be submitted to South Gloucestershire Council. This will be followed by the start of the formal planning process which will be subject to further consultation and discussion.

Feedback from all the consultation activities will form part of a Statement of Community Involvement which will accompany any future planning submission.

Appendices:

- Appendix A – June consultation exhibition boards
- Appendix B – June consultation questionnaire
- Appendix C – April/May consultation summary report