

Chairman's Report

Car Parking within the Ward

One advantage of convalescence is that it allows one the time to think about many issues. Last week my thoughts turned to that old chestnut of parking within the ward, of which one suggestion was to put a multi-storey car park on the NCP site in Church Street. There are numerous photographs showing how the east side of Church Street and the north-west side of Stonegate Street looked prior to their clearance in the 1960s. A three-storey car park - which would be 24 feet/7.3m in height - could easily sit on the site, with each floor (ground, first and second) affording car parking for 350 vehicles, giving a total of 1050 spaces.

However, Church Street is insufficiently satisfactory for such a large structure as it would be too dominating but, if the west side (the Church Street side) of the building was facaded with an absolute replica of the buildings formerly on the site then I'm sure that such a development would be happily tolerated by those who live in Church Street. The same, of course, could be done to the elevation on the north west side of Stonegate Street. It would not be beyond the wit of an architect who understand the town such as Richard Waite to draw up a suggestion of what it could look like, creating the current access and exit on Church Street and Stonegate Street as arches beneath the facaded building.

The advantage, apart from that of sensitively recreating that which was a lamentable destruction of perfectly good buildings, would revivify the area and elevate its tone. In addition, it would be providing an additional 700 parking spaces, of which I would recommend that the 350 spaces on the top floor be reserved solely for those who live in the southern part of the Ward thus removing all parking from Nelson Street, described by Pevsner as "one of the finest streets in Europe".

A number of different interests would need to play ball for this to happen: NCP, BCKLWN, NCC and the residents of the ward. If all were together as one then there is no reason why the proposal could not become a reality. NCP would be gaining 100% increase in its revenue as well as a percentage of the parking fees for the residents who occupy spaces on the top floor.

I'd welcome your comments. Incidentally I do have photos of the demolished buildings cited and a copy of the high-detailed 1886 map showing the configuration of the former buildings in Church Street and Stonegate Street.

Chapel Street Car Park.

The Architects Journal has announced: Competition: Chapel Street, King's Lynn.

King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council is seeking a design team for a residential-led redevelopment of Chapel Street Car Park

I am grateful to Ken Hill for this alert.

New ward boundaries and borough elections.

The ward has been extended to take in, among other areas, The Chase. We have not been able to advise new ward residents and businesses of the ward forum and its activities, though we hope to do so in future. A full list of streets is attached, if you know anyone living there, please tell them about the ward forum and encourage them to register and come to our meetings. At the moment the borough does not have an up to date boundary map. It **SHOULD** be available in due course and we will be able to amend the website.

The borough elections have produced a new councillor for the ward, Francis Bone, Labour. Our own

Lesley was re-elected and thus continues as vice-chairman. Francis signed up to the forum several years ago and is therefore informed of our doings.

The elections resulted in a greatly reduced majority for the Conservatives, though they still constitute the ruling group. One departure is Alistair Beales, who as cabinet member for projects and assets was responsible for the riverfront development scheme and - the widely criticised - misnomer *Nelson's Quay*. We have been assured that this is a 'working title' and is not set in stone, but we wait to see.

Ken Hill has written to the borough council leader, Brian Long, with another suggestion:

"I now feel it would be more appropriate to include King's Lynn in the title, rather than a historical figure. I suggest we call it KING'S LYNN QUAYS.

If it is called Nelson Quay, the question "Where's that?" will follow immediately.

Nelson, Vancouver, Cresswell all refer people back to the town's history. (With the riverfront scheme) what you are promoting now is not the history of the town, but its current reputation as a centre of vitality, located where history happened, but with a future to be welcomed by residents, industry and visitors.

"We also have more than one quay: South Quay, Boal Quay, Riverside Quay, and hopefully later Arts Centre Quay. So the plural in King's Lynn Quays is justified."

I would be interested to hear constituents' views.

We have no immediate news of the Riverfront Scheme, if there is Lesley will update us at the forum meeting. We do know that the borough has acquired the former Somerfeld and Thomas building. A borough official has produced a film of the interior (previously circulated). If you haven't seen it go to YouTube and key in Somerfeld and Thomas, King's Lynn. Set for Hammer House of Horror? Or Line of Duty?

Guildhall of St George – Shakespeare's Guildhall Trust.

From the considerable activity so far, it appears that the trust is getting off to a very good start. Regular meetings are being held with the borough (which leases the complex) and the National Trust, the owner. Charitable status has been applied for and it is hoped that this will be granted soon. Meanwhile there are regular activities, Shakespeare's birthday celebrations were the beginning and this was followed up by a music night where the Ella Macready Trio and the - most impressive - Springwood Swing Band performed. A one-woman play about Sylvia Pankhurst is being held next Wednesday (most regrettably clashing with the ward forum meeting) and next month there will be a performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on June 21. *Kipper Feet* a new ballet by Trina Lee, based on life in the North End comes in September.

To get all these notifications and regular information, sign up to the trust by emailing:

info@shakespearesguildhalltrust.com

Julian Litten, chairman