

Dear Marvin,

Thank you for your response 25<sup>th</sup> September.

We are certainly with you in the need for a comprehensive approach across the entire area. As we are sure you will appreciate it is easier to talk of this than it is to be sure that it will happen. We can feel the uncertainty of exactly how developments get stitched together in a coherent plan when things happen in such different timeframes.

As you will know we think that the engagement event of summer 2019, which focussed solely on roads, was a mistake. This was compounded by the gradual revelation that the southern park river verges were being monetised for development in consultancy reports in previous years. Unfortunately this got any engagement activity with a wider view of building the Western Harbour community off to a bad start. Since we last wrote we must say we are pleased to note that, "The council has recognised that we need to take a step back and look at aspirations and a vision for the area in collaboration with local and citywide communities."

We have encouraged the Advisory Group, to make it clear to the public that all road options are still on the table. We are encouraged to learn that this might be addressed through the answers to FAQs on the Western Harbour web pages. However we remain concerned that the Cabinet decision of 5.11.19, appears to give real credence to the results of this engagement event. To quote "Cabinet noted the intention to develop options for further consideration, including options not previously considered, with engagement from the Advisory Group and Reference Group taking into account the results of the engagement process." It is the latter part of this that we are concerned about.

We believe the intention should be adjusted to recognise and take into account only the outcomes of the engagement process that we hope will start in early 2021.

We should be interested to hear if you are in agreement with this proposal.

We think it is also important for us to raise a second matter with you which arises from your very interesting "Bristol and Beyond" webinar with Pennsylvania University. You will not be surprised that our comments must focus on your response to the issue of housing and the plans for Western Harbour.

I think it sensible for me to quote a reaction, sent to Hotwells and Cliftonwood Community Association by a long term local resident who watched your webinar – or at least part of it.

*"I was deeply shocked by Mr Rees's representation of how the meeting went. He presented it as the usual NIMBYS stopping the building of decent affordable houses. It was nothing of the kind." The writer also says "no-one who spoke at the meeting was against housing being included in any redevelopment. We simply didn't have any information about what the Council was proposing to do and we felt that we couldn't make any informed and sensible comments about the merits of the road schemes until we had more information."*

We feel that this is indicative of the problem. We all have different perceptions of what has been said or proposed and we all share in different and varying degrees concerns about major developments, especially where they might end up literally on our doorstep. You referred to the "horrific flyover" a description many, but by no means all, would go along with.

"Pay Major regard to aesthetic considerations because of the close proximity of the scheme to the Avon Gorge and the Clifton Suspension Bridge", was the sixth key part of the original highway scheme brief.

The South Bank viaduct zone and fixed River Avon bridge has the benefit of the best green landscape architecture that money could buy in the 1960's, now in maturity, (with exchanges for Highway land-take from Bedminster & Southville's only Victorian park, established before the motor car).

Upon opening it was said "Situated as it is at the end of the Avon Gorge, amongst the City's most beautiful scenery, its fine appearance and imaginative landscape setting makes it a proud gateway to the capital of the West"

The aesthetic side was overseen by the City Architect and the Royal Fine Arts Commission and Dame Sylvia Crowe was engaged as landscape architect.

However you then – perhaps rather too easily - go on to indicate that it could just be knocked down and roads moved and so on. I am sure you know, and would accept, that it is not that easy.

Your notes of the Labour Party meeting in Holy Trinity acknowledge that there were a number of people open to the idea of new housing and I think this is born out through conversations with people round here. As they say the devil is in the detail; height, quantity, affordable and otherwise, the quality of the architecture, density, green spaces, community facilities, services, etc.etc.

The correspondent referred to above finishes her email by saying

*"I am pleased to say that the Council's website now says that "the Council has recognised that we need to take a step back and look at aspirations and a vision for the area in collaboration with local and citywide communities and has set up an advisory group on which our Community Association is represented. We all hope that at some point proposals will be put forward which will re-order the road system in a sensible manner, enhance the views of Bristol's suspension bridge and provide decent high-density (but not high-rise) housing and decent green space."*

It is the positive, which is there, that we must hang on to. We don't doubt that there is plenty of concern in Hotwells as well as in Bedminster and Southville, where residents might stand to lose out especially with the potential for development over green spaces on the South bank which have been shown to be so well used in the long Covid-era lockdowns. However we are also sure that there are plenty of positive voices who want to make a sensible and rational contribution to the notion of "Western Harbour".

We all need to find ways to work towards constructive engagement.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Kind Regards

Dennis Gornall

Chairman Cumberland Basin Stakeholder Group