

## **Minutes –Burrell’s Field lighting Open Meeting**

Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> April 2013, 5pm, OCR

### **1. Dr Pullen began by explaining why the college can not light the path through the Fellows’ Garden:**

- a. Cambridge is a typical UK town/city, thus not particularly dangerous but not absolutely safe. Trinity College covers a very large area from Jesus Lane to Grange Road and beyond and therefore the entire perimeter of the college cannot be secured, but the Fellows’ Garden and Burrell’s Field is secured with a fence around the area. This, however, is not too difficult to get over/through.
- b. The trial lights on Parker’s Piece make people feel safer (there was a recent article on the subject in *The Cambridge News*): but it is a pathway across open ground and the lights do not only illuminate the pathway but also the ground around it, following the principles of safety lighting (The Junior Bursar referenced the book *The Principles of Security and Crime Prevention*). To protect people in the dark you illuminate potential attacker and *not* the target – ie. Lights that shine outwards. If lights were positioned only along the path, you should illuminate yourself as a potential target.
- c. What feels safe/safer isn’t necessarily *actually* safer. The advice from the College and also the Police is to discourage people from walking through the Fellows’ Garden after dark and to instead go along Garret Hostel Lane then along Burrell’s Walk (past the UL) up to Grange Road and access the Burrell’s Field accommodation from there.
  - i. The Fellows’ Garden is in an isolated area with no public access. Once you enter, you are enclosed with any potential attacker who has scaled the fence. Lighting the area cannot counter this because there is no way to light the entire area safely.
  - ii. There is also the risk of falling over, or suffering a medical emergency, when in an isolated area.

### **2. Questions then arose from attendees:**

- a. Q: How recent is the advice from the police about this issue? Is it up-to-date considering the fairly recent attacks by the serial sex offender who attacked women around Grange Road (adjoining the public Burrell’s Walk)?
  - i. A: The advice has not changed since the attacks. The way the communication works with the police is that there is a Police Officer based in Cambridge police station who has responsibility with liaison with all colleges (same Police Officer who gives the safety talks to Freshers) with whom there is continuous dialogue. There is also a system by which advice is sent out by the police to all colleges concerning specific incidents or issues – there is a regular exchange of information and advice between Senior

Tutors and Police. The college has not asked the specific question regarding the lighting, but had the advice changed, the college would expect to have been informed by suggestion from the other side. The advice rests on the perception of what constitutes risk, and that has not changed since the attacks.

- ii. The Junior Bursar also reminded the attendees that whilst the area was deemed unsafe due to attacks the college ran a minibus from New Court up to Burrell's Field to ensure safety of students living there. The perpetrators were apprehended following a Police surveillance operation, were tried and convicted.
- b. Q: Members of the college cannot really avoid using the Avenue up to Queen's Road from New Court – are there any reasons not to light this area?
  - i. A: The Junior Bursar understood from his predecessor that before 2006 there was a planning application to put lights down the Avenue but was turned down by the City Council – the entire area of the college is Grade 2 registered park and therefore needs planning permission AND Listed Building Consent. The Junior Bursar, however, suggested re-applying for lighting in this area might be looking into if it was a strong student concern.
- c. Q: There is a section after the brick octagon with bushes running alongside it which is dark and not in view of the roads – one can see more clearly from the light by the bridge if walking into Burrell's Field but when walking away from the light it can seem pitch black. Why not light at least this section?
  - i. A: The path is considered more dangerous than the other suggested route and the College wouldn't want to encourage use of this path towards Queen's Road by lighting only some of it when there is a safer option.
- d. Q: The path from the road to the brick octagon is straight with very low-lying shrubs – why not implement high lighting along this path?
  - i. A: The Junior Bursar did not agree that there are not areas where high shrubbery comes close to the path – particularly around the octagon area. The garden itself is a “designated green space” in the plans for the city and therefore bushes cannot be significantly cut back (in order to provide a wider space between the path and the bushes).
  - ii. Q: What about lights in the trees? Or lights that don't disturb the place very much?
    - 1. A: Even for this the college would need to make a planning application and make a significant change to the look and character of the area due to close vegetation from the octagon towards the bridge (trees, bushes etc) – the College had to balance this

against people taking five minutes longer to take safer route. The college cannot just make *some* of the path safer with lighting when other parts cannot be made safer.

- e. Q: Why is there a path going down middle of college grounds that we're being asked not to use and yet is still accessible?
  - i. A: The students are only asked not to use the path after dark and the alternative is completely locking the gates at this time – darkness happens at a slightly different time every day so this would be very difficult to implement.
- f. Q: Is the path we are being asked to use completely safe?
  - i. A: No, because it is through a public area after dark, but it is safer because it is fenced on either side without being enclosed, and it is lit.
- g. Q: There is a section through the card-operated door near the entrance to the UL where a path *is* lit – why? The lights must have been there for a while.
  - i. A: Presumably yes. This path is less dangerous than the main path because it is closer and on view to a public area. The path down to the octagon is more masked by vegetation and takes you further away from anyone walking past who might be able to call for help if there is a fall/an attack.
- h. Q: Is it possible to make the gates into the area quicker?
  - i. A: They have to be slow mechanical ones because of legal disability requirements. The Junior Bursar personally thought that the point to make a gate that *opens* quickly so we can get out is a good one, but legislation is not always consistent. The college often has to compromise with the City Council.
  - ii. Q: Could we have 2 different operation systems? One for those with disabilities that require a slow gate and another to open and close the gate quickly?
    - 1. A: The practicality level for this is low - either it would have to know *who* is disabled by their card or to have 2 scanners – difficult/complex to implement.
- i. Q: From the trips/falls/personal injury perspective – is it not worth having some sort of low-level illumination on parts of the pathway where footing is difficult to see? Also: If someone's lurking, it doesn't make much of a difference if the path lit or not, they may have adjusted to light levels.
  - i. A: There is a duty of care of the organisation and an individual responsibility of care. To fulfil their duty, the college recommends the longer walk up Burrell's Walk, so in choosing to take the Fellow's Garden path we are putting ourselves at risk - the college is not reasonably responsible for making significant changes when they have provided a safe option.

- j. Q: If lighting was implemented the costs are reduced safety combined with possibility that more people might walk on the path. The benefit is that there is less chance of tripping and falling. Do the costs outweigh the benefits?
  - i. A: The Junior Bursar's responsibility must be to make college as safe as possible, not to save time. If you walk on the suggested path, you won't trip and fall. If they do something about the lighting they are acquiescing the decision of individuals to take risks.
- k. Q: What about building small porters lodge at Burrell's Gate? (Wasn't this Queen's Road gate?)
  - i. A: It would be unlikely for the college to receive planning permission.
  - ii. Q: But there are gardeners' buildings there
    - 1. A: Yes, of long-standing and shielded from view. Also it would need to be manned all night, which is a significant staffing burden. We already have a larger, continuous porter presence and more porters lodges than many colleges.
- l. Q: Are there any security cameras in the fellow's garden?
  - i. A: No – CCTV is generally useful for evidential purposes after the event. It can be useful for practical purposes: e.g. on lampposts outside Great Gate porters lodge there are CCTV cameras so porters can see what's going on – they cannot see from the Porters' Lodge up to the cobbles in the dark). If CCTV were installed in the Fellows' Garden, it might produce evidence but not a possibility of a real time response to any incident.

**3. In Summary:** There are parts of the path that are not safe and cannot be made safer by lighting. The college can't make *part* of it safer and not the other parts. Unless the college undertook major transformation to character of garden (which the City Council has the power to oppose under legislation, and is likely to do so) it cannot be lit safely.