



# Historic Parks Upgrade – end of project debrief BSARA’s “Lessons Learnt”

Affect on Local Residents

Avoidance of similar mistakes on future projects

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## CE post project evaluation

- BSARA thank Nina Dawes for her comprehensive report

### However:

- the report is too focused on process rather than outcomes.
  - Minimal coverage of the Council's management of the project and of key judgments made.
  - CE criticism of LDC's performance during face-to-face meetings has been omitted from report.
  - Report should do more to acknowledge the negative impact of the project on the public.
- So BSARA still has unanswered questions

*Note: Due to threat of litigation by Casey, BSARA's lessons learnt report was censored i.e. references LDC's management of the contract were removed.*

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## CE's comments in meetings<sup>1</sup>

The Outer Friary project has benefited in a number of ways from changes that have been introduced<sup>2</sup>:

1. Clearer internal accountability and a more structured approach in decision making;
2. A commitment to consult more widely regarding sensitive areas e.g. within the conservation zone;
3. A commitment that the District Council will keep the public better informed;
4. Within Lichfield District Council there would be a stronger emphasis on delivering results

**Note:**

1 - Full file note at end of presentation

2 - Due to threat of litigation by Casey, BSARA's notes of the meeting did not acknowledge that the improvements referred to above had occurred on the Casey contract. Nina Dawes conceded in private that these were issues which occurred on the parks project and which LDC needed to address.

## BSARA's response to the report

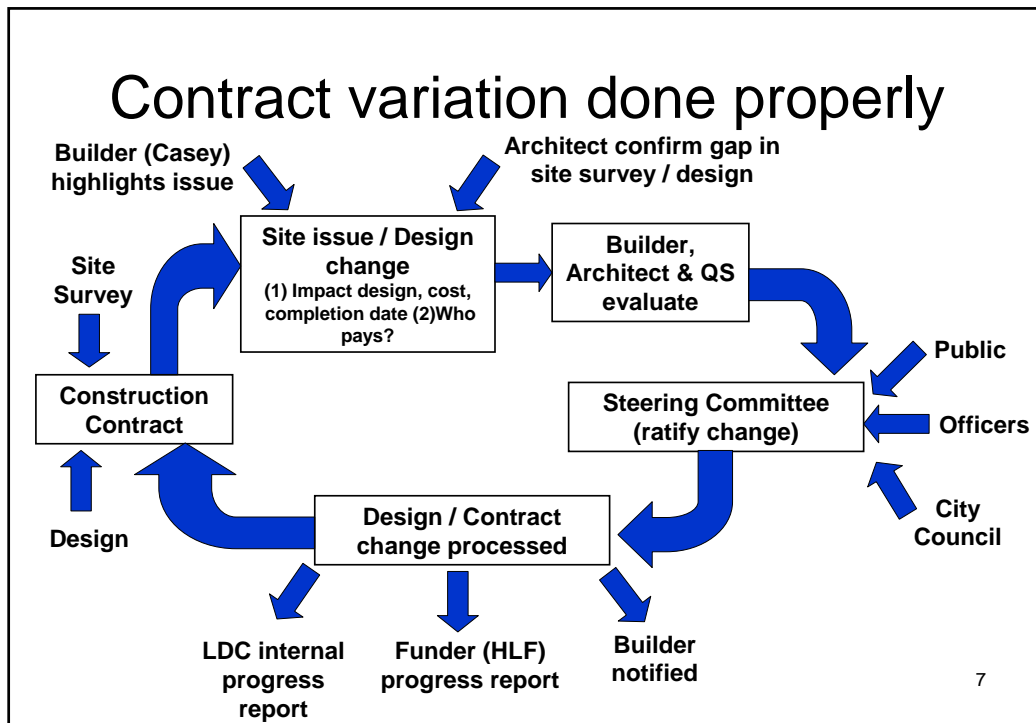
- **We agree:**
  - The end product is great
  - The parks team are special
  - LDC worked hard to make it happen despite all the difficulties
- **We would like Council to explain:**
  - Why did it take so long?
  - Why was it so disruptive to the public?
  - Why was there a disconnection between what was happening on the ground and what LDC were saying?

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## BSARA Views

- **Theory:** contract for **fixed** design, cost & deadline with penalties for late delivery. ✓
- **Reality:** many design changes + poor change control = chaotic scheduling i.e. stop/start work led to inevitable delays. ✗
- LDC officials failed to adopt best practice re contractual change control, project management & internal reporting. ✗

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This slide merely illustrates the importance of minimising design changes once site clearance has started. It is a complex process, which can lead to chaotic project planning (scheduling) if too many changes are introduced.

## How did this affect the public?

- Unacceptable disruption to public because too many work areas started but not completed.
- More and more locations became building sites.
- The construction continued well beyond the promised finish date.
- Some examples:

## Families: Lack of regular refreshments

- Too many changes in design of cafe
- Then, decide to let out (tenant to fit out?)
- Multiple rethinks = stop & start
- Opens over 2 years after previous amenity withdrawn.



Identified at design stage	✘	Steering Comm. effective	✘
Change control followed	✘	Internal reporting effective	✘

## Benefactor: Swinfen-Broun Stone

- Ad-hoc decision to put in front of toilets
- Bypassed steering committee & offended trustees
- Out of sequence work made planned location inaccessible



Identified at design stage	✘	Steering Comm. effective	✘
Change control followed	✘	Internal reporting effective	✘

## Walkers: Footpaths obstructed

- 6 week obstruction of Heart of England way.
- Building delays disrupt utilities e.g. water.
- LDC & Casey gridlocked until Staffs CC Rights of Way Officer steps in.

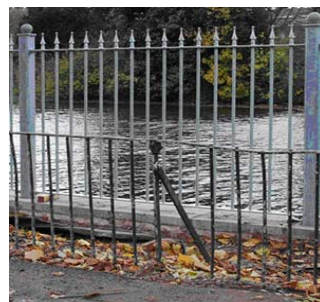


Identified at design stage	✓	Steering Comm. effective	✗
Change control followed	✗	Internal reporting effective	✗

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## Conservation & Consultation (e.g. Minster pool railings)

- Upset the City Council, Civic Society, fishermen & Park Friends
- Planned design not followed.
- Higher than safety recommendation
- Inadequate visibility in steering committee
- Inadequate change control
- Negative press coverage



Identified at design stage	✗	Steering Comm. effective	✗
Change control followed	✗	Internal reporting effective	✗

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## Thinking about ... community participation



*“By community participation, we mean people having an active role in your project, in particular taking part in decision-making and delivery.”*

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## BSARA's — lessons learnt

- **Clearly separated stages**, design → project plan → build
- **Senior official's time best used up front**: Is design final & site survey complete? Are officers and advisors properly organised?
- **Critical goal: Minimal changes once build starts**: -
- Result was time wasted on disputes, investigations & unnecessary reports.
- *“Most delays were avoidable if, pre-build, a 4-8 week gap was added to discuss details with designers”*

**Paul Turner** (Casey Site Manager) quote from Park Friends meeting

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## Positive Outcomes preceeding report

- **Communications** (via Friends Group)
  - Effective communication channel with LDC
  - Senior Officials attend, problems resolved
  - Friends support LDC e.g. Skate park
- **Managing Projects** (e.g. Friary Outer)
  - Good project management say Audit Commission
  - No conflict with public during construction
  - Minor niggles quickly resolved

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## Pitfalls to be avoided in the Future

- **Senior management**
  - Must be more involved before site work starts
  - Ensure LDC acts as per contract
- **People issues**
  - Better internal coordination
  - Advisors and council officials work together in a more positive manner
  - Discipline in Steering committee
- **Actively manage lead contractor**
  - Protect LDC position via change control

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## Questions / Discussions

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End of presentation

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## **“Lessons learnt” inquiry into Lottery Funded Heritage Parks upgrade – meetings with District Council CE<sup>1</sup>**

Lichfield District Council Chief Executive Nina Dawes met with community representatives to consider any lessons to be learnt from the upgrade of our Parks. The meetings took place on 20/Dec/2011 and 26/Mar/2012 and involved the Park Friends (Ken Webb) the Lichfield Civic Society (John Thompson) and BSARA (Bob Smith & Andre Hefer).

Nina Dawes explained that negotiating a final settlement with the lead contractor (Casey) was proving to be a difficult and time consuming process. Despite this, Lichfield District Council wanted to capture the knowledge gained and move forward to address the new challenges, such as the Friary Outer development.

Nina Dawes thanked all those who had contributed, both within Lichfield District Council and from the community. Lichfield District Council has a genuine wish to address all significant points raised. She acknowledged that there are lessons to be learnt and that mistakes had been made. Looking forward the District Council could use the experience gained to ensure that future projects ran more smoothly.

Once final settlement with the lead contractor has been achieved<sup>2</sup>, a report would be submitted to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The District Council has already started applying some of the lessons learnt, so operational changes have not been held up by the delayed publication of the report.

The Outer Friary project has benefited in a number of ways from changes that have been introduced:

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3. A commitment that the District Council will keep the public better informed;
4. Within Lichfield District Council there would be a stronger emphasis on delivering results.

**Note:**

1 - Refer to BSARA website [www.beaconstreetara.org/announcements](http://www.beaconstreetara.org/announcements)

2 - Achieved on 25th May 2012