

## Revised Cycles of Deceit, Shed and Corruption – Part 12, March 2022

The neighbours of UK Docks' slipway shed off River Drive complained about its height in September 2013 and after the Council's Planning Manager conceded that it was too tall, some five months later, we asked for it to be removed but instead of it being removed the Council removed the admission that it was taller than permitted from the records. How this was done was described in a letter to the person now in charge of South Tyneside Council.

It was called Shooting the Messenger in 2015 which was and sent as an attachment named Shed and Corruption - Part 11 to the Chief Executive on the 3rd March 2022 under an email separating not unrelated issues.

Date: 03/03/2022 (15:14:43 GMT)

From: Mick Dawson

To: Jonathan Tew, Hayley Johnson, George Mansbridge, Helen Dalby, Emma Lewell-Buck MP, Anne-Marie Trevelyan MP

Attachment: SandC-Part11.pdf (262 KB)

I hope Mrs Johnson and the others realised that they should have been dropped into the cc. box and I apologise for the error.

There were two issues, the first being the English Coastal Path which should really matter for Parliament and something needs to be done about that quite quickly for the corrupt practice of giving away public footpaths to the developers of sites overlooking them has spread from South Tyneside to Northumberland County Council.

### **Shooting the Messenger.**

The second is the width of UK Docks' Shed which I described as a first cycle of deceit to a former neighbour, I was forgetting the first was the response to a complaint about 71 Greens Place, called Double Standards in August 2021. It had in fact taken place a year before and was the first example.

I had originally mentioned Cycles of Deceit in relation to UK Docks' shed, in a post of February 2020 when I was planning the Shed and Corruption series and thought it might be Part 4 before I got round to highlighting it again but with the interruption by Customer Advocacy unjustly sectioning me, I am describing 'Cycles of Deceit' in Part 12. They only have themselves to blame for time wasting.

I was also overlooking something that should have been obvious from the beginning, and that it was the refusal of the planning officer to admit that the shed was taller than planned when first asked about it, in September 2013. It ended with the accusation that we were making allegations by the Council's Corporate Lead when she returned us to the beginning, the main cycle:- *The matters and allegations raised by your constituent are well documented and have been subject to a number of enquiries from Mr Dawson and other local residents over a lengthy period of time.*

### **Cycles of Deceit.**

When I had to request a copy of what we were shown at a Town Hall Meeting, we were passed, from the Principal Planning Officer, unauthorised drawings with a mistake in the landward end height. It was an attempt to fool us into believing that UK Docks had approval for the shed. They restarted work on their shed as soon as the results of the meeting were known. It was obvious that we had not seen any approved drawings or we would have been given them but the need to hide the fact that the shed was taller than planned had become imperative for some reason.

The Principal Planning Officer, the two Councillors and the [Executive of the Tyne Gateway Assn](#) knew why it had become an imperative as did some in the Council but not I. Logic dictates that the main reason was; it saved UK Docks' from having to make a retrospective application for their taller shed or the fraudulent misrepresentation made about the height would have been revealed.

After I had [hailed the complaint that the shed was too tall back on course](#), the Planning Manager had the simple choice of backing his Principal Planning Officer or the protestors, of which I was one of many, and he chose to back Mr Cunningham presumably to save himself the trouble of taking disciplinary action against the offending officer. His offence was to claim that the shed had approval when the approved plans indicated that not only was the shed wider than planned it was taller as well.

I had [used drawing 8296/14 to establish the planned height](#):- *“Examination of this drawing number (8296/14) gives a detail of a beam (portal column) width 0.686mtres, with which the height and width of the north elevation can be gauged. The north elevation is 15.6m high with a width of 12.2m.*

The north elevation is the river end, however my letter to Mr Tew, Chief Executive of March 3rd, began:- *“I have laid out the timeline which I shared with my neighbours in Greens Place and your office from September 2013 but before we retrace our steps through the Council Complaints Procedure, I suggest you determine, [by the examination of the approved drawing 8296/2](#), what the planned height of UK Docks' shed should be.*

In the letter, Shooting the Messenger 2015, I first ask Mr Tew to look at the only approved drawing from 1996 with dimensions and that was because it gave the landward end as 12.7m and I then explained how the complaint about the shed being too big and in its passage through the complaints system was sent round and round in numerous cycles of deceit. Every time I had to point out that the planned height of the landward end was 12.7m, not that as claimed by the Council, 15.5m.

The earlier misrepresentations of the planned height of the shed were:-

1. That shows the overall height of the structure as 15.5m above the foundation level at the landward end – [Planning Manager, 15-Jan-14](#);
2. The approved dimensions of the steelwork are, • Proposed height 15.5m at the River Drive end – [Head of Development Services, 2-May-14](#);
3. The height of the steelwork at River Drive is clearly marked as 12.5m+3m (total 15.5m) – [Head of Development Services, 2-Jun-14](#).

Three denials of the truth about the height of the shed 12.7 or 12.8m before the Ombudsman was involved and before each one I had carefully explained why it was a lie to say that the height at the landward end was 15.5m.

The evidence that complaint 248789 had been removed from the records was removed from the record when the Head of Development Services introduced a new complaint, 253539 at the second stage and it appears that was to save himself the trouble of taking disciplinary action over both his planning officers but it still left the question about the shed's height to be answered.

I explained much of this in [Shed and Corruption in March 2021 it was to become Part 1](#) in a series.

The first cycle, was a dismissal of a claim that the shed was wider than planned and the second was passed back to someone who was happy to declare the shed 'legal'. In the 3rd, 4th and 5th cycles they repeated the lie that the shed had been built to the approved height each one being a cycle of deceit as I had to repeat a variation of what was said in the original complaint and so on:-

### Meeting 25th November 2013

- 1 Mr Cunningham Compliant with plans that were not approved i.e. ones in error that gave the [Landward End as 15.5m](#) but they did give the planned width as 12.2m. It is 13.1m wide.

### Undesignated complaint 10th January 2014

- 2 Mr Cunningham 13-Jan-14: [Referred Back to the meeting of 25th November](#)  
3 Mr G Atkinson 15-Jan-14: response to escalation from first stage,  
[Approved Height Landward End = 15.5m](#)

### Complaint ID 248789: Dumped on Mr Mansbridge.

- 4 Mr G Mansbridge 2-May-14: response to Petition,  
[Approved Height Landward End = 15.5m](#)

### Complaint ID: 253539 [Mansbridge Trap](#)

- 5 Mr G Mansbridge 2-Jun-14: [original complaint overwritten](#),  
[Approved Height Landward End = 15.5m](#)  
6 Mr G Mansbridge 8-Jul-14: Meeting arranged to view drawing. [There was no viewing.](#)  
7 Ms M Hamilton [No mention of the height at all.](#)  
8 LGO – 1st Draft [No mention of the height at all.](#)  
9 LGO – 2nd Draft The complainant says the shed is also 3 metres higher than it should be. The Council says it is not. There is no fault in how the Council decided the shed is the permitted height. [Second draft reference.](#)

### [Letter to Emma Lewell-Buck, MP](#): 31-March-15

- 10 LGO – 3rd Draft 15-April-15 The complainant says the shed is also 3 metres higher than it should be. The Council says it is not. There is no fault in how the Council decided the shed is the permitted height. [Final draft reference.](#)  
11 LGO 2nd Inspector I consider that [your latest complaint remains that of your previous complaint](#) which has already been determined and the opportunity to request a review of that decision has passed.

### [Letter to Cllr Anglin](#): 6-August-17

- 12 Reply from MP 6-September-17 The previous issues relating to the boat yard have in fact now been looked at by the Local Government Ombudsman [and they found no issue with the yard or anything relating to its development.](#)

### [Letter to Gill Hayton](#): 26-October-18

- 13 G Hayton, Reply 12-December-18 [It is helpful if I set out some of the background to your complaint](#)~~~  
The Ombudsman found no fault in how the Council determined the permitted height of the landward end of the development was 12.5m + 3m.

The sixth was peculiar in its own way and only went to [confirm the value of 8296/14 in proving that the shed was taller than planned](#). In the seventh and eighth stages they failed to mention the height at all. In the ninth and tenth they just repeated the denial given to them by a Senior Planning Officer. [As explained to the 1st Ombudsman in great detail in LExplanation1A.pdf](#).

In the eleventh, the complaint that they had given misinformation to the Ombudsman was conflated with the original complaint to avoid the denial made by his predecessor and that takes us back to the very beginning as did the letter accusing the good folk of South Shields of making allegations about the height of the shed.

I had tried to break out of the cycles of deceit by writing to the MP for South Shields in March 2015 but failed when the email ended up with the MP for Berwick upon Tweed because I was staying in Amble. Strange, one might think, because UK Docks slipway is located in South Shields but it did not matter because Anne-Marie Trevelyan summed up the situation neatly:

*[MP asked the Chief Executive](#):- “Mr Dawson has not been able to locate any detail from the Council as to why the structure was approved despite the breach in planning conditions, and has been attempting to do so for nearly a year.*

She had given the Chief Executive the simple choice of admitting that the shed was taller than planned or calling us me a liar. When Customer Advocacy (CA) said the structure had no permission [they also hid the fact that it was nearly 3m too tall](#) and it also remained hidden in the first draft of the Local Government Ombudsman’s response to my claim that the Council knew about the shed being too tall but did nothing about it.

The Chief Executive had the choice of answering the question put to him by the MP honestly or avoiding it and he chose the latter by getting his [Corporate Lead to accuse the other residents and I](#), of making allegations so that he did not have to admit to the cycle of deceptions perpetrated by his staff:-

*“The matters and allegations raised by your constituent are well documented and have been subject to a number of enquiries from Mr Dawson and other local residents over a lengthy period of time.*

It was because of that exchange in mid 2015 that I called the retelling of this cycle of events from 2013 to the new Chief Executive, Mr Tew:- ‘Shooting the Messenger 2015’

I finish *Shooting the Messenger 2015* with the observation that by the time I find out that we have been falsely accused of making allegations the date for making any observations about ST/0461/14/FUL had closed and one can blame the Council’s Corporate Lead for that. Her parting shot in attachment 6 of her letter to Anne-Marie Trevelyan of the 25th June 2015 was to say:-

*I hope that this information is useful. Please do not hesitate to share this letter with your constituent.*

The letter was not shared and I do not know else was said. My request to know what was said in the main letter and the other attachments was ignored and it is not unreasonable to assume that it was not much different from what a Senior Planning Officer told the Ombudsman ([cf. paras 30-38](#)).

While I knew that the Council were using the Ombudsman to hide malpractice in their planning and building control sections, it was not until I received an email from [Alison Hoy on the 9th December 2015](#), on behalf of C Advocacy that I get confirmation that they were doing this, 2nd paragraph:-

*This matter has been investigated fully by the Council through its corporate complaints procedure. The complaint was not upheld and was also considered and decided by the Local Government Ombudsman who found no fault with the Council's decision.*

I also get confirmation that there is another reason, in paragraph 5, and it was to fend off enquiries from people like MPs and Journalists:-

*We have also responded to a further enquiry made to the Council via your then local MP Anne-Marie Trevelyan, dated 1 June 2015, which claimed you had not been able to locate any details from the Council on why the shed had been approved despite the breach in planning conditions, even though at that time you had received complaint responses from both the Council and the Ombudsman.*

I took a copy of this email to a solicitor for advice and he said that it would be best to raise a [complaint about the Council giving misinformation to the Ombudsman](#). It was in January 2016 but it was not until July that I made the decision to [raise the complaint with the Chief Executive about it](#).

It was no good pursuing it with Messrs Mansbridge and Co as they had failed to let the Committee who approved ST/0461/14/FUL, know that the existing shed was taller than planned. The people that I have associated with Mr Mansbridge included Mr Simmonette by the time of Alison's email of the 9th December. It was he who forwarded the emails mentioned in the first two paragraphs of that email, to her:-

*I have been forwarded your emails to the Planning Team dated 4th and 7th December 2015, in order to clarify the Council's position regarding your comments on issues relating to the existing boat repair shed at UK Docks Tyne Slipway and your earlier complaint to the Council regarding this matter.*

*Your email of 4th December refers to not being satisfied with the responses to the second part of your earlier contact to the team on 30 September. This was regarding the planning enforcement aspect of the existing boat repair shed.*

The email to Mr Simmonette on the 30th September was the first time in which, [the approved plan 8296/2 was directly referred](#), and one can see why Mr Simmonette asked Alison to make sure it ended up unanswered. It was about a lot more than the lack of enforcement and one can see why I the first thing I asked Mr Tew to look at 8296/2 before he did anything else.

8296/2 was indirectly referred to, in the request that the Council request that UK Docks either rebuild their shed to the correct size or remove it, made on March 4th 2014. Mr Mansbridge ensured that went into the bin when [he re-assigned 248789 as 253539 in May 2014](#).

I finish Shed and Corruption Part 11 with:-

*It would appear that the Council's Corporate Lead was the latest in a line of people starting with Cllrs Anglin and MacMillan and Messrs Haig and Watson, in getting UK Docks their longer shed and I can only assume that she was chosen to take a shot at the messenger again when I told the Chief Executive that his staff were giving misinformation to the Ombudsman because she did such a good job in persuading the MP for Berwick that we were making allegations.*

**In the Beginning**, Mr Cunningham, by referring my neighbour to a complaints procedure instead of answering her question in September 2013 began the cycle of events that ended with the false

accusation about us to the MP for Berwick:- *“The matters and allegations raised by your constituent are well documented and have been subject to a number of enquiries from Mr Dawson and other local residents over a lengthy period of time.*

To dissociate myself from the rest of those at the meeting arranged by Cllr Anglin and the Chair of the TGA to hide the fact that that the she was significantly taller than planned I went and measured the width of the shed for myself as there was no confusion about what the approved plans said it should be and found it to be nearly a [meter wider than planned and told the attendees](#). The response from the Principal Planning Officer was to say that it was not wider, an outright lie, and this was the first in a number of what I now call cycles of deceit about the shed.

In that first cycle, it was implied by saying, *I have explained during our meeting that the base and height of the structure are compliant*, that the shed had been approved. It was compliant with a plan that had not been approved and as another local resident had pointed to the provenance of another drawing I decided raise a complaint using it (8296/14) instead but I am referred back to the meeting again. That was the second cycle of deceit.

The undesignated complaint is then referred on to the Planning Manager in the third cycle and he misrepresents an obvious error in a dimension on an drawing that had not been approved as the approved height of the structure at 15.5m above the foundation at the inland end.

After Mr Atkinson was made aware that the Gable end on 8296/14 referred to the river end of the shed he said:-

I had told Mr Mansbridge that the shed was taller than planned in [response to an article in the local press](#):- *“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”* but he ignored it by passing the email back to the planning manager thus completing the fourth cycle.

The fifth cycle was generated in response to my [accusation that his staff were abusing the complaints procedure](#):- *“I will also ask at the same time that you do not refer this letter to one of your staff to raise a stage 1 complaint on my behalf. I understand you did this with my email of the 4th April which I take to be an abuse of the complaints procedure.* It was the first time I saw the reference 248789.

Mr Mansbridge did not raise a complaint at [Stage 1, he raised one at Stage 2](#), and in doing trashed my observation that the shed was 3m taller than planned by reference to 8296/14. The drawing used to fraudulently misrepresent the planned height of the shed by his Planning Manager on 15th January 2014 and possibly his Principal Planning Officer in the earlier cycles was 8296/1A.

I had hoped that [the cycles of deceit would be broken by the viewing of 8296/14](#) where I could have carefully explained why the gable end on it represented approval for a shed of 15.6m x 12.2m but it was not to be, [building control had completed a Certificate of Completion on the 17th June 2014](#) in spite of the shed being 3m too tall and the reason why 8296/14 was not shown at the meeting.

It was because Mr Mansbridge had invited Mr Atkinson to the meeting expressly arrange to view it that I suspected that something was amiss and [wrote to the Chief Executive the day before](#) saying:-

*On the 5th Sept 2013 work started at UK Docks premises on River Drive to build a slipway shed length 22.3m, width 13.1m and height at end facing River Drive 15.5m.*

*On 27th Sept an application was received in the planning office from the agents for UK Docks, Messrs Maughan, Reynolds Partnership Ltd to meet conditions of a previously granted application ST/0242/96 for a slipway shed length 22.3m, width 12.2m and height at end facing River Drive 12.5m.*

*This discrepancy is still not acknowledged by your Council after 9 months of work on this site.*

The first thing to notice about [the response made on behalf of the Chief Executive](#) is the lie that I asked for the complaint to be investigated at stage 3 but more damning still is that there is no denial against my comment:-

*“On 2nd May the Head of Development Services sent a letter to some residents in Harbour View and Greens Place repeating the earlier misrepresentation of plans that the Principle Planning Officer was voicing last year.*

She skirts the whole issue of the height of the shed by failing to mention it altogether and dismissing the extra width of the shed by saying:-

*“I am satisfied that when George Mansbridge made the decision on behalf of the Council that it was not expedient to take planning enforcement action, he was fully aware of the discrepancies noted in your email with regards to the width of the structure and the variation in pillar angle.*

In the seventh cycle, the lie that the gable end in drawing 8296/14 is not to scale, was seeded again:-

*“Mr Mansbridge stated in his Stage 2 response that the engineer chose to include a gable elevation of the structure on the same drawing but told you this was not drawn to scale.*

The authority in 2013 (South Tyneside Council?) had specified that the detail on 8296/14 had to be drawn to a scale of 1:20 but to complete the whole picture the draughtsperson chose a scale of 1:100 for the gable end. If it had been produced at the meeting arranged to view it I could have pointed this out to Mr Mansbridge and that my calculation for height of the river end of 15.6m was valid.

In the eighth cycle the Inspector for the Ombudsman like the author of the response to my letter to the Chief Executive also fails to mention the height of the shed but [says with regard to the extra width](#):-

*“When the Authority found the structure was wider than the approved plans, there were two possible decisions it could reach. It could have said the development was wholly unauthorised because it was in breach of the approved plans. In this case it could not enforce any of the conditions. Or it could have said the development was authorised but the structure as built was in breach of condition 2 of the permission. In that case it had to consider whether it was expedient to enforce condition 2.*

Someone did think it was expedient to enforce the second condition in September 2013 because they forced UK Docks to stop work on the structure and for no other reason than the approved drawing from 1996, [8296/2, showed that it was 3m taller than planned.](#)

By the time we get to cycle nine the Ombudsman was repeating a variation of the fraudulent misrepresentation given to Mr Cunningham by UK Docks in September 2013 and combined with a repeat of the comment about the extra width, the Ombudsman found for UK Docks and South Tyneside Council in her summary:-

*“The complainant says the shed is also 3 metres higher than it should be. The Council says it is not. There is no fault in how the Council decided the shed is the permitted height.*

Whoever was giving misinformation to the Ombudsman was getting desperate by the time we get to the tenth cycle because he presented her with the [actual plans presented to Mr Cunningham](#) by UK Docks on September the 5th or 6th 2013. Note that they were produced for Tyne Slip and Engineering in February 1997 and best example of fraudulent misrepresentation of the height of the shed to date.

It turns out that the second Inspector for the Ombudsman was no better than the Senior Planning Officer who had given the first Inspector so much misinformation/misrepresentation about the shed. I could tell from Mr P Lewis’ correspondence that he had as much interest in the truth as the planning officer and I [wrote 17th May, 2017](#):

*Thank you for responding. My records show that your Inspector, Adele Reynolds, sent her final draft for 14015052 on the 15th April 2015, not in March as you say in your letter.*

*This is important because I wrote to my MP about the slipway cover on River Drive being 3 meters higher than planned on the 31st March 2015. I could see from your Inspector’s first draft, 9th March, that she had bypassed the main point of my complaint, i.e. we were told that the cover was built to approved plans when it had not and she had ignored the height question completely.*

Later in my letter to Mr Lewis I said, the hash numbers refer to the paragraphs in the final daft:-

*That a Senior Council Planner (# 31) thought that he could get away with passing off an unauthorised drawing from 1997 as a legal one from 1996 (#34) is shocking but sadly it appears to have worked, and it does not reflect very well on the office of the Local Government Ombudsman.*

[Mr Lewis has no answer to the challenge and he made his response of 30th May 2017](#), confidential and said:-

*Whilst you remain of the view that the building does not comply with approved plans, I see no reason why your argument could not have been made to this office within three months of the decision in 2015. That delay also makes any investigation of the matter more difficult given the length of time involved.*

He then followed it up with a far better example of conflation than South Tyneside Council’s planning officers ever made:-

*I consider that your latest complaint remains that of your previous complaint which has already been determined and the opportunity to request a review of that decision has passed.*

My complaint to Mr Lewis was that the Council had misled the Ombudsman, 17001436 and the previous complaint was that the shed was nearly 3m taller than that which had been approved, 14015052 and this has been covered by cycles 2-11.

A twelfth item has been added and that is the response from Council solicitor who repeats the misrepresentation about the height of the shed making item 12 and Repercussions has now published separately as Fallout from Cycles of Deceit.

Mick Dawson  
1 April 2022.