

Friends of Bradford's Becks

11th April 2014

An open letter to Bradford One

It's exciting that you have an opportunity to develop a plan to revive the Odeon and contribute to the improvement of Bradford's City Centre. This has started well with the creation of City Park and the Mirror Pool; we wish your proposals are as successful.

Flowing water is a pleasure in cities, creating calm and interest, introducing nature, and providing bankside locations to walk, sit or have cafes. Friends of Bradford's Becks have a vision to improve the Bradford Beck both to improve the city and to improve the environment. Our catchment plan is published in *Bradford's Becks: A new lease of life* and has been endorsed by Bradford Council's Environment Scrutiny committee. We are now working with Council officers on a series of projects to improve the Beck and its tributaries.

You of course know that the Bradford Beck flows under the Odeon site in a decaying culvert, before it continues under the city centre on its route towards the River Aire at Shipley. Development of the site offers a once-in-a-hundred years opportunity to daylight part of the Beck and it would be a mistake not to take it.

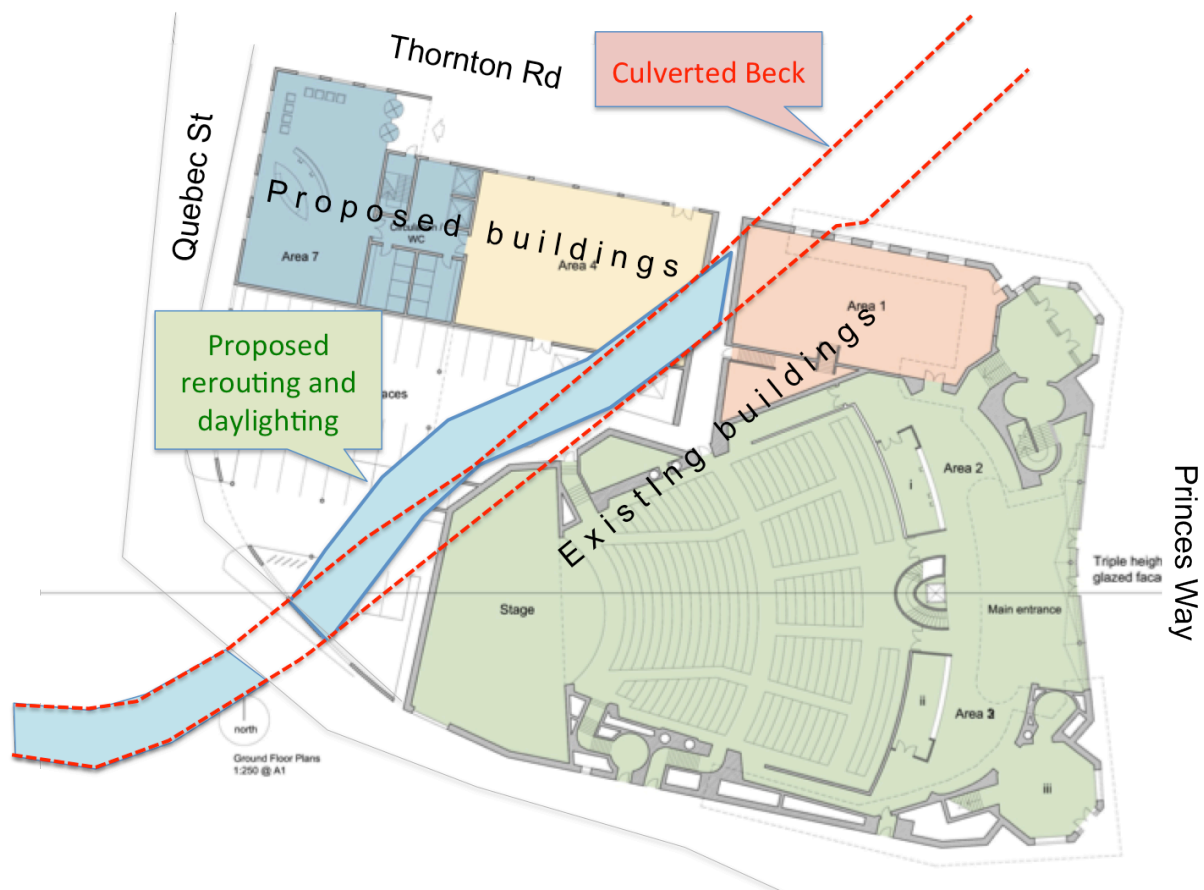
Burying rivers in culverts is not a good idea. The culverts decay and become dangerous – this one is in very bad condition and needs to be rebuilt – see photos. They can block and cause flooding. There are multiple incidences of culverts collapsing or blocking in the recent floods and causing severe problems. For example, in September 2012 a culvert collapse in Newcastle led to the erosion of the foundations of a block of flats and the subsequent demolition of 3 blocks – see attached photos. Culvert capacity cannot be increased to cope with increased volumes of runoff due to climate change and upstream urbanisation.

We wish to encourage you to be bold and daylight the Beck across most of the Odeon site. A sketch plan of the current location of the culvert and our suggestion for daylighting part is below. A slight rerouting will mean that the outer wall of the stage is no longer resting on the culvert roof which will give you more confidence in its stability!

The new buildings would have to be rearranged, and some carparking spaces will be lost. But there is a large public car park nearby, and there will still be plenty of space for loading bays for deliveries and accessible spaces. In return, you will gain a new asset and make an even bigger contribution to the regeneration of the city!

We would be happy to meet and discuss designs. We have shared these ideas with Bradford Council and the Telegraph and Argus.

Friends of Bradford's Beck is a community group affiliated to the Aire Rivers Trust	
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The Spencer Court culvert, Newcastle

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28 September 2012 Last updated at 09:41

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Newcastle floods: likely demolition for unstable flats



Angry residents did not know demolition of the flats in Newburn was being considered

Flood-damaged flats in Newcastle which are close to collapse are likely to be demolished, engineers have said.

Floodwater gouged out ground beneath Spencer Court, Newburn, on Tuesday, exposing the piles holding it up and badly damaging foundations.

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23 October 2012 Last updated at 12:15

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Newburn flood-damaged flats: Demolition begins



Work begins on the demolition of the unstable block of flats

Demolition work has begun at a block of flats left close to collapse by flooding in Newcastle.

A stone platform has been built to allow heavy machinery to access Spencer Court in Newburn.

MGL Demolition is carrying out the work on behalf of developer Dunelm Homes. It is expected to take about two weeks.

The state of the Beck culvert under the Odeon



From: Report by CSTS Ltd, Feb 2013. Bradford Beck Culvert, Thornton Road, Bradford