

Cafe culture on George Street this Festival



When the council's Transport and Environment Committee met in March this year they were faced with three deputations, all on the subject of closures proposed in George Street this August to accommodate the Spiegelterrace and Spiegel Tent outside the Assembly Rooms.

Salt n Sauce Promotions who run the Assembly Rooms Fringe insisted that they could only make the venture work by having the Spiegeltent right outside the door, and suggested that the Olympic effect had filtered through to Edinburgh last year. It has been claimed by other cities who put on Olympic Games previously, that their tourist figures went down due to the presence of the Games.

Andy Neal, CEO of Essential Edinburgh explained that George Street businesses had experienced a downturn on takings during last year's Festival and asked for a change to the proposal.



The George Street Association said they were in favour of something in the street, but had concerns about the street closure and suggested putting the Spiegeltent in St Andrew Square as an alternative.

Matters progressed by the council giving Tommy Sheppard of Salt n Sauce permission to do much the same as last year, by closing the whole street outside the Assembly Rooms with permission for bars and entertainment.

Other parts of the street have however now become outdoor cafes and extensions of the businesses already sited there as the other blocks of George Street have been partially closed,

while retaining the parking and access along one side of the street only.

We went to meet Josh Miller from the George Street Association and Andy Neal to find out if they are happy with the way things have turned out:-

What do you think of the traffic and pedestrian arrangements? Do you like them? Or do you have other suggestions?

