

NEWSLETTER

4/93

Aug. 1993

Editorial

The last Newsletter was dedicated to Beckenham Place Park and the situation prior to the start of the Local Inquiry. This one gives an update on the inquiry plus other issues which were deferred from the last Newsletter. That makes it longer than usual - but if you find your eyelids closing, don't give up, mark the place and return when you feel refreshed.

To those members who have not yet been visited by their Road Representative, a friendly reminder that subscriptions were due from the 1st July. So when the Road Rep does call, a warm welcome please and an open wallet/purse. Thanks.

Dates for the Diary

The next two Members Meetings will be held at 8.0 pm in the Farnborough room, Bromley Court Hotel on :

Thursday 2nd September and

Thursday 4th November.

PLANNING ISSUES

Beckenham Place Park The Inquiry started as scheduled on the 20th July and it was good to see the Council Chamber full almost to overflowing.

It started with the Inspector identifying the principle parties and who was representing them. In this case the Applicants were David Lloyd plc (previously called Willacre), they were represented by a barrister who intended to call 6 expert witnesses to make the case for the proposals.

Lewisham were supporting the applications and were represented by a Solicitor who intended to call 4 expert witnesses.

Bromley were against the proposals and were represented by a barrister who would call 2 expert witnesses.

And ourselves, who were speaking not only for our own membership but also for the 40 or so other residents associations in Bromley. Your Chairman was representing supported by your Secretary and we intended to call at least 2 expert witnesses. We had initially intended to call more, but English Heritage and the London Planning Advisory Committee both submitted written evidence direct to the Inspector. We had also approached the London Wildlife Trust but they wanted to make their own case and we accepted that that could have a greater impact.

The Campaign Group were also representing themselves as were several of the Lewisham residents associations, the Liberal party and a dozen or more individuals who wanted their say.

Sorting this out, took rather longer than it might have done because the public address system in the Council Chamber did not seem to be working very well and most people, including the Inspector had difficulty hearing what anyone else was saying. (Goodness knows what happens when they have a Council Meeting.) There was also a problem with the lighting, the gallery was in darkness and the ventilation system apart from being noisy did little to keep the temperature down.

With the preliminaries over the Inspector invited Counsel for the applicants to start their case. Normally the written Proofs of Evidence are taken as read and the witness either highlights the key points or summarises it. In this case both the applicant and Lewisham were so late submitting their Proofs of Evidence that the Inspector had not had a chance to read them, so they had to be read out in their entirety. Indeed Bromley and ourselves only received our copies 2 working days before the start of the Inquiry.

Inevitably this process meant that the original program of 4 days for the Inquiry was in jeopardy from the outset. In fact it took from the Tuesday to the Friday just for the applicants witnesses to read their evidence, be cross examined by Bromley's Counsel, be cross examined by ourselves, answer questions from the other

interested parties and then to be re-examined by their own Counsel. Just to get that done meant that the formal accompanied site visits scheduled for the Friday had to be postponed.

To give some idea of the range of witnesses called by the applicant, there was David Lloyd himself, who did a good PR job by getting annoyed with Bromley's Counsel. An expert from the LTA who spoke of the need for indoor tennis centres. An expert from the PGA speaking for driving ranges and 9 hole par 3 golf courses, who in fact was very even handed and when asked about the most important adjunct to an 18 hole course, said a practice area was more important than driving ranges or a 9 hole course.

These were followed by the architect who although a specialist on tennis centres had to admit he knew very little about the needs of listed buildings, although that had not stopped him from drawing up plans to renovate and rearrange the Mansion House.

Then came a Planning Consultant who tried to make us believe that the primary purpose of open space was to be useful instead of open. At that stage we felt a bit like Alice when told that "words mean what I want them to mean".

Finally there was a road traffic consultant who did his best to prove that the additional 1200 cars a day for the tennis centre would not be noticed by the frontagers of nearby roads. He spoilt his argument somewhat by suggesting that drivers using the A222 between Beckenham and Bromley could go on the South Circular instead.

By then it was mid afternoon on the Friday and we were all quite glad to have a break until the following Tuesday, which was to be devoted to the general public having their say. However over the weekend we learned that the Inspector was unwell and the Inquiry was postponed for a week. But worse was to come when the following weekend we were told that he had a blood disorder and the Inquiry was postponed indefinitely.

The question now is when will it recommence. The best information we have been able to get from the Inspectorate support staff at Bristol is that they intend to resume with the same Inspector. When this will happen is subject to free time slots in the diaries of the 2 Counsel and the Solicitor. At best it could be later this

year, but spring next year is not ruled out.

Meantime back at the ranch - or more literally Bromley's Development Control Committee. It has been decided that Bromley will make that part of the Park within their boundary a Conservation Area. At the deciding meeting Councillor Hollobone spoke both eloquently and persuasively for the proposal. Although the Tennis Centre, Driving Range and 9 hole course are in Lewishams part of the Park, it does ensure that nothing similar can happen to the 60 acres in Bromley. This can be said with reasonable confidence because although the whole of the park will come within Lewisham after the Boundary Commission's recommendations are implemented in a year or so, it needs a special submission to the Secretary of State for the Environment to de-designate a Conservation Area.

The saga continues - watch this space.

Not yet mentioned but something all members should be aware of, is that the Inspector singled us out as the only group to get their evidence to him in time. He also remarked that it was the only one he had studied in detail and commented favourably on the presentation of our case. If I tell you that our main case plus supplementary statement came to 100 sides of A4 paper and the appendices fully filled a 3" ring binder, you will appreciate that a lot of work went into creating that document. Your planning team were all involved, but the bulk of it and not least the slaving over a hot word processor plus the drawing of maps, the studying of plans and the taking of photographs were all done by Leslie Tucker our Secretary. No mean feat and we are very lucky that he retired - just in time.

Whilst on the subject, all of that did not happen for nothing. and so far Beckenham Place Park has depleted our funds by about £400 and there will undoubtedly be further expenses. That together with the preparatory work for the Christ Church Inquiry which so far amounts to nearly £200 means that our finances have taken a bit of a hammering this year.

In both of these issues our responses have been a reaction to the strength of feeling expressed by the membership. If any members would like to make a contribution to help meet these exceptional expenses, please do so by either :

- 1) Making it when your Road Rep calls for your subscriptions or
- 2) Send it direct to Arthur Barwell our Treasurer, at -
14 Grasmere Rd, Bromley.

If you choose the second course and decide to post it, please do not send cash. A crossed cheque or Postal Order, payable to R.V.P.S. will be much safer. Receipts will be given for all donations.

Before leaving Beckenham Place Park (for this issue at least) a reminder to those members who for whatever reason did not get around to writing to the Inspector. As the Inquiry has been postponed - it is not too late - the Inspector has said he will accept submissions until the end of the Inquiry. The last figure for letters received was only some 700. This is nowhere near enough. If anyone has not yet written please do so now. Surely 15 minutes of your time and a stamp are not too much to ask. Especially if you care about the Park and think it should remain not only open space but available to the general public. Believe me every letter counts.

The previous Newsletter (3/93) gave a summary of the points to be made. If you cannot find your copy just let your Road Rep know and they will obtain a spare copy for you.

Let us hope that at the end of the day, the Inquiry findings do not favour the applications for a tennis centre, a driving range and an additional golf course. Otherwise the protective clothing for people and pets advertised on the next page may be required.

**To all Beckenham Place Park
DOG WALKERS AND THEIR DOGS**

*Do not miss this unique opportunity
to purchase this fine example of
PROTECTIVE LEISURE WEAR*

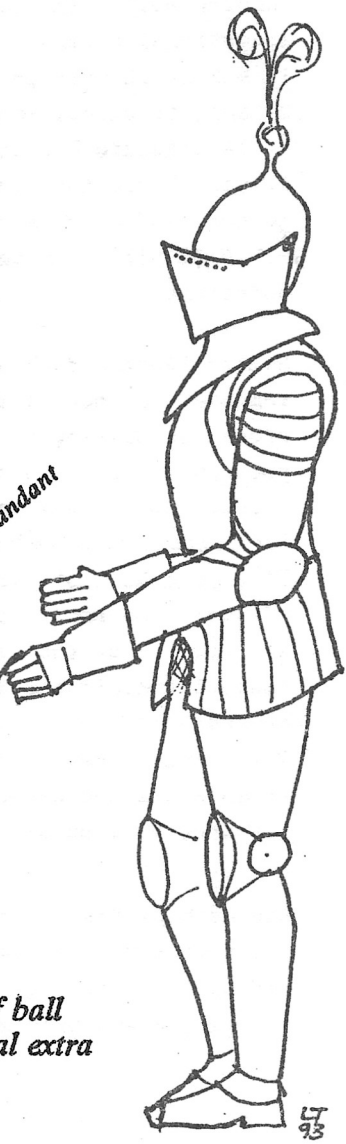
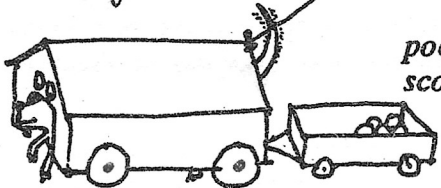
*Designed with you in mind and
essential if the golf course
is extended -BE PREPARED !*

*Send no money now!
When ordering please give
1)-your inside leg length
2)-your dog's inside leg(s)
3)-nose to tail length*

*Mobile kennel
sensitively designed
to be in keeping with
the Tennis Centre*

*Fashioned by skilled craftsmen by secret method using redundant
copies of Lewisham's UDP - Guaranteed rustproof*

*poop and golf ball
scoop optional extra*



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Christ Church readers will remember that there have been three planning applications for a flank extension to the church. All were refused by Bromley. Two of the applications are the subject of an appeal and the DoE have scheduled the hearing for the 12th and 13th of October. It will be held in the Council Chambers, in Bromley Civic Centre.

For those who want to write to the Inspector about the plans, letters should be sent to : The Case Officer (Mrs M.P.Reeves)

Room 12/14 Tollgate House
Houlton St Bristol BS2 9DJ

The reference to be quoted is : APP/G5180/A/93/217673 & 674
It is the view of the Society that although we have every sympathy with their aspirations to do more for their congregation and the local community, the ends do not justify the means. They are trying to get a quart into a pint pot and what is worse the plans indicate that the buildings will be of poor functional quality. If anyone wants to know more please contact Bill Jamieson our planning officer for Bromley matters.

Abingdon Lodge (west corner of Highland Rd/Beckenham Lane)

Members will have seen an additional storey being put onto this block of flats. We raised no objections to this mainly because the extra height did not appear to impinge on any other property or view. We also noted that the accommodation was for 2 x 3 bed room penthouses and although it increases the site density, we felt that on balance the development was acceptable as the site has generous amenity space.

24 Oaklands Rd A bungalow exists on this generously sized site. An application has been made to convert it to a 5 bedroom 2 storey house, with integral garage. We have raised no objections and regard this as a positive move to create a desirable residence.

Billingsford, Elstree Hill An application has been made to Lewisham to build 4 houses on the site of one house. The submitted plans were very vague and Lewisham is seeking clarification. We have objected not only on the score of the badly drawn plans, but also pointing out the substantial slope of the site and the number of trees that could be affected.

Unitary Development Plans

Nothing to report on Lewisham.

However Bromley are considering rejecting the Inspector's recommendation that they remove all reference to an upper density limit for new developments. Making the case to the Secretary of State will inevitably involve Bromley in a lot of work. However as several of our objections at the UDP Local Inquiry were aimed at getting densities reduced still further, we have written supporting Bromley's intention to reinstate an upper limit. Especially as the figure in the UDP was lower than the one in the previous Borough Plan.

TRANSPORT

British Rail Channel Tunnel Link Firstly the good news. As most of you will know the government has announced the route of the new railway, which will not go through Bromley. Broadly it will follow the M20 from the tunnel to Maidstone. It will then veer north west and follow the M2, crossing the Medway west of Gravesend. Then crossing the Thames between Northfleet and West Thurrock it gets to Kings Cross/St Pancras via Barking and Stratford. There is also a proposed connexion from the new rail link south of Gravesend using the disused Gravesend West branch line to join the existing main line near Longfield. This would allow trains from the new link to access Waterloo. Unfortunately this involves international passenger trains using the existing Victoria line via St Mary Cray, Bromley South, Shortlands to Penge East.

BR cannot say how many trains will use this route, but if Waterloo International is not to become a white elephant it could be a substantial number.

On current timescales the new link should be built by the year 2000 and it has been designed to keep open the option of carrying freight to the larger continental gauge.

The bad news is that there no plans to exercise that option and international freight trains will not only use the Swanley, Bromley, Ravensbourne route after the Tunnel opens, but will continue to use it after the rail link is completed.

British Rail's estimate is that between tunnel opening and rail completion - say 7 or 8 years - all the international passenger trains and half of the international freight trains will pass through Bromley South and Shortlands stations. At Shortlands junction the passenger trains will use the "main line" and the freight trains the "Catford loop".

After the rail link has been built, international freight will continue existing lines as will those passenger services to Waterloo International. Bromley together with other Councils are pressing on two fronts. One is noise, the other is the effect on local train services.

Your Society, together with others in Bromley is part of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Consultative Committee and uses that forum to state our concerns and support and encourage Bromley in their actions to lessen the impact of both the interim and final rail link proposals.

Noise. There is no legal obligation for rail operators to provide noise reduction measures for properties beside existing tracks. However Bromley plus others are lobbying hard for the government to provide statutory noise standards for existing tracks which are scheduled to carry international traffic. They are also pressing for minimum delay to the new link so that at least most of the passenger traffic moves off existing lines as soon as possible. In respect of noise Bromley and BR have reached a voluntary agreement to jointly fund noise reduction barriers along quite a bit of the affected track in the borough. However because the passenger and freight traffic split at Shortlands junction, the Shortlands / Ravensbourne section is not included. We are following this up to find out the full reasons for this and if possible will make a case for an extension of the sound barriers.

If any of our members are locomotive buffs, they will be interested to learn that the first pre-series International Passenger Train arrived in England mid-June and is running on test between Penge East and Swanley. However the new Class 92 electric freight locos will not be about until next summer. This means that for the next 12 months international freight trains will be hauled by deisel locos which are noisier.

Road Schemes

Commuter Parking Some time ago when Bromley were considering restrictions to reduce commuter parking on the roads near Petts Wood station, we asked for similar arrangements at Shortlands. We were told then that it was experimental and nothing more would be done until the effect was evaluated.

It seems as though the arrangements worked as Bromley are now considering a similar ban for Highland Rd, Queens Mead Rd, Valley Rd and Park Hill Rd. First however, will be a period of consultation. It is not clear to us why Park Hill Rd was included but Shortlands Rd and Station Rd were excluded. We will be following that up with Bromley Traffic and our Councillors.

Road Works Shortlands Village It is unlikely that anyone failed to notice the complications caused by S.E. Gas with their road-works in Shortlands Village. What some may not know is that the original proposals by the contractors was to close off Beckenham Lane and divert all traffic through Ravensbourne Avenue and Farnaby Rd. Thanks to the persistence of our two Councillors, Messrs Wilkinson and Hollobone that did not happen. It was inconvenient and a nuisance, but it could have been a lot worse. Only a few motorists appear to have found and continued to use a new rat run.

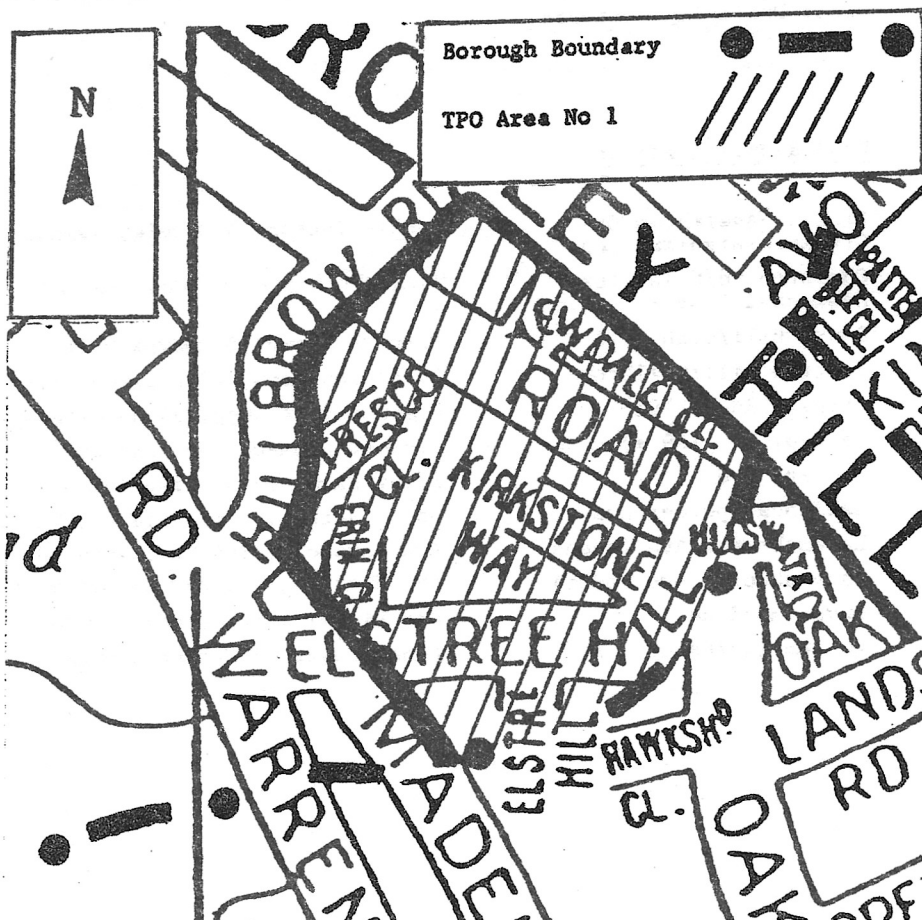


"... BUT I WAS TOLD IT GOOD
FOR RAVENSBOURNE VALET &
PRESSING SERVICE"!

Tree Preservation Orders

A few Newsletters ago, we included a map of the Bromley Tree Preservation Order areas that affect us. Later we gave a write up on the legislation as it concerns householders. To complete the picture we now include a map showing the the area of Lewisham's TPO No 1 which is in our area. One difference between Lewisham's approach and Bromley's is that Lewisham surveyed the property in the TPO area and individually listed each tree; whereas Bromley made a "blanket" TP order and monitor it by regular aerial photographs.

If your property is within the Lewisham TPO No 1 area and you require more detail, we recommend you contact the Tree Officer at Lewisham Council Offices - tele No 081-695 6000.



R.V.P.S. Officers (August 1993)

Chairman	Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue
Secretary	Leslie Tucker, 5 Bromley Avenue
Treasurer	Arthur Barwell, 14 Grasmere Rd
Auditor	Wally Carlross, 11 Karen Court
Planning Officer - Bromley	Bill Jamieson, 7 Bromley Avenue
Planning Officer - Lewisham	Paul Bennett, 12 Elstree Hill
Membership Secretary	Paul Bennett, 12 Elstree Hill
Newsletter Editor	Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue
BR Link/Bromley Committee Reps	George Hodson, 20 Ravensbourne Ave
	Tim McCarthy, 79 Ravensbourne Ave
Tree Wardens	Arthur Barwell, 14 Grasmere Rd
	Tim McCarthy, 79 Ravensbourne Ave
Press/Publicity Officers	

Road Representatives

Bromley Ave/Karen Ct	Leslie Tucker, 5 Bromley Avenue
Grasmere/Highland Rds	
Coniston Rd/Ullswater	Margaret Payne, 68 Coniston Rd
Hawkshead Closes	
Downs Hill/Crab Hill	Barbara Brown, 34 Downs Hill
Elstree Hill/Hillbrow	Carol Davidson, 27 Elstree Hill
Farnaby Rd (1-108)	Roger & Iris Legg, 39 Madeira Ave
Farnaby Rd (109 +)	Maureen Johnson, 69 Farnaby Rd
Madeira Ave	Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue
Oaklands/Spencer Rds	Joyce Varney, 1 Lavinia Ct, Oaklands
Ravensbourne Ave (evens)	Ann Rowsell, 164 Ravensbourne Ave
Ravensbourne Ave (odds)	Ann Huntley, 155 Ravensbourne Ave
Ravensmead Rd	Kay Lincoln, 12 Ravensmead Road
Warren Ave/Calmont Rd	Dennis Dyer, 7 Warren Avenue