

APPENDIX 2: EMAIL 21/8/05.



Jean Dent
23/08/2005 09:24

To: Paul Brook/LDA/LCC@Leeds_City_Council, Mike Darwin/HWT/LCC@Leeds_City_Council
cc:
Subject: Fw: Abbey Mills Highway works

for information
Jean Dent
Director of Development
Tel: 0113 247 7828
e mail: jean.dent@leeds.gov.uk
----- Forwarded by Jean Dent/PLAN/LCC on 23/08/2005 09:24 -----



Alison Hopwood
22/08/2005 13:53

To: Jean Dent/PLAN/LCC@Leeds_City_Council
cc: Wendy Illsley/PLAN/LCC@Leeds_City_Council
Subject: Fw: Abbey Mills Highway works

- to please action as below.

Many thanks.

----- Forwarded by Alison Hopwood/CED/LCC on 22/08/2005 13:53 -----



David Page
22/08/2005 13:51

To: Alison Hopwood/CED/LCC@Leeds_City_Council
cc:
Subject: Re: Fw: Abbey Mills Highway works

Alison
I would ask Jean to do a note for Paul on the matter explaining what has occurred.
D. J. Page
Deputy Chief Executive
Tele.No. (0113) 24 74255
Fax No. (0113) 24 74870
email: david.page@leeds.gov.uk
Alison Hopwood



Alison Hopwood
22/08/2005 12:40

To: David Page/CED/LCC@Leeds_City_Council
cc:
Subject: Fw: Abbey Mills Highway works

Dave, not sure if you could pick this one up on behalf of Paul - or whether you think best for me to refer to Jean Dent?

thanks,
- Ali

----- Forwarded by Alison Hopwood/CED/LCC on 22/08/2005 12:38 -----

John Illingworth
21/08/2005 11:58

To: Paul Rogerson/CED/LCC@Leeds_City_Council
cc: lynsey.simenton@kpmg.co.uk,
p-painter@audit-commission.gov.uk
Subject: Abbey Mills Highway works

Dear Paul (BCC all councillors),

I am forwarding below a message to Mike Darwin, which is self-explanatory. I should emphasise that

Mike was not responsible for the problematic highway drawing, he merely passed it on to the Kirkstall members. I have removed very large the AutoCAD files from the end of this forwarded message, because very few people (other than highway engineers) have the software required to read them. Dennis Rhodes in Members IT and Mike Darwin in Development have copies and will help people to open them if needed.

This is my third major complaint about the Abbey Mills scheme. The original report to the Executive Board on 15 December 2004 contained misleading financial information. This was followed by an 8 month internal audit investigation where the investigator did not interview the complainant. Now we have a highway safety assessment where some buildings that obstructed the sight lines have been deleted and hundreds of houses have been digitally moved by up to 4 metres on the map, making it much easier for the proposals to "pass".

This is playing with people's lives. The financial side has already been referred to external audit. I insist that we call in the Royal Society for Prevention of Accidents to do a full professional and independent highway safety assessment to restore public confidence in the Council's decision making processes.

John Illingworth

— Forwarded by John Illingworth/MEM/LCC on 21/08/2005 11:37 —

John Illingworth
21/08/2005 11:18

To: Mike Darwin/HWT/LCC@Leeds_City_Council
cc: Jean Dent/PLAN/LCC@Leeds_City_Council, Paul
Brook/LDA/LCC@Leeds_City_Council, Chris
Kwasniewski/LDA/LCC@Leeds_City_Council, Roy
Coello/HWT/LCC@Leeds_City_Council, Josie
Monaghan/HWT/LCC@Leeds_City_Council, Dennis
Rhodes/CSV/LCC@Leeds_City_Council
Subject: Abbey Mills Highway works

Dear Mike,

An extremely serious problem has emerged with the AutoCAD drawing number "HDC-993735-GA-2b.dwg" from Josie Monaghan in the highway design team that you forwarded to the Kirkstall members on 19 August 2005. This drawing [1,596 KB] was created on 18 August 2005, at 09:48:43 and the Novell checksum is BA76 3F13 5E8E ED97 E4E0 3FCE. I have re-attached it to the end of this document. For reasons that will become obvious below this message is being copied to the Council's auditors, the Chief Officer, English Heritage and to all the elected members of council. I am about to go on holiday, but I can still be reached on 07946 301132.

Some recipients will lack the software to open AutoCAD files directly, so I have also included a series of GIF images to explain the problems more clearly. These are much lower resolution than the original drawing "HDC-993735-GA-2b.dwg" which is the definitive document.

The drawing "HDC-993735-GA-2b.dwg" purports to show various highway layouts for the access road proposed to serve the Abbey Mills redevelopment. I have attached an image "new junction.gif" showing part of the preferred scheme, with the peripheral parts of the drawing omitted. North is on the left. If people are using the Lotus Notes file viewer, this image is best rotated through 90 degrees (use the "viewer" menu) and printed out in landscape orientation, when it will be very much easier to study. The new access road is a thin continuous blue line, and the proposed road markings on the A65 are in heavy black. It is much clearer to print these diagrams out rather than viewing them on screen.



new junction.gif

It is odd that Abbey Mills itself has been omitted from the proposals drawing. This building blocks the sight lines from the proposed junction, and I have attached a photograph taken from the point "A" on the drawing (opposite the West End public house) to show that this building is in the way. It is not the

only obstruction, and numerous trees must also be removed (shown in the second picture) to achieve highway visibility standards if the mill itself were not blocking the view.



aug05 030a.jpg



aug05 048a.jpg

I tried to insert the mill building into the highway drawing using the Ordnance Survey digital map, at which point an amazing discrepancy came to light:

THE HIGHWAY DRAWING "HDC-993735-GA-2b.dwg" IS NOT AN ACCURATE REPRESENTATION OF THE SITUATION ON THE GROUND.

A substantial area of land and buildings in the "Normans" has been moved electronically eastwards in the original highway drawing, making it appear that this road scheme might be practicable, when in fact it is not. I have highlighted the affected area in orange on my drawing "annotated.gif". Not all these buildings have been moved by the same amount, and there may have been some attempt to "smooth out the joins" so that these changes are less obvious than they might otherwise be. The largest errors are about 4 metres, which makes all the difference between success and failure in highway terms.



annotated.gif

Parts of the affected area along the A65 have been rotated clockwise about a point "B" in the "pocket park" (opposite the Kirkstall Sports Centre) thereby achieving a seamless join with the existing kerb line. The discrepancy is, however, very obvious at the point "C" near Norman Mount once one understands what to look for.

One effect of these alterations is to move the sight lines away from Kirkstall Abbey Park, making it appear that comparatively little demolition and tree felling would be required, when this is not actually the case. The land slopes steeply at this point, and significant civil engineering works would be necessary within the park to achieve normal highway visibility and safety standards on this scheme. The rotation also pushes the new access point about 2.5 metres eastwards into the middle of Abbey Road, making it apparently easier to see round the bend in the direction of the city centre.

These changes are obvious when the highway drawing "HDC-993735-GA-2b.dwg" is digitally superimposed onto the Ordnance Survey digital map. The maps are in perfect agreement around the periphery, but an area in the middle has clearly been moved. I have attached a low resolution image derived from the OS map "se2635nw.gif" and a file "superimpose.gif" to illustrate this point:



se2635nw.gif



superimpose.gif

Buildings are outlined in red on the OS map, and pavement edges are dotted blue, whereas these features are in black on the highway drawing. It is clear that key buildings have either been omitted in the case of Abbey Mills and Abbey Villa, or electronically moved out of the way in the "Normans". This is even more obvious on an enlargement of the proposed junction:



enlarge1.gif

Readers using the Lotus Notes file viewer may find it easier to rotate this image 90 degrees and print it out in landscape orientation. I have coloured the houses yellow on the OS map, and the pavement edge is dotted blue. The new road is continuous blue. The new "junction" is actually in the middle of the A65, and the inbound cycle lane is on the pavement! The origin for the sight lines is in the wrong

place, making the highway visibility requirements apparently easier to satisfy. I have included a second enlargement near Norman Mount:



enlarge2.gif

Once again I have coloured the buildings yellow on the OS map. The green dashed sight line terminates in the middle of Abbey Road, about 4 metres from the dotted blue kerb line where it should terminate. This makes the highway visibility requirement artefactually easier to meet.

All my previous criticisms of this scheme still apply. It would be hugely damaging to the visual environment, with major demolition of historic boundary walls and a considerable loss of mature trees. It would create a new non-signalised cross road intersection on a busy main road, contrary to national and local highway guidance. It is on a slope. The visibility is poor, in fact downright dangerous. There is stationary queueing traffic in the inbound lane for much of the day, and the right turn reservation is much too narrow, causing drivers to encroach into the cycle lanes. When compared with the A65 Quality Bus Proposals, the designer has artificially narrowed the cycle lanes and the pavements in order to accommodate motorised vehicles. Where does this leave the Council's "hierarchy of road users"? It isn't pedestrians, but property developers, who are plainly at the top!

In view of the clear conflicts of interest between the Council's Development Department, and our duty of care towards the ordinary residents of Kirkstall, I insist that we call in engineers from the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents to perform a fully independent highway safety assessment of these proposals. In the meantime, please will you ensure that revised accurate drawings are prepared for this scheme, showing all the relevant buildings in their correct places, and investigate why such an inaccurate and seriously misleading drawing was initially produced by our highway design team.

John Illingworth

The AutoCAD drawings have been removed.