Objections to demolition of former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital

Petition, email transcripts including complaints regarding lack of public consultation, etc, from 2008 to 2016.

Photo 1, taken 13.6.2009 by Clare McCrystal, shows the Administration Building of the former hospital which closed as a working hospital two days earlier, 11.6.2009.

Photo 2, taken 7.9.2013 by Peter Milner, shows demolition of the Administration Building nearing completion.

The Lodge Gatehouse of the former hospital still stands but Manchester City Council has granted permission for its demolition – see pages 19 to 24 below.
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9 photographs on pages 1, 8, 12, 20, 23, 24.

ABBREVIATIONS
BHCH: Booth Hall Children’s Hospital.
MCC: Manchester City Council, local planning authority.
MCC P&HC: MCC Planning & Highways Committee.
FoBHC: Friends of Boggart Hole Clough; in 2015, FoBHC replaced the name BHCCAT.
PFM: Peter F. Milner, BHCCAT / FoBHC Acting Secretary, peterfamilner@hotmail.com

INTRODUCTION
FoBHC is concerned about the site of the former BHCH because it is adjacent to Boggart Hole Clough, across Charlestown Road. The Clough was part of the Booth Hall estate before becoming a Municipal Park in 1894.

Booth Hall Infirmary opened 1908, becoming a children’s hospital in the 1920s. After prolonged protests against closure, BHCH closed as a working hospital, June 2009.

This document is a compilation of objections especially, after all other buildings had been demolished, to the proposed demolition of the 2 remaining buildings, the Administration Building & Lodge Gatehouse, of the former BHCH.

These objections are mainly emails sent to MCC by BHCCAT / FoBHC members & associates. The objections become inseparable from complaints regarding the lack of public consultation. MCC’s responses are also reproduced.

PFM pasted the emails together to form a growing body of objections / complaints which were regularly copied / forwarded to MCC planning department & to around 80 BHCCAT / FoBHC contacts including, more often than not, Charlestown Councillors & the local MP. MCC’s responses were likewise forwarded to same addressees.

To make this document more reader-friendly, emails are set out with earliest emails at top, latest emails at bottom, reversing normal presentation of emails. Where emails refer to an earlier email “below” this is replaced by “[above]”. Additional notes are similarly [bracketed].

For reasons of data protection, contact details of objectors / complainants are omitted. Irrelevant parts of emails, dealing with other subjects, are deleted. For brevity, job titles etc of e.g. MCC planning officers are given once but not usually repeated thereafter. To further condense the text, greetings (‘Dear’ etc) & farewells (‘Yours sincerely’ etc) are usually omitted. Otherwise, emails are presented verbatim.
1. **PETITION** - We, the undersigned, object to the demolition of the former Booth Hall Children's Hospital administration building, FoBHC. Petition signed by 148 people between 10.7.2013 & 13.8.2013 on 11 sides of 8 x A4 sheets. Photocopy of Petition handed 3.9.2013 to MCC, see pages 14 & 16 below. Original sheets of Petition kept for FoBHC records. As the Petition contains petitioners’ contact details, for reasons of data protection the pages of the Petition are not reproduced.

**Referenced documents which can be seen on FoBHC’s website** – www.boggart.org.uk

2. Twelve suggestions for Site Specific Allocations in the Irk Valley - Submission to MCC Local Development Framework - Core Strategy Issues & Options Consultation, PFM, 8.2.2008. Suggestion 9 concerns site of former BHCH. This doc 2 referenced in doc 4 below.


4. *Save former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital administration building from demolition*, BHCCAT, 27.6.2013. Should be read in light of item 17, on page 10 below, which clarifies matters re different planning applications & approvals.

5. *Objection to proposed demolition of the Lodge Gatehouse of former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital – email transcript*, FoBHC, 6.5.2015. Transcript of item 43 on pages 20-21 below.

6. Appendix to ‘Objections to demolition of former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital’, FoBHC, 23.2.2016. MCC’s responses (3 letters) in accordance with their 3-stage complaints procedure. FoBHC declined to take the complaint beyond these 3 stages to the Local Government Ombudsman on account of only “1.71% of cases” typically resulting “in a published report & a finding of maladministration” (Wikipedia, 17.12.2013).

**Referenced documents which should be on MCC’s website** – www.manchester.gov.uk – if not found there, PFM can forward copy of docs upon request.


10. *Addendum Report* recommending approval of application to demolish former BHCH’s Administration Building, MCC P&HC, 24.11.2011.


15. *Report* recommending approval of application to demolish former BHCH’s Lodge Gatehouse, MCC P&HC, 2.7.2015.


17. *Planning Permission* to demolish former BHCH’s Lodge Gatehouse, MCC, 2.7.2015.
**CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Email 25.6. 2013 from J. Regan @ MCC to PFM.
Subject: Re: Site of former Booth Hall Children's Hospital.

I am the case officer that is dealing with all the different applications for the Booth Hall site, and therefore you can send any comments you have to my email address.

Jeni Regan, Senior Planner, Development Management North, Planning, MCC, Level 6, Town Hall Extension, Albert Square, Manchester ..

2. Email 27.6.2013 from PFM to J. Regan @ MCC.
Subject: Re: Site of former Booth Hall Children's Hospital.

Please find pdf attached: 'Save former Booth Hall Children's Hospital administration building from demolition' (BHCCAT, 27.6.2013).

This is BHCCAT's comment / representation re this matter.

3. Emails 29.6.2013 from PFM to bbc.co.uk (North West Tonight), peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk, men-news.co.uk [Manchester Evening News], independent.co.uk, observer.co.uk, guardian.co.uk
Subject: Save former Booth Hall Children's Hospital admin building from demolition.

Please see pdf attached: 'Save former Booth Hall Children's Hospital administration building from demolition' (BHCCAT, 27.6.2013).

Thought this may be of interest to [addressee].

[No response received from any of above addressees].

4. Email 2.7.2013 from F. Nield to J. Regan @ MCC, copied to PFM.
Subject: Save Booth Hall Children's Hospital.

.. I am writing to express my concerns that a whole era of Manchester life will be lost if Booth Hall Children's hospital is demolished. It should be used as a medical museum displaying the very important work in children's medicine in the area and its history.

You may be aware that Booth Hall Hospital Heritage Project have a facebook page with many supporters of the great work that was undertaken here, and so much information on the building and its staff etc. I also have an open page on facebook under the name Gregory Nield-Fielding which records just my family experience of the hospital. I would like to invite you to visit it.

Although late in the day, I have only just been made aware of the possibility of the building / some part of it being preserved for posterity. Please consider those who support this. I thank you in anticipation.

Francesca Nield LLB, Freelance Writer and Editor .. Knutsford ..

5. Email 3.7.2013 from M. J. Johnson to PFM.
Subject: BOOTH HALL HOSPITAL.

I wish to add to the many requests to have the building that housed Booth Hall Hospital in Manchester preserved. This building has great significance for the people of North Manchester and beyond. The house was built and given to the community and been central to people's thoughts and lives for many decades. I add my request that the proposed demolition be prevented or at least postponed to allow local people their say. We believed this was already a listed building and therefore safe. Thank You for your commitment to this issue.

Marcia J Johnson.
6. Email 3.7.2013 from D. Gray to K. Galston, forwarded to PFM.
Subject: Re: Save former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital admin building from demolition.

Just sent following to the regen team [MCC North Manchester Regeneration]:

During my time as community coordinator on the team that restored Gorton Monastery, an innate conviction I'd had since childhood that communities needed cherished local buildings and landmarks to nurture local identity and cohesions was confirmed. The Prince of Wales and his architectural advisers agreed with what people who, like myself had lived through the notorious "slum clearances" knew - that without such evidence of the footprint of the local story, communities suffered in many often subtle ways.

As someone who has known Booth Hall hospital since my own childhood, when I was a patient there, and whose child's life was saved by the prompt action of doctors there in 1984; as someone who lived several years in the Blackley and White Moss areas, I know how much the buildings are valued deep in the local psyche and write to urge you to retain the admin building as a feature in any new development of the site, as this will have enormous positive benefit for those who live in the area for years to come.

Rev. David Gray .. The Monastery Manchester .. Gorton ..

7. Email 3.7.2013 from M. Sloane to PFM.
Subject: Booth Hall.

Having heard that the demolition of the remaining building at Booth Hall Hospital, Blackley is imminent I feel compelled to communicate with you.

I have attached the potted history of Booth Hall which is fact based [doc 3, see p.3 above]. What it doesn't say is how strong the emotional attachment is, especially for local residents. To see this wonderful building demolished is a tragedy. Surely it could be converted into flats, a library or used as a community building? Blackley, as with a large area of north Manchester is having vital services removed. The reason Taylor Wimpey want to demolish it is because they will have to run a road around it!

When that building is gone there will be nothing in Blackley to remind people of the wonderful legacy of Humphrey Booth except the name Booth Hall Rd. A huge chunk of local history will be gone. Tesco have to put something into the community when they move in so why can't Taylor Wimpey?

All I can envisage is another characterless housing estate, please give it some heart and retain the last building.

Margaret Sloane.

8. Email 3.7.2013 from J. Biggs to J. Regan @ MCC, copied to PFM among others.
Subject: Booth Hall Hospital Grounds.

I went to a consultation meeting held at St. John Bosco’s community room on Wednesday February 20th. 2013 held by Wimpey Taylor. We assumed and were aware that the main building was to be kept standing as part of the development and that building was to be used to convert into a number of flats or used for people within the locality to keep as part of our heritage history within Charlestown the reason for it being left up.

I sent back my feedback form to TWMConsultation@taylorwimpey.com on behalf of the Charlestown TARA [Tenants & Residents Association] and received no comments on anything at all. I thought an acknowledgement would of been nice and keep us informed of any developments. I have only learnt about this application of the demolition of these premises due to a third party email. On the backside of the feedback form Wimpey clearly state that they would keep us in touch as work progresses (Clearly this has [not] been done as how many people stop outside the hospital now to be able to read the notice the planning people have displayed?).

We our committee object to this application and do expect that Wimpey do properly keep this part of the building from a historical factor and for the wishes of our locals within the Charlestown Ward ..

John Biggs, Centre Manager, Whitemoss Club For Young People, Southdown Crescent, Blackley, Manchester ..
9. Email 8.7.2013 from PFM to B. Curley, M. Hackett, V. Kirkpatrick.
Subject: Save former Booth Hall Hospital admin building.

Dear Charlestown Councillors - Basil Curley, Mark Hackett & Veronica Kirkpatrick,

Re former Booth Hall Children's Hospital administration building.

Please see pdf attached: 'Save former Booth Hall Children's Hospital administration building from demolition' (BHCCAT, 27.6.2013).

I understand 10th July is the 'Determination Deadline' re the fate of the Admin Building.

It has come to our attention that none of the local community groups, who would be expected to be particularly interested in this matter, were notified of the building's proposed demolition - neither the Booth Hall Hospital Heritage Project, nor Charlestown Tenants & Residents Association, nor ourselves, Boggart Hole Clough Community Action Trust.

Indeed it seems that few residents even in the immediate vicinity of the Booth Hall site were notified. This cannot be right when considering the future of one of North Manchester's most important historical buildings.

In case you haven't read them before, please see 5 emails copied in above, a sample of some of the emails which have been sent / forwarded to me in the last week. They demonstrate people's strong feelings against demolishing this building & include yet more ideas for its re-use e.g. as a Museum of Children's Medicine.

I haven't met a single person in favour of its demolition.

Even the developers, Taylor Wimpey, in their 2008 Design Statement described the building as "a key architectural & historic landmark” which should be retained for conversion into apartments. Their change of mind appears to be based solely on short-term economic considerations.

With imaginative planning this building could become a wonderful monument symbolizing a high-water mark of Charlestown's history.

Demolishing this building, when it means so much to local people, would be shocking & unforgivable.

We urge you to prohibit its demolition.

PFM.

10. Email 10.7.2013 from J. Regan @ MCC to PFM, copied to B. Curley, M. Hackett, V. Kirkpatrick.
Subject: Application 102685/DEM/2013/N1 - Booth Hall Children's Hospital.

I am writing in response to the email of objection you submitted for the above prior notification for the demolition of the former administration building at the Booth Hall site.

For the demolition of buildings, the relevant regulations for assessment are the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 Schedule 2, Part 31. Demolition of a building is not a development that would generally require a planning permission. However, the demolition of certain buildings will need approval from the local planning authority beforehand.

As this building is over 50 cubic metres capacity, although such works are known as ‘permitted development’, an application is required to be made to the planning authority for a determination as to whether prior approval will be required for the method of demolition and any proposed restoration of the site. The purpose of this control is to give local planning authorities the opportunity to regulate the details of demolition in order to minimise the impact of that activity on local amenity. However, the prior notification procedure only examines the methodology of the proposed demolition and proposed restoration of the site and not whether the demolition will be permitted or not, as it is explained that by virtue of part 31 of Schedule 2 of the GPDO, planning permission has already been granted. It is only possible for the Local Planning Authority to consider whether the demolition process is likely to have significant environmental effects.

Therefore, I understand your concerns about the proposed demolition of the building, however within the limitations afforded by legislation, it is not possible for this prior notification to be refused on the grounds raised within your objection letter.
Unlike a planning application, a prior notification is not subject to a neighbour notification process. It is however, necessary for the applicant to display a site notice on or near the land on which the building to be demolished is sited and shall leave the notice in place for not less than 21 days in the period of 28 days beginning with the date on which the application was submitted to the local planning authority. This was duly carried out by the applicant in this case.

The notification application has now been thoroughly considered and in light of the method statement content and other associated information, it is not believed that the proposed demolition works will have any serious environmental impact on it surroundings or on local amenity. As such, the works are considered satisfactory and no further detail is required.

If you require any further information in relation to this matter, then please contact me..

Jeni Regan .. Planning, MCC ..

11. Email 10.7.2013 from F. Nield to Customer Services, Taylor Wimpey Manchester, copied to J. Regan @ MCC, PFM.

Subject: Message for Bob Pickthall, Managing Director, Taylor Wimpey Manchester.

I understand that Taylor Wimpey are in the process of building on the former site of Booth Hall Children's Hospital. My son died there in 1989. Although a desperately sad time, he was cared for with compassion and skill and the hospital was a very unique place.

I am writing to you as I have recently discovered that the administration buildings are still standing, and that your company has previously called them of great historic/architectural significance. You may also be aware that there is much local opposition to their demolishment. I would ask you to look at the facebook pages - where there is huge support for retaining the remaining buildings on the site - Booth Hall Hospital Heritage Project, and a facebook page I administer in memory of my son - it can be found under the name Gregory Nield-Fielding. So many have benefited from this hospital over such a long period of time, but it is great that there is now a Central hospital to care for all sick children from the North West.

What concerns me however is the very important loss of the legacy of the old hospital, with its incredible history, its firsts in specialist care, and if you look at my facebook page you will find that the first ever female neurosurgeon to qualify in the UK - Carys Bannister OBE, along with many others, undertook some amazing work there. She looked after my son, and was innovative in research into spina bifida and hydrocephalus.

Manchester nearly lost the legacy of Lowry when he died, when his house started to be dismantled immediately upon his death. And, I draw a comparison here: I feel that to demolish the remaining buildings on the Booth Hall site would destroy a piece of Manchester's very important history.

Therefore, I am appealing for you to put something worthwhile into the community, and to consider letting the remaining buildings be used as a medical museum. There are so many archives of information and unique stories, that I think that you could create something as worthwhile as the Imperial War Museum in Manchester. Alternatively, you risk alienating the community within which you are building your houses.

Yes, this is an emotional plea, but please consider it. Thank you.

Francesca Nield LLB, Freelance Editor and Writer .. Knutsford ..

12. Email 10.7.2013 from M. Willner to PFM.

Subject: Booth Hall.

Below is a copy of the email I have just sent off to Graham Stringer [MP].

Dear Mr Stringer,

Demolition of Booth Hall hospital Administration building.

I am writing to you to protest in the strongest possible terms about the proposed demolition of the Administration building on the Booth Hall site.

Originally the plan for this building was to preserve it, not only as a beautiful building in its own right but as a monument to what it became to the people of the area, a much loved children’s hospital which has it’s own history.

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For some reason the plans have now changed and the building is to be demolished. Permission has been sought and apparently granted. **Despite what the council say there has been no proper consultation with the local community.**

Part of Manchester’s history is going to be lost for the sake of the profit and convenience of the builders. Saying that the building would cost too much to repair puts one in mind of the saying about ‘knowing the cost of everything and the value of nothing’.

A council that is contemplating replacing the B of the Bank sculpture at the cost of several hundred thousands, and one that is subsidising the National Football Museum to the tune of many millions cannot convincingly plead poverty, indeed the developers of the site should also have some responsibility for preserving the historical building, and not just see the land that it is occupying as a “cash cow”.

I would also like to point out that the building has stood empty and neglected for a number of years, in fact at one point the roof was removed! The best way to facilitate the deterioration of a building is to take its roof off! Then - although the demolition permission had been agreed - the roof was mysteriously restored.

I am pretty certain that you will have already received news of this and by writing this email I am simply adding my voice to the many who are utterly shocked and horrified by the underhanded way the permission for demolition has been pushed through.

I would ask you to look into this matter, consult with the various community groups to see if there is any way at this late hour the building can be saved.

Yours sincerely, Mildred Willner.

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**13. Email 10.7.2013 from J. Biggs to R. Shipway, copied to PFM among others.**

Subject: Re: Application 102685/DEM/2013/N1 - Booth Hall Children's Hospital.

Wimpey didn’t attend the meeting tonight and I will send photo [Photo 3 above] of those attended the meeting tonight and will forward onto MEN [Manchester Evening News]. The notice A4 size was displayed on the gates of Booth Hall how many people would pass there? as there would be no reason for you to go there. What a nonsense that is Local groups should of been notified.

John Biggs.
14. Email 11.7.2013 from J. Biggs to J. Regan @ MCC, copied to PFM among others.
Subject: Re: Application 102685/DEM/2013/N1 - Booth Hall Children's Hospital.

This [Photo 3 above] is the response from the people who attended tonight's meeting, and the only time that we saw the notice that had been displayed on the 2 main front gates at Booth Hall. How many people would pass there knowing the closure of the hospital. Local community groups should of been notified of this action. We feel that we have not been given the opportunity to oppose this decision, how can people feel included if procedures are not followed for the community ..

John Biggs.

15. Email 11.7.2013 from R. Shipway to J. Biggs, J. Regan, S. Keane, PFM.
Subject: Re: Application 102685/DEM/2013/N1 - Booth Hall Children's Hospital.

Thanks Jon, I think your resolute stance is right and I look forward to our meeting Friday. MCC still have many answers to give. The planning response is technically correct but is written in such a way that few people would understand. Why not give a Plain English answer, and deliver it in person given it is such a sensitive issue?

We are told as residents that our views count and we should join groups like TARA [Tenants & Residents Association] to let the Council work in partnership. But as I note in my earlier email, the complete lack of engagement by Whimpey, North Manchester Partnership, planning or councillors displays a total disregard for partnership working. I am not surprised the notice was posted on the derelict, cordoned off and boarded up section of Booth Hall. No houses are nearby and few people would want to walk past such an unsafe and unsightly area. Another example of the disregard of local views .. We will receive platitudes for our work and the work of the Youth club and hear of the huge investments in Academies. But the truth is that these are because North Manchester's schools were - and remain - among the worst performing in the country. And areas like Moston, Blackley and Charlestown have suffered severe decline. That decline will continue if the council continues to ignore local people, ignore local heritage and ignore the principles of partnership working.

Rob Shipway.

16. Email 11.7.2013 from T. Neal to postbag@men-news.co.uk [Manchester Evening News], copied to PFM.
Subject: Booth Hall Children's Hospital.

On 28th October 1908 the opening ceremony of the Prestwich Union Workhouse Infirmary was held.

During the First World War it helped to care for wounded soldiers. When this was no longer required, the new Manchester Union Guardians decided to create an infirmary specifically for children.

By 1924 it was a recognised training school for children’s nurses.

By 1929 it was the third largest children’s hospital in the UK. It was the home of many innovations: the first infant diet kitchen, a burns and plastic surgery unit, a children’s dialysis unit; provision of overnight accommodation for the parents of seriously ill children.

In 1990 it was proposed to close it but massive protests ensued and it remained open. However, closure did finally come a few years later, and it was sold for re-development. Buildings were demolished, except for the administration block, which everyone was told would be turned into flats.

Until this week, when word began to circulate that the builders now had permission to knock it down. I drove up Charlestown Road last night. I found the notice of demolition pinned to the security gates. It was a sheet of A4, which I had not even noticed driving by, unlike the banner for a slimming group nearby which could easily be read from my car. I only heard of the proposed demolition from a friend. There does not appear to have been anything in the press and local groups, such as Residents’ Associations, had not been informed of the change of plan.

So, following on in the history outlined above – what will there be in 2013? A heap of rubble and another precious piece of history gone for ever?

Tricia Neal.
17. Email 25.7.2013 from PFM to J. Regan @ MCC.
Subject: Consultation re future of Booth Hall Hospital administration building.

Re proposed demolition of former Booth Hall Children's Hospital administration building.

Thank you for your 10.7.2013 email [above] explaining that the latest planning application (102685/DEM/2013/N1) concerned only the method of demolition of the Admin Building & that permission to demolish the building has already been granted.

We were unsure about this because, of course, no consultation was held re the proposed demolition of the Admin Building which we now understand was approved by Manchester City Council (MCC) over 20 months ago at MCC's 24.11.2011 Planning & Highways Committee Meeting (see attached Minutes).

No consultation was held because, as MCC's 24.11.2011 'Addendum Report' re planning application 086932/O0/2008/N1 (see attached pdf) reported to MCC's Planning Committee, in "seeking a revision to the previously submitted planning application to enable the demolition of the administration building .. it was not deemed necessary for a full re-consultation & re-notification of residents to be carried out .. because the impact of the proposed changes was considered to be minimal.."

Consequently, as far as we can ascertain, not a single local resident or community group was consulted re the proposed demolition of the Admin Building.

This lack of consultation contravenes MCC's 31.1.2007 'Statement of Community Involvement' (see attached pdf) which "sets out how the community & other stakeholders are involved in planning processes in Manchester .. This is in line with the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which sets out new standards for community involvement in the planning process including a requirement to 'frontload' consultation .. This means that the Council will involve communities from the very beginning .." (page 3); "MCC will encourage developers to consult with the community before they submit a planning application .. Pre-application consultation is beneficial to both the community & the developer as it allows the developer to design a proposal which takes on board the opinion of the community .. It is important that the developer gives people a chance to make comments that could help shape & change the development .. if developers do not [carry out pre-application consultation], or they have only carried out unsatisfactory consultation, consultation will have to be carried out by the Council .." (pages 29-30).

This community involvement policy requires MCC to encourage Taylor Wimpey (the Booth Hall site owner & developer) to hold a consultation re their proposed demolition of the Admin Building - “a key architectural & historic landmark” to quote from the developer's 11.6.2008 'Design & Access Statement' (this 5 MB pdf can be emailed upon request).

If the developer declines to hold a consultation re their proposed demolition of this 'architectural & historic landmark' then the 'Statement of Community Involvement' requires MCC to carry out the consultation.

Therefore, in order to rectify the present situation, we would be grateful if you would confirm that a public consultation, re the future of this landmark building, will indeed be carried out.

18. Email 25.7.2013 from K. Rowbotham @ MCC Planning to PFM.
Subject: Complaint ref: CXR/PL5414 - Re proposed demolition of former BHCH administration building.

I acknowledge your complaint dated 25th July 2013, which has been logged under the reference number above. Your complaint will be dealt with by Des Jones, who will respond shortly.

Kath Rowbotham, Technical Support Team, Planning, MCC ..

19. Emails 26.7.2013 from PFM to itv.com (press centre & Granada Reports), guardian.co.uk, independent.co.uk, men-news.co.uk, peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk, bbc.co.uk, observer.co.uk, itn.co.uk
Subject: Campaign to save former BHCH administration building from demolition.

Please see emails [above] & 3 related attachments re campaign to save landmark building in north Manchester. Thought this story may be of interest to [addressee].

[No response received from any of above addressees].

FoBHC - Peter F. Milner, 23.2.2016: Objections to demolition of former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital
20. Email 26.7.2013 from PFM to: redpepper.org.uk
Subject: Campaign to save former BHCH administration building from demolition.

Please see emails [above] & 3 related attachments re campaign to save landmark building in north Manchester. Thought this story may be of interest to Red Pepper magazine.

21. Email 29.7.2013 from K. Webster @ Red Pepper magazine to PFM.
Subject: Re: Campaign to save former BHCH administration building from demolition.

Thanks for sending this to us. I’ve forwarded it to contacts at Mule as it's something I'm sure they'd be able to cover with more urgency. Do please keep Red Pepper updated though. If anyone would like to write a blog post about it, tapping into wider issue of selling of public land / our history, then we could put it up on our website. Let me know if you'd like to do that?

Kitty Webster, Red Pepper Magazine .. London ..

22. Email 31.7.2013 from PFM to manchestermule.com
Subject: Campaign to save former BHCH administration building from demolition.

Please see emails [above] & 3 related attachments re campaign to save landmark building in north Manchester. Thought this story may be of interest to Manchester Mule.

[No response received from above addressee].

23. Email 8.8.2013 from J. Regan @ MCC to PFM.
Subject: Complaint ref: CXR/PL5414 - Re proposed demolition of former BHCH administration building.

Please find attached a copy of the Stage 1 complaint response to your email received [above – item 17]. A paper copy of this response has also been placed in the post today.

Jeni Regan .. Planning, MCC ..

[1st letter in Appendix – doc 6, see p.3 above].

24. Email 8.8.2013 from F. Nield to PFM.
Subject: Re: Complaint ref: CXR/PL5414 - Re proposed demolition of former BHCH administration building.

Thanks for keeping me copied in Peter. I don't have the fight left in me to do anything other than to support you and all others to try to preserve what is left of such an important historical site.

Today I visited the Manchester Museum of Science & Industry to see an exhibition called "Brains: The Mind as Matter" - the first time this "absorbing exhibition is on display ... outside London". Carys Bannister - WORLD renowned expert in neurosurgery; first female neurosurgeon to qualify in the UK was credited as such here. She worked at Booth Hall Hospital. Manchester was at the forefront of ground-breaking research and pioneering treatment in Neurosurgery. A permanent recognition/museum is definitely NECESSARY.

Again, I can only offer an emotional plea for this - the preservation of history in retaining a building of architectural interest and to preserve the heritage of the people it served.

Francesca Nield.

25. Email 11.8.2015 from D. Earl to PFM.
Subject: Booth Hall.

Many thanks for the updates. I saw several tragic losses of historic farm dwellings when resident in Hale Barns. The West Lancashire District seem to have their act together when it comes to respecting heritage as at Sollom and Rufford. Good look with your campaign.

David Earl.
26. Email 2.9.2013 from PFM to J. Roscoe @ MCC.

Subject: Complaint ref: CXR/PL5414 - Re proposed demolition of former BHCH administration building.

To: Julie Roscoe, Head of Planning, Planning & Building Control, Manchester City Council (MCC).

MCC formal complaints procedure: Stage 2, reference CXR/PL5414.
MCC planning application reference 086932/OO/2008/N1.

Dear Julie Roscoe,

Request for a public consultation re proposed demolition of the former BHCH’s administration building.

The ‘Stage 1 complaint response’ letter I received from Derek Jones (Group Manager, MCC Development Management North) dated 7.8.2013 (attached), in reply to my 25.7.2013 email [above], states that MCC “does not accept that it failed to provide adequate consultation in respect of the proposed demolition of the administration building ..” But, to the best of our knowledge, there has been no consultation whatsoever re this matter. Therefore we are submitting this formal complaint – Stage 2 of MCC’s complaints procedure.

Derek Jones’s letter refers to a MCC report, re the Booth Hall site, presented to MCC’s 28.7.2011 Planning & Highways Committee meeting. According to the MCC website archive, no report re the Booth Hall site was presented to this meeting. The Booth Hall site report was presented to MCC’s 24.11.2011 Planning Committee meeting (report attached).

To avoid any confusion - two MCC Planning & Highway Committee reports are relevant to our request for a public consultation re the proposed demolition of the Admin Building:


We do not accept these reasons, as shown below:

2.1 The Addendum report states: “.. recent marketing exercises for the site have shown that interested residential developers would only submit bids for a totally cleared site rather than with the retention of the former administration building .. On this basis, the NHS Trust are now seeking a revision to the previously submitted planning application to enable the demolition of the administration building ..”

- The motive for proposing to demolish the Admin Building to create “a totally cleared site” is to enable developers to increase their profits.
- MCC’s support for this proposal, pandering to the demands of developers, suggests they’re losing sight of their proper mandate, to represent & uphold the interests of their constituents.
- MCC is allowing the profit-making of developers to override all other considerations, most importantly the long-term well-being of the North Manchester community.
2.2 The Addendum report goes on: “.. it was not deemed necessary for a full re-consultation & re-notification of residents to be carried out. This was because the impact of the proposed changes was considered to be minimal with no impact from the additional demolition on any surrounding residential properties ..”

- We suggest that destroying a community’s heritage (its history & identity) has an incalculably harmful ‘impact’ on that community. The community in this case being Charlestown & North Manchester in particular & North West England more generally.
- Convenienently, to avoid dealing with objections from the community re the proposed demolition, “it was not deemed necessary” to consult them.

2.3 The Addendum report goes on: “It is acknowledged that it was previously considered important to retain the former administration building on this site due to its key presence in the centre & entrance of the site, its reflection of the history of the former hospital use & its architectural merit & design by a noted architect ..”

- The Admin Building, “previously considered important to retain”, is now expediently, at the behest of developers, no longer considered important to retain.
- The Admin Building’s special architectural & historical qualities “previously considered important” are now, due to pressure from developers, no longer considered important.

2.4 The Addendum report goes on: “Since the demolition of the surrounding hospital buildings & the loss of the administration building’s historic setting, it is considered that the significance of the structure has diminished visually ..”

- This pretext would be helpful to developers, for obtaining “a totally cleared site”, if it were true. We consider the opposite to be true - the significance of the structure has actually increased visually. Standing now independently, with surrounding buildings demolished, the Admin Building has come into its own as a compelling heritage landmark – see inline photo, taken 21.6.2013, at top of this email [Photo 4 above].

Further items relevant to our request for a public consultation re the proposed demolition of the Admin Building:

3. Supporting document of original report (see item 1 above): Taylor Young’s 11.6.2008 ‘Design & Access Statement’ which describes the Admin Building as “a key architectural & historic landmark” that should be retained (this 5 MB pdf can be emailed upon request).

- This apt description of the Admin Building is now conveniently overlooked by MCC.
- But in reality, as already pointed out (item 2.4), the Admin Building, now standing starkly alone with its former surrounding buildings demolished, possesses a new monumental quality – it has become the very essence of “a key architectural & historic landmark”.

4. MCC’s 31.1.2007 ‘Statement of Community Involvement’ (see pdf attached) which “sets out how the community & other stakeholders are involved in planning processes in Manchester .. This is in line with the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 which sets out new standards for community involvement in the planning process including a requirement to ‘frontload’ consultation .. This means that the Council will involve communities from the very beginning ..” (page 3); “MCC will encourage developers to consult with the community before they submit a planning application .. Pre-application consultation is beneficial to both the community & the developer as it allows the developer to design a proposal which takes on board the opinion of the community .. It is important that the developer gives people a chance to make comments that could help shape & change the development .. if developers do not [carry out pre-application consultation], or they have only carried out unsatisfactory consultation, consultation will have to be carried out by the Council ..” (pages 29-30).

- This is unambiguous - MCC is obliged to ensure that a consultation is carried out re the proposed demolition of the Admin Building.
- Refusal to carry out a consultation would render MCC’s ‘Statement of Community Involvement’ meaningless in practice.
- Indeed, refusal to carry out a consultation would suggest deliberate exclusion of the local community from involvement in the planning process amounting to disenfranchisement rendering MCC’s avowed involvement policy a hollow pretence, a sham.
5. ‘Petition. We, the undersigned, object to the demolition of the former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital administration building.’

- This petition has been signed to date by 148 people. Their signatures with contact details are written on 11 numbered petition sheets. I will deliver photocopies of these tomorrow to your office: Planning & Building Control, PO Box 532, Manchester Town Hall.
- These 148 petitioners highlight the lack of consultation. Signing the petition has been their only available opportunity of voicing their opinion, because there was no consultation.
- Each signatory will have their own particular reasons for objecting to the demolition. A public consultation would allow them to articulate these reasons.

6. [Above] this email is a selection of emails, objecting to the proposed demolition of the Admin Building, from David Earl, David Gray, Francesca Nield, John Biggs, Marcia Johnson, Margaret Sloane, Mildred Willner, Rob Shipway, Tricia Neal & myself.

- These emails take issue with MCC’s pretexts & attempted justifications for demolishing the Admin Building.
- They also discuss further grounds for the Admin Building’s retention, looking to the past (the building’s architectural & historic interest) & the future (proposals for the building’s conversion for various possible useful purposes).
- We view the Admin Building as an invaluable asset which suitably converted, e.g. into the North Manchester Heritage Centre, should become an inspiring focus & foundation of North Manchester’s regeneration.
- MCC’s present approval of the Admin Building’s demolition shows a contempt for Manchester’s history. Beneficial, sustainable, worthwhile regeneration must surely be based upon conserving the city's irreplaceable heritage.

Returning to Derek Jones’s 7.8.2013 letter, he states that MCC “did not consider the demolition of the former administration block to be a significant amendment to the application such as would warrant a re-notification exercise ..”

- We consider this a misjudgement on MCC’s part. The original application was for the demolition of all buildings except the Admin Building. So a revised application to demolish the Admin Building must be considered “a significant amendment” as its reversing the original application’s most significant planning decision, to retain the Admin Building whilst demolishing all the surrounding buildings.
- It was “previously considered important to retain” the Admin Building (item 2.3 above), therefore proposing to demolish the building must be considered an important / significant amendment.
- We reiterate - when it was “previously considered important to retain” the Admin Building, it has to be considered “a significant amendment” to propose demolishing the building.

I have outlined above why we remain dissatisfied re this matter. In conclusion:

- As far as we can ascertain, not a single local resident or community group has been consulted re the proposed demolition of the Admin Building.
- Therefore, in accordance with MCC’s ‘Statement of Community Involvement’ (item 4 above) & taking into account the 148 petitioners (item 5 above) & various email correspondents (item 6 above) & other matters discussed above, we request that a public consultation is carried out re the proposed demolition of the Admin Building.

PFM.
I come from the wider community, being based in Cheshire - but this hospital, its activities and staff were important throughout the WHOLE North West, not just locally. My son was transferred there from Macclesfield in 1989 because his health problems could only be dealt with by Dr Carys M Bannister OBE, a specialist neurosurgeon, the first female neurosurgeon to qualify in the UK.

Professor Bannister was a WORLD expert neurosurgeon, and this is reflected in work she undertook in MANCHESTER; for instance she was involved in ground breaking treatment on babies in the womb with hydrocephalus. This doctor, whose research was world-renowned and respected, lived locally (in Rawtenstall) and worked for many years at the hospital, travelling abroad to conferences to present research undertaken in Manchester.

Also, as I understand it - didn't Booth Hall Hospital have the first childrens' burns unit?

Add this to the architectural merit of the building, and I question how/why this can be bulldozed from history.

And, on a personal level, despite all my memories of the hospital being traumatic and sad, this was my first son's home - his only home as he died in the hospital without ever making it home. I have written a memoir as yet unpublished called "Too Deep for Tears", a finalist in the Brit Writers' Awards non fiction, unpublished category, 2012. For anyone interested I am administering a facebook page in his name, Gregory Nield-Fielding - which has received 180 Likes: so simply on a personal level for my family alone there is so much HISTORY and INFORMATION!

How sad it would be if bureaucracy results in the destruction of HISTORY. I know how much the hospital and staff touched my life; goodness knows how many other stories remain to be told, how much history is still to be recorded. REEL.mcr have made a great start in recording it, but I feel that that is what it is - a start only.

Wishing you and all your supporters strength and courage in continuing your campaign, and, of course, ultimately, success.

Francesca Nield.

28. Email 3.9.2013 from K. Rowbotham @ MCC to PFM.
Subject: Complaint ref: CXR/PL5414 Stage 2 - Proposed demolition of former BHCH administration building.
I acknowledge your complaint dated 2.9.2013 [item 26 above], which has been logged under the reference number above.
Your complaint will be dealt with by Julie Roscoe, who will respond shortly.
Kath Rowbotham, Technical Support Team, Planning, MCC ..

29. Email 4.9.2013 from PFM to K. Rowbotham @ MCC.
Subject: Re: Complaint ref: CXR/PL5414 Stage 2 - Proposed demolition of former BHCH administration building.
Thank you for your 3.9.2013 email [above].
Re the Petition - 'We, the undersigned, object to the demolition of the former Booth Hall Children's Hospital administration building.'
I hope you received the envelope, addressed to Julie Rocoe, containing a photocopy of each of the 11 petition sheets containing 148 signatures with contact details, which I delivered yesterday to the Town Hall for internal posting to the Planning & Building Control department.

30. Email 4.9.2013 from K. Rowbotham @ MCC to PFM.
Subject: Re: Complaint ref: CXR/PL5414 Stage 2 - Proposed demolition of former BHCH administration building.
Yes we have received.
Kath Rowbotham, Technical Support Team, Planning, MCC ..

31. Email 8.9.2013 from PFM to BHCCAT contacts.
Subject: Demolition of former Booth Hall Children's Hospital administration building.
Just to be sure you all know - the Admin Building was demolished last week.
32. Email 11.9.2013 from R. Butler to PFM.
Subject: Re: Demolition of former Booth Hall Children's Hospital administration building.
Sorry to hear it. Good old council. Good to know they listen and care about residents' views over profit! ...
Rob Butler.

33. Email 12.9.2013 from R. Shipway to K. Heesom, PFM.
Subject: Re: Demolition of former Booth Hall Children's Hospital administration building
... Unfortunately we have a council which places the desires of a developer ahead of the concerns and heritage of a community.
It will be the same council asking residents to 'play a greater role' in their communities as cuts bite. I doubt they can see the link between actions like this and the difficulty of resident groups attracting new members.
Rob Shipway.

34. Email 15.9.2013 from M. Willner to PFM.
Subject: Booth Hall.
Very sorry to read of the demolition, its very upsetting how they ride roughshod over people in the pursuit of profit, and how the people in 'power' have so little regard for those they are supposed to represent. No prizes for guessing whose side they are really on. Its not just an old hospital building, 'they' are knocking down the whole National Health Service. ...
Mildred Willner.

35. Email 22.9.2013 from PFM to BHCCAT contacts.
Subject: Demolition of former Booth Hall Children's Hospital administration building.
Please find 3 scans attached: 3-page letter, received 20.9.2013, dated 11.9.2013, from Julie Roscoe (Manchester City Council Head of Planning) in response to complaint (see 2.9.2013 email [above – item 26]) re lack of consultation re proposal to demolish the former Booth Hall Hospital Admin Building (demolished week beginning Monday 2.9.2013).
[2nd letter in Appendix – doc 6, see p.3 above].

36. Email 6.10.2013 from PFM to J. Roscoe @ MCC.
Subject: Complaint ref: CXR/PL5414 Stage 3 - Demolition of former BHCH administration building.
To: Julie Roscoe, Head of Planning, Planning & Building Control, Manchester City Council (MCC).

MCC formal complaints procedure: Stage 3, reference CXR/PL5414.
Dear Julie Roscoe,

Complaint relating to the lack of consultation regarding proposal to demolish former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital administration building (demolished week beginning Monday 2.9.2013).

Thank you for your letter dated 11.9.2013, received 20.9.2013, which states: “A request for a Stage 3 investigation should be made within 20 working days of the date of this letter ..”

Your letter, received 9 days after the date of your letter, has left little time to prepare a response before the deadline stipulated in your letter.

You write: “I do not accept that the Local Planning Authority failed to provide adequate consultation in respect of the proposed demolition of the administrative building at Booth Hall Children’s Hospital .. If you remain unhappy about this matter then you can submit a formal complaint to the Corporate Complaints Team, which is Stage 3 of the complaints procedure ..”
We do remain unhappy about this matter. This email sent today 6.10.2013, setting out the contents of the attached letter also dated today, which is within the stipulated 20 working days from the date of your letter, constitutes our Stage 3 complaint.

Our complaint relates to MCC planning application reference 086932/OO/2008/N1. Two MCC Planning & Highway Committee reports are relevant (these documents were attached to previous correspondence):


B. Addendum Report dated 24.11.2011, revising the above application, proposing demolition of Admin Building; approved by committee same date.

Below are extracts from your letter with comments beneath showing why we remain dissatisfied re this matter:

1. You write that the Admin Building “is not listed & is not located within a Conservation Area ..”

1.1 This merely confirms the lamentable state of heritage conservation in Manchester.

2. Re the 2008 planning application (see A above) to demolish the hospital buildings with the exception of the Admin Building, you write: “A full notification process was completed .. letters of representation were received from local residents .. none of the comments received related to the loss of the former hospital buildings ..”

2.1 This suggests that residents accepted the proposed demolition of most of the hospital buildings on the understanding that the Admin Building would be retained.

2.2 In other words, residents made no comments re the loss of most of the hospital buildings because they trusted, mistakenly as it turned out, that MCC would ensure the retention of the Admin Building as stated in the application.

3. Re MCC’s 31.1.2007 ‘Statement of Community Involvement’ you write, repeating earlier correspondence, that MCC “did not consider the demolition of the former administration block to be a significant amendment to the application such as to warrant a re-notification exercise ..”

3.1 As pointed out in previous correspondence, we consider this a misjudgement on MCC’s part:

3.1.1 The 2008 application (see A above) was for the demolition of all buildings except the Admin Building. So a revised application to demolish the Admin Building must be considered “a significant amendment” as it is reversing the original application’s most significant planning decision, to retain the Admin Building whilst demolishing all the surrounding buildings.

3.1.2 Furthermore, MCC’s 2011 Addendum Report (see B above) re the revised application stated that it was “previously considered important to retain” the Admin Building. Therefore proposing to demolish the building must be considered “a significant amendment” to the application.

4. You write that MCC “did consult / notify residents, businesses & other third parties .. when the outline planning application was submitted in 2008 & objections to the principle of redeveloping the site were considered & addressed at that time ..”

4.1 We have not suggested that people were not consulted re “the principle of redeveloping the site”. We have only suggested that people were not consulted re the later, 2011, proposal to demolish the Admin Building.

5. You write: “The submission of a petition is acknowledged, however it is not considered that this has been the only available opportunity to voice opinion on the redevelopment of this site ..”

5.1 We have not made this claim. We claim only that there was no other opportunity to voice opinion re the proposal to demolish the Admin Building.
6. You write: “.. no letters of representation have been received from local residents in response to the submission of the Reserved Matters application ..”

6.1 The 2013 ‘Reserved Matters’ application was not concerned with the proposal to demolish the Admin Building, as shown below.

6.2 The document entitled ‘Planning Statement – Former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital .. On behalf of Taylor Wimpey Manchester, May 2013, CBRE Ltd’ (this pdf from MCC’s website can be forwarded upon request) states “This Reserved Matters application is seeking to address the matters which were reserved at outline application stage, namely: access, appearance, landscape, layout & scale ..”

6.3 The document entitled ‘Statement of Community Consultation: Reserved Matters Application – Former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital .. May 2013, CBRE Ltd’ (this pdf from MCC’s website can be forwarded upon request) states that on 20.2.2013 a “public exhibition was held .. at St John Bosco RC Church on Charlestown .. with exhibition display boards to clearly communicate the proposals .. attendees were encouraged to record & submit comments using the consultation feedback form ..” This form contained 4 questions: “1. What do you think about the location of the public open space within the proposed development .. 2. What do you think of the type & mix of housing .. 3. What do you think of the type of materials that should be used & the appearance of the proposed houses .. 4. What do you think of the vehicle pedestrian routes through the site ?

6.3.1 There was no question in the ‘feedback form’ asking whether attendees approved of the proposal to demolish the Admin Building because this had been approved by MCC in 2011 (see B above).

6.4 Despite there being no question about the Admin Building, several attendees wrote comments about it on the ‘feedback form’. These are recorded in the ‘Statement of Community Consultation’ document:

6.4.1 A Kirkway resident wrote: “I note with interest, and some concern, that the original Hall part of the Booth Hall building is missing from your plan – there is a cross roads there instead. When the hospital was demolished I thought it was a condition of any planning permission that this building would remain standing .. has a deal already done with the City Council ? ..”

6.4.2 A Southdown Crescent resident wrote: “Could use not be made of the iconic Booth Hall building or are you demolishing that ? Do you care whether some heritage is retained ? ..”

6.4.3 A Victoria Avenue East resident wrote: “The Character of the area must be retained & some of the history of the hospital. I cannot see these on your plans. The history cannot and must not be obliterated ..”

6.4.4 A Grange Park Road resident wrote: “The old administration offices could be utilised for general or social reasons in the new estate as well as locally .. perhaps a nature wildlife centre would use the admin block. The building needs saving it is impressive. Convertible into flats ..”

6.4.5 A Penistone Avenue resident wrote: “I think its atrocious that no provision has been made to keep what was Booth Hall itself. What was the point of demolishing the hospital leaving the Hall and now not leaving it as a lasting memorial to what Booth Hall was – disgraceful ! ..”

6.4.6 Another Grange Park Road resident wrote: “The only problem with this plan is that as the old hall was originally given as a hospital .. [for] war veterans and then as a children’s hospital .. I think that this hall should be kept and turned into flats or a nice community centre for the new development ..”

6.5 The above writers’ confusion & dismay, upon learning at the exhibition of the apparent imminent loss of the Admin Building, resulted from the lack of consultation in 2011 at the time of the planning application proposing to demolish the building.

You write: “Should you wish to [submit a formal complaint to the Corporate Complaints Team] .. you should contact this team explaining the reasons why you remain dissatisfied & what you want the outcome of further consideration to be ..”

- I have outlined above the reasons why we remain dissatisfied.
- Re what we want the outcome of further consideration to be .. We want MCC to accept that it failed to provide adequate consultation regarding the proposal to demolish the Admin Building. Consequently, we want MCC to genuinely involve communities in planning processes & take on board their opinions.
You write: “If you remain unhappy about this matter then you can submit a formal complaint to the Corporate Complaints Team, which is Stage 3 of the complaints procedure .. A request for a Stage 3 investigation should be made within 20 working days of the date of this letter ..”

- You do not give contact details of the Corporate Complaints Team. Therefore I would be grateful if you would forward this email with attached letter to this team by Tuesday 8.10.2013 which is within 20 working days of the date of your letter.

PFM.

37. Email 28.10.2013 from PFM to BHCCAT contacts.
Subject: Complaint re demolition of former Booth Hall Children's Hospital administration building.

Please find 4 scans attached: 4-page letter from Lucy Knight (Manchester City Council Complaints Manager) responding to 6.10.2013 email [above – item 36] re lack of consultation re proposal to demolish the former Booth Hall Hospital Admin Building (demolished week beginning Monday 2.9.2013).

[3rd letter in Appendix – doc 6, see p.3 above].

38. Email 15.4.2015 from A. Moore @ MCC to PFM.
Subject: Planning application 108160/FO/2015/N1 consultation - Former Booth Hall Children's Hospital.

Please see attached consultation letter for application 108160/FO/2015/N1.

Anthony Moore, Technical Support Team, Planning, MCC ..

39. Email 16.4.2015 from PFM to FoBHC contacts.
Subject: Proposal to demolish the Lodge of former Booth Hall Hospital.

Please see attached letter from Manchester City Council, which was attached to 15.4.2015 email [above], re planning application to demolish the Lodge / Gatehouse on Charlestown Road, the one remaining original building on the site of the former Booth Hall Children's Hospital.

Comments, objections, have to be submitted by 6.5.2015 as directed in attached letter.

40. Email 16.4.2015 from G. Stringer to PFM.
Subject: Re: Proposal to demolish the Lodge of former Booth Hall Hospital.

Thank you for your email.
I have objected to this proposal.

Graham Stringer, Labour’s Parliamentary Candidate for Blackley and Broughton constituency.

41. Email 16.4.2015 from R. Butler to G. Stringer, copied to PFM & others.
Subject: Re: Proposal to demolish the Lodge of former Booth Hall Hospital.

We all know exactly how this will go. Just as it did at Booth hall before. We will fulfill the council's objection procedures, the council will completely ignore them and fail to meet their own commitments and deadlines of communication. The council will 'represent' the local people by treating them with absolute contempt, and demolish the building as and when they (or rather, the developers) like. Citizens will be appalled but not surprised. The council will be in the pocket of another rich, powerful, company, which will be the only winner. Prove me wrong..

Rob Butler.
42. Email 17.4.2015 from K. Heesom to R. Butler, G. Stringer, copied to PFM etc.
Subject: Re: Proposal to demolish the Lodge of former Booth Hall Hospital.

Thank you Rob for a pretty accurate description of what will happen. Is there any point in objecting? Probably not, but I would like to hear other people's views on this. Will we ever get a politician, local or otherwise, who understands the meaning of the word 'integrity'?

Keith Heesom.

43. Email 5.5.2015 from PFM to J. Roscoe @ MCC. Email posted 6.5.2015 by PFM on FoBHC’s Facebook Community page.
Subject: Objection to proposed demolition of the Lodge of former Booth Hall Hospital.

To Julie Roscoe, Head of Planning, Manchester City Council (MCC).

Dear Julie Roscoe,

Objection relating to planning application number 108160/FO/2015/N1: proposal to demolish the Lodge Gatehouse of former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital, Charlestown Road, north Manchester.

Thanks for your 15.4.2015 letter which was attached to email below of same date from MCC Planning department. Please see series of over 20 emails [above] dated from 27.6.2013 to 28.10.2013. These emails from various people, which include mention of the petition signed by 148 people, objected to the proposed demolition of the Administration Building of the former Booth Hall Hospital. They are, for the most part, just as relevant to the proposed demolition of the Lodge Gatehouse & they should therefore be taken into consideration.

Some comments follow regarding items (highlighted in red type) quoted from the ‘Planning Statement’ for this proposal prepared by CBRE Ltd ‘on behalf of Taylor Wimpey Manchester’ dated February 2015, downloaded from MCC’s website:

A. “The new dwellings proposed to be built .. will retain the character & appearance of the existing building” (item 1.5). New-build copies of old buildings cannot be classed as heritage assets. Furthermore, the proposed new dwellings (from looking at the plans provided on MCC’s website) do not in fact “retain the character & appearance of the existing building”. For example, the flat-roofed shelter supported by three pillars & a stone arch, which reveal the building’s former function as the hospital’s gatehouse, is missing from the plans, presumably ditched. This important original feature of the building can be clearly seen in the 2 photos attached which were taken 3.6.2013.

B. “The Core Strategy Vision states that by 2027 Manchester will be a city with neighbourhoods where people choose to live all their lives because they offer a wide range of quality housing & an attractive environment where locally distinctive character is conserved & enhanced” (item 6.7). When “the hospital has been entirely cleared aside from the lodge building” (item 4.3) which the application now proposes to demolish as well, it is illogical nonsense to claim that the result will be an “environment where locally distinctive character is conserved & enhanced”.

FoBHC - Peter F. Milner, 23.2.2016: Objections to demolition of former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital
C. “Planning principles which should underpin both plan-making & decision-taking, set out at paragraph 17 of the NPPF [National Planning Policy Framework], state that planning should .. Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance” (item 6.20). Whilst the Lodge Gatehouse is not listed as of national heritage value by English Heritage, it is however of local heritage value for the neighbourhood of Charlestown which now has no other built heritage assets. The fewer buildings of heritage value in an area the more important they become for that area; if there is only one such building left, as in this case, then its heritage value becomes extremely significant for that local area. It surely deserves to be ‘locally listed’ by MCC as a non-designated heritage asset.

D. “It is .. proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness – [NPPF] paragraph 60 .. In weighing applications that affect directly or indirectly non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss & the significance of the heritage asset – [NPPF] paragraph 135” (item 6.21). The “scale of .. loss” is nearly total as “the hospital has been entirely cleared aside from the lodge building” (item 4.3), so “the significance of the heritage asset” – the one remaining original building – is consequently increased. As already suggested, the Lodge Gatehouse should be listed & protected by MCC as a non-designated heritage asset.

E. “Character & Context: A place with its own identity: design should be informed by location .. areas of change should promote a sense of place ..” (item 6.25). The proposal actually reverses this planning policy stipulation - the “location” to be completely flattened without even one original building left standing, the “sense of place” eliminated, its “identity” nullified, its “Character & Context” lost forever.

F. The quotes above are among items from the ‘Planning Statement’ which supposedly prove that “the proposal .. fully accords with the statutory Development Plan for the area & the NPPF [National Planning Policy Framework]” (item 1.7). But, as shown, this can only be considered true if these planning policy stipulations are meaningless in practice, not worth the paper they’re written on.

As noted above, the ‘Planning Statement’ was prepared ‘on behalf of Taylor Wimpey Manchester’ (title page). It serves the interests of the corporate house-builder - greater profits can be made building on completely cleared sites. This is the underlying but undeclared motive for the proposed demolition.

There is no justification for erasing the last visible trace of the highly regarded former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital. Demolishing the Lodge Gatehouse would be a needless infliction on the local community demonstrating MCC’s disdain for the citizens it purports to represent.

PFM.

44. Email 23.6.2015 from J. Regan to PFM.
Subject: Application 108160/FO/2015/N1 - Former Booth Hall Children's Hospital, Charlestown Road.

Application number: 108160/FO/2015/N1. Proposed demolition of the former lodge building and the proposed erection of a detached two storey building on a similar footprint to the existing lodge to create 1 no. three bedroom dwellinghouse and 1 no. two bedroom dwellinghouse (C3) with associated car parking, landscaping and boundary treatment at Former Booth Hall Children's Hospital, Charlestown Road, Charlestown, Manchester, M9 7AA.

I am writing to inform you that the above planning application will be reported to the next meeting of the Planning and Highways Committee for consideration on 2 July 2015. The meeting will start at 2.00 pm and will be held in the Council Chambers at the Town Hall, Albert Square, Manchester. Should you wish to make representations at the meeting you should inform the Committee Clerk of your intention prior to the start of the meeting..

Jeni Regan .. Planning, MCC ..

45. Email 30.6.2015 from PFM to J. Regan @ MCC.
Subject: Re: Objection to proposed demolition of the Lodge of former Booth Hall Hospital.

Thanks for your 23.6.2015 email [above] re forthcoming 2.7.2015 Planning Committee Meeting which will consider the proposal to demolish the Lodge Gatehouse of the former Booth Hall Children's Hospital.

Please see attached PDF containing FoBHC's objection to this proposal [doc 5, see p.3 above] which is otherwise only available in 5.5.2015 email format [above].
Email 9.7.2015 from PFM to J. Roscoe @ MCC. Email posted 9.7.2015 by PFM on FoBHC’s Facebook Community page.

Subject: Question re Manchester City Council's approval of proposed demolition of Lodge Gatehouse of former BHCH.

To Julie Roscoe, Head of Planning, Manchester City Council (MCC).

Dear Julie Roscoe,

Question re MCC's approval of planning application 108160/FO/2015/N1: proposal to demolish the Lodge Gatehouse of former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital, Charlestown Road, north Manchester.

On behalf of the Friends of Boggart Hole Clough, I emailed you 5.5.2015 (see below) objecting to this proposal, before the 6.5.2015 deadline stipulated in your 15.4.2015 letter attached to email below of same date; my 5.5.2015 email was copied to, amongst others, Jeni Regan at MCC Planning Department. This objection in PDF format was re-emailed 30.6.2015 to Jeni Regan & re-emailed 1.7.2015 to yourself (re-attached to this email).

And our local MP Graham Stringer emailed me 16.4.2015 (see below) saying "I have objected to this proposal".

However, the only document on MCC's website regarding the decision to approve this planning application proposal, titled 'Planning Permission' & signed by you, dated 2.7.2015 (2nd PDF attached to this email), does not acknowledge any objections, let alone address them.

As 'Head of Planning' at Manchester City Council, how do you justify completely ignoring objections submitted by a Local Community Group & by a Member of Parliament?

We look forward to receiving your answer.

Email 15.7.2015 from J. Roscoe & MCC to PFM. Email posted 15.7.2015 by PFM on FoBHC’s Facebook Community page.

Subject: Re: Question re Manchester City Council's approval of proposed demolition of Lodge Gatehouse of former Booth Hall Hospital.

Thank you for your email in relation to the planning application 108160/FO/2015/N1 for the demolition of the lodge building at the site of the former Booth Hall Children's Hospital on Charlestown Road.

I would like to confirm that the emails of objection received from the Friends of Boggart Hole Clough and from Graham Stringer MP were fully considered as part of the planning application process. The City Council does not provide copies of objections on the Public Access website nor does it make reference to them in the Decision Notice (titled 'Planning Permission').

However, the objections were fully documented and considered within the Officers report and this was presented to the Planning and Highways Committee for determination at the meeting on Thursday 2nd July 2015. (I am aware an email was sent to both yourself and Graham Stringer MP advising of the Committee meeting and details on the 23rd June 2015.) The report can be accessed on the Council website on the Planning and Highways Committee page by following the link .. http://www.manchester.gov.uk/meetings/meeting/2433/planning_and_highways_committee [doc 15, see p.3 above].

I can also confirm that the second email sent to Jeni Regan and myself on the 30th June / 1st July 2015 was also documented in a Late Representation report that was presented to Committee before and at the meeting. Please find a copy of this attached [doc 16, see p.3 above] ..

Therefore, I do not believe the City Council, as local planning authority, failed to give proper consideration to all the relevant factors in its decision to grant planning permission.

Julie Roscoe, Head of Planning .. MCC ..
48. Email 15.7.2015 from PFM to FoBHC contacts. Email posted 15.7.2015 by PFM on FoBHC’s Facebook Community page.

Subject: Manchester City Council’s approval of proposed demolition of Lodge Gatehouse of former BHCH.

The link in MCC’s 15.7.2015 email below leads to a PDF [doc 15, see p.3 above] solely about the Lodge Gatehouse planning application.

It shows that Graham Stringer MP objected to the proposed demolition on similar grounds to FoBHC.

It also reveals that the 3 Charlestown councillors did not object.

And it communicates that planning officers repeated much the same arguments in favour of demolition as presented in the February 2015 CBRE ‘Planning Statement’ which was scrutinized in FoBHC’s objection [item 5, see p.3 above / item 43 above].

49. Comments written under 15.7.2015 post on FoBHC’s Facebook Community page – item 48 above.

Mildred Willner: It would not have cost all that much to save and preserve the Gatehouse and turn it into something valuable for the community. But once again private profit is king, and we are saddled with councilors that don’t care and cannot be bothered. Finding it much easier to pamper to the will of the developers, rather than stand up and support the views of the local community.

Ann Cooper: Sad that heritage counts for so little.

Penelope Sullivan: .. Sad to think that two unremarkable Wimpey built houses will replace something so significant and memorable. Shame on you Manchester councillors!

50. Post 19.1.2016 from PFM on FoBHC’s Facebook Community page.

There is no justification for erasing the last visible trace of the highly regarded former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital ...

https://boggart-holeclough.files.wordpress.com/ .. [hyperlink to doc 5 (see p.3 above) on FoBHC’s website].

Objection to demolition of Lodge Gatehouse of former Booth Hall Children’s Hospital, submitted 5.5.2015 to Manchester City Council.

Subsequently, 2.7.2015, Council perfunctorily dismissed objections & approved application to demolish the building – see 15.7.2015 post including comments on this page below.

Monochrome photo, from circa 1910s, courtesy of Booth Hall Hospital Heritage Project. Photo shows the Lodge Gatehouse on right & the Administration Building in centre. Despite numerous objections, the latter building was demolished in 2013.

Colour photo, taken last Saturday 16.1.2016, shows the Lodge Gatehouse still standing, now boarded up, awaiting its fate.
51. Comments written under 19.1.2016 post on FoBHC’s Facebook Community page – item 50 above.

Lynn Cullinan Griffiths: I don't understand why they were allowed to demolish the original building, I thought it was listed!! I was mortified!! I can't bare to look at that site when I go down Charlesdown / Boothhall Rd!! It breaks my heart, but does anyone know what happened to the Plaque that was in the Foyer, explaining the Heritage of the building and what it was originally used for. It was beautiful!!

PFM: None of the hospital buildings were listed. Manchester City Council could have "locally listed" them as "non-designated heritage assets" but chose not to do so. Re the Plaque, perhaps get in touch with Booth Hall Hospital Heritage Project & see if they know anything about it.

Aidan O'Rourke: They retained Withington Hospital and the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital, why was this one demolished?..

PFM: An answer to your question. Reason closed in 2009 as working hospital despite prolonged protests against closure: ruthless cost-cutting forced onto NHS by central government. Reason hospital buildings demolished after closure: for new site owner - Wimpey house building company - greater profits to be made from cleared site. All other considerations (e.g. preserving evidence of local architectural heritage) secondary / subordinate to profit-making. Despite numerous objections against demolition of the central admin building, Manchester City Council allowed Wimpey to demolish it, sweeping away our history. Overall outcome of closure & demolition of hospital: Wimpey has profited at the expense of the local community who have lost children's health services & historically significant buildings. A dramatic example of the dismantling of the NHS & privatization / sell-off of NHS assets for corporate profiteering, to the detriment of the majority of people, at their expense.

Carole Dimascio: My grandfather help plant the bushes along the front, bet they got destroyed.

Aidan O'Rourke: .. it all helps to keep the memory alive. Soon there will be no evidence that there was ever a hospital there.

Linda Ann Coleman: What a shame a very important piece of local history. We have lost so many good buildings over the years and when they're gone, they're gone. Sad.

Lynn Cullinan Griffiths: This Council don't seem to care as much about this City as they claim to. They could have done something with the building, and I'm sure, the same with the last remaining one!! Shame on them!!!! X

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Photo 9, taken 6.7.2013 by PFM, shows sides of the Administration Building from the east.