

Record of Emergency Meeting of Friends of Nutsford Vale Wednesday 15th February 2017 6:30pm at the Blue Bell Inn

Attendees:

Gail Nicholson,	Steve Cree,	Maxine Knizka-Craig,	Mark Lucas,
Julie Knizka-Craig,	Frank Pollitt,	Caroline Brandwood,	Cassie Spinks-Lewis,
Susan Bristow,	Chris O'Rourke,	Kath O'Rourke,	Ally Fogg,
Alan Gibson,	Christine Prunty,	John Prunty,	Bruce James,
Daniel Heathcote,	Julie Portman,	Louise Swift,	Keith Sloane,
David Sloane,	Mavis Holt,	Maureen Riding,	Barrie Edge,
Rita Edge,	Bernie Cree,	Bob Lomas,	Jean Wood,
Barbara Moore.			

Apologies:

Marie Convery, Cllr Bernard Stone, Cllr Julie Reid, Cllr Peter Cookson,
Denise Riding.

Matters Arising: from Previous Meeting on 8th February 2017

Cllr Peter Cookson to advise who will be Sir Howard Bernstein's replacement.

Bob still waiting for an answer to the questions he raised with Cllr Julie Reid after the last meeting.

Main Meeting:

Welcome everyone and thanks for coming.

A question was asked "so what are our plans" & Rita explained that until we have seen the council plans for the new school and associated documents and a planning application has been submitted we can't go much further. However we can all make a list of how we can make our objections known and highlight our aim. Continue to send letters/emails out to whoever you can think of that might have an interest or be able to help our cause.

Rita advised the Group that the council had now confirmed that Nutsford Vale was the preferred site for the new 1800 place secondary school. The copy of the confirmatory email had been sent to all those who had signed in and provided their email address.

It was noted that the authorisation by the council for the survey work wasn't until the 14th Dec 2016 yet the surveyors were on the site from the beginning of December and as a result could be cause for a judicial review because there appears to have been no contract in place before the work started and therefore there was no liability.

Alan G offered a response to the confirmatory email we had received from the council which can be summarised as follows.

Ref: Preferred site for new high school in Central/East Manchester - decision

Has concerns about the weighting factor that has been applied which significantly affects the final "score" for Nutsford Vale

1. Has concerns about the weighting factor that has been applied which significantly affects the final "score" for Nutsford Vale
2. No mention of a responsible body being liable if any issues (methane etc.) arise as a result of building on an unregulated landfill site affecting local housing.

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3. No budget information given - is the money coming from EFA?
4. Other ex-factory sites around Manchester would be more suitable as existing foundations could be used.
5. What appears to be a temporary bulge in the school placements required is taking preference over the permanent loss of a well used unique open green space with wildlife and their habitats.

Earlier questions put to the council regarding funding benefits received for new people coming to Manchester, i.e. £10,000 available to claim but only claiming £3,000, appear not to have been understood/prepared to declare. The Council however, have confirmed that £5,000 is available and claimed for each new child moving into the area. Percentage paid to school, some kept back for admin.

A point was made that Cllr Julie Reid had mentioned that the benefactors of any free school could easily be scared off if they were made aware of any significant opposition to the building of a new school they were involved in. They don't want the aggravation, mud sticks and may affect their enrolment numbers/grant entitlement.

It was also noted that in the "arc" mentioned by our Councillors, there are currently 26 secondary schools and 39 schools within the 3.2 mile radius parameter.

Rita advised that today we had been to have a look at the Lytham Road site of the new school there. We were told that it was for 1200 places but the published plans indicate that it is for 1050 places. It is enormous when you take in the car parking and sports facilities spaces. Nutsford Vale will be over 50% bigger!!

Bruce asked if we are objecting to the school or the site or the loss of our amenity. Rita pointed out that once we had seen the plans and planning permission had been submitted, then we would then have clarity and be able to formally object to their proposal. Bruce was concerned that we don't want to be aligned with the "Not in my backyard" brigade.

Bob advised the group that he had asked, under the Freedom of Information Act, for details of the licences issued for disposal of hazardous waste.

There was again a discussion about walking dogs shortly after the tipping had stopped and topsoil had been laid and they had to stop taking their dogs on the Vale due to skin irritation problems. Unfortunately, the Council are claiming that only domestic rubbish was tipped and referring references to hazardous waste being tipped as anecdotal evidence.

Rita re-iterated that her objection to the building of a new school on Nutsford Vale is:-

1. The unsuitability of the landfill site.
2. The unknown content of what lies below.
3. The effect on the local infrastructure – our roads are already clogged.
4. The loss of a well loved amenity.

And this should be our focus.

Apparently the Health Minister was speaking in Salford this week and talking about the

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benefits of open spaces and the need to improve & enhance them, and here, the Council want to destroy one. When will they start singing from the same hymn sheet?

For information – The O2 Arena in London was built on an ex Gas Works. They ended up spending something like £200,000,000 on cleaning up the site. They don't appear to have looked before they leaped and in the process wasted our money paying for it. Does this promote confidence in our planners?

A further point that came up was, if thinking ahead, what provision is being planned for college places in Manchester and where are they going to be. Should this be on their agenda because they will be needed in 5 or so years?

Rita advised that earlier today, we went round to the old Peacock Centre off Gorton Lane near the Monastery. We understand this to be council owned land and would also be a good site for a school. It is an ex school with foundations, presumably power and water connections and has under-used open land just across the road with a few trees on it.

Ally offered a Leaflet design highlighting our aims and objections and indicated that it needed to date focussed to create the most impact. One comment tonight requested that we call our oasis Nutsford Vale Country Park to emphasise it's profile. Please review and let us have your comments. **Copy attached to this email.**

It was also noted that the surveyors are still drilling in the Vale along the back of the houses on Hemmons Road but closer to the Community Orchard now.

There was a plan for Spurley Hey to have a Sports Field on Nutsford Vale after their football pitch had had houses built on it, but it didn't happen because the Vale was too toxic – this was around 15-20 years ago.

Perhaps we submit a Freedom of Information request for information about a Sports Field for Spurley Hey school.

The group was also advised that the pupils of Chapel Street school in Levenshulme had been given a letter last Friday saying that a new secondary school was being built locally but we don't know anything more. Perhaps, if Cedar Mount is failing, and parents don't want their children to go there, there will be a local alternative. A suggestion by Cllr Julie Reid was that we should lobby the head teachers from other local schools because the new school might be taking pupils from their schools thereby reducing their benefit entitlement.

Initially there will need to be an Outline Planning Permission request submitted. Because it will be an outline,, it will have no bearing on what the final submission will be. We believe that this "outline" will go to main council committee at the beginning of April. It was pointed out that the council is required to give 8 weeks public notice on the OPP before it can be ratified, and as they have not yet made it public they are already too late for the next meeting. Hence, there will be a delay in the ratification.

Also, because of the election, there will be no meeting of the planning committee. So the

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next applicable meeting will be in June – giving us more time to formulate our plans.

It had also been noted that for the Lytham Road school. They will have to close the road so as to renew the sewers to manage the extra waste.

We have just had Matthews Lane re-surfaced. For some streets off Matthews Lane, water pressure is very low and United Utilities class it as an insufficient Water Main of only 6” down Matthews Lane. It needs be 10”. Could we be faced with the same issue.

Cassie had made several Freedom of Information requests around the number of school places required or in use and vacancies but the council would not divulge this information because the places are open to offer and it may create an unfair advantage for some schools.

Schools “basic need” reports for placements required in 2015 & 2016 are 6,871 and 6,293. How can we trust these numbers when so many other reports rely upon them after such a large change?

The Education Dept are responsible for monitoring all attendance records and absences.

For information
Cedar Mount has 609 pupils,
Melland has 154,
St Peter's has 932.

One concern expressed was that we are experiencing lots of children coming into our area and the plan is to bus even more children here for their education but we are not getting the support in terms of better transport links, wider roads, suitable infrastructure to adequately support it.

Locomotion Internet Radio Station at the Steelworks Tavern, Gorton Lane near the Monastery – Bob indicated that he might check it out tonight.

Action Plan	Who
Write Letters	Everyone - please personalise - use own words
Contact local radio	Everyone
Write to Woodland Trust & RSPB	Mavis – awaiting reply
Write to Manchester Evening News	Everyone
Spread the word – tell your neighbours, use social media, post comments on the Save Nutsford Vale Gorton Facebook page	Everyone

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Next Meeting:

Wednesday 22nd February 2017 at the Bluebell Inn at 6:30pm

Next Event:

Litter Pick: Saturday 4th March 2017 from 10:30am

Meet at the Bickerdike Avenue Entrance to the Vale.