

South Tyneside Council and Corruption: Petition

More than nine years ago, [the Planning Manager agreed with me as one of the main protestors](#) that the enclosure, on the slipway, in UK Docks boat repair yard off River Drive was nearly 3 meters taller than permitted. South Tyneside Council had done little but deny the fact it that was taller than planned for five, months by withholding the approved plan which showed the enclosure or [shed was 2.7m taller than what had been approved 8296/2](#), and we decided to raise a Petition:-

3.3.2014 To the Chief Executive STMBC,

The attached signatories are concerned about recent developments at Tyne Slipway and Engineering Ltd, River Drive, South Shields.

We protest at:

1. A lack of relevant information from STMBC
2. A lack of public consultation on the unannounced construction
3. Lack of research and impact surveys
4. Apparent negligence by STMBC
5. Apparent breach of planning law by the developers

We are concerned that by its actions in this case STMBC is in breach of its own Local Development Framework Core Strategy Objectives, eg. "to protect and enhance the boroughs coastline and water frontage; to ensure that the individual and cumulative effects of development do not breach noise, hazardous substances or pollution limits; to increase public involvement in decision making and civic activity".

Local residents wish to live in peace and harmony with appropriate light industry as we have for many years, supporting the cultural heritage and environment of the area for the benefit of residents and visitors. We believe the new development at Tyne Slipway threatens to disrupt this.

Yours sincerely,

Signatories attached

The response to the Petition was not from the Chief Executive but from [the Head of Development Services](#). It was in the form of a letter, sent to addresses in top third of Greens Place on the Lawtop and all of those in Harbour View, South Shields, on the 2nd May 2014 and it contained a lie.

At some point Tyne Slipway and Engineering Ltd had become UK Docks and the lie, that UK Docks had approval for both the height and width of the development on the slipway became established when it was repeated by the Head of Development Services, that day in May:-

The approved dimensions of the steelwork are • Proposed height 15.5m at the River Drive end. The gradient of the slipway is 2.66m over the length of the shelter. This would mean the height at the riverside end would be 18.16m above the slipway; • Proposed length 22m; • Proposed width 12.2m.

More precisely, when he said: "Proposed height 15.5m at the River Drive end", he was repeating the fraudulent misrepresentation made by his [Planning Manager in January 2013](#):-

"The following are details of the relevant drawings in the Council's possession. The drawing that was submitted on 11th April 1996 with the application is numbered 8296/1A. That shows the overall height of the structure as 15.5m above the foundation level at the landward end.

He went on to say that the riverside end would be lower by 2.656m, giving a height at that end of 18.17m above the slipway, another misrepresentation of the shed's height because one can see that [8296/1A clearly shows the riverside end to be 15.5m](#).

Either of copies of 8296/2, two of the three approved drawings to have survived from 1996 showed that the landward end to be 12.7m as well. The Planning Manager, Mr Atkinson, had therefore been fraudulently misrepresenting the facts about the shed when he said on the 15th January 2014:-

The dimensions of the steelwork have been checked on site and they are in accordance with the measurements shown on the approved drawings.

We were not to have proof that the measurements were not in accordance an approved drawing until we had seen a copy of 8296/2 towards the end of January 2014 when he said in an attempt to [reinforce the earlier fraud about the shed's height](#):-

It is therefore reasonable to say that 8296/1A, 8296/1B, 8296/2 and 8296/4 represent the development which was approved in 1996 (the only difference between 1A and 1B being to the foundation detail).

It was only reasonable to make that statement if one assumed that the height of the shed given on 8296/1A and 1B at the downhill end of the shed had been approved at 15.5m but [he compounded the fraud by reference to a drawing that he had approved in October 2013](#) by adding:-

8296/14 is the recent drawing and the only purpose of that is in regards to the condition dealing with the strip curtain door fixing details. You explain that you have measured the height from this drawing as 15.6m, and you seem to have assumed that is the riverside elevation, and have adjusted for the gradient of the slipway and concluded that the height at the River Drive side should be in the order of 3m less. In fact the 15.6m height is the height to River Drive and the height on the river side is some 3m greater.

I had to calculate [the height of the river gable end on 8296/14](#) and found it to be 15.6m and no-one from South Tyneside Council in nearly 10 years has ever questioned it. I discovered later that it was because he included the fraudulent misrepresentation about the shed's height his email of the 28th January was marked with a protect notice:- This email has been classified as: **PROTECT**.

The first time we come across the use of [PROTECT was as early as the 9th September 2013](#) when Mr Cunningham said:-

Hello – I stamped these drawings on the day they were handed to me in reception, as I explained these are copies of drawings passed in 1996 by the T&W Development Corporation the only difference is that these drawings do not have the approved stamps on them.

[The drawings did not have approved stamps on them because they had never been sent for approval.](#) 1B shows that it was an amendment to 1A made in 1997 and the cropped drawing with it, that bore no identification turned out to be 8296/2 with the height of 12.7m at the road end removed to complete the fraud that UK Docks had approval for a structure with a height of 15.5m at that point.

It was to avoid the issue of whether the height of the road end had been deliberately removed to complete the fraud that 8296/14 was used to [register the complaint about the shed's height made on January 10th 2014](#):-

As the applicant has not discharged condition 2 why is there no retrospective planning application?

It would appear from Mr G Mansbridge' response to our Petition that the difference between the planned and actual height had been deliberately removed from 8296/2 by UK Docks before sending them to Mr P Cunningham in the first week of September 2013 and he was complicit with the fraud when he forwarded the pair of drawings to the protestors within a few days.

I had not seen the response to our Petition before I wrote to Mr Mansbridge about the slipway shed being in use before completion and advised him of the [abuse of the complaints system by his staff](#):-

1. *in an email from your Principle Planning Officer, dated 13th Jan 2014:- "May I therefore suggest that you speak with the Chair of the residents group in respect of the points that you have raised below, as these have already been discussed and explained. If you are still not satisfied with the Council's response then you should use the Council's complaints procedure which has 3 stages."*
2. *in an email from your Planning Manager, dated 28th Jan 2014:- "I can only suggest that if you do wish to pursue this matter further you ask that my Head of Service, George Mansbridge, responds to any remaining points you may have formally under stage 2 of the Council's complaints procedure. You will have to write to him and say specifically what you remain unhappy about."*

Those 2 responses were made to a complaint about the shed being taller and wider than planned made on 10th Jan 2014 and I finish the observation of May 2nd, by saying:-

If I had followed the suggestions by these officers there would have been no admission by the planning office that the slipway shed on River Drive had not been built to plan and it ill behoves you to refer my email to the formal complaints procedure as well. Work continues in the slipway shed as I write this so if you have not written to the operator to stop, as you intended to, then please do so.

The operator, UK Docks, did not stop work in, or on, the incomplete slipway shed and the North Shields Ferry was soon back in service.

The first of these officers was Mr P Cunningham, who had written in response to the complaint raised on the 10th January:-

*"My understanding is that the responses that I had provided to you at this meeting enabled the matter to be closed.
May I therefore suggest that you speak with the Chair of the residents group in respect of the points that you have raised below – etc.*

I had presented whoever picked up the complaint a simple choice: to admit the truth about the shed's height or [hide the fact that it was taller than the approved plans allowed](#) and he chose the latter because it allowed him to rescind the decision made mid September and allow UK Docks to resume work soon after the meeting, 25th November 2013.

The dispute between the [Chair of the residents group \(TGA\) and I](#) over whether the slipway shed was taller than planned was not resolved when we met with Mr Cunningham at the [Town Hall at a meeting organised by a Ward Councillor, in November 2013](#):-

Subject: RE: TGA - Town Hall Meeting 25 Nov
Michael

I took no minutes as is customary at these informal meetings.

For your record I am sure all would agree:

1. The Exec representatives of the Group accepted that the construction had been made legally as per drawings seen.

A meaningless statement when one has to consider whether a structure has been built to approved plans. Mr Cunningham had brought drawings to the meeting but they had not been approved by the Tyne and Wear Development Corporation. Points 2,3, and 4 were irrelevant to whether UK Docks had approval for their shed and [examination of drawing 8296/14](#) which had been sent to the Council at least a month and a half before the meeting would have shown that they had no approval for a shed of 18m at its river end.

While I was waiting for that drawing I noticed that 8296/1B gave the width of the shed as 12.2m and [mindful that one of the other protestors knew it was wider](#) as well as being taller, I went along and measured it. UK Docks had made it easy to do by making the sides of the vertical and I found it to be 13.2m. It was actually 13.1m but it pointed to the fact that those at the meeting, apart from myself, were happy to go along, not only with the lie about its height but the fact it was wider than permitted as well.

I had asked for a copy of 8296/14 but I received a copy of 8296/1A which contained the same error as 1B and recalculation [showed again the landward end as 12.8m](#). It also gave the river end of the shed as 15.5m and only went to confirm that our assessment of the shed's height was correct as the gradient between the ends is 2.7m and that Mr Cunningham has chosen to hide the truth about it at the Town Hall meeting in November 2013.

It should be a given that only approved drawing should be used to determine whether a structure has planning permission but it was not until we saw the approved drawing 8296/2 at the back end of January 2014, did we have proof that the permitted height of the landward end should be 12.7m.

Mr Cunningham must have known of the existence of the approved drawing and his method of avoiding telling a direct lie about the shed's height was to refer back to the November meeting. Unfortunately for him, there was a record in [the minutes of Tyne Gateway Assn](#) of the first time 15.5m was associated with the fraud that the shed was not taller than planned:-

KH advised that they had seen the plans which were date stamped 1996, the structure is 15.5m. Proper drawings were on file and there is nothing illegal about the structure.

KH was Mr Ken Haig, who with Mr G Watson were the Exec representatives who attended the meeting of 25th November 2013 and notice he does not specify which end of the shed has a height of 15.5m but more importantly he did not declare his interest in UK Docks. He was at that time, the sole director of the firm [HB Hydraulics, who were based in Portsmouth](#).

It turned out it was the rebuild of the property, formally owned by his wife, in Greens Place [that was to provide him with an immediate gain](#) following the Town Hall meeting in November 2013 because the need for a retrospective look at the rebuild of 71 Greens Place was done away with when an architect redrew a party wall to match what had been built rather than what had been approved and the new plan was accepted by the Planning Manager.

I digress, Mr Cunningham had picked up a complaint that a structure was in breach of an approved plan and referred it back to a meeting where we had been told that there was no breach. He then suggested I make a complaint about his response to the complaint about the breach:- *“If you are still not satisfied with the Council's response then you should use the Council's complaints procedure which has 3 stages.*

Not only did he withhold the approved drawings from 1996 he suggested I raise a complaint about his misconduct and both [were referred on his manager on January 14th 2014](#):-

Therefore until I have some satisfactory answers to my very reasonable questions I do not consider this matter closed. If you are unable to supply me with answers to my questions could you please pass the issue to someone who can.

The Second of these officers was the Planning Manager, Mr G Atkinson and it was he, to whom the complaint that not only was the shed taller than planned but it was wider as well was passed after Mr Cunningham had completed the first stage of the original complaint.

Mr Atkinson was on the horns of a dilemma: back or sack his errant Principal Planning Officer and as one can see he chose to back Mr Cunningham because the first thing he did, in the second stage response to the complaint about the height of the shed, was reinforce the lie started by Mr Haig at the meeting in November 2013 by wrongly attributing the 15.5m to its inland end.

Under the title, [Approved Drawings](#), he reinforced the lie about the shed's height by saying:-

The drawing that was submitted on 11th April 1996 with the application is numbered 8296/1A. That shows the overall height of the structure as 15.5m above the foundation level at the landward end. At the riverside end the foundations are shown as 2.656m lower due to the gradient of the slipway. The structure would therefore be that much higher at the riverside end. 8296/1B is the same drawing captioned 'Foundations Amended. All Frames Identical'

That much is true but notice when he says '[All Frames Identical' and the height of the river end from 8296/1B is 15.5m](#), so one must subtract the gradient from it to get the height of the frame at both ends and it is 12.8m. A little bit different to that from the height shown on the approved drawing 8296/2 but only by 10cm or half the width of this page, and in 12m that is less than 1%.

The Planning Manager was then challenged on the 24th January to produce the approved drawing and duly attached a [copy of 8296/2 on the 28th January 2013](#).

It was one of four drawings associated with the permission granted in 1996 and showed that Council had known that the shed was 2.7m taller than planned since mid September 2013, and that meeting of November was a sham, called to bow to pressure from those who needed UK Docks to complete the shed quickly i.e. without planning permission and three come to mind, Nexus, the Port of Tyne and the Ministry of Defence.

Nexus, because the ferries in service with them in 2014 were longer than the shed for which UK Docks had permission and the Port of Tyne because UK Docks maintained their Pilot boats and without pilots the Port of Tyne, to all intents and purposes, would have to close and the MOD because they required any repairs or maintenance of their vessels to be done under cover.

[About a week later I reminded him](#) that boats enter the shed from the water:-

With reference to the drawing 8296/14 I have made no assumptions regarding this drawing but have taken my information from the drawing. There are three indicators that the elevation is the north end of the structure:

- 1. Detail notes on the drawing " strips to draw back to each side to allow access for boats"*
- 2. The section at the door jam shows the cladding on the downward i.e. North/river end.*
- 3. The apparent use of third angle projection would imply that the door is at the north end.*

The third note was about the use of third angle projection was intended to show Mr Atkinson that on his preferred drawing, 8296/1A, the downhill end of the shed showed 15.5m which tied in with my 15.6m on 8296/14 and in his response [he finally admitted that the shed was not built to approved plans](#) but he went on to say with respect to 8296/14:-

The engineer chose to show a gable elevation of the structure (not drawn to scale) on the same drawing.

Like Mr Cunningham, he had been presented with a simple choice: to admit the truth about the shed's height or to hide it and he chose the latter having modified his claim by swapping the lie about the gable elevation on 8296/14 referring to the road was to one about it not being drawn to scale and in doing so reverted to his misrepresentation made in mid January that River Drive end of the shed had been approved at 15.5m and that was repeated by the Head of Development Services in his response to our Petition.

Nobody, [except the Local Government Ombudsman](#) has questioned the dimensions, that I added to the gable shown on 8296/14 (15.6m x 12.2m) in all nine years of its existence. In paragraph 31 of her findings, the Inspector says she has been talking to a senior planning officer and paragraph 37 of her findings contains two lies about the drawing. One being that it is not to scale and the other being that the draughtsman has [not said to which end of the shed the main part of the drawing, refers:-](#)

37. Mr X says plan 14 shows 15.5 metres as the river end height. The Council has explained to Mr X why this is not the case. . . drawing shows an end with the panels in place to provide an impression of the final appearance. The drafter has not specified which end this is and the drawings are not to scale.

There is a note on drawing 8296/14, top left, which clearly says:-
Strips to draw back to each side
to allow access for boats.
to be kept closed during
cleaning operations.

With his admission, 20 or so of the residents, excluding Messrs Watson and Haig, held a meeting in the South Shields Sailing Club where it was explained that the gable end on 8296/14 referred to the river end, not the other end, and we decided to raise the Petition and [I was tasked with thanking Mr Atkinson for his admission and because of his evasions regarding 8296/14](#), I referred to 8296/2:-

A meeting was held with members of the local community and I can now answer your question as to 'what kind of action we would like the Council to take'. Thank you also for confirming that the Slipway Shed is not built to the approved 1996 plans.

I did not mention the Petition but I did ask him that the shed be removed or at least stop work on it while we discussed what should be done about it but [he did nothing about it and the protestors heard nothing about it until his lie about shed's height was repeated](#) in Mr Mansbridge's response to the Petition.

In order to complete their move from Tyne Dock, UK Docks needed a taller, wider and longer shed, than the one for which they had permission, especially to accommodate the Tyne Ferries then in use, and that was probably why they had given misleading plans to Mr Cunningham in the first week of September 2013 and I repeat, one was [cropped with the height detail missing from the left hand edge](#) and the other showed both ends of the shed to have a height of 15.5m in spite of the gradient.

As you can see from the responses from both the Principal Planning Officer, Mr Cunningham, and the Planning Manager, Mr Atkinson, over following 4 months, they were content to back the lie that UK Docks had permission for their shed and it was not until I was sent a copy of 8296/2, attached to the email of the 28th of January did I and the other protestors, have proof of that not only were UK Docks lying about their shed but so were both the Planning Officers.

Their conduct was in total contrast to whoever stopped the work on the shed in September 2013 and by their conduct, I mean the conduct of Messrs Cunningham, Atkinson and Mansbridge. He or she and I believe to have been a Senior Enforcement Officer who would have seen the same evidence much as I have outlined above and by reference to both approved and non-approved drawings, seen that what UK Docks were building did not conform to any plans or drawings and it was in breach of the second condition from the day that the first two frames were erected.

My observation about the conduct of the two planning officers on May 2nd was not my first attempt to advise the Head of Development Services about the fraud.

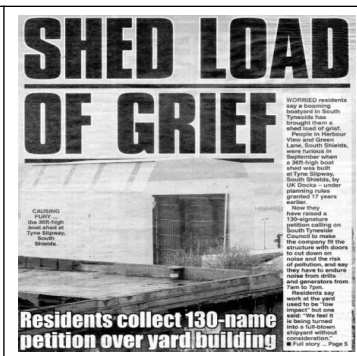
Mr Atkinson had written on the 21st March:-

Thank you for your email. Before the Council makes any decisions on the planning aspects of this case, we need to have a full understanding of the history of the site, and analyse all the facts. This is a complex matter and will take some time.

It was not a complex matter, the approved drawing from 1996 says the shed should have a height of 12.7m not 15.5m, all one had to do was take the height of the footings from 8296/1A or 1B – 96.1m and subtract it from the height of the shed given on 8296/2 (108.8m) giving 12.7m.

It appears that the Council had made the decision to back the fraud that UK Docks had permission for the shed that one sees today when they allowed the ‘Shed Load of Grief’ article to appear 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.



Gazette, April 1st 2014

I had written to the Head of Development Services because the Planning Manager had joined his Principal Planning Officer and the Executive of the Tyne Gateway Assn in their desire to hide the fact that UK Docks shed was taller than permitted.

Since September, I had discovered 8296/14 with the help of another protestor and been sent a copy of 8296/2 by the Planning Manager himself, both of which had been approved and both showed that the shed was indeed nearly 3m taller than planned.

I had become aware from the very beginning of our protests in September 2013, that South Tyneside Council had been asking the Gazette, to simply remove references to misleading articles, rather than issue corrections to the misinformation published in them.

Mr Atkinson then resolved his 'complex matter' by ducking his responsibilities as a Planning Manager:-

1. by overlooking the mismanagement of the original complaint by Mr Cunningham, [see FBR 248789 where says the complaint originates from the escalation made on the 14/01/14](#) and not the original complaint of 10/01/14/;
2. by passing the buck, [to the Head of Development Services to overwrite with the original Stage 2](#) with one where he repeats the lie about the height of the shed;

The [complex matter and hence the delay](#) was solved by Mr Mansbridge introducing a new complaint at a second stage overwriting Mr Atkinson's second stage:- *I'm sorry for the delay. Mr Mansbridge is hoping to get a comprehensive response off to residents by the end of next week.*

Mr Mansbridge' response to the petition and my letter of the 2nd May 'crossed in the post' and the letter was very critical of his staff and I added:-

If I had followed the suggestions by these officers there would have been no admission by the planning office that the slipway shed on River Drive had not been built to plan and it ill behoves you to refer my email to the formal complaints procedure as well.

As you have seen, the officers to whom I referred were Mr P Cunningham and Mr G Atkinson and the reason we raised the Petition was because the Council had agreed after 5 months of prevarication that we were correct about the shed being taller than planned. It was why we held a meeting in the South Shields Sailing Club in March 2014 and why a petition was raised.

When one sees the response to the petition, they will see that [the Council had reverted to the view, held by their Principal Planning Officer in November 2013](#) and like me one should question the basic assumption in the response to the petition, that approved dimensions of the steelwork are 15.5m at the road end, which I did on the 9th May. I had approximated the height difference to 3m:-

This is not true, there is no supporting documentation which says that the approved height is 15.5m at the River Drive end. All indications are that the approved height is 12.5m which one can get from scaling the portal details in the Drawing 8296/14.

For nearly three months the Council had forced UK Docks to close the slipway off River Drive then for the following four months they had not only allowed them to use it, they had allowed work to continue to work on the shed, [including the installation of an overhead crane](#).

I mention the overhead crane because none of the plans or drawings in existence, make for its provision and the only change to any the plans the plans or drawings since 1996, was made in August 2013, and that did *not include any heightening of the shed*. The turning point appears to have been the two meetings held on 25th November 2013 where the Executive of the Tyne Gateway Assn and the Principal Planning Officer joined forces to maintain the fraud about the shed's height.

The main thing to notice about [Mr Mansbridge' acknowledgement of my letter](#) is not whether the date should be the 8th or 9th of May but that a new complaint was introduced at a Second Stage which begs the question, ['where is stage 1 for 253539?'](#)

The simple answer is there isn't one as there was no escalation needed from the second stage of 248789 when we decided to raise the Petition following the admission about the shed's height in February 2014.

The complexity that Mr Atkinson spoke of in March arose because he had chosen to embellish the [misrepresentation about the shed's height](#) rather than to stop the progress on the shed in January 2014. The Council had the Management of UK Docks over a barrel for the initial fraudulent misrepresentation about the shed that was in circulation in September 2013 but that was compromised by the action taken within days of the meetings of November the 25th when UK Docks were allowed to restart work on their shed.

It was further compromised when Mr Atkinson removed the first stage response made by Mr [Cunningham on the 13th January 2014 from FBR 248789](#) and even further compromised by Mr Mansbridge's response to our Petition in May 2014.

His way out of the mess created by his planning officers was to prepare the way for the misrepresentation about the shed's height to be [presented to the Ombudsman and that was done on the 2nd June 2014](#) but in doing so he had to repeat the fraudulent misrepresentation made in his response to the petition:-

The approved dimensions that I state are those which are annotated on drawing number 8296/1A which was submitted to the Tyne and Wear Development Corporation on 11 April 1996 etc.

8296/1A may have been submitted to the Development Corporation but it was never approved by them because it contained an error as explained on the page 4 of this letter and in much detail in [Shed and Corruption, Part 10](#). Part 10 goes on to relate how a succession of Council Officers conspired to hide the truth about the shed's height and finishes with the then estranged husband of the MP for South Shields, Mr S Buck.

The current Chief Executive was [advised of this on the 30th December 2021](#) but he seems content to do nothing about it. In far less detail the officer who was to become Mr Tew's Corporate Lead, Legal Governance and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Mr Rumney, had been similarly advised on the 14th and 30th April 2021 but ensured that the truth about the shed would remain hidden by recruiting Ms P Abbott to the inner circle of corruption when she was instructed to misuse Section 7 [of the Complaints Policy 2019 v 1.5](#).

On July 19th 2019 I had written to whom I thought was the [Head of Legal Services, Mr M Harding in great detail](#) about the misinformation given by a South Tyneside Council solicitor:-

Dear Mr Harding and Everybody,

Please see attached signed letter. It should be self explanatory. I knew from complaining about 71 Greens Place that the Council were misusing their complaints procedure and using the Ombudsman as a hidden fourth stage of it to hide malpractice, bad planning decisions etc. and it was clear from the start that that they were going to do the same thing with UK Docks shed.

If the Planning Officer who measured the shed had any evidence to support his view that the shed was approved we would have seen it long before we even considered resurrecting the Tyne Gateway Assn and certainly before the charade of the Town Hall meeting in November 2013.

It should of dawned on me before Alison's email of 9-Dec-15 that they would use the Ombudsman's findings to misinform other Residents, Councillors, MPs, Newspapers etc. but there you go, one does not expect people to lie to the Ombudsman.

Regards,
Michael Dawson

One will notice that the letter attached, is now unsigned and the address is incomplete but let me assure you that the original letter, sent in good faith, was signed and a copy is available. I received an out of office reply from both Mr Harding and another planning officer, Mr G Simmonette, who was also party to the fraud UK Docks' shed was not taller than permitted.

What I was not aware of was, that between the December '18 and June '19, Mr Harding had been replaced by Mr J Rumney who had [began to describe complaints as vexatious in February 2019](#).

If one looks South Tyneside Council and vexatious complaints today one will find that the first reference in the Gazette, has been [changed from 28th February 2019 to 7th July 2020](#) i.e. from before Mr S Buck accused me of being vexatious in February 2020, to a few months after.

Since November 2013 I have maintained that the shed is about 3m taller than permitted and the approved drawings from both 1996 and 2013 back my point of view but it was not until February 2020 were any of my letters or emails described as vexatious and it does not take much work out from where Mr Buck got the idea to [misapply the Parliamentary Code in his effort to libel me](#).

Mr Swales' Corporate Lead, Mrs Haley Johnson was [persuaded to misapply Section F of the previous Staff Code](#) so that that he did not have to answer the question about why his staff were giving misinformation to the Ombudsman and Paula Abbott was persuaded by Alison Hoy to [misapply the updated version in 2021](#) so that Mr Rumney did not have to answer similar questions to those asked of Mr Swales some five years before.

There are many unanswered questions arising over the years and the most recent being, who asked the Gazette to put back the date of the [meeting about vexatious complaints from February 2019 to July 2020](#).*

This letter began with the lie about the shed's height given in response to our petition by Mr Mansbridge in 2014 and I'll [finish it with what a Senior Planning Officer told the Ombudsman in 2015](#):-

34. I have seen the 1996 plans. On plan 1/B the applicant has written the proposed elevations at the inland end as 12.5 metres plus 3 metres. Mr X says the Council should not have taken the applicant's word for this. The planning authority has to consider what an applicant applies for; it can grant or refuse this but it cannot make an applicant submit something different. This developer applied for a shed 15.5 metres high at the land end. The Tyne and Wear Development Corporation as planning authority approved this. The current Council had to accept this as the approved height.

Plan 1/B was an amendment to 1/A made in 1997 and could never have been approved in 1996. From September 2013 until April 2015 the argument with the Council was about whether UK Docks had permission for their shed and since [Ms Hoy's email of the 9th December 2015](#)** it has been about whether the Council has been giving misinformation/misrepresentation to the Local Government Ombudsman.

Michael Dawson, 22 September 2023
Corrected, 30 October 2023

PS: I was reminded that a similar Petition to ours about the loss of [green space in Holborn was kicked into the long grass in November 2021](#). It had collected 1000 signatures but it was not until Mr Harlow's request to *give it a rest mate*, in April 2023, that I discovered that unlike ours, the Holborn Fields protest concerned a planning application and the Council, over the intervening years had changed the rules, so they could completely ignore it and they did.

[* 180 Claims complainants are "weaponising" council processes as reports of alleged councillor misconduct soar in South Tyneside.](#)

** “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.” - *by the LGO maintaining the lie that the landward end of the UK Docks' enclosure had an approved height of 15.5m when it had been shown to be 12.7m since 10th January 2014.*