

ST/0746/15/FUL, Discrepancies in Site Plans

There was one very obvious flaw in the plans drawn up by the agent for the owner of the Beacon public house on Greens Place in South Shields by GC Architectural Services. The plans were for its demolition and a block of flats to replace it and the flaw concerns the conversion of the former beer cellar into suitable living accommodation.

The two scripts say “Blocked Paved Frontage with Glass Block Light Wells and “Railings 1.2m Max” High.

The flaw was that the architect had extended the curtilage of the former Beacon to include about a metre of the public path that ran the entire length of the front of the Beacon and the Planning Committee, and when the Planning Committee approved the plans in February 2016, they gave that piece of common land to a private developer.

A small piece of land but it presented South Tyneside Council with a big problem.

In 2016, the obvious shortcoming of the site plans for the development for 100-101 Greens Place were pointed out to the Council by reference to the most relevant of site plans of which there now 4 to confuse the issue and only one, the third, represents anything like truth:-

1. [ST074615FUL Site Location 220715.pdf](#);
2. [ST074615FUL Site Location Plan 220715.pdf](#);
3. [ST074615FUL Site Location Plan Figure 2 220715.pdf](#);
4. [ST074615FUL Location Plan 2 Figure 3 220715.pdf](#).

I discovered when I watched the Planning Committee meeting of 12th January 2016 the from the gallery in Jarrow Town Hall that the obvious flaw in Site Location Plan had not been communicated to them.

The second sketch was taken from one the site plans that were made available before the meeting and it clearly shows the curtilage of the public house does not include any of the pavement outlined by the dotted line.

One will see that only the third of the current site plans reflects the situation in 2016 and before we look them in detail, we will examine how the Council refined the process in the intervening years.

The first refinement was to avoid the planning committee altogether and they did this when they gave part of the English Coastal Path to the developer in his [conversion of the former Garlands call centre into luxury flats](#).

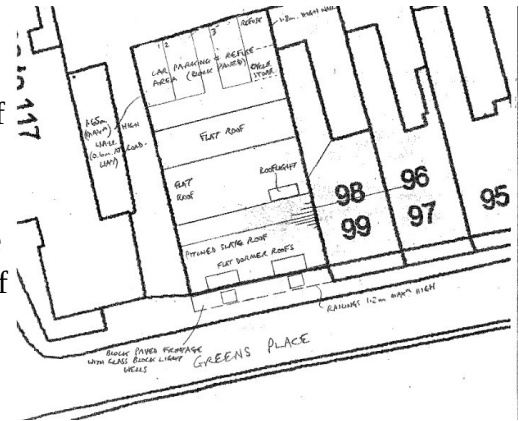


Figure 1: ST074615FUL Amended Roof Plan

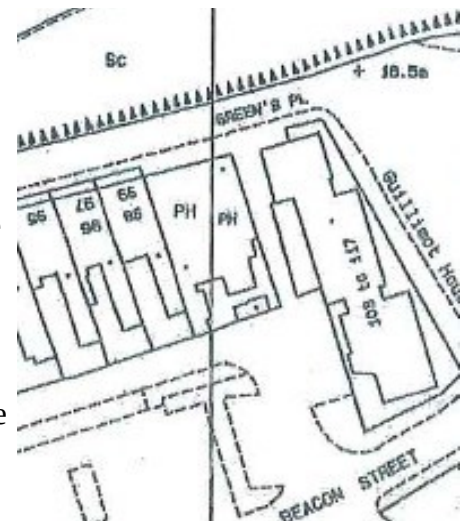


Figure 2: Plan from 2016

It required a certain amount of collusion between the agent, Mario Minchella Ltd, the Planning Officer, Mr Gary Simmonette, who accepted their plans and the Head of Development Services who gave his approval to the modification to include the former dry dock and the public footpath surrounding Nos 14-29 Long Row.

In early 2017 [the Head of Development Services](#), Mr G Mansbridge, simply gave the stretch of the English Coastal Path, running from the slipway next to the Sea Cadets, around the remains of one of Brigham's former dry docks to their former No 1 dry dock, over which Long Row passed, away to the developers of the waterfront luxury flats because he could. However, he needed their agent to amend the site plans to include the relevant stretch of [The English Coastal Path as part of their development's curtilage](#) before that could be done.

As the permission to rebuild the Beacon lapsed in February 2019, per Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. I took the opportunity to tidy part of [thehabourview.co.uk](#) and that unfortunately included removing the sketch taken from one of the site plans. It was the second of the two shown above and I decided to reinstate it to broaden my general complaint about the corruption stemming from the Council's planning and building control sections to include the Beacon. I could not remember from which one of the site plans the sketch was taken and looked up the application and discovered that some or all of the plans overwritten in various ways.

The In-House Changes

It appears that GC Architectural Services were not available to edit the plans for planning control so it had to be done in house. This was not like the plans provided by Mario Minchella Architects, for Messrs Simmonette and Mansbridge, per the [redevelopment of Garlands' old call centre](#).

As one can see, only the first of the site plans shown below, nearly represents what I had lost from

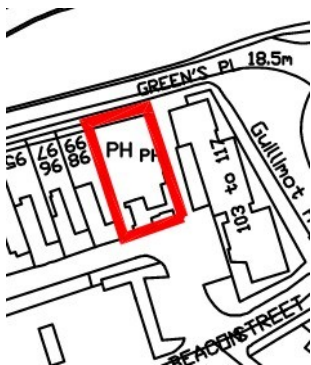


Figure 1: Site Location Plan Figure 2 220715

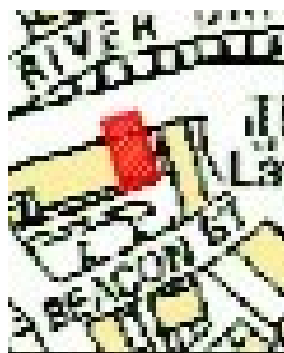


Figure 2: Site Location 220715 4-Dec-22



Figure 3: Location Plan 2 Figure 3 220715

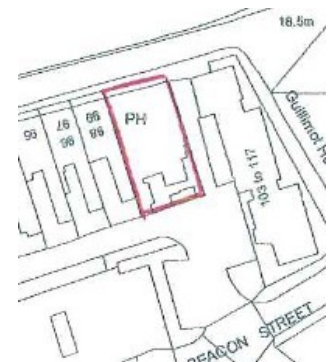


Figure 4: Site Location Plan 220715 6-Dec-22

my records in 2019, but while I was trying to reinstate the site plan shown in Figure 2 on Page 1, While I compiling this document I discovered that the *Site Location Plan* shown in my Figure 2 below had morphed from *Site Location Plan Figure 2* into a variation of *Site Location Plan* shown in Figure 4.

Or to put it another way, *Site Location Plan* been edited to show the curtilage, had overnight, been extended over the pavement to make it line up with the fence in front of Nos 95 to 99 Greens Place. The red box had been altered to include the “Blocked Paved Frontage with Glass Block Light Wells.

Figure 2: *Site Location 220715* was taken from a street plan which includes most of South Shields and it has remained unchanged, as has Figure 3: *Location Plan 2 Figure 3*.

It looks like the first person tasked with doctoring the plans for the redevelopment of the Beacon was assigned to someone with a wry sense of humour and if one looks carefully at Figure 1: you will see that he or she has not corruptly altered the overall dimensions of the ground floor but he or she had also introduced a complete red herring with a site location from street plan covering a square kilometre or so and a map drawn many years before the Beacon was even built.

It was the second person who came up with Figure 4 who *has altered the curtilage of the ground floor of the Beacon* and that has corruption written all over it.

By the time I got round to publishing this misinformation on the 6th December some-one had picked up the fact, presumably from the cookies left behind [while Mr X was checking the facts](#) for the blog was actually posted on the 6th they altered *the Site Location Plan* yet again. The original plans presented to the Committee on the on February 1st 2016 were, as I said, represented by second sketch on page one. There were no red outlines in those days.

The second sketch, page 1, took some finding as I has misfiled it/misnamed it and there are a great many files on my laptop but it was worth the effort for the search if only to illustrate how far corruption is endemic in South Tyneside Council.

The first of the four extracts, was taken from [ST074615FUL Site Location Plan Figure 2](#), on the 4th December 2022. The second was taken, again taken on the 4th December from a street plan which covered an even bigger area than just South Shields town centre and the third, again on the 4th December, from a map of 1827, which shows the top end of Greens Place leading to the Lawe was not much than a footpath at that time.

It illustrates the corruption practiced by the [Principal Planning Officer and his Manager in 2013](#) had spread over the years to include their Manager, the Chief Executive who retired in 2020, those who gave away parts of the English Coastal Path to the developers of apartments overlooking the Tyne under Mr Swales command and whoever recently edited the *site location plan* for the Beacon.

The current Chief Executive was appointed in May 2021 and [advised of what went on under his predecessor's command](#) but prefers to sit behind the wall of silence set up by the Council's Corporate Lead in 2016 and rebuilt the month before at [the command of whoever was in control of South Tyneside Council at that time](#).

The case is still out for Northumberland County Council but it appears [the Ambler still needs some answers from them](#). When barriers across the English Coastal Path in Amble were first put up I had assumed that developer of the four blocks of flats overlooking the marina had wished for private access to the Coquet but have since realised that it will be the [owner of Radcliffes Lodge who will benefit most from private access to the river](#).

One does not have to dig very deeply to find that Mario Minchella Architects are also the agents behind the [owners of the riverside flats in South Shields obtaining private access](#) to the River Tyne.

M Dawson, 9th December 2022