
St. Peter's Neighbourhood Association

Committee Meeting Minutes

Location: Anzio House, St. Peter's.

Date: Tuesday 8 January 2018, 7.00pm.

Committee Members: Jon Bryan (Chair), Robert Mee (Secretary), Peter Thompson (Treasurer), Peter Boyle, Jude Harris, , David Robinson Young, Brian Hunt, Catherine Harris, Gwynneth Common, Paul Common, Paul Worth, John Cornhill, Phil Huddy

Members: Joanne White, Paul Kelly, Helen Kelly, Irene Pitsceki, David Briggs, Joan Kirsopp, Gary Wilson, Trevor Chapman, Davina Outhwaite, Eileen Larkin, Chris Langshaw, Laurence Burns, Pam Jameson, Patrick Boyle, Chelsea Brain, Mr Brain, Andrea Carman, Jonathan Belassie, Chris Wilson, Zoe Thompson, Gavin Thompson, Katie Lister, Ben Kilsby, Ben Francis, Siobhan Currell, Scott Patterson, Carol Reekie, Laura Mullin, Vera Powles, James Powles, Sarah Wilson, Tom Pearson, Pauline Wilson, Katharine Burrows, Sarah Wray, Leon Tighe, Jenny Lassalle

Apologies: John D Watts (Committee member), Dorothy Fawthorpe, Elaine Hastings

1. Opening

Jon opened the meeting at 7pm by welcoming the fifty attendees (residents and businesses) and thanking them for attending.

He thanked Robert and Merchants' Tavern for another enjoyable neighbourhood Christmas Party.

Jon then broadly outlined the role of the Association including representing views of its St. Peter's neighbourhood membership.

He advised that the Committee had decided to make that night's scheduled meeting open to all members to hear and collect views on the latest planning application for the development of the neighbouring Spiller's Mill site.

The meeting agreed that the Meeting's Minutes would be a summary of the views and concerns expressed, and these should be forwarded for information to the Council's Planning Officer for this application, Nick Brown MP, Council Leader Nick Forbes, Cllrs Veronica Dunn and Nick Kemp.

It was confirmed that no representatives from World Wheel Company (Newcastle) Ltd, the Council or Ward Councillors were present.

An information sheet was circulated at the start of the meeting.

2. Comment from resident

He said three of his neighbours and himself had no objection in principle to the application itself. However, all four were concerned about traffic impacts, the low number of planned on-site parking spaces. He also said that consideration needed to be given to a new roadway.

3. Comment from resident

He said he was against the application. Despite the land being a public asset, not one company has been offered or invited to submit suggestions for the use of the Land be it in a Planning Competition or otherwise. He could not understand why just one company was in the running, when if more were invited, then this would provide a better range of choice and uses for this public asset.

He pointed out that there was no proposal to improve access to and from the Walker Road/Glasshouse Street junction. He queried the reality of the applicant's assertion that only 19% of visitors would visit using a car. He thought the current infrastructure and allowance for traffic would be incapable of coping with the new demands of the applicant's development. He objected that the applicant was advocating our neighbourhood takes over-spill parking on what they see as "on-street Parking capacity and availability".

4. Comment from resident

She said she too had concerns about lack of planned parking on-site and how this would impact on our neighbourhood. She was also concerned about the operational impact on BEL Valves with the increased vehicular and pedestrian flows past its Works and Offices, as well as in our neighbourhood.

She also expressed concerns about litter volumes emanating from the planned fast food, beverage and other eateries, as well as littering by visitors from cars parked on-street in our neighbourhood.

A third area of concern was the future relationship with visiting Royal Navy and other country fleets and whether they could continue with tie-up on Spiller's Quay.

A fourth concern was the safety of children visiting this attraction firstly because it is set next to the river, and secondly because of the volume of expected visitors when children and school parties were also on-site. A fifth concern was had first-aider provision been considered.

The resident expressed a query about the Council consultation process and where were the Statutory Notices and letters to residents and businesses. There was significant group concern about this, and the feeling was that the Council must ensure that every neighbourhood person knows about this application.

5. Comment from resident

She supports the proposed development of the site. However, she too has strong concerns about the planned parking provision not being enough, and the applicant's assertion that our neighbourhood should be used for on-street overspill parking. Regarding traffic, she highlighted that at weekends, and weekdays, there are frequent queues for the Byker Household Waste Depot down Glasshouse Street, and these force drivers to drive down the oncoming traffic lane. She has also noted an increase of "Park and Ride" commuters during the week, leaving cars parked on-street. If the bus service were improved to provide a greater service to accommodate the development, she expressed the view that not only would there be even more buses navigating our neighbourhood, but also more "Park and Ride" drivers leaving their cars parked on the road.

6. Comment from business

He said he anticipated even more problem parking. He was concerned that if parking were chargeable on Spiller's, then visitors would migrate to our neighbourhood for free parking. He also pointed out that another

source of increased traffic flow other than cars and buses, would be service vehicles visiting the site throughout the day.

7. Comment from resident

He would like to see the site developed but not necessarily with the Wheel. He has concerns that this is not the best location for viewing from an observation wheel, when there are others more appropriate. He is worried about the impact of the scheme if delivered on neighbourhood and residential amenity.

8. Comment from resident

She expressed concern about light pollution and its impact on our neighbourhood.

9. Comment from business

He expressed concern about the on-street visitor car parking becoming a magnet for criminals attracted by many more cars regularly parked in our neighbourhood. Recently there has been an upturn in recorded car-related crime in our neighbourhood, and with more cars parked on-street then the probability is that this is likely to get worse. Similarly, he is worried about anti-social behaviour from visitors to the planned pubs.

10. Comment from resident

He explained he had been researching World Wheel Company (Newcastle) Ltd. He was concerned that this might be a start-up company with no track-record in construction-delivery, unlike the more familiar, and established, company names that might be expected for such a project. He said he cannot find any company accounts, or records of investors and what they have invested.

He pointed out that the applicant had employed a consultancy company to secure a successful application. This consultancy team employs a former Newcastle City Council Planning Director.

He was of the view that as the Council will be leasing the land to a successful applicant and will receive rent, then the decision on this application would ultimately be made by the Secretary of State.

He also pointed out that the MetroCentre had 15000 parking spaces, the Spiller's development if green-lighted would have 172 car parking spaces to satisfy parking for an anticipated and applicant-promoted figure of thousands of visitors per day. He also pointed out that from this 172 car parking spaces, 25 had been designated disabled parking. Then there would be the question of where the applicant-promoted figure of hundreds of workers a day were to park.

He suggested everyone have a look at a defunct company called Great Wheel Co-operation <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GreatWheelCorporation> that listed failed and shelved observation wheel projects in capital and major international cities.

He also suggested that drone camera footage of the expected views would have been easy to source to support the application. He was surprised that none was available in the public realm.

11. Comment from resident

Whilst of the opinion that a development of the site must happen, she said she had no confidence that this development would ever transpire.

12. Comment from business

He said this development was the wrong one for this site. That other users should be allowed to submit suggestions through a competition.

13. Comment from resident

He is of the view that the site has been an abomination for far too long. At the very least Spiller's needs action to tidy it up, clear out gullies and so remove surface water.

He also noted that there were no Statutory Notices for the Consultation on the site perimeter or any of the adjacent neighbourhoods. He wondered how many people know about this application.

He said there were 74 documents submitted with this application. Many are voluminous and not average-person-friendly. He recommended that people view the applicant's Transport Assessment and Travel Plan Framework. Both again being voluminous in pages, he said, and arguably factually incorrect and contradictory. He hoped an Official would carefully review these and take issue with the applicant.

He also hoped that every relevant stakeholder would be contacted by the Council officials to advise on the application availability.

It was also agreed that residents and people who work here be encouraged to contact such individuals and companies and let them know of the application.

14. Comment from resident

He was also concerned about the voluminous documentation submitted on a public-website to be viewed by ordinary members of the Public.

He also said that people are attached to their cars, and that realistically we should expect far greater traffic volumes than the applicant sets out.

15. Comment from resident

He reminded everyone of the traffic jams and access/egress problems caused in our neighbourhood and the immediate close neighbourhoods by the hosting of the Tall Ships Race in 2005. He suggested this was evidence that Spiller's cannot cope with increased volumes of car traffic and parking, public transport and people.

He also foresees this being a short-term development and commercially unsustainable in the mid-to-long-term.

16. Comment from resident

Whilst realising the site and neighbourhood needs a development, it is not this one. He believes there will be parking, traffic-flow, anti-social, criminal, littering and light pollution problems.

He believes that there will be a negative impact on our neighbourhood and residential amenity. He also is concerned about noise pollution, pointing out the problems the neighbourhood and wider Byker ward experienced, and caused by, Live Music being played last Summer at the Schooner public house.

17. Comment from resident

She said she was concerned about light pollution generally and the light emanating from the proposed Big Screen. Ecologically, she was concerned about the impact on the nesting Kittiwake Tower within a stone's throw of the proposed development.

18. Comment from resident

He suggested that Permit Parking might be a solution to parking management. The Group felt that this might not work as it would have to be policed, and that it might incur cost for residents and people who work here.

19. Comment from resident

She said it was important to consider what our neighbourhood wants, as well as the City.

20. Meeting close

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.25pm.