

ECS River Canal and Quay Group

Minutes of meeting 5th April 2017

Venue - White Hart 7.30pm

Attending: Peter Nickol, Keith Lewis, Simon Goddard, Jane Evans and Guy Parker.

Apologies: John Monks, Bernard Frowd, Kimberley Bryan, Stuart Barr, Jean Hall and Dominic Houston.

Item 1. Canal Management.

Due to management restructuring ECC have announced a new management line up for the Waterways.

Steve Carnell – Service management, community safety and enforcement – will be overseeing the compliance with the Port Marine Safety Code and the production of The Canal Management Plan. (Replaces Sarah Ward)

Peter Stewart – Line Manager and engineering issues. (Replaces Roger Crane)

Colin Acton – River and Canal Manager.

JE – will be sending a copy of the User Group's Priorities Report to Steve Carnell.

JE & GP due to meet with Steve Carnell on 24th April to discuss ECC's future waterways plans.

Item 2. Planning Applications.

Rockfish Restaurant – Piazza Terrcina.

JE – Shame Piazza is being built on – open space will no longer be available for events.

KL – the site has long standing planning permission linked to the Waterside development.

PN – Planning permission not assured – as advised by Paul Jeffry the planning officer.

JE – Possible impacts on other businesses and residents from associated smells.

PN – asked members to jot down thoughts and objections to the proposals.

KL – suggested that the Group should persuade ECQT to take over the plot of land.

PN – Retaining the openness of views was a reasonable objection.

Action – PN to have a conversation with ECS planning sub-committee re the proposal.

Action – proposal that the RC&Q group objects on the grounds of loss of open space.

PN – Piazza's Plot B – Paul Jeffry said that development here was hard to argue against because of the Master Plan.

Action – GP to search his records of Masterplan Consultation for evidence of public opinion .

KL – suggests appealing to ECQT re development of Plot B.

Item 3. Water Lane Master Plan.

KL – Richard Short (now departed head of planning) said that ECC had put in for grant aid to investigate development opportunities. K said that he has email on the topic. DCC highways looking to use the second underpass at Tan Lane as part of future access. Also, planners should hold consultation first in order to determine highway issues before talking to potential developers.

Item 4. Friends of Exeter Ship Canal.

PN – Friends momentum picking up in terms of activity and publicity, although there is a need to recruit new members.

JE – said she has emailed canoe club members about the friends.

Item 5. Bike Shed Theatre.

PN – BST is to hold summer taster events. BST needed to raise £25K towards the cost of pop up events. An appeal via crowd funding raised £30K.

Item 6. EA Flood Prevention Works.

JE – Traders are not being kept adequately informed, also problems with parking. Quay toilet problems result in toilets being shut. Traders are struggling to get ECC to listen.

SG – Ground works are running behind schedule by eleven weeks and EA have resorted to temporarily covering up work with tarmac and to resume work after the tourist season.

KL – suggested asking EA for a guided tour of the upper river valley park area.

Action. Simon offered to talk to the site agent on this topic.

Item 7. RC&Q Group – What it can do.

PN – It is proving difficult to get a consensus on dates for meetings. The group should look to recruit additional members to boost attendances. Can the group take lessons from DCC's role on the Tiverton canal which has a healthy visitor focus?

A.O.B.

JE – raised the issue of ECC's failure to have a Sports Strategy Document that includes volunteer sports clubs.

Next Meeting – Date to be agreed.

RCQ Meeting

31st August 2017, White Hart, South Street Exeter 7:30pm

Present

- Peter Nickol (Chair)
- Jane Evans
- Simon Goddard
- John Monks
- Guy Parker

Apologies

- Kimberley Bryan
- Jean Hall
- Dominic Houston
- Keith Lewis

[Action](#)

Notes of last meeting

No comment

1 Canal Management

The councillor who has taken over as the Portfolio Holder for Place, which includes the canal, is now Stephen Brimble. The Canal Users are encouraging him to oppose the Exe Estuary Voluntary Exclusion Zone.

JE

Exeter City Council has recently become more uncooperative with opening the swing and bascule bridges on Bridge Road to canal traffic, culminating in refusing to do so recently for Mr & Mrs Parker, members of the Inland Waterways Association. Andy in the Canal Office said the canal was closed for 2 weeks from 26 June. They would not even allow vessels to travel in convoy with the scheduled Stuart Line cruise boat. GP discussed the issue with the construction workers on the Bridge Road widening and they could not see any reason why the canal should be closed. Representatives of the Friends of Exeter Ship Canal are meeting with Councillor Stephen Brimble to pursue this unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Exeter City Council's Local Notices to Mariners¹ are only sent to owners of boats on the estuary, not to those on the canal. Friends of Exeter Ship Canal will seek clarification from Steve Carnell on the navigation rules and why notices are not sent to all people affected.

2 Planning applications and our responses

Rockfish application has been approved for restaurant use only despite our objections, although it does include conditions to limit potential nuisance.

Quay Bridge application in connection with flood works has been rejected as it adversely changed the overall atmosphere of The Quay.

On The Waterfront had shabby plastic awnings up for a long period last Christmas and we need to consider our response if repeated this Christmas.

SG

The Mill on the Exe Headweir Hotel extension approval noted our request to provide story boards about the history of the mill. These have not been put up. If we seek this to pursue this, we are likely to find they will ask us what we would like it to say and provide the copy for it. Therefore we need to line someone up to provide this in case we are asked to do so.

JM

¹ Notice 10/17 covered the above canal closure

3 Water Lane Master plan

Keith tabled a written report as follows:

I chased up the planners about the Water Lane Masterplan and got this message from Andy Robins who has taken on most of Richard Short's duties in planning control. I have chased up obtaining a copy of the DCC access strategy but no response yet. I did not get a response to my question about the grant that ECC applied for to help develop the area.

The final paragraph relates to the new structure of the planning department.

You will recall that my thoughts for the area is a new two-way access to the area from Marsh Barton under the railway, and that the car park has a new access from Water Lane to support tourist visitors and boating access. I would also like to see Haven Road blocked/pedestrianised in front of the Climbing Centre with main access to the Basin via Michael Browning Way, and an updated master plan for the basin, or perhaps incorporated into a new master plan for the whole area.

Andy Robins (ECC) said:

“There has been no significant progress on Water Lane although we have an initial meeting with agents charged with disposing of the gasholder site. The County have produced an access strategy but the copy I have is marked “draft” so I am unclear of its status. I have contacted Will Pratt at DCC to find out whether I am able to release its contents to you. I am awaiting a reply.

In terms of structure the only change is that I have effectively absorbed Richard’s responsibilities. The management team therefore comprises myself and two deputies, Roger Clotworthy (Planning) and Steve Chapman (Building Control).”

Another issue regarding housing development here must be that the main electricity sub-station for Exeter sits in the waist of this hour glass shape site, and is not so easily moved due to all the cables running to and from it.

4 FESC — activities and update — the potential of FESC, cf. RCQ

The Kings Arm bridge has been painted by volunteers from FESC.

JM will prepare a summary of progress of activities in conjunction with Make Grayshan, the FESC Volunteer Coordinator.

JM

Future activities under consideration are further clearing of Himalayan Balsam from the canal banks (suggested by Colin Acton, Waterways Team Manager at ECC) and a litter pick (suggested by JE).

Concern was expressed by JE that the AGM and committee meetings of FESC dragged on. SG pointed out that the secretary stood in as chairman and all the business on the agenda was actually despatched in the time allocated. ²

5 Bike Shed / Boat Shed summer

This appeared to be well organised with no adverse consequences noted and it will be good to see the buildings revived.

6 Parking, especially in front of Maclaines

Contrary to assurances given when the Haven Banks Outdoor Recreation Centre was planned, the riverside path at the back of Maclaines Warehouses is used as free car parking by workers in the Quay area throughout the day. This is both unsightly and an unnecessary hazard: cars drive downstream on the wrong side of the road, forcing cyclists and pedestrians close to the water’s edge, and when they turn round there is no space for other road users. DCC are well aware of the issues, as the officer concerned commutes to work by cycle along that route.

² The AGM lasted 35 minutes, committee meeting 75 minutes

It is believed that DCC issued a Traffic Order in 1991 limiting traffic here to access to the premises, directing traffic along the water side to the Coop on Shooting Marsh Stile, whereas everyone now drives over Piazza Terracina. A copy of this Traffic Order is needed so we can progress this.³

GP

RCQ will write to DCC Highways asking for action to stop parking here, and limiting traffic to that accessing premises and to clarify the route.

PN

7 Flood prevention works

Nobody could understand why massive walls are being built in some places, and low walls in others, with conspicuous gaps. A trip alongside the river, guided by the EA or contractors, for members of the Exeter Civic Society should be very informative and needs to be arranged.

SG

8 Green Partnership

ECC want funding for a paid staff officer to bring together people responsible for green spaces in the city. PN will attend the initial inaugural meeting.

PN

9 AOB

JM strongly believes that ECS needs a root and branch reform of its communications and has put forward his comments to the ECS committee. People join ECS as they are interested in the future of Exeter but feel they have little say in what affects Exeter and are let down by the absence of any communication from ECS on what they are doing, other than arranging guided tours which are done well.

PN will try to establish links with Mike Walker at ECQT.

PN

The Canoe Club are waiting for ECC to find a developer for their proposed new premises.

A boat has sunk on the west side of the basin due to a disorganised owner and unresponsive ECC. The owner requested permission to crane it out before it sunk, but this was turned down by ECC as it would have exceeded the safe ground loading there. Consequently the boat sunk and as a result the basin was polluted with diesel oil. Worryingly ECC do not appear to have an action plan to deal with such eventualities.

The canal is becoming more choked with weed.

³ Is it here? <https://www.devon.gov.uk/trafficorderssearch.htm>