
Subject Coventry Local Plan Examination Hearing - Session 10 Transport and Accessibility –
University of Warwick Transport Statement

Date 5 September 2016

Job No/Ref 115438/4.28

Coventry Local Plan Examination

Hearing Session 10: Transport and Accessibility

University of Warwick

Transport Statement

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The University of Warwick working closely with Coventry City Council has dramatically improved the transport environment in and around the University over the last 8 years under the current Masterplan / s106 Agreement.

1.2 In 2007 the position was as follows:

- 4,500 staff, 18,800 students, 4,974 car parking spaces, c. 400 bus movements into and out of University per week day and a limited Travel Plan.
- There was insufficient car parking to meet demand with car parking problems on both the university estate and on local roads. The bus interchange was inadequate to meet demand.
- Major congestion on the local road network during peak periods and regular major congestion and gridlock at times on University estate roads particularly on Open Days and Graduation days.

1.3 This situation has been turned around whilst the University has continued to grow. The University has achieved this through commitment to its Travel Plan and working in partnership with the local authorities. The Travel Plan and s106 Agreement together set out limits on car parking, targets for sustainable transport modes and s278 works to improve the operation of the local highway network. In addition to the capital investment in the local highways the University has been investing approximately £0.5million per annum supporting sustainable travel options including public transport, cycling, walking and car sharing.

1.4 This statement sets out the work the University is currently doing to manage its transport impacts and the University's response to the policy changes.

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2.0 Current Transport Environment

- 2.1 Nearly 50% of the traffic on the roads passing through the University (Gibbet Hill Road and Kirby Corner Road) is through traffic. The other major trip generators in the area are the Westwood Business Park, the Science Park and Cannon Park Retail centre.
- 2.2 In general the highway network suffers from urban congestion at busy times, typical for a medium to large city. The congestion is generally restricted to the AM and PM peak periods and dissipates reasonably quickly.
- 2.3 The local road network has been upgraded by Coventry City Council (CCC) through a Pinchpoint scheme, known as the University of Warwick and Westwood Business Park Congestion Relief Scheme, which was completed in 2015. This project included significant funding from the University under the s106 Agreement. This involved improvements to nine local junctions.
- 2.4 The University is situated on the edge of Coventry with good pedestrian connections to the local district centre at Cannon Park, residential neighbourhoods, community facilities, employment areas and transport interchanges.
- 2.5 The campus is well connected to a series of signed and advisory cycle routes including the National Cycle Network route 52 which has been developed in part with support from the University. Other local off road cycle routes are provided along Kenilworth Road and Charter Avenue. The University is working with CCC developing further cycle routes as part of the Cycle Coventry project.
- 2.6 The University has cycle parking stands for over 2,300 cycles and has introduced a successful cycle hire scheme with 50 hire bikes at various locations. This scheme is being expanded.
- 2.7 The following rail stations give access to local, regional and national destinations:
 - Coventry Main station 5.5km away with direct bus links.
 - Canley Station 2.5km away with University shuttle bus link.
 - Tile Hill Station 3.6km away
- 2.8 There are c. 750 bus movements into and out of the University per term time weekday operated by National Express Coventry, Stagecoach and Travel de Courcey. The primary destinations are Coventry city centre and station, Kenilworth, Warwick and Leamington. The University also operates 11 dedicated bus routes which run one to three journeys per day to and from the University from numerous destinations across Coventry. All of these buses use the new bus interchange located on Gibbet Hill Road, next to the Arts Centre,

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which was completed by the University in 2015.

- 2.9 The University operates a Park and Ride facility with free shuttle buses for Open days, Graduation and other events. In 2015 the facility successfully parked 3,950 cars and transported approximately 12,000 visitors to and from the campus in one day.
- 2.10 The University charges for all car parking and has developed a very successful car share scheme. This has approximately 1,790 staff and students signed up under the branding of ‘Warwick Share’ for staff and ‘Take a Mate’ for students removing c. 400 cars a day from commuting. The number of users continues to grow steadily from an initial take up of c.400 people in 2009. Car sharers get preferential car parking reserved for them and save on petrol and car parking charges.
- 2.5 The University through the s106 Agreement works with and supports Coventry Council with the introduction of parking schemes and TROs to address parking problems if they arise on residential roads.
- 2.6 The University carries out travel surveys and traffic surveys every 2 years and these show that the University is on course to meet its sustainable travel targets despite its continued growth. The results from the 2015 travel survey show that the University is already meeting or exceeding the 2018 modal share targets for eight out of the 12 key metrics.
- 2.7 The University also carries out a carbon assessment of the emissions arising from commuting under its second Carbon Management Implementation Plan. These are Scope 3 indirect emissions which are not yet covered by Higher Education Funding Council for England targets but the University is committed to reducing its carbon footprint.

3.0 Relevant Policies

- 3.1 The draft plan as proposed to be modified contains the following relevant policies which provide the context for the University’s comments on the Hearing Session 10: Transport.
- 3.2 **Policy AC6: Rail** - identifies proposals for additional local rail stations.
- 3.3 **Policy AC5: Bus and Rapid Transit** - sets out the desire to develop a Rapid Transit network.
- 3.4 **Coventry Development Plan 2016 Appendix 5 Car and Cycle Parking Standards for New Development** – identifies parking standards that would be applicable to the University.
- 3.5 **Coventry Development Plan 2016 Appendix 7 Infrastructure Delivery Plan at March 2016** – identifies enhancements to deliver improved access to UKC and HS2.

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4.0 Response to the Transport Policies and the Questions Raised by the Inspector

- 4.1 **Policy AC6: Rail.** The University supports the principle of a new local station (Coventry South) to the south of the city serving the University, other local employment areas and the new housing developments on the edge of the city (albeit coming forward in the Warwick Local Plan).
- 4.2 **Policy AC5: Bus and Rapid Transit.** The University supports the development of a Rapid Transit system linking major trip generators to the city centre, Coventry main rail station and HS2 Interchange and UKC.
- 4.3 **Parking Standards.** The University broadly supports the proposed standards as consistent with the standards applied in the current Masterplan taking account of the mix of academic, residential, and community arts, cultural and sporting facilities across Campus. The University has successfully been implementing its Travel Plan over the last 8 years as shown above and considers that car parking can be effectively managed on a Campus wide basis.
- 4.4 **Infrastructure Delivery Plan.** The University supports the packages of measures to support walking and cycling and the delivery of infrastructure to encourage recharging of electric cars. The University also supports the enhancements to deliver improved access to the UKC and HS2 from the area south of the city where significant housing and economic growth is planned including the University and the area around it.
- 4.5 **Questions Raised by the Inspector.** In general response to the issues raised by the Inspector the University would like to record that it has worked well with the Local Planning and Highway Authorities within whose boundaries it is located and is supportive of the direction of travel set out in the Coventry Local Plan in respect of transport and accessibility. The area of concern to the University relates to question 1(f).
- 4.6 **Question 1(f):** *Does the Plan provide sufficient clarity about how allocations will be subject to an appropriate assessment of the capacity of the existing highway infrastructure, the identification of any requirements for new infrastructure and how this will be delivered through the master planning process?*
- 4.7 There is recognition of the importance of the University to the city, the region and the country and it is important that the University is able to grow as it has done continuously over the last 50 years. The allocation of additional housing on the edge of Coventry in close proximity to the University under the developing Warwick Local Plan will affect the operation of the local highway infrastructure much of it within Coventry. The roads that the University are primarily concerned about which lie within Coventry are Kirby Corner Road

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and Gibbet Hill Road.

- 4.8 It is important to the University that the extent of the housing growth planned for the south of the city does not adversely impact on the operation of the local road network surrounding the University and restrict the future development of the University prior to the provision of enhanced access infrastructure. The limit of 425 dwellings off Westwood Heath Road identified in Policy H42 and Policy DS NEW2 of the emerging Warwick Local Plan prior to the provision of enhanced access infrastructure is supported by the University and they would wish for Coventry to confirm their agreement to this restriction.
- 4.9 This limit to the number of dwellings in this area provides the opportunity for the continued growth of the University up to the provision of enhanced infrastructure in the area which it is anticipated will secure the long term development of the University albeit this infrastructure is provided within Warwick.