



NEWSLETTER

3/2001

July 2001

EDITORIAL

There has been movement on several fronts and another Newsletter is needed to bring everyone up-to-date. Of course none of the issues has yet been fully resolved, but there has been progress.

It is also timely to remind everyone that the 1st July is the beginning of our financial year and between now and the Autumn, Road Representatives will be calling for your subscription. If you are not in when they call most of the Road Reps will put a reminder through your letterbox. Please respond to it. Three quarters of the subscriptions can usually be collected quite quickly. The last 25% can sometimes require many repeat visits. Thank you for your co-operation.

Dates for the Diary

Thursday 6 Sept, Members' Meeting, 8.00p.m., Bromley Court Hotel.

Thursday 1 Nov, Members' Meeting, 8.00p.m., Bromley Court Hotel.

Peter Pain (Editor)

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

Seat at Bus Stop -Junction of Farnaby Rd/Ravensbourne Avenue

Bromley are content with the proposal in principle, but details and time-scales have yet to be agreed. Unfortunately our original contact has now left the Council and his replacement is on holiday. As soon as he returns we will get the matter moving again. According to local reports, the bus service has become unreliable of late, mainly due to traffic delays, so the seat should be even more welcome.

Donation to Valley School

Because of the foot and mouth epidemic, Lullingstone Nature Reserve has been closed and the Summer Field Study trip had to be postponed. As the school will break for the Summer holidays shortly we will be discussing future activity with the Headmistress in the Autumn.

Improvements to Corner Sites

We are still waiting for Bromley to respond with acceptable proposals.

BECKENHAM PLACE PARK

The Tender Evaluation Group - which includes a representative from the Working Party finally shortlisted 3 of the Tenderers and subsequently determined a preferred bidder plus a reserve. The Preferred Bidder is the Royal Victoria Hotel Group which is based in Hastings although the owner lives at Bickley.

Their plan is to renovate the Mansion for use as a conference centre. To retain and renovate the Stable Block and build on the other 3 sides to form a quadrangle for a 40-bed 3-star hotel. That complex will also house the golf clubs and Pro shop plus public rooms for refreshments. The golf course will remain public pay and play and any increase in fees contained to the rate of inflation. The course will also be improved and include a practice area and putting green.

Quite a lot of detailed issues have yet to be resolved and then the proposals need to be approved by English Heritage as "enabling development". Meantime the existing contractor BPP Ltd., who was also the reserve tenderer, continues until the end of July when Lewisham reassumes direct management until the long term contractor is in position.

TRANSPORT

Shortlands Junction Grade Separation

Following the Planning Inquiry last December, the Secretary of State has now approved the plans and work started on 2 July. Initially that will consist of constructing a new playground, drying area and additional car parking at the Trees Estate in preparation for later land-take.

In addition they will be starting work on creating an access to the site at 31 Downs Hill, be doing work on the embankment near Ravensbourne station and erecting noise barriers at 2 and 33 Downs Hill as well as behind the Sloane Hospital. In respect of the site access at Downs Hill, Railtrack have also submitted a detailed planning application for this work which includes proposals for saving some trees and replanting others with a mix of

semi-mature, extra heavy standard and container grown trees. Mainly they will be coniferous or evergreen but there will also be some deciduous and ornamental trees.

At the Public Inquiry, Railtrack said that they would have a lorry holding area to ensure a smooth flow of traffic to and from the site behind the Trees Estate and the site by Downs Hill bridge. They appear to be having trouble finding such a site. If they fail to find one they will have difficulty managing lorry movements which could result in congestion at the peak periods and possibly at other times. Railtrack are still committed to monthly meetings with Bromley and representatives of local residents plus other involved parties. We have every intention of being represented and will be closely monitoring the activities of Railtrack's contractors.

Parking Restrictions -Madeira Avenue

Following complaints from local residents about the number of cars being parked between the junctions with Highland Rd and Bromley Ave. The Council - after local consultation - are proposing to introduce a mixture of free and permit parking on this section. Plans have been sent to all of the residents who will be directly affected and it is expected that work will start in August.

PLANNING

Bromley Unitary Development Plan

We have commented on the First Deposit Draft and are now waiting the issue of the Final Deposit Draft. We will then have a further 6 weeks to decide whether to restate any of our earlier comments which either had not been included or for which we did not receive a satisfactory explanation. At that stage our comments will have to be in the format of evidence to the UDP Planning Inquiry.

Lewisham Unitary Development Plan

This one is already at the Final Deposit Draft stage. Over half of our proposed amendments were accepted and we were content with the reasons given for those which were not. So we will not be progressing to the Planning Inquiry stage for Lewisham's UDP.

Planning Applications

31 Downs Hill

There has been an outline application to demolish this house and replace it with 4 new houses on the site. We have written to Bromley formally objecting to the proposal. However, it is thought that this is an attempt by the owner to put a market value on

the site before it is compulsorily purchased by Railtrack as part of the land-take for the grade separation at Shortlands junction.

5 Oaklands Road - Greenhill

This building is owned by Mission Care and until a couple of years ago was used as a retirement/care home. We understood that it had to close because it no longer met all of the current legislation. Mission Care have now submitted an application to demolish the existing building and its extensions in order to build a new 3/4 storey home to the latest standards. The original complex only had 26 bedrooms and the Victorian part at least must have had a lot of neutralised space. By making better use of the floor area the plans show 60 bedrooms for the new building. There will be some increase in the footprint at both the front and rear. They also intend to provide on-site parking for 9 vehicles and that will involve building up the ground at the rear. Our comments to the Planning Committee draw attention to the following:

- * The new car parking area to the rear of the new building would be level with the eaves of the house on the corner of Bromley Ave & Grasmere Rd and less than 15m away. That conflicts with Policy H2ii of the present UDP and H6 of the emerging UDP.
- * The roof line would be overly prominent - a lower roof pitch is required. The main entrance is positioned too near to the junction of Oaklands Rd and Grasmere Rd, with poor sight lines.
- * Although the garden is protected by a Tree Preservation Order with later additions, the plans do not specify all of the trees nor whether smaller screening will be retained. We believe that they should be.
- * The larger building will generate more parking. Some of which will be on-street as the rear parking area is understood to be for staff only. Street parking is already a problem in this area.

GENERAL

The London Fire Brigade have recently issued a review of the past year which also talks about their future aims. Some of the facts are interesting.

Out of a total staff of 7,200; 6,900 are operational firefighters.

Out of 175,000 incidents attended; 61,000 were false alarms.

Clearly false alarms and hoax calls waste time and could cause delay to a real emergency. They have successfully reduced the number of hoax calls and continue to work with schools on both fire safety and the foolishness of hoax calls. However the number of false alarms from automatic fire alarms has increased, indicating either poor installation or poor maintenance. They intend to visit the worst offenders and investigate the reasons.