

CA 572 (4)

Proposed Markets Extensions + Bylaws 1907

H. Sayer, Esq. Town Clerk, Sheffield.

Proposed Markets Competition

The following are my replies to certain of the points submitted by the Sheffield Society of Architects and Surveyors

size of Butchers shops

10ft frontage x 11' 6" deep. This is the average size, but I take it the competitor is not tied to these dimensions as the corporation is desirous of improving on the present style of shop.

Stalls for Butter, Eggs &c. This should read linear.

Water Supply.

I should say in convenient central positions unless the competitor shows good reason for a separate supply to each stall.

Public Lavatories

When the conditions were drawn up the idea was to leave the competitor a free hand. If not too expensive there should be accommodation for ladies as well as men. Perhaps the committee had better consider this point having regard to the fact that accommodation for both sexes is shortly to be constructed at Castlefolds.

The city Surveyor informs me he is dealing with other points.

Yours faithfully

George Hobroyd

H. Sayer Esq, Town Clerk. Sheffield

Dear Sir.

Proposed Market Competition

At a recent meeting the Markets Committee gave instructions that a new Wholesale Fish Market be included in the competition.

I suggest the following be considered by the markets committee before they are embodied in the Instructions to Competitions

For New Wholesale Fish Market.

- 1) Provision to be made for about 33 stands
- 2) The total area of such stands to be about 990 square yards.
- 3) Roadways to be not less than 22 feet wide
- 4) Overhead Office for each tenant
- 5) Provision for fish dressing chamber and cart for refuse
- 6) Water supply for each stand

Paving, lighting, water supply for flushing & c, left to the competitor's discretion

Yours Faithfully

Gordon Hobroyd

Local Government Board. WHITEHALL S.W.

5th July 1907

Norfolk Market Hall

1st July 1907

I am directed by the local Government Board to state that they have had under consideration the Report made by their Inspector, Mr North, after the Inquirey held by him with reference to the application of the Town Council of Sheffield for sanction to borrow £11.500 to defray the cost of alterations to the front of the Norfolk Market Hall.

Before coming to a decision on this application, the Board directed me to refer to the fact that there is an accumulated deficit on the markets undertaking of the Town Council which on the 31st March, 1906, amounted to £27,856.8.3, and to enquire whether the Town Council propose to take any steps for clearing off this deficit

I am Sir.

Yours obedient Servant.

19th October 1905

Messers Holmes & Watson have certified the enclosed Account for £38- 18- 6, Messers Pawsons & Brailsford's charges for the preparation of lithographed plans in connection with this scheme.

Kindly submit the account to the next meeting of the Markets committee

Yours faithfully

Town Clerk.

W. Fisher Tasker Esq. City Treasurer

Chief Constables Office Sheffield

8th March 1905

Mr Councillor of the Watch Committee.

Broomgrove House Sheffield.

Dear sir

Smithfield Market

I desire to bring to your notice that the corner of Furnival Road is the busiest and most congested corner in Sheffield, and the removal of the Wholesale fruit Market to Smithfield Market will tend to enhance this congestion

No provision has been made for porters and green-grocers carts which form the greatest difficulty that the police have to contend with. In any event the entrances should be by way of Furnival Road and exit by Blonk Street, and waiting carts could be placed under the railway arch. As many of the arches as possible should be opened

This opinion is also borne out by the officers on duty in the district.

Yours Faithfully,

CHAS .T . SCOTT

Chief constable

Norfolk Road. Sheffield 15 March 1905.

To the members of the Markets Committee

Gentlemen

Your chairman has asked me to put in writing my views on the scheme for the proposed rearrangement of the Markets. I willingly accede to this request.

- 1) The removal of both the Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable and another Wholesale Fish Market to the Smithfield site is a matter that has claimed the serious attention of those responsible for the control of traffic in the city Blonk Street and Furnival Road are two thoroughfares already taxed with a superabundance of traffic, and when the enormous traffic in connection with the two Wholesale Markets is added as well as that in connection with the Market Gardeners, Hay and Straw, and Cattle Markets, a block of traffic would be created that it would be impossible to deal with. This is not only the opinion of every merchant in the markets concerned that I have communicated with, but it is also the unanimous opinion of such well known traffic experts as the Chief Constable, the Deputy Chief constable the local Goods managers of the Midland, Great Northern, Great Central. and London & North Western Railway companies, and also the carting agents of the Great Western, Great Eastern, Lancashire & Yorkshire, and L. D & E.C. Railway Companies
- 2) So far as my knowledge goes, (and I have visited the principal Markets in England and Scotland) there is no instance in any other town of Wholesale Markets being placed on a site adjacent to two such busy thoroughfares as Blonk Street and Furnival Road.
- 3) Moreover, these two streets would not be available for the traffic in connection with the Markets being separated there from by the Station Road and the encumbrances on the Blonk Street boundary.
- 4) It is impossible to be adapt the Smithfield site for the proposed purpose because of its locality the Royal Victoria Station Hotel on one side and the River Don on the other are factors which militates against this. It has been suggested that the Sheffield Test Works premises should be secured, the proposed shops on the Blonk Street side abandoned, the whole of the arches under the approach road to the Station opened for traffic, the River Don

bridged over, and a way through either Osborn's or the Dannemora Works to the Wicker secured, but although by these most expensive means the block of traffic would undoubtedly be mitigated, there would still be far too much vehicles in the locality to be successfully dealt with, and the Markets Committee would incur great responsibilities in this direction.

- 5) The enormous vehicular traffic would seriously impede the pedestrian traffic in connection with the markets, and although it is quite true that, as a general rule, the retail trade follows the wholesale, yet there are always those retailers who are independent of one particular wholesale market and, if these are not encouraged to patronize the Wholesale Markets, their numbers will increase and the trade of these markets will necessarily decrease
- 6) From what has been already stated of the block of traffic outside it follows from the arrangements of the stands inside Smithfield that confusion would prevail. It would be impossible from the very nature of the traffic so to regulate it as to avoid cross currents, and the opinion of all the traffic experts I have communicated with is that delays extending over much valuable
- 7) The very existence of Wholesale Markets depends upon the prompt delivery of the produce there dealt with. This prompt delivery would be a matter of impossibility in the proposed markets on the Smithfield site, and thus the law of supply and demand, would be frustrated. It would follow that
 - a) injustice and wrong would be done to the growers, exporters and others who send consignments of produce to the markets who would not secure a proper price for their goods and who would, therefore, cease to patronize the markets,
 - b) similar wrong would be done to the traders, who could not avail themselves of a proper market price and who would constantly be acting in ignorance of what the real supply of goods was, thereby being placed in ignorance of what the real supply of goods was, thereby being placed in a false and unenviable position and thus gradually losing their trade, and
 - c) customers, too would necessarily be incommoded, sometimes because they would have to wait for the produce that was detained en-route to the market, and sometimes because they had bought at a false price. The result would be that the most valuable link that at present exists between the wholesale markets and customers, especially those from Barnsley, Mexbro, Rotherham, Doncaster and other outlying districts would be served. Sheffield would become of less importance as a food distributing center, and thus an injustice would be done to the rate payers in that the revenues from these markets would necessarily be a diminished quantity
- 8) The proposed scheme does not seem to deal fairly with the trade which it is proposed to transfer to that section of the Smithfield site next to the Royal Victoria Hotel. Certainly their would not seem much encouragement for dealers in Cattle to visit Sheffield and the prevalent opinion is that this is a branch of trade that should be encouraged in every way. The market Gardeners, too, some of them local growers and heavy ratepayers, would be placed in a most unenviable position and would not have fair chance of disposing of their produce. It is not right to suppose that the trade in this connection is confined to the early morning hours, as many of them are occupied in this business up to closing time (2pm).
- 9) The atmospheric conditions that obtain on the Smithfield site are not those best calculated to act beneficially upon the valuable food products which it is proposed to deal with there, and those who have expert knowledge on those matters are agreed that such conditions would have a very detrimental effect upon both fruit, vegetables and flowers. May I also, in this connection put in a word for the traders who would be called upon to spend many hours in this atmosphere from early morning until sometimes late in the evening and whose health ought, surely to be a matter for consideration on the part of the markets committee. And the tenants whom it is proposed to allocate there are those who have hitherto been the principal contributors to the revenues of the undertaking
- 10) The proposed changes appear to me to place in jeopardy the revenues from too many sources. This it is quite a matter of speculation what would be the revenues from (1) the shops and Stalls upon the Castlefields site, (2) The Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market, (3) The Wholesale Fish Market, (4) The market Gardeners, (5) The Hay and Straw, (6) The Agricultural Implements, (7) The Cattle market, to say nothing of the revenue to be derived from

the spaces that would necessarily be vacated in the Sheaf Market.

- 11) It is agreed (1) that the Fitzalan site should be cleared at the earliest possible moment so as to be available for bringing in more revenue; (2) that the Wholesale Fish Market is inadequate for the requirements of the City. Is it not possible to effect these desirable changes without placing so many revenues in jeopardy ?
- 12) The principal revenue jeopardised would be that of the Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market, some £7,000 per annum. It appears to be a matter of general agreement that it would be unwise to transfer the business of this market and that for these reasons (1) the difficulties that would be encountered on the proposed site in connection with the traffic which I have already allowed to, and (2) The impossibility of finding another site adequate for the essentials of the trade. In connection with (3) I may say that the reasons which weighed with the Duke of Norfolk's advisers in advocating the present site were its accessibility for all purposes in connection with this particular trade, and the fact that the site was not only at a distance from the busiest thoroughfares but still surrounded by streets all of which are available for the immense traffic which there must be of necessity so far as this market is concerned. Thus you have Pond Street, Sheaf Street, Dixon Lane, Castlefoulds, Exchange Street, Broad Street, as well as the streets on the North and East of the Corn Exchange all available for this traffic. When the proposed site is compared with the present one the suitability of the latter is at once apparent.
- 13) But the very reasons which prove the suitability of the Castlefoulds site for the Wholesale trade are those which militate against its success as a site for the traders in the Fitzalan Hall and I am not at all surprised at their unwillingness to be transferred thither, Back streets are the essentials of success where a WHOLESALE trade is concerned but they are the reasons which spell failure where the RETAIL trade is introduced
- 14) It is the opinion of many who have studied the subject, that so far as the shops and stalls which it is proposed to put upon the Castlefoulds site are concerned the success of the venture is by no means a foregone conclusion. It would be well to consider the change of circumstances which has been brought about in recent years through the effect of the Co-operative Stores; the delivery of many tons of fish direct from the seaport to the retailer, the many shops of the character proposed which are now to be found in almost every part of the city.
- 15) In consideration the financial statement in connection with the proposed scheme it is well to bear in mind the contingencies which affect it. This the revenues stated are all dependent upon whether or no the hopes entertained are realised, Everything is speculative, no item is a certainty. Even the cost of buildings upon the " difficulty in definitely deciding what shall be done" The " estimated income from present markets for current year" errs on the side of modesty, hence the " estimated increased income" (surely this is a misleading term) appears greater than it should be.
- 16) Taking the figures as quoted in Messers Holmes and Watson's report and always bearing in mind the uncertainty attaching to their being correct, owing to the proposals, we have character of the proposals, we have. Estimated increased net income £3:684:4:1 Deductions not already made,

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|--|-------------|
| 1) Annual charges on the £59:000 (providing a loan for 50 year can be obtained.....) | £2733:13:4 |
| 2) Present Annual income of Wholesale Fish Market..... | £1100: 0:0 |
| 3) Extensions of Wholesale Fruit & Vegetable Market in Sheaf Market | £1150:0:0 |
| 4) Market Gardeners..... | £338:0:0 |
| 5) Rabbit Merchants..... | £123:0:0 |
| | £5:444:13:4 |
| | £1:860:9:3 |

Thus when the contingencies already alluded to are reckoned as though they were all to turn out favourably and this to the full extent there accrues a certain annual loss on the venture of £1860 odd. But who shall say how large the actual loss would really be ? Of Course there would be the Fitzalan site left on hand, as also the space in the Sheaf Market that would be set at liberty through the removal of the Wholesale Fish Market, Market Gardeners and others to the Smithfield site.

- 17) The Question therefore arises that considering the speculative nature of the proposals,

the insurmountable difficulties in connection with the traffic that would be created the great uncertainty as to the financial success of the scheme, to say nothing of the injustice to so many who are at present connected with the markets, is this the best that can be done?

18) I certainly think not. I repeat my statement in the council that if the Markets Committee would state upon paper the two changes they desire to, effect (mentioned in paragraph 11), If they would seek the best expert advice available upon the matter and then institute a competition amongst the Architects of the City, they would discover a means of attaining their object which would not jeopardise so great a portion of their revenue and which would inspire more confidence in all parties concerned. I feel sure the Markets Committee will consider that there are vast interests affected and many rate payers and traders concerned in this matter.

19) Alternative schemes that have been suggested are as follows:

1) Transfer the business in connection with the Fitzwilliam Hall and the Wholesale Fish Market to the Smithfield site. This would involve the erection of two new Market buildings.

2) Transfer a part of the Sheaf Market (say, the secondhand clothes, crockery, tapes, cottons, quack medicines, etc) to the Corn Exchange (it would only be needed for two days weekly) : and utilize the space thus set at liberty by erecting a more commodious Wholesale market as also a new Market Hall to take the place of the Fitzalan Market. This would not involve the purchase of more land and if the space is found to be insufficient more could be obtained by removing the Market Gardeners to the Smithfield site. (The Market Gardeners used to do their business there some years ago and I understand are not averse to such a proposal.

In each of these alternatives it will be noticed that the risks in connection with revenue are not formidable In

1) the traffic in connection with the Wholesale Fish Market is added to that of Blunk Street and Furnival Road but much of it is relieved from the streets surrounding the Sheaf and Castlefoulds Markets. There is not much vehicular traffic in connection with the Fitzalan Hall trade and you are not thereby placing the butchers etc in a back street but in a busy thoroughfare where people are known to congregate.

The advantages in connection with

2) are so obvious that I am inclined to favour this scheme in preference to (1) The utilising of the Corn Exchange and the concentration of the trade in the Sheaf and Castlefoulds Markets, together with the minimum of risks so far as revenue is concerned are very formidable arguments in its favour

In bringing these alternatives before your notice I am aware I have exceeded my instructions, and my excuse is that I do not wish to be a destructive critic only. I am desirous of rendering the Markets Committee all the assistance in my power and beg to assure them that the task which fell to my lot on Wednesday last was one most distasteful and painful to me and one which nothing but a keen sense of public duty compelled me to perform.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully

ALFRED CATTELL