



NEWSLETTER – No.112 – SUMMER 2007

THE CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTARY

I realise that I am taking the Chair of the Society as a very new member and I appreciate that I shall be leaning heavily on the expertise and professionalism of the existing members. Geoffrey Stone will be remaining on the committee and in thanking him for the work that he has done during the last four years I can say that I shall look to him for advice and guidance in the coming months and years.

We will be preparing for our 50th Anniversary in 2009 and I believe that we have grounds to celebrate achievements in protecting the environment. Whilst also accepting that many of us are living in homes which have replaced older and perhaps architecturally more impressive buildings we should be vigilant to protect what is left of our heritage. We must ensure that projects which may spoil the appearance of our Borough are challenged and justified.

I understand that all of the existing members of the committee are remaining. I shall hope to express my gratitude to them as we have our meetings and hope they will accept any shortcomings as part of a learning curve. Joy Furness has also now joined the committee and I am sure she will be arranging some interesting visits and events during the coming years; we hope they will receive your support.

HARRY CORBEN

EPS EXHIBITION ON SATURDAY 8TH SEPTEMBER 2007

The Exhibition will be in the Ashley Centre (now officially known as The Mall, Ashley). The purpose is three fold. The committee is hoping to raise the profile of the Society to let more people know that we exist. The display is also there for information for our members so do come and see for yourself. And last but not least we hope to recruit new members. We do have a good membership but the more we have the more attention is paid to our views.

Committee members will be manning the Exhibition but we would also appreciate additional help. If you think that you could give two hours of your time please contact me on 01372 728570

ISHBEL KENWARD

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Society took place on 26th April 2007 in the Myers Hall, Epsom Playhouse. Following the retiring Chairman's address on planning challenges and new legislation, members of the committee and others reported on their respective areas of particular responsibility.

The retiring Chairman then presented Tom Detheridge with a painting of one of the illustrations to the Heritage Trail, signed by the artist, in recognition of his work on the Heritage Trail. Mr. Detheridge made a short speech in reply.

The following officers, members of the Executive Committee, Hon Auditor and Hon Archivist were then elected:

OFFICERS

Tel (01372)

Chairman

Harry Corben.

Vice-Chairman & Planning

Alan Baker FRICS.

Hon Secretary

Malcolm Boyd.

Hon Treasurer

Tony Smith.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Minutes Secretary

Mrs Angela Clifford.

Membership Secretary

Mrs Ishbel Kenward.

Planning Infrastructure

Norman Dempster.

Planning & Conservation

Robert Austen.

Information Technology

Piers Nicholson.

Events

Mrs Joy Furness.

Publicity

Nick Lock.

Past Chairman

Geoffrey Stone.

AND

Hon Auditor

Harry Wilkinson OBE.

Archivist

Philip Clifford.

EDITOR

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

8-12 Dorking Road and 6 Elm Grove: Last time I reported that the appeal against the refusal of the first scheme of sheltered apartments had been withdrawn and that a revised application had been made. This has been refused under delegated authority on the grounds of its siting, size and bulk harming the character and appearance of the area, and for a number of more detailed reasons.

Upper High Street and Depot Road: The site appraisal was reported to the March Environment Committee as hoped and not surprisingly a long debate ensued. The public consultations were written up as a number of broad options and the Committee's views were sought as a basis for future discussions with interested parties and for use in the preparation of the Local Development Framework. You will remember that the study included the Helical Bar site and the whole of the Depot Road Car Park. Broad support was given by the Committee to the possibility of including a medical centre in a mixed use housing development; retail use of the Helical Bar site should be restricted to the ground floor to increase the total housing available on the site. Careful attention should be given to the height of buildings especially the frontage to Upper High Street and near the Pikes Hill Conservation Area. Whilst some loss of public car parking spaces might be inevitable, the scale of this would be decided by the Planning Committee at the relevant time. The access route from Upper High Street should be located further away from the Conservation Area. These are only a few of the points arising from a long debate on a long report.

Heron Court, 53 Alexandra Road: The revised application for the redevelopment of this land was refused on a number of grounds. One of interest to us, and which was not used in the first refusal, was that it proposed the demolition of a locally important building of architectural and historic interest. This was one of our own grounds for objection, and we had suggested Heron Court should be locally listed. We have since heard that an appeal has been lodged which will be heard at a public inquiry.

Dame Annis Barn, Burgh Heath Road: This went to the March Planning Committee with a recommendation to refuse planning permission but with a weak reason - that it would threaten several trees including the loss of a protected cedar. There was a vigorous debate and the application was refused with strengthened reasons. We have been speculating whether there would be an appeal or a revised scheme, but I have just heard - while typing this paragraph - that the developers, Charles Church have no further interest in pursuing the proposed development. This sounds good news, but if the owner still wants to sell we may get something even worse. Keep your fingers crossed.

Land rear of 10-11, Beverley Close, Ewell: This also went to the March Planning Committee who unanimously agreed to the recommendation to refuse.

Capitol Square, 4-6, Church Street: This development, formerly called Capitol House, is well advanced and we have always thought the vehicle access to Church Street very unsatisfactory, being so close to the major junction. An application has now been approved to provide a rear access from the Town Hall car park, following an exchange of lands with the Council and relocation of some parking spaces. There is a condition

that there will be no vehicle access from Church Street and the existing access shall be permanently closed. This is good news. The only subject for discussion at the Planning Committee was the removal of the 150 year old London Plane but Jeremy Young the Tree Officer argued that it was diseased and its replacement by a new semi mature specimen would be better, and this was accepted.

Centralè, Station Approach: This is also well advanced and we have received many comments about its appearance, which is disappointing to say the least. The conditions on the planning permission required the external materials to be approved in order to achieve a satisfactory appearance. We have therefore written to the Planning Department asking whether this happened and for comments generally. So far no reply has been received.

64A Worple Road: This is a former smithy, now workshops, a quiet backwater between Worple Road, Avenue Road and Rosebery Park. It immediately adjoins a number of back gardens. An application was received from Realistic Rock Academy to use the buildings for music tuition, rehearsal, recording and band management. They have associations with a number of schools. Whilst sympathetic to their community work, we were even more sympathetic to the neighbours who would suffer, and were unconvinced by sound insulation proposals. We therefore objected strongly and the application has been refused.

Storage units, Derby Arms Road: Permission was refused earlier for extensions to these units next to the public house and in the Green Belt. Five enforcement notices were served including one in respect of the intrusive metal fence many of you will have noticed. Planning permission was then sought for the fence; we objected and permission was refused. Appeals have been made on all these matters and we shall be writing objecting.

High Street fascias: Prominent undesirable fascia signs have been proposed for the McDonalds premises and for the former main Boots shop next to the Ebbisham Centre. We have objected to both and think the control of fascia signs to be important to the appearance and success of the Town Centre.

ALAN BAKER

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

We have now received notification that the Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework has been deemed 'sound' by the inspector subject to a number of binding changes. This is one of the first in the country to have been approved and the Borough Council should be congratulated for the detailed composition of the document and for the consultative exercise in which we took part. The Council intends to adopt the Core Strategy formally at its Council meeting on 24th July 2007. In the meantime, since the Inspector's report is binding, considerable weight will be attached to the policies in the revised Core Strategy in determining planning applications.

Protection of the Green Belt is a key feature of the Core Strategy and this has been forcibly endorsed by the Inspector. As an example of the Policies within the Core Strategy I now copy one which I hope will be of interest to members. This Policy has

been significantly modified by the Inspector.

“Policy CS6. The Council will protect and seek to enhance the Borough’s heritage assets including historic buildings, conservation areas, archaeological remains, ancient monuments, parks and gardens of historic interest, and other areas of special character. The settings of these areas will be protected and enhanced. High quality and inclusive design will be required for all developments.

Development should:

- Create attractive, functional and safe public and private environments;
- Reinforce local distinctiveness and complement the attractive characteristics of the Borough;
- Make efficient use of land and have regard to the need to develop land in a comprehensive way.”

Lavandou Stud, Chalk Lane

Members of your committee are expecting shortly to meet Michael Baxter, Lord Halifax’s local agent, and the appointed architect in order to discuss development proposals for the listed equestrian buildings in this Chalk Lane Conservation Area. This will give the Society an opportunity to make their views known prior to a planning application being submitted.

MALCOLM BOYD.

MEMBERSHIP

Thank you to those members who have paid their Subs. and especially to those who have generously given donations. A reminder for those who have not yet paid - subscriptions are due by the end of June - £2 per individual, £3 per household. If you have not yet paid and you were out when he/she called, your Road Rep. should have put a note in with this *Newsletter* giving a reminder of his/her address. Please save them an extra trip by taking your Subscription to them. If you have any queries regarding your Subscription, please phone me.

ISHBEL KENWARD (728570)

TALK BY MRS BRONWEN MILLS FOLLOWING THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Mrs Bronwen Mills, a Blue Badge Tourist Guide, was introduced by Alan Baker and spoke on the subject ‘If it tastes nasty it must be good for you’. This intriguing title turned out to be the history of Spas. At one time there were over 200 Spa towns in the United Kingdom but Mrs Mills concentrated on Bath, Epsom, Tunbridge Wells and Brighton. The word ‘spa’ derives from ‘sanitas per aqua’ - Latin for health through water. We learned that springs have been used for thousands of years as the waters were believed to have many health benefits - you either drank them or bathed in them or both! The popularity of waters at Epsom, discovered in 1618, led to the need for fresh water, food and lodgings, so the town developed around the pond in the market place. Pepys recorded in 1663 that locals were selling mugs of water containing 12 pints! Activities recorded by various people show that men and women separated in the town - men to the drinking establishments and women to promenade via the coffee

shops and bookshops - the purpose being to be seen by the rest of society. Racing and hawking are recorded as happening on the Downs and Box Hill was a favourite place for romantic trysts.

We learned much about the social mores of the times and how the popularity of Spa Towns waxed and waned - often according to which member of Society had given or withdrawn approval. Modern spa equivalents could be said to be bottled water and health farms though none would dare to claim to cure the long list dating from the 19th century which Mrs Mills read to us at the close of her talk! She was thanked and warmly applauded.

ANGELA CLIFFORD

TALK BY DEREK MOSS ON DESIGN OF BUILDINGS IN RELATION TO THEIR ENVIRONMENT - PHYSICAL, POLITICAL & ECONOMIC. 27th March 2007

Some 50 members listened to an erudite, informative and thought-provoking trip through some 2000 years of building design in approximately 90 minutes. We learnt that the Parker Morris Standards, which set minimum space requirements, e.g. ceiling heights, were abolished during the so-called 'Thatcher Years'. This has led to considerable variation in standards. The use of local materials - e.g. bricks, wattle and daub - limited the height of buildings otherwise walls would have been so thick that window openings would be like tunnels! Derek has a theory that jettied buildings came about because if the first floor joists overlapped the walls, the weight of the upper walls upon them tended to stop them bowing down – food for thought indeed. Greek Classical Architecture relied on the 'Golden Rectangle' to establish an overall proportion which pleases the eye. The Parthenon is a perfect example of mathematical proportions. Many buildings retained these design requirements right through to the end of the 18th century. The wealthy took the Grand Tour and because carpenters and masons understood the principles they could build a house from a drawing. They were so skilled they could reproduce whatever their employer had sketched. Elements were used from all over Europe - the Banqueting Hall has a Rubens ceiling brought over in pieces from Italy; Tuscan style towers appear at Osborne House. Before the advent of gunpowder, defensive buildings were purely that - living quarters were separate and inhabitants rushed inside the castle at times of war. Gradually big houses encompassed more comfortable living and sleeping areas. Rye was cited as a typical nucleus town - Tudor through to 20th century developments are visible. Inigo Jones visited Italy and his first house design in 1635 was of classical style - he admired and was influenced by Palladio. 1667 saw the first Building Act in this country and Covent Garden was the first attempt at Town Planning. Mansard roofs came into being because of a tax on the number of floors - rooms were claimed to be not a floor but a roof. French Baroque architecture was not copied - after all they were Catholic, had despotic rulers and were our enemies!

By the 1750s people were becoming tired of classical design and the invention of wallpaper meant that by 1770, when Robert Adam 'did over' existing houses, there was a battle between Gothic and Classical styles. During the 19th Century, the Classical design was considered 'not Christian enough' and fell out of favour. Modern Architecture really starts with the Industrial Revolution. Modular building became possible. For

example the Crystal Palace - built for the 1851 exhibition - was constructed by bolting together prefabricated iron elements. This is why it was possible to take it down and re-erect it elsewhere.

Twentieth century design incorporated modern technology and materials. The Arab Centre by Jean Nouvelle is all steel and glass and has windows with elements - controlled by photo electric cells - which open and close like the iris in our eyes. In Japan, the Church on the Water was designed so the landscape and the building appear to flow one into the other. Norman Foster's Mediatec is next to a classical style building but uses similar proportions in different materials. The final slide was of the post-modern American Disney Building which echoes 550BC Athens by using huge, stone seven dwarfs instead of classical caryatids on the front. The audience was not impressed!

ANGELA CLIFFORD

EVENTS AND OUTINGS

OUTING to MAPLEDURHAM and HENLEY on 26th JUNE 2007

There was a very good response to this outing and many more people applied than there were seats on the coach, so to be fair to everyone a ballot was held. Everyone who applied has been notified of the result and the lucky ones have received their tickets and the others have had their cheques returned. The possibility of running a second coach was suggested; this was considered but was not feasible for a number of reasons. I am sorry for any disappointment.

VISIT to THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT and LUNCH on TUESDAY 18th SEPTEMBER 2007

We are very fortunate that our MP's wife Sue Grayling has been able to arrange for the Epsom Protection Society to visit the Houses of Parliament on 18th September. There will be a conducted tour of both the House of Commons and the House of Lords and of Westminster Hall followed by lunch in one of the members dining rooms in the House of Commons. Our MP Chris Grayling will host the lunch and his wife Sue will also be present. The outing will include a three course lunch and a glass of wine followed by coffee and petits fours.

The coach will pick up outside the Methodist Church in Ashley Road about 9am and at the car park by the tea hut at Tattenham Corner shortly after. The coach will return to Epsom after lunch leaving about 3.30pm. More details and exact times of departures will be given with the tickets.

The cost will be £45.00 per person which will include coach, tour of Houses of Parliament, lunch and tips.

Please note that due to the popularity of our outings only members of EPS can apply, so if you wish to come with a friend please ensure that he/she is a member before you apply.

Please apply on the application form with this *Newsletter* and return to Joy Furness together with a cheque made out to the Epsom Protection Society and a stamped addressed envelope. Early application is recommended.

ANNUAL BUFFET SUPPER FRIDAY 19th OCTOBER 2007, 7.45 to 10.15pm

This event will again be held in the large hall of St Joseph's Church and the catering arrangements will be the same as last year as this format proved to be the most convenient and popular. On arrival please collect an individual plate of canapes and a glass of wine and find a seat and the rest of the food (hot and cold) will be brought to your table.

Please note that the doors will not open before 7.30pm to allow time for the room to be set up beforehand by the committee.

The entertainment will be provided by our own members Kate and Malcolm Bown and their well known group 'Sweet and Low' supported by two other artists. All these people are very accomplished so we can look forward to an extremely pleasant and entertaining evening.

There is no restriction on the number of people who can attend this function so you are welcome to bring guests and friends with you.

The price is £16.00 each. Please fill in the application form with this *Newsletter* and return to Joy Furness together with a cheque made payable to the Epsom Protection Society and a stamped addressed envelope.

VISIT TO THE MILL AT SONNING ON SATURDAY 12th JANUARY 2008 for LUNCH followed by a MATINEE PERFORMANCE of RAY COONEY'S play 'RUN FOR YOUR WIFE' which is an hilarious farce.

As the time before Christmas is very busy we decided to have our outing early in January when the social calendar is quieter. I was able to book 52 seats so we will be able to take a full coach.

The cost will be about £45 and more details and an application form will be in the next *Newsletter*. Keep the date free if you are interested in coming.

TALKS

It is hoped to have the first of the next series of talks sometime in early November, more details in the next *Newsletter*.

JOY FURNESS (01372 722186)

Epsom Protection Society
Tel nos. (membership) 01372 728570
(other) 01372 723325
Website: www.epsomprotectionsociety.co.uk

Editor: Paul Fifoot
Zebrato
Lynwood Avenue
Epsom KT17 4LQ

Printed: 'Print Centre'
5 West Street
Epsom KT18 7LR

APPLICATION FORM FOR VISIT TO THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT FOLLOWED
BY LUNCH, TUESDAY 18th SEPTEMBER 2007

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

PHONE NUMBER.....

Please tick below as appropriate:-

I will join the coach outside the Methodist Church.

I will join the coach at Tattenham Corner car park.

Cost per person £45.00 (inclusive of tour, lunch coach and tips).

I would like Tickets and I enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to Epsom Protection Society and a stamped addressed envelope.

Please return the form to Joy Furness, 37 Woodcote Hurst Epsom KT18 7DS (Tel 01372 722186)

Cut here

APPLICATION FORM FOR BUFFET SUPPER PARTY,
FRIDAY 19TH OCTOBER 2007 7.45pm in ST JOSEPH'S CHURCH HALL EPSOM

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

PHONE NUMBER.....

I would like tickets for this event (£16 each) and enclose a cheque made payable to Epsom Protection Society for £.....and a stamped addressed envelope.

Please return to Joy Furness 37 Woodcote Hurst Epsom KT18 7DS (Tel 01372 722186)