

Crossrail presentation on settlement 2011/12

One of the major things that has always bothered residents about the Crossrail development is the risk of structural damage to their flats. Crossrail is under an obligation to prevent such damage, to mitigate it where it may happen, and to restore any damaged buildings to their former state. It therefore has to do assessments along the path of the railway to assess the likelihood of settlement damage and is needed to prevent it.

Just before Christmas the Crossrail team gave an informal presentation to the BA's Crossrail group about the findings of their assessment of the Barbican. In July, seven months later, having completed the assessment and about to issue the final reports, they gave a similar presentation to a wider group of BA general council members and house group chairs. This is what they explained:

The big risks to the Barbican Estate disappeared when Crossrail decided not to build a cross-over cavern under the estate. That meant there would be less ground movement and no need for protective measures like compensation grouting.

Crossrail assessed the whole estate because it is listed and because many of the buildings are built on piles – but they have produced reports only for those buildings that fall within their 10 mm settlement contours (the area surrounding the path of the tunnel that might be subject to movement of up to 10 mm).

These are: Shakespeare, Willoughby+Speed, John Trundle + Bunyan, Lambert Jones, Lauderdale, Defoe, Gilbert, Andrewes, Brandon Mews.

None of these get a score above 1 (very slight cracks, easily treated during normal redecoration). And Defoe, Lambert Jones, Andrews, Brandon, and Willoughby+Speed get a score of 0 (negligible). The other buildings are outside the area of risk and have no reports. Crossrail's conclusion is that "no significant settlement impacts are predicted. Crossrail will, however conduct baseline inspections before the tunnels come through under the estate and will monitor settlement for some time. Crossrail will also rectify any problems that do arise (that's what the baseline inspections and movement monitoring are for).

The housegroup chairs of Shakespeare, Willoughby+Speed, John Trundle + Bunyan, Lambert Jones, Lauderdale, Defoe, Gilbert, Andrewes, Brandon Mews have a copy of the formal report (which is fairly technical), if anyone wants to see a copy. Also the BA is proposing to leave a set of the 9 reports in the Barbican library for reference by any resident (they probably won't be there till early September).