

"The Inkerman-Alexandra Road are was built solely because of the opening of the mid-land Railway station"

The midland railway station opened in 1868 and ran directly through St.Albans. From the 1860's census we know that the Inkerman-Alexandra road had not yet been built, whereas in the 1880 OS map the Inkerman-Alexandra road had been established. Many people think that those roads had only been built on because of the fact that they were in close proximity to the railway but there were also a lot of job opportunities. Many people that lived on these streets worked in the various factories, also St. Albans had become a blooming straw hat industry which may have persuaded people to move their.

We had to see if the houses had been built at the same time as the railway station to determine this we went on a site visit to that area. The site visit showed us that the houses even after justification, were built in the 1900's we could tell they were built then because they were made of bricks in the stretcher bond style and the houses were also two up two down indicating that the working class were living in them, this is significant because the jobs available around that area would have mostly been for the working class. There were some houses that we could tell had been shops because the houses had larger windows.

Although the roads had been built up after the midland railway station was built, it was not the sole reason people moved to that area. The railway station would have contributed to the increase of population as it would have offered various jobs to people living locally; but in St. Albans there was already a very strong straw hat making industry and st. Albans jail which may have attracted people there because of the job opportunities. There was also a printing works and a orchid nursery near the Inkerman- Alexandra roads. There was a factory close to the Inkerman- Alexandra road which would have encouraged people to move as there were more job opportunities.

One of the other main attractions of this area was the fact that the local government was very pro active as the sewage system was introduced in 1880 before cities and towns had to legally have one, this showed people that the council would address and improve various issues. Also the local government were building better facilities and in 1887 had built a hospital. The water mains were also built before the public health act as they were built in 1883. Law and order was also very important as st. Albans had its own police force.

From the census we know that in 1881 only 16 people were directly employed by the railway station, this is significant because it shows that the railway wouldn't have been employing a large number of people; meaning that the people that moved to Alexandra and Inkerman road must have other jobs waiting for them. Although some people think that the railway benefited many of the industries, which may have lead to people moving to those roads so that they could be employed this isn't necessarily true as the straw hat industry actually declined after the railway was built.

One way in which the railway station contributed to the area being developed is that because of the railway more job opportunities were available. The railway helped farmers franchise their goods as they could send fresh food and crops to London regularly. Before they would have

only been able to sell their food to the local area but the railway station allowed them to widen their prospects. So although the railway wasn't directly giving people a job it helped many people as St. Albans now became a very desirable place to live, this may be the reason why those two roads became a popular place to live. So although the railway helped contribute to the increase of population on the two roads it was not the sole reason.

The 1881 census shows that the people moving to St. Albans were generally moving from around Hertfordshire. There was quite a proportional increase in houses on Alexandra and Inkerman road from 1871 to 1881. From this information we can tell that there must have been more job opportunities otherwise they would not have been able to move there; St Albans was becoming much more prosperous due to the railway line as it enabled easier shipping of produce to and from St Albans and therefore secured links to London. One of the businesses that blossomed because of the railway was the Washer Women Society. People who were located in London would send their washing to the countryside of St Albans so it could dry in the clean, fresh air rather than the dirty polluted air like that of London.

One of the other main attractions of the Inkerman -Alexandra road was the fact that in walking distance there was a school. We can tell this because in the census in 1871 there were 51 scholars whereas in 1881 there were 125. This may have persuaded people to move to the Alexandra- Inkerman roads as their children could walk to a nearby school.

From the maps we can tell that there was a prison located near the Abbey, built before the railway in 1867; the census shows us that there were many jobs linked to the railway such as the prison warden and the Police constable. The prison was situated relatively near the two roads therefore this may indicate that employees of the prison would move to those roads to be in a closer proximity to their work place, thus stating that the railway was not the only reason the Inkerman - Alexandra roads were developed.

In conclusion we can recognise many factors why the Inkerman - Alexandra roads have been built up. The city itself was becoming more popular as the general appeal of the city was attracting people from the surrounding towns and cities. The city had a very active local government not to mention the facilities (sewage works, hospitals). St. Albans also had a local authority that helped keep the peace ensuring that no riots were caused on the streets. However one cannot say that the railway didn't have some influence over the expansion of the two roads, it did. The railway, although indirectly in some cases, helped the growth of the industries around St. Albans; it also enabled them to transport their products easier and quicker. It would be incorrect to say that the railway was the only factor that contributed in the expansion of the Alexandra - Inkerman roads, although it would have had a positive influence in the expansion.