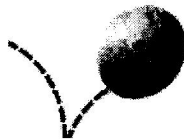


APPENDIX 2: PRESS STATEMENT.



Gillian MacLeod

11/07/2005 13:36

To: Sara Hyman/CED/LCC@Leeds_City_Council, James
Rogers/CED/LCC@Leeds_City_Council
cc: Jean Dent/PLAN/LCC@Leeds_City_Council, Paul
Brook/LDA/LCC@Leeds_City_Council, Ian
Andrews/PLAN/LCC@Leeds_City_Council
Subject: Draft Press Release for Abbey Mills Site, Kirkstall

--- Forwarded by Gillian MacLeod/HWT/LCC on behalf of Gillian MacLeod/HWT/LCC ---



Jon Crampton

11/07/2005 11:25

To: Gillian MacLeod/HWT/LCC@Leeds_City_Council
cc:
Subject: Junction email

As discussed.

Thanks.

Jon Crampton
Press Assistant
Communications Unit
Leeds City Council
Tel: 0113 3951577
Fax: 0113 2474736
<http://www.leeds.gov.uk>

--- Forwarded by Jon Crampton/CED/LCC on 11/07/05 11:24 ---



"Stuart Robinson"
<Stuart.Robinson@ypn
.co.uk>

07/07/05 09:42

To: <Jon.Crampton@leeds.gov.uk>
cc:
Subject: Junction email

This is from Coun John Illingworth up in Kirkstall
Cheers
Stuart
LWN

The new access road proposed for Abbey Mills in Kirkstall would become "a hideous death trap", a local councillor said today.

Leeds City Council officers want to build a new road linking Abbey Mills to the A65 Abbey Road, as part of a redevelopment plan. The new junction would be close to Kirkstall Abbey, directly opposite Norman Row, on a narrow and congested section of the route.

But local councillor John Illingworth (Labour, Kirkstall) has slated the proposals. He said:

"This is, without doubt, the most stupid road scheme I have seen in 26 years of Council service. The new access would be on the inside of a blind corner, on a steep slope and at an acute angle to the road. It breaks every rule in the safety book. Visibility is not just bad, it is exceptionally bad. Someone has proposed this lunacy by looking quickly at a map, without any local knowledge of conditions on the ground."

"The A65 through Kirkstall is an extremely busy main road. There is standing traffic at peak times, but off-peak speeds are high as vehicles enter and leave the dual carriageway past Kirkstall Abbey. Norman Row joins directly opposite, so the new access would create a new cross roads on a blind corner. Every motorist and traffic engineer knows that this is downright dangerous."

Nevertheless he thought there was a real danger that the scheme might go ahead, because Council officers hoped to make £900,000 from the sale of Abbey Mills to a multiple landlord or a housing developer. He had personally been approached by landowners on the far side of Abbey Mill goit, who wanted to join in the scheme.

Cllr Illingworth added: "There is a real possibility that this will start off as a minor access, which will be gradually enlarged to create a major new connection to the former Allders car park, and later to the open fields behind Kirkstall Abbey. Developers have wanted this for at least 25 years. Surveyors have recently been on site measuring up for a new bridge over Abbey Mill goit, and Council planners have discussed the idea in secret behind closed doors."

The Council had a history of caving in to big developers. Cllr Illingworth said: "The Council's officers were in such a rush to agree the Morrisons development in Kirkstall that they signed the approval letter before the plans had been submitted. When the plans arrived they wouldn't work and had to be altered, even though the scheme had already been approved. This is how we came to have the present half-baked arrangement just down the road, which causes serious congestion and has a poor accident record."

Major demolition and tree felling would be needed to create sight lines for the new access road, both in the garden of Abbey Villa and in Kirkstall Abbey Park. A council tree surveyor has already visited the site to determine which trees will come down. Abbey Mills is grade 2 listed, and listed building application has been submitted for Abbey Villa. Kirkstall Abbey is a grade one Ancient Monument. Cllr Illingworth commented:

"I doubt that the listing will stop them unless the public makes a fuss. They are such Philistines. Not only is this a truly dangerous road scheme, it will also be extremely ugly - a real blot on the landscape - but we have had plenty of those before."

John Illingworth

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