

Fiona Powell Speech for Full Council Sept 15th 2016

- Councillors, as a group of professionally-minded residents, we have never been given the chance to debate the topic of an East P&R with you. However, the time we spend breaking down the evidence means that we really do understand it. We ask you to listen with an open mind today and think independently as you move forward.
- [You will spot a common theme of a face mask among some of us – many have been prevented from speaking tonight since you changed the rules and we are here in solidarity with city centre and Batheaston residents who see no improvement in their illegal air quality in the offing because a P&R may only ease future congestion. What a mockery that makes of the Transport Strategy now, predicated as it is on removing vehicles from the city's core.]¹
- In preparation for today you will have read the new World Heritage Site Management Plan. When I quote the following definition from it – I am incredulous that we are still having to defend the Meadows.

World Heritage Sites are 'places of Outstanding Universal Value to the whole of humanity'. 'Outstanding Universal Value' means cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries.

Now quick quiz - who can tell me what OUV number 5 is?

That's it - the green setting of the city in a hollow in the hills

And Attribute 47 within this?

Fingers of green countryside which stretch right into the city

And the first line of the Vision?

The Outstanding Universal Value of the City of Bath World Heritage Site will be conserved and enhanced for this and future generations

And a bonus point – what does the Core Strategy say about OUVs?

There will be a strong presumption against development that would harm the Outstanding Universal Value of the World Heritage Site itself, or its setting.

Right – so let me summarise. You must not develop a park and ride on the Meadows.

¹ Note: this was not used on the night because we had said in our press release that we would wear masks and were approached before the meeting by the Council who said that masks would not be allowed. When I then showed these to the outgoing Chief Exec, she said that the Council had thought that we were planning to speak with full anonymous face masks on, which was not the case. We had small paper dust masks that you wear on a bike or building site to prevent breathing in pollution/dust and had planned to take them off as soon as seated in order to speak.

- In the midst of this mess, I found myself raising a small smile when I read in the previous draft:

There is also a continuing need to train, educate and influence decision makers which, as previously described, have a very short life compared to the historic buildings which they are stewards of.

You got it – a short life. The final Management Plan points out 'Local elections take place every four years and can result (as they did last year) in a widespread change of local politicians' and goes on to reflect that 'key decision makers may benefit from training'

We think this is an understatement and are formally requesting tonight that all members of the Cabinet and of the Development Control Committee receive training on the importance of the world heritage site and on the Setting Supplementary Planning Document ahead of considering any decision to site a park and ride to the east of Bath.

We also expect this decision to be after the planning inspector has presented back her report. To do otherwise would be poor practice indeed.