

Castlehill & Pittodrie Community Council

Objection to the proposed drive through restaurant at Queens Links

Queens Links falls within the catchment of the Castlehill & Pittodrie Community Council. We would have commented earlier on this proposal but were only alerted when the agenda for the Committee meeting was circulated to us late last week. We are not circulated directly by Aberdeen City Council with all planning proposals.

Although this is a relatively small scale development, the potential ramifications are substantial and the Community Council wishes to raise serious concerns as follows.

Parking

It is not clear from the documentation whether we are looking at a loss of 71 or 107 parking spaces but either number is of concern. The letter from the Roads Engineer expresses concern at a large loss of parking at such a busy leisure centre, and highlights the fact that two of the largest properties in the development are currently empty. We agree, and ask that the committee consider the implications in the long term for when these buildings are occupied.

We disagree that the Esplanade could take up the excess parking requirement. The Esplanade is already being heavily used for parking. Harbour workers cars, lorries, coaches, surfers' cars, burger vans and parking for toilets and recycling are all increasing its use. On weekends it is already often full, particularly on sunny days and when there are events on in the Beach Ballroom and Pittodrie stadium. Removing this amount of parking spaces will also ultimately affect resident parking in the surrounding area.

Environmental Concerns

Litter is already a problem and observations based on Burger King drive-through indicate adding another drive-through would exacerbate the problem. Many of those who use the drive through go to the beach in their cars to eat; the more responsible put litter in the bins, others just dump it out of the window.

Gulls are adept at dragging litter out of the bins and an increase in food supply presented by another drive-through (particularly chicken bones) will allow them to increase their numbers. The majority are herring gulls which are a protected species and therefore hard to get rid of. An increase in numbers is the last thing

we wish to see. Gulls can become aggressive and as you will be aware, present health problems.

Air pollution (already a concern in some areas where the EU limits are exceeded) will increase as a constant stream of moving and idling cars produce a lot more emissions than parked cars.

Sustainable travel choices

It is a stated aim of the Aberdeen City Council to encourage people to walk and cycle and to use public transport rather than cars. We fail to see how adding another drive-through restaurant ties in with this. It also seems at odds with the stated aim to encourage people to eat healthily, with fast food brought directly to the car without even the effort of standing up!

The beach and Esplanade are increasingly being used for walking, jogging, cycling and general family enjoyment - an encouraging trend which we would wish to see continue. However, the lack of public transport does mean many visitors use cars to access the beach and Esplanade, and these all need to park. Reducing parking further will discourage some of the very activity the City Council is successfully encouraging.

In Conclusion

The beach and links area is a valuable and rare asset for Aberdeen, its residents and visitors. It should be used wisely.

Mistakes have been made in the past with developments in this area but that does not mean they should be compounded. It would be much better if the empty buildings could be used, rather than filling up the car park with yet another fast food outlet.

Castlehill & Pittodrie Community Council therefore objects to this planning application

Mike McConnell
Chair

Kate Bailey
Secretary

MEMO



ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

To	Robert Forbes Planning & Infrastructure	Date	14/12/2012
		Your Ref.	P120909 (ZLF)
		Our Ref.	TR/KS/11/51/2/
From	Roads Projects		
Email			
Dial			
Fax			

Roads Projects
Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 4
Ground Floor North
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen AB10 1AB

Planning Application no. P120909
Queens Links, Queens Links Leisure Park
Proposed drive-thru restaurant

Having reviewed the letter dated 30 November 2012 sent to you by the applicants consultant and the additional information sent with their email of 10 December 2012 in support of the above planning application and would comment as follows:

- 1 In reviewing the information supplied in support of the application the impact of the proposals through all hours of its operation have been considered. By their very nature the snap shot parking survey which forms the basis of the parking study can only give an indication of the likely effect on capacity. The peak periods have been highlighted in the memo, as they are within the applicant's submission, as a key indicator of the adequacy of provision. I can therefore not agree that we have solely focused on a very narrow fleeting situation.
- 2 As stated in the memo I am aware that parking demand for the drive-thru was developed through a TRICS assessment. However, our concern is that this assessment by its nature only takes account of the parking effects within the boundary of the drive-thru site and does not recognise likely customer behaviour.
- 3 I disagree with the comments presented in paragraph 2.7 and consider that adequate justification was provided with reference to the consented use of units 8 & 9. However I would clarify this further. Units 8 & 9 (Approximate GFA of 6,000sqm) which are currently unoccupied hold Class 11 (Assembly and leisure use) consent. The applicant's submission only limited their assessment to the most recent used. Given Class 11 covers a variety of uses the removal of demand from one currently vacant unit based on its previous use is not appropriate. This approach is not reasonable and therefore casts doubt to the robustness of the parking assessment. There is always a possibility that this vacant unit will be occupied and therefore the potential parking demand must not be ignored. The additional vehicles generation could lead to a significant impact on the car park which should be explored fully. However, I note that the

Gordon McIntosh
Corporate Director

applicant reluctantly suggests that in a situation when both of these units were occupied the car park occupancy would not be higher than 96%. Additionally considering the presented car parking demand of 65 vehicles for Bingo Unit in Table 4.3.3 of Parking Assessment Report; if a similar demand was taken for the vacant unit car park occupation would be as high as 99% during surveyed Sunday afternoon peak. During these scenarios there would be significant periods where car park occupancy levels are high and given the previously expressed concerns with regards to the survey having been conducted a low demand time of the year our concerns with regards adequacy of provision persist.

- 4 With refer to the comments made by the applicants consultant in paragraph 2.8 of their letter I would reiterate my comments that seasonal variation in parking demand in Queen's Links and wider beach area would be significant. And with little or no spare capacity in the Leisure centre car park during the assessed Sunday afternoon peak, this proposal would be detrimental for car parking in the area and would result in unacceptable consequences such as additional congestion, on road parking pressure and abuse of private parking areas.
- 5 With reference to the internal layout, I am satisfied with the internal circulation proposals but would ask that the length of waiting area from the ordering hatch be provided.

Conclusion

To date the applicant has not adequately addressed our concerns detailed in the most recent memo. I still therefore, consider that this proposal would result in significant impact on car parking in the area resulting in additional congestion, on road parking pressure and abuse of private parking areas, I must therefore sustain object to the proposal.

Kamran Syed

Engineering Officer

(Development & Traffic)

MEMO



ABERDEEN
CITY COUNCIL

To	Robert Forbes Planning & Infrastructure	Date	27/11/2012
		Your Ref.	P120909 (ZLF)
		Our Ref.	TR/KS/1/51/2
From	Roads Projects		
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Fax			

Roads Projects
Enterprise, Planning & Infrastructure
Aberdeen City Council
Business Hub 4
Ground Floor North
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen AB10 1AB

Planning Application no. P120909
Queens Links, Queens Links Leisure Park
Proposed drive-thru restaurant

With refer to the additional information with regard to the above application; I would make the following comments:

1 Development Proposal

1.1 I note that the applicant plans to erect a drive-thru restaurant on land currently used to provide car parking for the Queen's Links Leisure Park.

2 Parking

2.1 I note the proposal will result in an over all reduction of 71 parking spaces, reducing total provision for the Leisure Park from 884 to 813 spaces.

2.2 I note that a parking assessment has been submitted in support of the application. From the parking accumulation survey undertaken between Saturday the 29th September and Sunday the 7th October, inclusive, it is clear that the car park currently experiences its heaviest demand during Sunday afternoons 1400-1600hrs, with Friday evenings and Saturdays also busy.

2.3 I note from the parking assessment that maximum parking demand during the survey was between 14:45 and 15:00 with 78% of the car park occupied.

2.4 Within the assessment an attempt has been made to estimate the impact of the proposed drive-thru on car parking both within the applicant's car park and the wider surrounding road network. However, the assessment has not adequately addressed a number of issues:

- Parking demand generated by drive-thru;
- Future occupancy of consented development; and
- The seasonal variation in Park usage.

Gordon McIntosh
Corporate Director

- 2.5 Through TRICS assessment a parking demand of 18 spaces has been derived however, this has taken no account of the drive-thru nature of the proposal and the likelihood that those visiting the drive-thru enter and leave the site relatively quickly only to park elsewhere, either within the wider car park or public road network to consume their purchase.
- 2.6 I am aware that unit 8 & 9 of Queens Link Leisure Park are currently unoccupied. These units currently hold Class 11 (Assembly and leisure use) consent and where most recently a Night Club and Bingo Hall. Although acknowledged within the assessment only a scenario considering of the likely demand of the most recent use has been assessed. This assessment shows that with the bingo hall back in use 91% occupancy could be expected on the Saturday evenings surveyed. However, the likely effect on car park capacity of the two vacant units being occupied during the identified car park peak demand has not been review to provide a basis from which to assess the drive through proposals.
- 2.7 Both vacant units are large totalling approximately 6,000m² GFA of consented Class 11 use; if during the car parks time of peak demand on Sunday afternoon a modest parking demand is assumed for both units of 50 cars each (similar to that shown for a bingo hall) the car park is likely to be fully occupied, during these periods, following the proposed reduction in parking.
- 2.8 The Queen's Links and wider Beach area is a significant leisure and amenity destination within the city and due to its nature its use experiences significant variation in parking demand both seasonally and during school holiday times. The submitted parking assessment has not recognised this effect. Given that the surveys used in the assessment where undertaken in Autumn outwith school holidays I believe the based occupancy figures represent a low demand situation and that demands will be significantly higher during school holidays and over spring/ summer seasons.
- 2.9 I'm also aware that the adjacent Beach Boulevard Retail Park has established privately enforced parking restrictions following abuse of their car park by non-customers including those accessing the Queen's Links Leisure Park.
- 2.10 With the above issues taken into account I'm concerned that the loss of so many car parking spaces within an area which frequently experiences parking pressure will exacerbate the problem resulting in additional parking pressure on the nearby public road and private parking areas.

3 Internal Layout

- 3.1 The development of the proposal will require changes to the internal operation of the current car park however, no information has been provided with the application. The following issues are of concern and I would request that additional information be provided.
- The length of waiting area for drive-thru customers appears relatively short and may result in waiting cars obstructing the main access into the park causing queuing on the public road; and
 - If the new isle access is to be two way its location so close to the existing bin store will not provide divers with adequate visibility to safely exit from the development.

Conclusion

The proposal to erect a drive-thru restaurant within the car park would result in loss of 71 parking spaces. Having reviewed the submitted parking assessment and having taken into account its omissions it is clear that the car park has little spare capacity to accommodate the current consented use and is likely to be saturated during more popular times of the year.

I consider that this proposal would result in significant impact on car parking in the area resulting in additional congestion, on road parking pressure and abuse of private parking areas, I must therefore object to the proposal.

Kamran Syed

Engineering Officer

(Development & Traffic)