

4 April → GM.

Subject: Slipway Shed - River Drive.
From: mick.dawson@theharbourview.co.uk
Date: Fri, April 4, 2014 3:48 pm
To: "George" <Mansbridge@webmail.daily.co.uk>
Cc: "gordon.atkinson@southtyneside.gov.uk" <gordon.atkinson@southtyneside.gov.uk> (more)

Dear Mr Mansbridge

It a month since I sent Mr Atkinson an email on behalf of the residents affected by the redevelopment of the UK Docks site on River Drive and I have not received a satisfactory reply to the request that STC Planning Office meet with the residents to explain their action or rather lack of it over the slipway shed on River Drive. I am writing to you as I know Mr Atkinson is away and I know that you have been corresponding with another dissatisfied resident.

Until we as a group get an answer to the bulk of the questions caused by STC in allowing the shed, not only to be built to unauthorised plans (by their own admission on 13th Feb) but also allowing it to be put into use i.e. slipping of Port of Tyne vessel on 17th March, they must expect a continuous stream of complaints.

You, the Council should I say, have known since at least the 27th of September 2013 that the shed has not been built to plan and appear to be evading the issue since then and we would like to know the justification for your attempts to cover this up. It looks like a) you treat the outcrys in 1996 and 2001 as nothing b) the Townhall meeting of 25th Nov about ST/1146/13/COND was used to misinform representatives of the residents, they were incorrectly advised that the structure met legal requirements and c) the reticence of any elected members of the Council (ward and Planning committee) to comment on the inappropriate development on the riverside. To cap it all there was an article in the local paper on Apr 1st showing most flattering photograph of the offending shed saying that it was only 36ft high. The author of the article may have got away with saying that in September but not now. You should know that it is over 50 ft high and that is what we have been saying for months now. It's planned height is about 42ft.

Mr Atkinson's and now your retisence to answer any of the questions arising from this most inappropriate development, and also the refusal of any of the elected members of the ward or planning committee to say anything leads me to think that local politics may be involved. Elections in May (closing date for registration 18th Apr) may have something to do with it and the fact that the Cllr for this ward is up for election is also the Chairman of the Planning Committee. We cannot really be expected to wait another two weeks for a response.

The other thing that make me think that the issue is fundamentally a political one is item 4 on the list of items for consideration of the Planning Committee on Monday 7th.

For those interested please see attached. I have not attached all 60 pages of the report but the interesting part may be found at:-

<http://www.southtyneside.info/applications/2/councillorsandcommittees/viewdocument.aspx?id=25175>
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This political hot cake is about to slip under the radar and be 'rubberstamped' by a largely ill informed committee and is possibly the main reason why the council has been obfuscating, misleading if not outrightly lying to a group of residents about an ill considered planning application at the other end of the town for 7 months.

The above is why I am copying this mail to the main political parties. The response to our press release has been underwelming to say the least.

I ask again that the working at UK Docks Slipway on River Drive be stopped until this issue is resolved.

yours sincerely

Michael Dawson