

Notes on peninsula stakeholders meeting Forum 9.3.2016

Those representing the council were.

Cllr Danny Thorpe	RBG Lead Member
Cllr Denise Scott MacDonald	RBG Ward Councillor
Cllr Chris Lloyd	RBG Ward Councillor
Pippa Hack	RBG
Mike Hows	RBG (Planning)
Jeremy Smalley	RBG (Regeneration)
Sam Margolis	RBG (Transportation)
Kim Smith	RBG (Transportation)

In addition we were joined by representatives of Hanson UK who operate the Victoria Deep Water Terminal they were

Joel Morris	Hanson UK (Land & Planning)
Bob Smith (RN Smith)	Hanson UK (Land & Mineral Resources)

TRAFALGAR ROAD

Jeremy talked about the greening of Trafalgar Road project, a joint project with EGRA. Planting is scheduled for this/next week. Jeremy answered questions about the ongoing maintenance of the site and extending the project further along Old Woolwich Road (west) and across the junction of Blackwell Lane (east) without conclusion; this was a trial and if successful it could be extended. He said that a contingency fund had been established to maintain the plants during the next two years. He was asked if there were any ideas for alternative maintenance, next year was suggested as a time to review.

The market stall were touched on, RBG are still in discussion with possible interested parties. Everyone was very happy about this seemingly successful project (so far).

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AIR QUALITY and GREEN ISSUES: Low Emissions Neighbourhood Bid

Sam Margolis presented the RBG plan for better air quality in general and specifically talked about possible funding from the mayor's office. The GLA could provide seed funding of a million pounds for an innovative programme of anti pollution and emissions management. This bid has been submitted results will be known in a month. RBG's suggestions included; low emission municipal vehicles, maybe a car free day for Greenwich town centre. Pocket parks were to be encouraged, a possible district heating system is under consideration but it was still at the modelling stage. There could also be a number of greening projects. Pelton Road was shown on an architect's illustration as a pedestrianised street, leafy and lovely further ideas would be welcomed from residents and businesses for small sites that might be suitable.

There were question from the floor a to why they were selling of land with established trees (Rose Garden) threatening wildlife (goldfinches) then asking for ideas about pocket parks. There were immediately some suggestions about small areas of land that might be right, a sliver of land near the Arches, The car park near ORNC, the recreation ground opposite Greenwich Square, Greenwich Square itself and so on.

There was a question as to why they were in talks with TfL about the re-invigoration of the power station with seemingly no discussion about the resulting emissions thereof and little consultation with residents; and then there was the Cruise Terminal.

RBG fielded the questions telling us that all ideas for greening and low emission projects would be most welcome, and anyway we would know more in a month hence when we knew how the bid was received. Danny did not however respond to mention of the Cruise Terminal

HANSON UK Aggregates

The general manager of the Victoria Deep Water terminal told us about the plans to the development of the site. Hanson has the contract to manufacture cement pipes for the eastern section the Thames Tideway Tunnel, a project that would run for about 3 years (this section) they plan to develop the site building a cement factory and to create a space for the manufacture and storage of the cement parts. The recycling management business would move to another site. Most of the traffic would be river based, the delivery of aggregate (internationally and locally) and the delivery of cement parts would all be transported by river. Overall the amount of vehicular traffic would decrease with the closure of the recycling operation.

The manufactured cement parts will need to be transported from the new factory to the barges moored by the wharf on the river so crossing the Thames Path. It is proposed that instead of building a costly enclosed system these cement parts would be moved by lorry from the factory across the Thames Path to the river. A level crossing style barrier would need to be installed to allow safe passage for all it is estimated that these barriers

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would be closed for about a minute every ten minutes to allow lorries to pass when barges were being loaded.

There were a lot of questions and comments from the floor. Most people seemed pleased that the site would remain industrial and that there would be a reduction in lorry traffic overall. Hanson seemed confident that there would be enough infrastructure work to warrant the building of the new plant once this three-year deal was completed.

Cllr Lloyd asked about employment opportunities and we were told that the new plant would employ around four hundred people, a considerable increase to the current workforce. If planning permission were to be refused, the site would remain an aggregate business manned by a small team of people.

Here were questions about the look of the new plant and the height of silos, there were some comments about the cranes currently in operation (complementary). Fact finding questions were answered clearly but as the development had not yet gone to planning nothing was finalised

Brendan McCarthy who is now an NED at Visit Greenwich made a powerful argument for rethinking the barriers and lorry loading plan, pointing out that walking and cycling along the Thames Path was to be encouraged and as development continues along the waterfront the route would become better used. As it was already a popular thoroughfare a creative solution would need to be found for this tricky intersection.

Questions were asked about bird breeding grounds and suggestions made about how to improve the habitat both here and further up the peninsula for migrating birds including managing vacant pockets of land creating reed beds etc.

The development is still in the planning stage and has not yet been submitted to the council so more detail to follow. Hanson gave absolute assurance that the development would not close the Thames Path two years as previous developments had.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Richard Baglin asked about the plans for the distribution of CIL monies. There was a robust discussion about S106 money and the RGBs distribution of these funds to date. There was an allegation that the council had misappropriated the money, Cllr Thorpe who took exception to the comment robustly defended this. The conversation moved on to the locality and what assurance would be forthcoming that the money generated would be spent locally rather than in other parts of the borough. There was no satisfactory conclusion to this discussion but the point was made very firmly that East Greenwich residents felt short changed by the lack of visible expenditure in this ward.

The council was also questioned about their seemingly incoherent policies on environmental matters; residents pointed out the apparent contradictions in RGBs development to date and their stated ambition for a green and healthy borough.

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The neighbourhood Site Allocations were not discussed, many of us thought the information on this inadequate. Mike Hows offered to talk to groups and individuals separately and said that this could be after the published closing date for the consultation.

There was no update on TfLs plans for the power station.

AFTER MEETING NOTE*

I invited Mike Hows to the next EGRA open meeting.

Danny Thorpe in response to my comments about the playground at Lovells Wharf was that he was “on it”.

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