



NEWSLETTER

4/96

August 1996

EDITORIAL

After the last two Newsletters which tended to look inward, this one, I hope, is back to our old style and looks out and about. We have a major contribution from Leslie Tucker on the Bromley Planning Seminar held earlier this year, at which Leslie and Paul Bennett were our representatives. David Young has already started firing shots on our behalf about traffic matters and although rail issues seem to be dormant at the moment, George Hodson has been his usual vigilant self.

To be included in a future Newsletter - by request - will be an update article on Tree Preservation Orders (TPO) and penalties. If an extended line is drawn along Madeira Ave., everything east of that line is covered by a TPO of one sort or another, so over half of our area is directly affected.

Two reminders. Firstly the London Borough of Bromley Residents Federation hold their bi-monthly meetings at Keston Village hall. Because it is unfair to expect the Keston Village Association to always host the meetings, it was agreed that the various constituent associations/societies would take it in turns. Our turn is Thursday Sept 12th. Being host involves putting out and putting away chairs, paying for and preparing light refreshments of tea/coffee and biscuits. We need some volunteers for the moving of chairs and the boiling of kettles etc. If you are willing to give a hand please let the Chairman or Secretary know by or at the next Members' Meeting.

The second reminder is that subscriptions are due. If your Road Rep. has not already called, don't be surprised if they do so in the next few

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

weeks. Just to remind you subscriptions are £5 the same as last year. Senior citizens and unemployed have the option to pay what they can afford from 5p to £5.

Dates for the Diary

5th September, Members' Meeting, 8.0 p.m., Bromley Court Hotel

7th November, Members' Meeting, 8.0 p.m., Bromley Court Hotel

Peter Pain (Editor)

PLANNING

Unitary Development Plans (UDP)

Little change. Bromley are still reviewing theirs and have promised full consultation as the various drafts progress. Lewisham's UDP (their first) has now been approved by the Council. In our view it is one of the best we have seen. Ironically, even in its draft form it was of considerable help to us when we made our case against the David Lloyd/Lewisham proposals for Beckenham Place Park.

Planning Applications

6 Madeira Avenue

This site has been the subject of several planning applications. Several months ago it was sold with planning permission for 2 pairs of semi-detached houses. The purchaser, demolished the "cottage" and applied for new planning permission to build 6 town houses. there were quite a lot of objections and permission was refused on grounds of over-development. More recently, following a meeting between the developer, some objectors and our local Councillors, a fresh application was made. Still for 6 town houses but reducing the number of bedrooms to that already approved for the 2 pairs of semi-detached. However, in addition they propose building a brick wall on the other side of the road at the rear of Nos. 42, 44 & 46 Farnaby Road. The wall is 6ft high between 8ft piers and topped by trellis. The intention is to build it in yellow brick contrasted by red bricks every 4th course. To put it mildly the proposal would be overbearing because of its height,

aggressive because of its design and an incongruous interruption to the natural and green character of the west side of that part of Madeira Avenue. If the intention is to avoid overlooking of the houses in Farnaby Road which are some 300ft away, there must be a more sympathetic solution. We and others have made that and other points to the Planning Committee and asked Cllr Warner to take up the issue at the actual Planning Committee meeting.

Bromley's Planning Seminar - 1996 (L. Tucker)

Introduction and overview

For the last several years, Bromley have invited up to two representatives from each recognised resident group within the Borough to attend their Residents Planning Seminar. The general aim is for the Members and Planners to be given an opportunity to tell us how well they have done during the previous years and, more importantly, to educate local Societies on how various aspects of the Planning system work and to hear their views. The seminars are held on a Saturday each spring (this year on 30th March) with morning and afternoon sessions separated by a buffet lunch. We have found them of value and are grateful for the time and effort spent by the members and officers involved.

This year the morning began with a welcoming address by the Chairman of the Development Control Committee, Mrs Joan Hatcher. She went on to review the Council's performance in dealing with the 2,592 planning applications received during 1995. A short introductory speech was then made by the Mayor who outlined the programme for the day.

The local economy

Michael Blanch, the new Chief Executive, then gave us his impressions of Bromley as a newcomer. These were suitably flattering but coloured by concerns for the local economy. During the last 10 years there has been a 40% loss in manufacturing and in the last 2 years there has been a 9% reduction in the businesses in the Borough. Most dramatic has been the loss of Glaxo. 10% of Bromley's 3300 shops are vacant, 14% are empty in Orpington and nearly 10% in Beckenham and Penge. This situation will not be helped after the proposed Bluewater Park shopping centre with its 13,000 car parking spaces and 250 shops opens near

Dartford in late 1998. It will be significantly larger than Lakeside and 3 times the size of the Glades. The main effect of this will be felt in Orpington but Bromley may experience a 7% loss of trade.

So what are Bromley doing about this? They propose developing closer and more effective links and partnerships with the local business community to promote Bromley. They are also reviewing their published strategy "Bromley Means Business". The regeneration of disadvantaged parts of the Borough like Anerley, Penge, the Crays and others is being targeted by making applications for government regeneration grants. In the case of Crystal Palace Park the aim is to attract around £70m of external money for a new Concert Bowl, restoration of much of Paxton's design and much more. Michael Blanch went on to reassure us that it would not be a case of encouraging business and industry "at any price" environmental considerations would always be given proper weight.

Planning

The Planning Officers then took over, beginning with the Chief Planner Stuart Macmillan. He gave a short update on the Glaxo Wellcome site, Holwood House and Beckenham Baths. Glaxo were trying to sell the site, preferably to one concern but it might have to be split or let in smaller lots as a science park. One of their Divisions may even stay on site. It is designated for light industry and its retention for this use is preferred - but all is still in the melting pot. Holwood House, empty for several years now, might soon be on the move again with early discussions taking place for its use for leisure: e.g. hotel, conference centre etc. The obvious constraints here are due to the fact that it is in the Green Belt, it is a Grade 1 listed building set in a landscape of significant historic and archaeological interest. No formal application had been made at the time of the Seminar although preliminary discussions with developers had been held.

A lottery bid will be sought for the updating of the well known Beckenham Baths which would include better parking provision and a new pool.

Heritage

The Head of Heritage and Design, Robin Cooper then told us more about the proposals for Crystal Palace Park and of the attempt to set up a tourist attraction at Biggin Hill in some of the redundant RAF buildings. The aim would be to present the history of the airfield and its importance during the Battle of Britain. The good news that Down House was about to be taken over by English Heritage and saved as a museum on the life and work of Charles Darwin was also mentioned.

Unitary Development Plan

Next came Peter Martin who, as Planning Policy Manager will head the revision of Bromley's UDP. This will take into account the flood of Government Guidance issued since the last edition of the UDP was frozen and also recognise more recent boundary changes. Consultation with resident groups was promised and the whole process is likely to take until the year 2000.

Enforcement

The guest speaker was Barrister at Law, Ian Albut, who had been asked to speak on "Enforcement". In this context the word refers to the processes which follow cases where development has taken place without the benefit of Planning Consent. Space does not allow a meaningful account of this complex subject here but the Society has a copy of what he said for future reference.

Environmental Services

The morning session ended with Gordon Hayward, the Director of Environmental Services giving an overview of his Department's present activities and intentions for the future. Since April 1995 the department has had a wide and important remit embracing, as it does the work previously covered by Technical Services, Planning, Environmental Health and Trading Standards departments. Again his wide ranging subjects cannot be properly covered here, but they could well form the basis of information given in a future Newsletter.

Workshops

After lunch the 71 delegates split up into four workshop groups, each to

discuss a different planning subject under the leadership of one of the Council's officers. the subjects were 1) Conservation Areas, 2) Green Belt, 3) The shopping challenge of Bluewater Park and 4) The Planning System - how to object. Paul Bennett opted for 3) and I joined 4). The workshop idea was a new departure and was popular, but I felt the 50 minutes allocated was too short . By the time the groups had found their separate rooms and settled down there was insufficient time to discuss and review their subject before reporting back to the fully assembled meeting.

Questions & Conclusion

Questions had been asked after each speaker but there followed the usual Residents "Soapbox" where questions previously submitted could be put. As in previous years there was insufficient time for all of these to be answered at the Seminar but written replies have been included to all of the questions in the Summary of the proceedings.

Altogether it had been a full and informative day and the result of the questionnaire filled in at the time by the delegates showed this to be the general view. We hope that Bromley will continue the tradition.

Beckenham Place Park

The draft Management Plan is still circulating among those members who expressed an interest at the SGM. If anyone else wants to read it please contact the Chairman on 460 2828. Although Leslie Tucker and Peter Pain have already submitted their comments to the Plan editor, there is still time for other comments to be sent forward. If any reader of the Plan has any comment or suggested changes that they would like to see incorporated would they please send them in writing to either Peter Pain or Leslie Tucker by the end of August.

TRANSPORT

Ravensbourne Ave./Beckenham Lane junction

Changes have been made to the timing of the lights and subjectively this seems to give more time to exit from Ravensbourne Ave. Part of the

problem is undoubtedly traffic from Station Road jumping the lights when they change to red. It seems that only the installation of cameras will reduce this dangerous habit. Regarding pedestrians the Bromley Traffic Engineer is looking favourably on an island north of the railway bridge, but he has yet to persuade others on this.

Rumours that Metrobus wanted to take the left-hand lane when exiting Shortlands Road and turning right under the bridge are unfounded. The suggestion actually came from a team of consultants who are looking at ways of speeding up bus flows. Fortunately it seems that Bromley's Traffic Engineers quickly stamped on the idea.

Oaklands/Grasmere junction

The idea of yellow lines to control parking and preserve the sight lines at this junction has been added to Bromley's list for future survey and possible action.

Overhanging trees/street lights Farnaby Road near golf course

This problem has been reported and we have been assured that it will receive attention.

Channel Tunnel Trains

At long last some of the electric locomotives for Eurotunnel freight trains are running. The general opinion is that not only are they quieter than the passenger train locomotives, but they also seem to be quieter than the trucks they are hauling

GENERAL INFORMATION

Bromley have a wide range of leaflets available next to the information desk in the main entrance to the Civic Centre. Subjects are wide ranging and cover such matters as Buyers rights, Nature conservation, Country walks, Access to information from the Council and many other subjects. It is worthwhile making time to look in to see what is available next time you are in Bromley doing those necessary chores.

R.V.P.S Officers (May 1996)

Chairman
Secretary
Treasurer
Auditor
Planning Officer-Bromley
Planning Officer-Lewisham
Membership Secretary
Newsletter Editor
BR Link/Bromley Committee Rep
Roads & Traffic Rep
Tree Warden
LBBRF Delegate
Police Consultative Cmte Rep
BPP Joint Working Party Rep
Hon Legal Adviser

Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue
Roy McCarthy, 16 Ravensmead Road
Brian Sanders, 41 Farnaby Road
Wally Carloss, 28a Parkhill Road
Leslie Tucker, 5 Bromley Avenue
Paul Bennett, 12 Elstree Hill
Paul Bennett, 12 Elstree Hill
Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue
George Hodson, 20 Ravensbourne Avenue
David Young, 101 Coniston Road
Arthur Barwell, 14 Grasmere Road
Elizabeth Davies, 12 Ravensmead Road
Elizabeth Davies, 12 Ravensmead Road
Peter Pain, 74 Madeira Avenue
Richard Thomas, 118 Ravensbourne Avenue

Road Representatives

Bromley Ave./Karen Ct
Grasmere/Highland Rds
Coniston Rd/Ullswater
& Hawkshead Closes
Downs Hill/Crab Hill
Elstree Hill/Hillbrow
Oaklands/Spencer Rds
Farnaby Rd (1-108)
Farnaby Rd (109 +)
Madeira Avenue
Ravensbourne Ave. (evens)
Ravensbourne Ave. (odds)
Ravensmead Rd
Warren Ave./Calmont Rd

Leslie Tucker, 5 Bromley Avenue
Barbara Price, 85 Coniston Road
Barbara Brown, 34 Downs Hill
Daphne Robeson, 2 Lynton Court, London Rd
Audrey Burford, 90 Farnaby Road
Maureen Johnson, 69 Farnaby Road
Ray Terrett, 70 Madeira Avenue
Ann Rowsell, 164 Ravensbourne Avenue
Ann Huntley, 155 Ravensbourne Avenue
Kay Lincoln, 12 Ravensmead Road
Alan Weatherley, 50 Warren Avenue