

23rd August 2013

Aberdeen City Council
Planning Department
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen
AB10 1AB

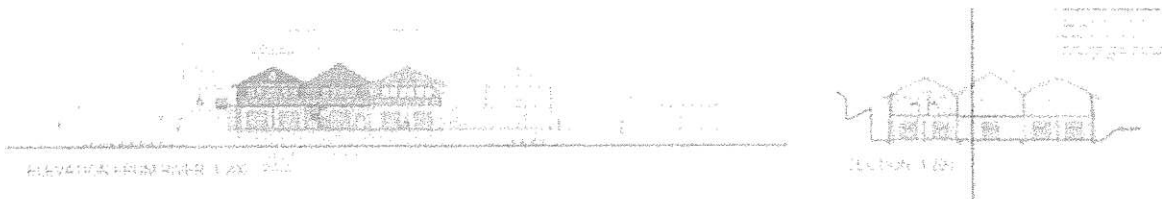
For attention of planning officer,

RE: Planning Application 131121: South Esplanade West, Aberdeen

We wish to make you aware of a number of strong objections that we have with regard to the proposed development of an additional property on open space to the side of Esplanade West, Aberdeen with an application number referenced above. [REDACTED] the proposed development, we are of the view that the proposed development will have a serious impact on our standard of living. Our specific objections are as follows:

1. OVERDEVELOPMENT ON SPECIAL AREA OF CONSERVATION

Planning Application 131121 classes the building as an extension but in fact the **Site Elevation Plan** shows that it will treble in size, creating an industrial site appearance on the special conservation area. This, including the colour of the original building and the extensions, is out of character and does not blend in with the surrounding area.



Construction Method Statement, Schedule of External Materials: It clearly specifies the building materials to be used in the car park are concrete slab and vehicle guardrails with galvanized steel finish. That is not in character with the surrounding area.

There are already three facilities for the rowing associations on this conservation site, excluding the boat club house.

2. IMPACT ON AMENITY (PLAY PARK)

This is the only open space beside the river for families to enjoy the view, walk dogs, feed the ducks, geese and swans and allow their children to play safely.

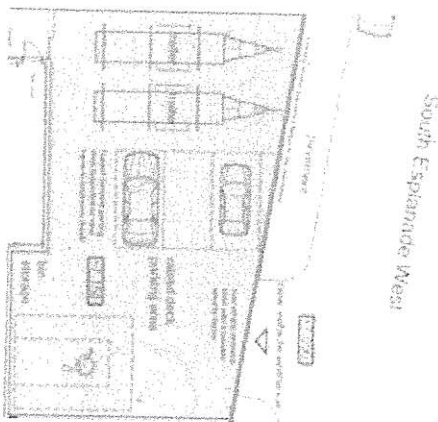
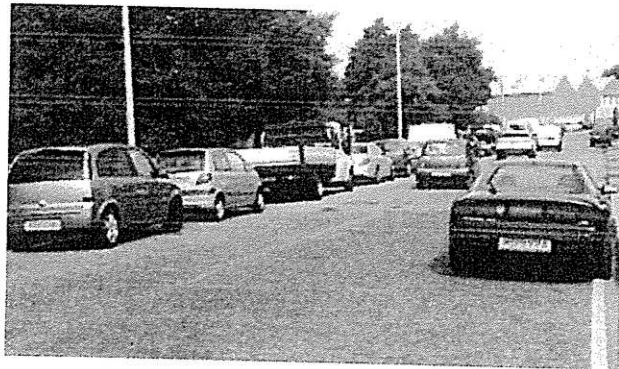
This is a small **Green Belt** area in Torry that is widely used by the Torry community of all age groups. The play park has been used faithfully since the 1950's and it is still as popular as it was then.

Planning Application 131121 states that the swings are to be removed and reinstated on a new site which has not been specified or confirmed. Also the climbing frame will either be protected or removed. Both these amenities are important to the children of the area.

Relocation of Play Equipment Ref. P100453: There is no statement specifying the time schedule of the relocation of the play equipment.

3. INCREASED GENERATION OF TRAFFIC

South Esplanade West is a one way street. Increased traffic on an already busy road will affect the safety of the public, especially children. There is very limited parking on the street and this would increase as would traffic from drop offs increasing safety issues.



The opening from the new proposed car park as shown in the **Indicative Site Establishment Layout** of the **Site Plan** will take away vital parking space for the public and local residents.

The car park is also so small that it will not have a significant impact on the South Esplanade street parking as the opening will take away two car park spaces.

4. DAMAGING NATURAL WILDLIFE ECOSYSTEM

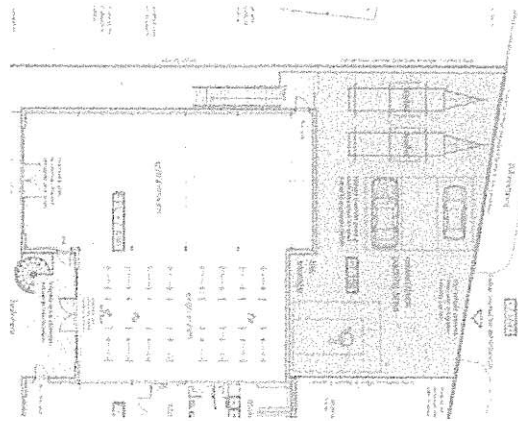
The disruption of the construction would affect the swans, geese and ducks who inhabit this area as their natural ecosystem and that would affect the environment i.e. breeding and habitat by destroying their natural environment.

Indicative Site Establishment Layout of the **Site Plan** clearly shows the removal of four trees, which will also affect the local nesting birds. Torry is an urban area with very few green areas that the public can safely access beside the river where they can feed numerous varieties of wildlife. If the swans, geese, ducks and birds move from the area, then the children won't be able to interact with feeding and observing natural wildlife.

5. REMOVAL OF TREES

As previously stated, the proposed **Site Plan** shows the four trees that are being permanently removed. Aberdeen City has the fewest number of trees in comparison with other cities in Scotland.

Planning and Environment, Aberdeen City Council states that trees are of vital importance to the world for many reasons. Amongst other things they screen eyesores, frame views and form landscapes. Trees have significant environmental value, produce a habitat for many species and help provide us with cleaner, filtered air, shade in the summer and warmth in the winter.



Aberdeen Local Development Plan, Supplementary

Guidance, Trees and Woodlands states that Trees make an important contribution to the quality and attractiveness of an urban environment. Areas of the city with large numbers of trees are associated with a high quality of life and affluence. The retention of trees in an urban environment is fundamental to making the city an appealing place to live and work. The presence of trees contributes to the character, cultural and natural heritage and attractiveness of an area. For this reason **the Council is committed to protecting trees where there is a threat of damage or removal.** The importance of trees cannot be underestimated in modern life. The retention of mature, healthy



trees on a new development site can add social, environmental and economic value to the site. Trees provide an instant maturity and can increase property prices. **They can also add anywhere between 5 – 18% to the value of a commercial and residential property.**

The trees on the picture are two of the four to be removed.

6. NO SITE NOTICE

Aberdeen Council, Planning Constraints, Conservation Areas, Paragraph 2: Once an area is designated a Conservation Area, the Council has a duty to advertise proposals that may affect it, **BY SITE NOTICE** and in the local press, so that public opinion can be obtained. Applications for 'outline' planning permission may often not be appropriate as full information as to the impact of a proposal may be required in order to properly assess the scheme.

We spoke with several members of the public using the play park and no-one was aware that the planning application for an extension of the Aberdeen Schools Rowing Association premises had been submitted.

7. RESIDENTS' VIEWS

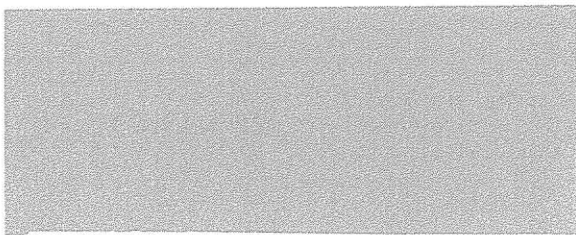
The construction of the 12 metre high extension will be erected directly in front of the only two residential houses on the South Esplanade West.

This will cause:

- a lack of natural sunlight
- devaluation of the property
- total loss the river view (sitting rooms and bedrooms will now face the back of tin sheds and car park)
- increased noise from construction and future activities
- increased traffic
- decrease of residential parking
- due to the fact that this is a recreational facility, traffic and noise will be present seven days a week including evenings

In conclusion, we would be grateful if the council would take our objections into consideration when deciding this application. We would welcome the opportunity to meet with a representative of the planning department at our home to illustrate our objections at first hand.

Yours Sincerely,



Robert Vickers

From: webmaster@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Sent: 21 August 2013 21:06
To: PI
Subject: Planning Comment for 131121

Comment for Planning Application 131121

- type :
- Comment : I have several reasons for objecting to this planning application.
- 1/ Green area: I feel that this development would be taking away a large piece of well used play park and picnic area for local people. There is not enough green space at this end of Torry as it is for people to relax and enjoy when the weather permits.
 - 2/ Wildlife: the proposal to remove at least 4 trees from the area which will also impact on the wildlife in the area.
 - 3/ Parking: it would mean that the parking which is very limited at the moment for local people will be even worse. When the children are in the boat club at the moment it seems that every child is dropped off and picked up with a car that can lead to over 20 cars at a time (most illegally parked on double yellow lines) parked near the current boathouse. It has not been uncommon for me to have to go try and find a driver that has blocked my drive and I have been unable to get out of or in my drive due to the vehicle blockage. If the proposed development goes ahead that will lead to more parking problems and less space to park as a result of the car park being built for trailers. This along with the new proposed office block across from the site will make the area unmanageable for parking and traffic flow.
 - 4/ Traffic: is an issue as this is a busy road with a lot of HGV lorries transporting goods to the docks and cars coming off the roundabout at high speed after coming down from Wellington Road. If more people are stopping to drop off kids and they cannot get parked at either side of the road due to the increase numbers they will block the road entirely and I am sure this will cause accidents as drivers will not expect the traffic to be at a standstill. I am unsure how cars and trailers are going to safely enter and exit the car park without causing major disruptions and risk to them and other drivers due to the shape of the road and visibility being blocked by cars parked on the road. We have had issues when entering our drive with traffic coming off the roundabout at high speed and not expecting cars to be stopping, this is with clear visibility as no vehicles should be parked to block there view as we indicate and turn in. Daily there seems to be traffic from the boathouses that turn and go back up the street the wrong way (street 1 way) and I can see this only getting worse if there are blockages / delays and people get frustrated and turn round heading for the roundabout.
 - 5/ Kids: With the traffic issues stated above and increase in kids crossing a busy street where cars will be parked at either side of the road (as this happen now when kids being picked up and dropped off even when it is not supposed to happen) it is only a matter of time before someone gets knocked down.

I understand it would be nice to have the gym next to the current boathouse but it I far from a necessity and as such this could be built elsewhere where there would not be the risks that this development would cause. At my current employment I was reviewing risk assessments today and I am thinking if a proper risk assessment was done on this the probability and severity of risk would be high and I cannot see what mitigating measures could be put in place to reduce the risk significantly with regards to traffic and pedestrians.

I would have submitted photos of how busy the area is when the children are here but unfortunately the notice was submitted during the school holidays when it is quiet and the club is not busy.