

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the 40th meeting held on Sunday 10th October 1993, 11.00am.

Present: A.W.Bond (Chairman); M.C.Wright; D.Lardge; J.B.Brooke; W.G.S.Hyde; J.Soper; L.Wyld (Marketing Manager).

The Chairman welcomed Ms.Wyld to the meeting.

1. Apologies for absence: None, all present.
2. Minutes of the last meeting (24.1.93): Approved. No amendments.

3. Matters Arising not covered below:

a) Exhibition Hall west side: It was still intended to improve appearances with a pair of gates as used on Dutton's Yard. The wagon bodies were being emptied. (Action: DL)

It was still intended to build a lean-to in the area to house the hydraulic platform. (Action: DL)

b) Soakaways: Two had been constructed in the road to the Fleamarket. Their effect was being monitored before further construction. (Action: DL)

c) Ian Allan Plaque: Unveiled in May, temporarily fixed to the bridge.

d) 'Pedestrians Keep Left' signs: Installed. Significant visitor interest and amusement!

e) Terraced houses with living accommodation, east side, north of the Red Lion. The Board had agreed in principle. Initial design awaited.

(Action: JS)

4. Front Entrance & Road: The Marketing Manager expanded on the ideas for improving the main entrance, including more attractive signs, landscaping of the embankment by the bridge, low maintenance shrubs and a tramcar facade. Costs to be generated in time for the Winter Budget. It was stressed that whilst the proposals would be a key factor in enticing visitors in, the development should not impinge on the 'period atmosphere' observed by visitors once they were inside the Museum proper. (Action: LW/DL-AWB)

5. Red Lion: Progressing, but some of the CTF work would have to be done again as part of the inner skin had not been built according to the drawings. An appeal for funds and an article in the Stoke Sentinel had not yet produced any sponsorship. A significant amount would be required for materials to maintain some progress on the project over the winter. (Action: DL-AWB)

It was felt that because of the visual impact on the Museum Street, this project should continue to receive high priority. (Action: Board)

6. Board Inspection Items: Many of the low cost items had been completed. It was agreed that the regrading of the entrance ramp (to meet current regulations on steepness) was beyond this winter's budget and would have to be left until winter 1994/5 at the earliest. However, the budget would include:

Raising the kerb and fitting a queue barrier at the southbound car park stop.

A shelter for the northbound Victoria Park stop (parts from Ashton in F.H. Field)

Arch and lamp for top of picnic steps.

Tiling of the Emporium toilet walls

Removal of street lamp by wall post box, and fitting of lamp on wall end.
(Actions: DL→AWB)

11406 7. Review of street: Mr. Claydon had written (2.10.93) drawing attention to several non-tramway-period anomalies. Some, such as concrete and steel manhole covers and imitation York Stone paving, had been agreed as a result of cost constraints (see minutes of 23rd meeting, 3.7.88). York Stone was currently unobtainable secondhand, and was £40 per square metre new. It was agreed that emphasis should be placed on regularly reminding members and staff of the need to keep street development 'in tramway period'. Tighter control was necessary (through the Development Committee), and a reminder in Contact and the Journal was appropriate. (Action: MCW)

Street Periods. It was becoming difficult to meet the original intention of pre 1910 between Stephenson Place and the Bridge, and 1920-39 northwards. Quite a few items (such as the 'Illuminated' and 'Keep Left' signs) were 1920's and therefore in the 'wrong' place, although the long term plan had been to move such items northwards at a future date. Further thought was necessary regarding the practicalities. Would a "between the Wars" period be more realistic here? (Action: ALL to think about)

8. Sheffield Cinema: The Board had referred to the Committee a potential cinema in Sheffield which was likely to be dismantled. It looked the right period (pre 1910), and fitted in with the Development plans. Interest had been expressed to the owners, who, whilst not intending to demolish it just yet, agreed to bear the Museum in mind when taking any future steps.

9. A.D.B: The Development Plan included a picnic area at Glory Mine and a (fenced) trackside/embankment walk between Wakebridge and Glory Mine. This would be the only place where visitors could watch and photograph trams moving at typical service speeds, and it was suggested that this dimension be borne in mind when the Board considered the extension of the licence for this area.

(Action MCW→Board)

Statue for Victoria Park: None had been found so far. Looking for one could be a nice story. (Action: LW)

Next meeting: February 1994, in preparation for the 1994 Summer Budget.

Circulation: Those present, Board, Mins Sec.

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DEVMINS

TO: Winstan Bond
cc Malcolm Wright; David Lardge; Jim Soper

Please reply to:

FROM: Geoffrey Claydon

SUBJECT: Uncontrolled Developments in the Street

DATE: 2nd October 1993

I was delighted to see from Board minute 11298 that the Development Committee is to tackle the question of uncontrolled developments in the street. Improper embellishment of metalwork with paint was the point noted in the minute. I offer the following in the hope that they may assist you in your quest.

- ✓(1) Concrete manhole covers and surrounds in place of cast iron (east side footway).
- ✓(2) Steel manhole covers in place of cast iron (at various points in the street area).
- ✓(3) Surfaces which should be flagged have been filled with light-coloured, poorly-laid concrete, without even cut lines to simulate paving (notably in the area of the east side hoardings).
- ✓(4) Generally, there are footwalk areas which have received tarmac instead of paving.
- ✓(5) Plastic grids to drains instead of cast iron (Emporium and east side hoardings). Apart from the anachronism, the plastic is not durable, as a glance will show.
- ✓(6) Plastic gutters and fall pipes instead of cast iron or zinc (stone building, both shops, engine shed and print shop).
- (7) Emporium exterior: lack of proper fascia panels, out of place roofing materials over the door and window projections, out of place concrete panels beneath the shop windows.
- (8) Exhaust vent from print shop should be encased in a chimney.
- (9) Picnic steps: non-use of period bricks (cf. the new Exhibition Hall).
- (10) Fire exit from the Workshop: a complete disaster - the door, its surrounds, the ramp and guard rails are all out of character.
- (11) Forge shop guard rails: ideally these should have mesh or enamel panels between the supports (to prevent children climbing them - it is after all a safety feature).
- (12) The plastic box housing the telephone at the depot crossover should be replaced by one in metal or wood.

Apart from these negative aspects, it is also worth recalling the number of positive features lost - eg the boot scraper and coal hole cover outside the Emporium and the two gas lamps which used to project from it.

There should be a vetting procedure for street developments as there is for tramcar restorations. I do hope that the Development Committee will see its way to introduce one. The cover picture of the latest issue of "Tramway Review" showing main street Beamish demonstrates the competition we have in the search for authenticity.

Geoffrey Claydon