

Objections to Picardy Place voiced



Local & National Groups Team Up in Call for Rethink on Latest Picardy Place Proposals

The following collective letter has been sent to members of City of Edinburgh Council Transport and Environment Committee which meets this morning at a special meeting at the City Chambers. You can watch online [here](#).

To: Members Transport & Environment Committee, City of Edinburgh Council

23 January 2018

Dear Transport & Environment Committee Member

New Proposals From CEC For Picardy Place

As the Transport & Environment Committee considers the Council's proposals for Picardy Place at its meeting on 25 January, the undersigned organisations and groups wish to make a number of points.

The first is to acknowledge that the Council has responded positively to the consultation and brought back a design proposal that aims to meet a variety of concerns, including the need for public space outside the Cathedral and the Omni Centre and improved provision for cyclists, those attending the Cathedral and pedestrians crossing outside the Playhouse.

However, we are of the opinion that the proposals do not go far enough because a gyratory traffic management system remains integral to the design proposed.

Consequently, the proposal does not address sufficiently opportunities to: improve the character of this Gateway to the New Town in line with the best practice requirements of a World Heritage site; create a high quality public place designed around the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, parishioners, visitors and for those for whom this area is part of their local neighbourhood; and reduce traffic pollution in the area.

For these reasons, we request collectively that the Committee **does not decide to proceed to a decision on the future of Picardy Place.**

Instead, we ask that the Council undertakes a formal and open review of alternative designs to the gyratory to bring the design within the Council's own policy aspirations, and maximises the opportunity to improve the public realm and avoids a design excessively dominated by traffic considerations.

It is recognised that the Council is operating under a number of historical constraints that may restrict its present room for manoeuvre, although we are not aware of the exact conditions that pertain with this.

If the Committee were to conclude that these constraints do not provide sufficient time just now to consider alternative designs, we request that the matter is not allowed to rest and early consideration is given to further enhancements of the Picardy Place design that reflects the Council's work on the Central Edinburgh Transformation. This would require, amongst other things, that any works are future-proofed and have flexibility built in.

All of those represented here are willing to engage constructively with the Council and others now and in the future to achieve the best design for Picardy Place.

We thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sent on behalf of:

Terry Levinthal,

Director, Cockburn Association

Adam Wilkinson,

Director, Edinburgh World Heritage

Dr Richard Dixon,

Director, Friends of the Earth Scotland

Harald Tobermann,

Vice Chair, Leith Central Community Council

David Spaven,

Convener of the Living Streets Edinburgh Group

Martin McDonnell/Peter Williamson,

Co-Leads, Picardy Place Joint Campaign

Dave du Feu,

Lead Organizer, Spokes

Mgr. Patrick Burke,

Administrator, St Mary's Catholic Cathedral

Ann Laird,

Chair Technical Committee, Scottish Civic Trust

David Jamieson,

Partner, Zone Architects, Edinburgh