

February 2005

The **Town Crier**

The voice of the Ruislip Residents' Association, founded 1919

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Acting Secretary: 22Westholme Gardens, Ruislip, HA4 8QJ

Freedom Of Information Act

The Act came into force on 1st January. Any person can now make a request for information to a public authority and is entitled to be informed in writing if the information is held by the authority and, if so, to have the information provided within 20 working days.

There are 23 absolute or qualified exemptions. If an absolute exemption applies the authority does not have to consider it. For the other exemptions the information can only be withheld if it is in the public interest to do so.

We shall be carefully considering how best to make use of these new rights in pursuing issues with the Council.

Lewis Hawken, Chairman

Planning

Since our last report there have been more applications for mobile phone masts and another new block of flats to replace existing family houses. We also have an update on several other important items.

Mobile Phone Masts

The latest application is for a mast on land in Ducks Hill Road. As our Chairman explained in the last issue of the Town Crier, the Council's powers are limited due to the special rules applying to telecommunication operators. However following objections from residents and your Association the Council did recently refuse applications for masts in both Ickenham Road and Bury Street.

Flats

The latest application is at 32-42 Pembroke Road where Cosway Land are proposing to replace six houses with twenty four flats. When considering this application the Council will have to take account of Government policy encouraging more intense use of urban land. However there are several aspects of this development which are of concern and we have registered these with the Planners.

RAF Lime Grove

The application for 375 homes was due to be considered by the Planning Committee in November. This was postponed following last minute comment from Transport for London and it seems the matter is still under discussion.

Hillingdon Football Club, Breakspear Road

The Council approved an increase in height of certain floodlighting columns, subject to ratification by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). We have supported the local residents' request that the application be made the subject of a public enquiry. Without waiting for a decision from the ODPM the Club have installed the new columns. The Council are aware of the situation and await the ODPM ruling before deciding whether any action is necessary.

Kings College Fields Pavilion

The Council's plans to refurbish this building as a multi purpose community facility appear to have moved forward and planning permission was recently granted to change the first floor accommodation to three one bed flats. Following our representations the Council are considering making accommodation available to a live in caretaker on the first floor.

Recent Decisions

Applications for development in rear gardens at Kingsend and Thurlestone Road were refused. Also an appeal for the retention of an unauthorised extension on a listed building in Bury Street was rejected.

Council Policy

Last autumn the Council published a consultation document on how they intend to engage the community on future planning issues and also the preparation of the new Local Development Framework. This is an important matter as it will eventually replace the existing Unitary Development Plan and is intended to guide development in Hillingdon until 2016. We have commented on the proposals and will monitor the progress of the policy.

Hillingdon Hospital

Members who attended our AGM last year will recall the talk by the Hospital's Chief Executive, David McVittie when he outlined plans for the redevelopment of the Hospital. A planning application has now been submitted for these major works and details may be viewed on the Council website www.hillingdon.gov.uk/planning (Reference No 2005/1).

John Williams 01895 639004 & Mike Hodge

Manor Farm

We invited Tricia Grimshaw, the Council's Assistant Director For Youth & Leisure, to update us on the progress at Manor Farm following the award of Lottery funding in the Spring. This is what she had to say:

The Development Phase of the Manor Farm project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund is now in progress. The work comprises the development of the detailed design and costed plans for Manor Farm House, the Great Barn and the outbuildings of the west courtyard, the library and a new toilet facility. The landscape setting for these buildings will be restored alongwith work on the main approach into the site from the High Street.

The project design team is meeting on a regular basis and comprises a team of three architects from West Waddy ADP practice in Abingdon and the landscape architect team from Land Use Consultants. West Waddy are acting as the coordinating consultants for the project. The project design team also includes a member of staff from Smiths Gore with planning expertise and a representative of the Museum of London Archaeology Service (MoLAS).

The work completed by early January includes:

Cultural heritage assessment of Manor Farm Site by Museum of London Archaeology Service

Topographical survey

Measured survey of all the buildings in the project which can then be accessed on CAD and used by a range of services

Range of investigative work commissioned for Manor Farm House with agreement obtained from English Heritage. This includes mortar analysis, timber condition investigation, thermography, paint analysis and fibre optic borescope inspection to help analysis of constructional history and fabric condition.

Resistivity survey on specified areas of landscape

Application to English Heritage for a range of trial pits in different parts of the site to support the landscape and building design

The Council have recently appointed the company Haley Sharp to develop the interpretation plan for the Site and they will be joining the design team and working closely with both the architects and landscape architects. As a project aim is for the Site to be used and enjoyed far more by schools, a learning plan is also being prepared over the spring months - thanks to Eileen Bowlt for taking Allan Randall around the Site in late December.

In order to keep local people and visitors to the Manor Farm in touch with the project, posters around the site will provide current information. The Site manager will keep user groups informed and a website for Manor Farm will be developed.

Health

Paddington Health Campus

The future of Harefield Hospital continues to be an important local issue. Many readers will remember that five years ago, after acrimonious public consultation in the year 2000, it was decided that the hospital would move into the Paddington Basin in central London as soon as new premises are built. The pressure group, "Heart of Harefield" has constantly opposed that decision, backed unanimously by local people, who want the hospital to stay exactly where it is now.

Plans for the Paddington Basin have had a stormy passage. The Outline Business Case produced in 1998 was approved in 1999 and abandoned in 2004 - after a damning report from the National Audit Office. By that time projected costs had risen from £360 million to over £800 million and, despite all efforts, Planning Permission had still not been granted!

So now, five years later and with many millions of pounds wasted, the project is back to the beginning again. A new Outline Business Case was put to the North West London Strategic Health Authority at a special meeting on 20th December 2004. This proposes putting Royal Brompton and Harefield Hospitals and St Mary's Hospital on the north side of the Grand Union Canal in Paddington with academic facilities for Imperial College on the south side. The Full Business Case is expected in 2008 with completion of the Campus planned for 2013.

The new plans became possible when Westminster City Council and the Paddington Development Corporation agreed to sell additional land on the north of the Canal. This contrasts with earlier plans to develop only the southern site.

Mount Vernon Treatment Centre

Progress is on schedule. The Treatment Centre is due to open in Autumn 2006

Northwood Health Centre

The appeal against refusal of planning permission for the new health centre is scheduled to be heard on 28th June 2005 in Civic Centre Uxbridge

Joan Davis 01895 636095

Roads

Parking – High Street Pay & Display

This will go ahead very much as originally proposed except that Bury Street is excluded, but your Association, together with the local Chamber of Commerce, have been pressing Hillingdon Council for a 30 minute period of free parking to be made available as part of the scheme. I am pleased to report that this change was discussed, and a trial approved at a Council meeting on 18th January. The plan is scheduled for implementation in April 2005. I also understand that the proposed charge has been reduced to 20p for each 30 minute period after the first, with a maximum stay of 2 hours. The local car parks will be brought into line with both the charges and free 30 minute period.

Bury Street/Breakspear Road Roundabout

Some minor design modifications for this scheme are being completed, but it has received Cabinet approval. The roundabout should be installed by the end of March 2005.

Car Parks - St. Martins Approach

The shrubs adjacent to the road have been removed, the beds replanted and fences erected surrounding most of the area. Delivery of the remaining fencing is awaited, together with CCTV cameras and brackets. Work is expected to be finished before the end of January and should be completed by the time you read this.

Traffic Lights – Bury Street/Ladygate Lane

These lights have long been promised, but, unfortunately, we are in the hands of Transport for London. No date is available at the time of going to press.

Parking Consultation – Ruislip Lido

Residents in the relevant area should have received the documents relating to this consultation. The latest date for return of the questionnaire was 19th January 2005.

Peter Lansdown
peter.lansdown@sarbrook.co.uk

Ruislip Manor Station

You are no doubt aware that the eastbound platform into London was closed on 3 January and is not planned to reopen until 26 June while the embankment is strengthened and the platform completely reconstructed by Metronet Rail. Meanwhile passengers for London are recommended to walk (8-10 min) or catch a bus or train to Ruislip station and travel on from there (tube tickets will be valid on the bus). Those returning from Uxbridge can either get off at Ruislip or travel on to Eastcote and catch a train back to the Manor. Similar work will take place later on the westbound platform which is planned to close on 9 July.

To provide safe access many of the existing trees and the vegetation has had to be removed alongside both platforms. Metronet have undertaken to consult the Council on a replanting scheme - they have also promised to restore Park Way Green when the work is completed.

Brian Cowley 0208 582 7810

Police

Licensing Act

From February 2005 the Local Authority will start accepting applications for premises that wish to sell alcohol. Applicants will have to publish an A3 Notice in their premises which will give details of the application made. Applications to the Local Authority have to be decided within 20 days. If no objection is lodged then the application will be approved by the Council's Licensing Officer. The application should also be able to be viewed via the Hillingdon Council website. From 5th November 2005 the final stage of the Act comes into force whereby all premises will be trading under the new laws permitting trading for up to 24 hours. It is reasonable to believe that few premises will open 24 hours, there is however reason to believe that several premises will apply for say, 2 am closing. There are few grounds on which one can object to an application. The presumption is to award the application.

If you are concerned about a particular application please contact me 01895 675813 between 7pm and 9pm.

Vandalism & Graffiti

This is an issue of very great concern to our members. While it is difficult to know what children are up to all of the time parents should be aware that they can be fined for cleaning up after their children. Fines of £1,500 to £2,000 have been levied.

Ivor John 01895 675813

Environment

Friends Of Ruislip Lido

Following the appeal in October's Town Crier a Friends of Ruislip Lido has now been set up. If you would like to register your interest in joining please go to their web site www.friendsofruisliplido.net or e-mail

contact@friendsofruisliplido.net or phone 01895 625770. The Friends Of Ruislip Lido operates separately from the Association but very much with our wholehearted support.

Fines for Dropping Litter

Only 2 people have been fined in the whole of Hillingdon for dropping litter in the street since the introduction of the Council's much heralded "Saying No To Litter" campaign in May 2004. This is in spite of the fact that the Cabinet document introducing the campaign promised "A tough and energetic enforcement regime" and a "no tolerance approach to littering". I will be pressing the Council to properly enforce the anti-littering laws.

Street Cleaning

LBH will now be cleaning the section to the east of Highgrove Way each Wednesday. Previously it was only cleaned every five weeks.

Cllr Philip Corthorne is negotiating with Kentucky Fried Chicken in the High St for them to voluntarily litter pick the pavement either side of their shop between King Edwards and Ickenham Roads.

Graffiti

The Council will generally only remove graffiti if it is reported to them. In my experience once reported action is taken promptly. Let's make the most use of this service. To report graffiti ring the LBH Contact Centre on 01895 556000 or e-mail them at contactcentre1@hilligdon.gov.uk

High St Pavement

An inspection of the High St was made with the Ruislip Chamber Of Commerce and Officers from the LBH Highways Department in November. 28 locations were identified as requiring work mostly on safety grounds. The railings at the corner with Bury St had been in a state of disrepair for some months. Action was promised "in the new year".

Working with The Council

I am continuing to liaise with the Council in a number of areas but progress is slow due to what appears to be the Council's defensive attitude to my feedback and expressions of concern.

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