

Hitcham and Taplow Preservation Society

Newsletter 83 - Spring 2005



Hitcham House

As it was in about 1953 when it became a training centre and nurses' home as an annexe to the Canadian Red Cross Hospital.

Hitcham and Taplow Preservation Society

Formed in 1959 to protect Hitcham, Taplow, and the surrounding countryside from being spoilt by bad development and neglect.

President : Eva Lipman
Vice Presidents: Tony Hickman, Dr J Kennedy, Derek Walker, Lincoln Lee
Chairman: Anne Hanford
Treasurer: John Hanford
Secretary: Jeremy Vanstone
Asst. Secretary: Allyn Anthony
Committee: Euan Felton, Heather Fenn, Karl Lawrence, Andy McKenzie, Barrie Peroni, Fred Russell, Louise Symonds, Esther Willmore (co-opted), Gill Holloway (co-opted)

Editorial

Fred Russell

I've been writing these editorials for quite a while now and maybe it's time for a fresh hand at the keyboard and some new ideas. For instance, I wonder about the idea of 'guest editorials' from interesting people round the Parish?

In this issue we are fully testing the idea of developing the Newsletter via our new website (www.taplowsociety.org.uk). This is an important step in that it means that if anybody has an interesting idea for entry in the Newsletter then they can simply input it themselves on the website. The editor can then examine this material and extract the meaty stuff for the Newsletter which will become a printed snapshot of ongoing Parish life. We would like you all to look at our website on a regular basis and post information as well as articles on it which might be of general interest to us all. It would be great if it could become a forum for exchange of information.

There is an article within which summarizes the South East Plan which has been prepared by our new Regional Assembly planners. We are informed that this will be the only statutory backing for the Government's four designated growth areas, three of which are in our Region. The Government has produced a consultative document called "Culture at the Heart of Regeneration" (Such wonderful titles!) which states: "The planning system exists to ensure that there is a fair balance between the benefits to developers and the benefits to society". You have to ask yourselves what this means. Does it mean that developers are outside society and it's Us against Them? Or does it mean that aspect of society represented by the planners? What about you and me? It is worth noting that at a meeting of the Chiltern Society I attended, fully half of those present did not have knowledge of the 'Your Shout'

pamphlet which was supposed to elicit our opinion about the Plan - or at least the number of houses they wish to inflict on us. I have a copy of it but the questionnaire seems to boil down to "Do you prefer us to build 25,000 or 35,000 houses a year for a twenty year period and where do you think we should build them?" Some choice! The actual number required by the existing population is estimated to be approx 17,000 - 18,000 per year.

In the above context Crossrail makes its appearance as a provision of the transport infrastructure for all the planned increase in economic activity and population in the South. It's a bold and interesting idea (see brief article) but it could have significant effects on Taplow including, for instance, the Brunel Bridge being graced with electric pylons, a structure in line for a World Heritage Site ranking.

The Taplow Parish Plan is in its final stages at the moment of writing and by the time you read this it will be with the Planning Office. The work in producing this plan has been considerable and involved many volunteers from around the Parish and steered by John Kennedy. Special mention must be made of Bernard and Mary Trevallion who pulled the whole thing together to produce what is undoubtedly the very first definition of our parish environment together with an analysis of what a significant proportion of us wish to see happen to it in the future. The Parish owes them a debt of gratitude.

The Cliveden battle trundles on with a Public Inquiry to be held in August. There has, I gather, been much behind the scenes manoeuvring to avoid the expense (and exposure) of such an inspection, like the latest offering of 170 houses instead of 191. Watch this space.

Hitcham House

Alan Senior

The present 'Hitcham House' was originally built in about 1868 for George Hanbury, the great-grandfather of Robert Hanbury who currently lives in 'Tithe Barn' adjacent to St. Mary's Church to the north of Hitcham Lane.

At that time, however, the house was called 'Blythwood'. It only became 'Hitcham House' after the Hanbury family purchased the land to the north of Hitcham Lane on which the original 'Hitcham House' had stood, located close to the site of the present 'Hitcham Park Cottage'. At one time, Queen Elizabeth I visited Sir Nicholas Clarke at the original Hitcham House and reportedly said that he was a very rude man and she would not visit him again! At some time, the site was occupied by a monastery and stew ponds were created to provide a guaranteed source of fish. Finally, a Georgian house was built on the site, used as a school at some time, but was demolished in 1804 after a fire.

Skipping ahead now to the 20th century, here are some more recent activities involving Hitcham House and its estates:

During the Great War, Home Farm (now called 'Hitcham House Farm' with its entrance off Lent Rise) was occupied in March 1915 by the Kent Heavy Battery. It was also used as billets by the 2nd/4th Royal Berkshire Regiment, which was raised and commanded by Colonel L H Hanbury CMG VD. This Regiment moved to France in June 1916. In World War II, Hitcham House was partly occupied by the RAF Police (with Lionel Hanbury residing in one wing of the house only) and the RAF occupied both gate lodges. There was also a prison camp for Italian and other prisoners-of-war in the field on the north side of Hitcham Lane adjacent to the Gore.

According to Beryl Montague (who now lives in Church Lodge opposite St. Mary's Church), Hitcham House and its stable block was sold to the then Windsor Group Hospital Management Committee (now East Berks Health Authority) sometime between 1950 and 1952 for the princely sum of £17,000.

After minor alterations to the interior of the main house, it opened as a hostel for student nurses of the Canadian Red Cross Hospital in March 1953. Beryl first lived in Hitcham House as a student nurse in the 1950s. The stable block was converted into a School of Nursing in the mid-1960s with the loose boxes becoming offices, the stables two large classrooms, and the carriage room a very large practical room. After raising her own family, Beryl returned there in the 1970s, first as a nurse and then working as a nurse teacher.

By the end of the 70s, it was becoming obvious that Hitcham House would not be needed by the hospital

for much longer. The upkeep was enormous, more students lived out, training had changed, and the Hospital was to be closed. In 1982, the training school moved into one of the now redundant wards at the Hospital and the house was closed up.

Beryl recalls that Hitcham House was then sold to a developer for around £275,000. The main house was divided into nine separate 'houses' that were sold without further alterations. Individual prices ranged from £25,000 to £75,000 for which one got only what was there before division. There was no electricity, gas, water or plumbing. Most had no stairs unless you bought a part containing the original stairs, probably no bathroom and certainly no kitchen. As a Grade II listed building, any changes to the external appearance of the house were rigorously controlled by the local council.

Every house had a different builder which meant that there was a constant stream of builders' vans going up and down the drive. At the same time, the stable block was being converted into 4 units by a second developer. At the end of this nightmare, the old house looks very much the same from the outside whilst inside it is seeing yet another way of life. Unlike many other Victorian mansions, Hitcham House has lived to see another day!

Space did not permit the full text of this article to be included in this issue and for those wishing to read the fascinating recollections of Beryl's life at the Nurses' Home the full text by Alan is on our website at www.taplowsociety.org.uk.

Leonard Miall

The death of Leonard Miall was a sad blow to this Society. Leonard had been associated with it for many years. His wife was the first Secretary and, of course, he was the president for 12 or more years and an ex-editor of this Newsletter. In some ways he will be remembered for his great sense of humour: "We've got Fairies at the bottom of our garden" or, "These ancient beams fell off the back of a wain". But he will be remembered for his courtesy and kindness in and around Taplow. He was a wonderful man, and we will miss him. Some of the most admired people from the BBC were at his memorial service, and we were lucky to have someone of such charisma and capability living here.

Taplow Parish Plan

Karl Lawrence

Parish Councillor Mary Trevallion, with significant contributions from her lifetime and professional partner Professor Bernard Trevallion, presented an exemplary first stage Parish Plan for the people of Taplow to John Kennedy, Chairman of the Taplow Parish Plan (TPP) Steering Group at a meeting of the Group on March 21st.

It was agreed unanimously by the Taplow Parish Council on March 29th to submit this first stage Plan to the South Bucks District Council as a consultation document in the preparation of its Local Development Framework.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has said that Parish Plans should provide the 'bedrock' for Local Development Frameworks. To date Taplow is the only Parish to submit a Plan to South Bucks District Council.

The Plan analyses the reports of the several Group sub-committees, the comments of the 80 visitors to the TPP Exhibition, and the 234 respondents to the TPP Questionnaire which was distributed to every household in the Parish. It distills a statement of proposals and actions to meet the aspirations and priorities of the Taplow community.

The Government's Rural White Paper *Our Countryside – The Future* defined the purpose of a Parish Plan to be "to identify key facilities and services, set out the problems that need to be tackled and demonstrate how distinctive character and features can be preserved". With this clear objective, consultation with residents was key to the TPP Steering Group effort.

Working Groups were recruited to report on the current situation and the future needs of the three main areas of the Parish – the Woodland Plateau to the North, the Village at the centre and the Thames and Jubilee Riversides – and to identify specific topics for wide consultation.

Meetings were held with 15 organisations representing a wide spectrum of interests within the Parish.

A four day Exhibition was held in the Village Centre introducing visitors to the concept of a Parish Plan and displaying a series of annotated maps and photographs showing the range of concerns highlighted in the reports of the Working Groups plus additional photographs and notes outlining current situations and possible remedies augmented by a listing of all the comments from the various organisations of specific interests. Visitors were invited to express their views in the form of post-it notes on notice boards.

All residents were polled through a questionnaire compiled from all the issues raised. The questionnaire comprised tick box requests and

invitations for comment to open-ended questions. Responses came from 35% of households in the Parish.

Conservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment represent the major concern of Taplow people over all other issues. This is the main thrust of the actions proposed in the Plan. Traffic issues feature in all phases of the consultation process and the Plan addresses the problems of heavy vehicle movements, speed controls, and traffic flow. Other action areas proposed in the Plan include housing, public transport and community facilities.

A Summary will be distributed to all households in the Parish prior to further consultations in the on-going process of developing and implementing the Taplow Parish Plan. Copies of the full Plan will be available at the Village Centre for residents who wish to have access to it.

The Erosion of Local Power

Eva Lipman

Are you aware that our County and District Councils have had and are having their powers eroded? Some of the things previously under the control of BCC which have now been taken away are:

Police:

This now is now Bucks, Berks, and Oxon.

Schools:

The responsibility for schools will be taken away in less than two years and be administered from Whitehall. Sixth forms and learning skills are already being dealt with by a Quango.

Fire:

There are now Regional Fire Services. If you dial 999 you now get someone in Kent answering

There is a SE Region Planning Board, SE Region Transport Committee, and SE Region Culture Committee amongst others.

The BCC general grant which was under the discretion of the county has been removed and replaced by specific grants for specific things thereby removing local decisions as to spending. There are guidelines for most services.

The Government says how much should be spent on what. Of the increase in spending 4.9% is laid down by the Government and only 0.1% is allowed to be decided locally. If the increase is more than 5% the council is capped. The unelected Regional Assemblies have taken powers from local government. In the years to come more and more powers will be devolved upwards.



Above is Sheila Horton's evocation of our 20th annual Village Green Party.

Don't forget to book up for a grand evening's fun with Mike Sanderson and his band on Saturday June 18th.

Website

Andrew Findlay

The Society now has a website of its own. Its aims are to:

- Promote the Society and its objectives to the wider world.
- Provide updates to members between Newsletter issues.
- Help people to contact the Society.
- Act as a forum for the discussion of local issues.
- Host electronic mailing-lists for rapid communication.

Most websites are strictly one-way affairs, where the editor or webmaster controls everything that appears. Ours is rather different, as it is designed for audience participation. This means that anyone can write new articles or add comments to existing ones, and all changes appear on the site immediately. We have taken advantage of this feature to create a "Taplow Forum" where people are specifically invited to have their say on any local topic that interests them. Our hope is that this will lead to some interesting discussions that could form the basis for future

articles in the Newsletter.

The website is already playing an important role in the creation of the Newsletter: this issue was created by collecting all the articles into a special part of the site, and editing them online before starting the typesetting process. The finished result will also be available on the site and we hope to get the text of many past issues online to form an archive.

Please have a look at the website and tell us what you think. You can do this from any public library if you do not have a computer at home. If you want to add comments or contribute to the Forum you will need a username and password: it takes just a few seconds to register if you already have an e-mail address. Give it a try, and "have your say" in the Forum. Don't worry about messing things up: the site keeps copies of everything, so we can always recover from mistakes.

www.taplowsociety.org.uk

Taplow Canutes and Ostriches

John Hanford

At the meeting in the Village Centre last year to discuss the Parish Plan, Professor Trevallion, who introduced it, said that the majority of the inhabitants wanted to retain the status quo of the village and its surroundings. However, it became apparent from the discussion that followed that many in the room wanted the status quo ante, preferably that which existed in the early 60s, together with the butcher's shop and the village store which existed then. This despite the fact that neither shop was, nor would be, economic.

The Canutes in fact, wished to turn back the tide of change which the village had experienced since that date. The importance of horses to the village was stressed, and the dangers to pedestrians of the



increased volume and speed of traffic on the road. In the 60s, children either walked to school, or caught the bus which arrived every morning from Lent Rise and terminated at the school. In fact there was a general feeling that more

buses would be a good thing through the village, and if present and frequent, would persuade people not to use their cars to go to the station or to Maidenhead.

Unfortunately, like Canute, the changes are irreversible, and trying to reverse them will not succeed. Who would want (or could) carry their shopping back from the supermarkets on the bus? How would the shopping (normally for two people for a week - at least four or five carrier bags full) get from the supermarket to the bus, and from the bus stop to the homes of the shoppers? Unless people gave up their cars completely (an unlikely event) it would be cheaper to go by car as well as more convenient. Of course with free bus passes for pensioners it would be cheaper for them (but the Government seems strangely silent on who would pay for these - presumably it would be funded through the rates).

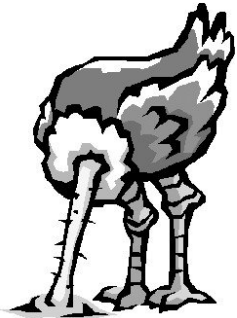
The Canutes were complemented by the Ostriches, who think that everything can remain as it is now. There will be no increase in car or lorry traffic or speeds. Crossrail will have no effect on the village or its parking requirements. When one resident raised the question of whether the village should consider the advantages of being connected to a cable network, there was general bemusement. In fact cable (or satellite) connections with large bandwidths

and video conferencing ability, would enable many, especially mothers with children, to work from home, thus not only reducing the commuting travel pressures, but increasing the wealth and happiness of their families. Cheap home cinema equipment, digital radio and television, and video from the Internet will mean less need to travel for entertainment. Better quality prepared meals means less need to go to the takeaways.

Not everyone (and particularly the older residents) will like this Brave New World, or will wish to take advantage of it. But to the younger generation without the memories of "how it was", it will seem quite normal, and whatever anyone wishes, it will happen. Who would have thought, even fifteen years ago, that by 2005 pretty well every house in the village would have a computer connected to E-mail and the Internet, that everyone would have a mobile phone, and, if they were also young, this would be combined with a camera, Internet connection and an i-Pod playing music?

Instead of trying to turn back the clock or keep things as they are now, should we not be looking at what changes are going to occur, and how we should best accommodate them? The negative nature of much of the discussion on the Parish Plan was depressing.

Ignoring change or trends is not going to help, and in fact will hinder the making of the decision and policies we need to improve our environment and enjoyment of the village in the future.



Lincoln's Corner

Earthy Joke

As readers know, Joyce Grenfell spent most of her adult life in Taplow. For the much shorter time that he was here, she was friendly with Walter de la Mare, and in one of her books of reminiscences she says that he told her the following earthy joke (her expression). *A lady who was suffering from constipation went to see her doctor and said: "I just sit there, but nothing happens."* "Uh huh," said the doctor, "are you taking anything?" "Only my knitting" she replied.

The South-East Plan

Eva Lipman

The South East Plan comes from SEERA which stands for the South East of England Regional Assembly. This covers the area Berks, Bucks, East and West Sussex, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire and Surrey. The consultation period for the 20 year Plan ended on 15th April 2005.

The indigenous population require approximately 17,000 to 18,000 new homes to cater for more single occupation etc. The average build for the past 5 years has been 25,500 homes. John Prescott would like SEERA to build many more homes to cope with an influx from London, the rest of the country and immigrants. The numbers being suggested are 28,000 homes, 32,000 homes and recently figures of 36,000 and even 40,000 homes per year for the next 20 years. Each of these new homes requires infrastructure. The figure put on the cost of this is £38,000 per house, which would include things like roads, schools, hospitals, leisure centres and services. So far the government has not given sufficient infrastructure funding to cover the homes that have already been built and so there must be a severe doubt over whether they will fully fund the proposed new homes. To support the influx of all these people, huge numbers of new jobs need to be generated which of course will mean yet more building.

There are various places which are earmarked for intensive building. One is in Kent and another is where we are in the Western Corridor and Blackwater Valley. The intensive building is scheduled to be around 'hubs'. Two of the hubs are Slough and Reading.

An analysis of the wishes of the people so far consulted says that:

- 9% want 32,000
- 12% want 28,000
- 22% want 25,500
- 39% want none

which means that 61% want 25,500 or fewer.

The consultation document put out by SEERA, which should have been sent to every house in the SE, but has not been, is very biased in favour of building more new homes than are actually needed for the indigenous population. Nowhere in the document does it actually say that all we need to build for our own people are 17,000 to 18,000.

It is entirely possible that either SEERA will not accept the wishes of the population on house numbers, or that John Prescott will over-ride SEERA and impose his higher numbers on them. It is to be hoped therefore that as many people as possible wrote giving their views, if our region is not to be completely transformed within the next twenty years.

For more information, see the website:

www.southeast-ra.gov.uk/southeastplan

Lincoln's Corner

The Memorial Service

Although our society is not involved in this, there is no doubt that the Memorial Service has become one of Taplow's major events. Little wonder, when it is so meaningfully and movingly led by Rev. Alan Dibden. In 2004 the church was packed, as usual, and the same question arose as at the Village Green Party: where do all these children come from? Of course many of them live in nearby villages, but not all of them. Perhaps Hitcham and Taplow do tend to be havens for older people, but looking around St. Nicolas Church of 14th November, you might have questioned it.



It is very interesting that in small print on the back page of the executive summary is the following:

The Assembly agrees to publish this initial draft of the S.E. Plan for public consultation subject to the following caveats:

- a) The draft SE Plan has been developed in little more than a year to a timescale set down by the Government. As a result serious doubts remain over the robustness of the data that underpins much of the technical work on which this draft SE Plan is based and, indeed, over aspects of the technical work itself.*
- b) The timescale has left little opportunity to date for public involvement in the development of this draft SE Plan*
- c) This draft SE Plan has been agreed for consultation by the Regional Assembly as a whole and does not necessarily reflect the views of individual members/local authorities.*

Taplow Quarry

Mike Lowe (Summerleaze Ltd)

Summerleaze Ltd held a liaison meeting with representatives of Taplow and its surrounds on Tuesday 5th April at the Village Hall. The meeting was preceded by a visit to the site. Mike Lowe, Director for Summerleaze outlined the current proposal and timings of the activities on site.

Summerleaze are a local family company with a history of gravel extraction in the Maidenhead area dating back to the early 1930s. They are very active in the local communities in which they operate and specifically in the Taplow area have funded tree planting on Station Road and are a major contributor to the TVAP.

The site received planning permission for gravel extraction initially in 1990; this was subsequently extended due to the activities involving the Jubilee River and the Eton Rowing Lake. However, both projects will soon be complete and Summerleaze now require the material from Taplow to continue to be able to supply their local customers.

The intention for the Taplow site is to extract the raw material at a rate of 80,000 tonnes per year, and transport this material to their processing plant in Bray for onward sale to local customers. The expected start date is April 2006 and the consented reserve would be exhausted by April 2009. At the end of the extraction period the site will be restored to a lower level and laid to grass and woodland. The

haul road, which will link the site to Berry Hill, will also be removed at that time.

The operation will involve the loading of aggregate onto lorries by a hydraulic excavator. The intention is to operate the site on an intermittent basis equivalent to 26 weeks per year; at this rate they will require 30 vehicle loads of material to leave the site per day of operation. All vehicles will leave the site via a new road onto Berry Hill and down to the A4. There will be no other plant onsite apart from a water tanker, which would be used to maintain the haul road free from dust.

Opening hours will be from 7.30am until 4.30pm Monday to Friday and it is unlikely that Saturdays will have any activity at all. No activity will take place on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

Prior to the start of extraction some other works will be undertaken these will involve the installation of the haul road and its access to Berry Hill (July/August), an archaeological survey of the site (May/June) and the slight diversion of footpath 10 such that it exits onto Berry Hill to the north of the proposed vehicle access.

Summerleaze are committed to informing the local community of its activities on the site and have set up a liaison group where information can be easily transmitted.

Lincoln's Corner

Distraction

According to one national newspaper, a speed camera can be dangerous if it distracts a driver from concentrating on the road ahead. There may be some truth in this, but it doesn't seem very relevant in this area, where there are very few speed cameras, but lots and lots of notices which have the apparent objective of intentionally distracting the driver's eye. You will remember that the editor of this newsletter photographed some of these along the Bath Road recently - they seem to be at the rate of about 100 to the mile. Can we stop them? Of course this is a national problem, not a local one, but what do readers think? Most of us might be delighted to ban those which say "Bed Sale" or "Pine Sale", and even the notice on the Bath Road which everybody ignores advising "Reduce Speed Now". But what about signs which read "Cliveden" or "Church Fete"? Perhaps speed cameras should be banned because they distract from notices!

Speeding

Talking about speed cameras brings us back to a problem which is both local and national. What can be done to deter drivers from speeding on rural lanes? Most such drivers seem to be decent citizens but fail to learn at school that damage on impact is not proportional to the speed, but to the square of the speed. Consequently when they drive down Berry Hill, although it is obviously still a 30 mph zone south of Russian Roulette Corner they speed up to 70 mph or more. Unlucky for other drivers because when you leave Saxon Gardens (which is where I live) you can't see far up Berry Hill. The first attempts at traffic calming in this area were of questionable benefit; would speed cameras do any better?

Remebering Taplow

Elizabeth Shearman (formerly Elizabeth Cornelia)

I was delighted to receive a copy of the Hitcham and Taplow Preservation Society Newsletter 82, Autumn 2004, from Sheila Horton. It gave me a great feeling of nostalgia for Taplow and its residents. I must immediately own up to being the "psychic Australian friend" in Sheila's article on her wonderful murals.

We lived in Taplow in the 1970s, the 'we' being my then husband Glenn Cornelia, myself (Elizabeth) and subsequently our two sons - Giles and Guy. We first arrived from London to take up residence in Lynn and Eric Pope's converted stables "The Cottage", situated behind "Queen Anne's House". (No children in those days). Soon after our arrival, Eric took us to the "Oak and Saw" and introduced us to many denizens of the village. We were warmly welcomed by everyone and soon felt very much at home. We became friends with the Hortons and Clemency was later the favourite baby-sitter for our boys.

Once settled in, I began enjoying long walks through field and hedgerow, Cliveden Woods, Burnham Beeches and to Cookham. Bapsey Pond was a favourite spot, and one moonlit night I ventured after dinner across to the Burial Mound where my encounter with the Saxon Warrior apparition occurred. After this experience I refrained from further moonlit rambles!

After returning to Australia for the birth of our first son, Giles, we sold our house in Sydney and returned to live in Taplow, this time buying a house in Marsh Lane. Our second child was to be born at home with a midwife in attendance, but it was not to be - Guy was born 12 weeks premature at the Canadian Memorial Hospital on 28 March, 1979. He was soon diagnosed with a heart condition (Tetralogy of Fallot) and transferred to the Radcliffe Neonatal Unit in Oxford. Guy has survived all this plus three open heart operations and uncontrolled epilepsy. He is now an artist and his elder brother Giles is a Captain in the Australian Army, currently an instructor at Royal Military College Duntroon in Canberra and married to childhood sweetheart Heidi, who is a vet.

During 2000 I visited Taplow after a 20 year absence. I stayed with Sheila and Brian and their growing clan. Their hospitality was as warm and generous as ever, and I so much enjoyed meeting Clem and Andy's children and other family members. I caught up with old friends (particularly Sue and Chris Brock), saw Sheila's murals and wandered around my old haunts in and near the village. After I expressed a desire to see the old Canadian Hospital, Sheila told me it was a ruin, fenced off and out of bounds. Irresistible! So we went there one afternoon - Sheila sat in the car ready for a quick getaway - and I broke into the grounds with some difficulty to take some photos for Guy to see where he was born.

Nobody caught me, thank heavens! How very sad to see the place in such a run down state. By now I suppose it has been demolished.

In closing, I do hope that the residents of Taplow and surrounds can prevent the over-development and slow destruction of your very special part of the world. I now live in a solar-powered limestone cottage on a hill looking out to sea on Kangaroo Island off the South Australian coast. We too are trying to prevent our special part of the world being "developed" and the incremental destruction of the natural beauty and wildlife.

If anyone would care to make contact: my e-mail is pentagram@kin.net.au and address is PO Box 247 Penneshaw, Kangaroo Island, South Australia, 5222, Australia.

Acronymity in Acronymania

Fred Russell

I was reading a Civic Trust Circular the other day and in the space of two pages I encountered no less than 19 acronyms behind which lurk the many headed Hydra of the new planning system being foisted upon us in the name of Regionalisation. It seems we have to learn what these acronyms mean even though it is impossible to understand what the bodies (heads) they represent actually do....

CT	Civic Trust
CTSE	Civic Trust South East (for SE Region)
EEACTS	East of England Association of Civic Trust Societies
SEERA	South East England Regional Assembly
COVER	Community and Voluntary Forum Eastern Region
RAISE	Regional Action & Involvement in the South East
EEEF	East of England Environmental Forum
SEFS	South East Forum for Sustainability
CPRE	Council for the Protection of Rural England
SERDP	South East Region Design Panel
CABE	Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
SCAD	Solent Centre for architecture and Design
SEEDA	South East England Development Agency
LDD	Local Development Document (Replacing Local Development Framework)
LSP	Local Strategic Partnership (Only way to influence LDD)
SEP	South East Plan. (Replacing RSS)
RSS	Regional Spatial Strategy
ANTAS	Association of North Thames Amenity Societies

Planning Applications

Remember, readers, whilst your Society is responding to these applications on your behalf, it helps if you also write to the District Council stating your views, for or against.

South Bucks District Council
Director of Planning Services
Council Offices
Capswood
Oxford Road
Denham
UB9 4LH

04/01070/OUT. Ellington Gardens

Demolition of garages and erection of three detached houses. A bad one this since it is in a Conservation Area and means destroying the only stand of trees now left in the area. Refused, but we await the next move...

04/01190/FUL. MRC, River Road

Construction of fixed platform over the river bed at end of Ellington Road for storage of racing boats. The wording of this application was ambiguous and few realise it would impact the view from a Conservation Area. Approved 7/2/05

04/00033/FUL, Cliveden. NT

Application for 191 residential units. Gone to Public Inquiry. (August). The developers are now seeking a compromise solution.

05/00040/FUL, Nutshell, River Road (Antler Homes)

Demolition of existing buildings, erection of a block comprising 6 flats and 7 associated car spaces. Pending.

05/00050/EUC, Taplow Lake. Amerden Lane

Application for Certificate of Lawfulness for existing use of lake and facilities for water skiing. Approved 8/3/05

05/00246, 00247 and 00248/FUL Bridge End, Bridge Cottage and Arcalour, Bath Road.

Change of use to residential / Bed and Breakfast accommodation. Pending.

05/07001/DMT. Verge, Windrush Garage, Bath Road (Orange)

Notification of planning order for erection of 'replacement' (replacement?) 12.5 metre high dual use lighting column plus three telecommunications antenna plus ground based equipment cabinet. Planning Approval not required 2/3/05. *It seems to me that we should be starting a protest movement similar to that in Maidenhead against the arbitrary placing of these 'phone masts. One would have thought an experienced operator like Orange would have known they didn't need planning permission, so why did they bother?*

05/09013/TPO, Taplow Quays, River Road

Crown lift Horse Chestnut by 3 metres. Approved 21/3/05

PS. The discerning among you might have noticed the preponderance of South Taplow applications. Believe me, it's not a biased sub-set of all applications since practically all the others in Taplow are for conservatories, garages and extensions and other routine matters.



Taplow and Crossrail

Fred Russell

By now most of you will have read something about the ambitious Crossrail project to connect Maidenhead to the East of London. Taplow is to be a part of this project and there have to be some mixed feelings about the pros and cons of the idea. It is a shame that the total level of local consultation appears to have consisted of a single afternoon's exhibition in Maidenhead on the 11th Feb. Wonder how many of you went to it, let alone heard of it?

Fortunately Jon Wilmore has been keeping tabs on the project and he provided the material for these brief notes. The salient points are as follows:

- Crossrail is the plan to electrify the Western mainline from Maidenhead through London and then extending beyond London to Shenfield and south to Abbey Wood. It is planned to be operational by 2013.
- There are both temporary and permanent impacts on Taplow, the former arising from the estimated 4 to 6 month construction period (lengthening of platform etc.) The permanent effects, applying to the parish as a whole, would be:
- Increase in the number of passengers. Taplow would become a more practical destination for London-bound commuters from the north of the county and our attractive parish would become more interesting to potential settlers from central London and beyond. Can our roads cope?
- Increase in local traffic, environmental impact at the station and along the A4 corridor, increased car parking and increased pressure to build more houses.
- The southern skyline of South Taplow which is dominated by the railway embankment and is currently 'softened' by trees will radically change since one suspects that most of the trees

will have to go and be replaced by electricity pylons. The Brunel Bridge will also carry pylons. Isn't the Brunel Bridge planned to be a National/World Heritage site?

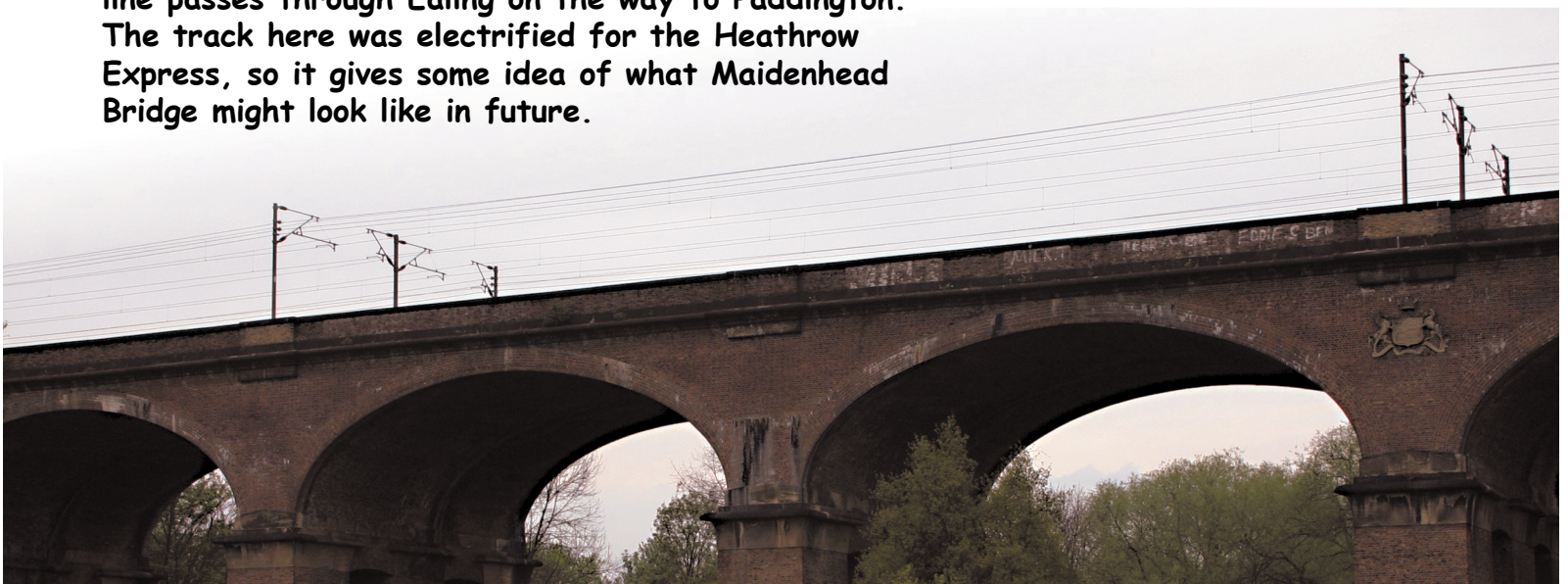
- The loss of tree cover would also mean a significant increase in noise levels in Riverside Taplow. The new much longer trains will be driven by electricity and are supposed to be quieter but they will take longer to pass and there will be no muting from trees. Additionally we can expect increased traffic. Normal inter-city diesel trains with their high noise level will of course continue.

The scheme has obvious benefits for London in that Paddington will become simply a large 'Hub', a waystation, rather than a terminus which will change the traffic patterns in that area. The scheme has full government backing and the Crossrail Parliamentary Bill was deposited in February this year. It could take up to 2 years before it is approved and the £10bn funding is available. There are lobbyists who wish Crossrail to end at Slough and some Maidenhead residents are ready to support this.

The consultation process which seemed to exclude us at this stage concluded that so far as Taplow is concerned the "permanent effect is deemed to be relatively slight" (Business case 2003, para 5.2). However the Crossrail proposal has to be seen in the wider context of the South East Plan which makes everything vastly more complicated. (See separate article by Eva Lipman). Crossrail is seen by the government as an essential part of the transport infrastructure for the South East to match their programme for a massive increase in housing in the Thames Valley area.

For those wishing to learn more: visit our Website, www.taplowsociety.org.uk where Jon Wilmore's fuller article is available

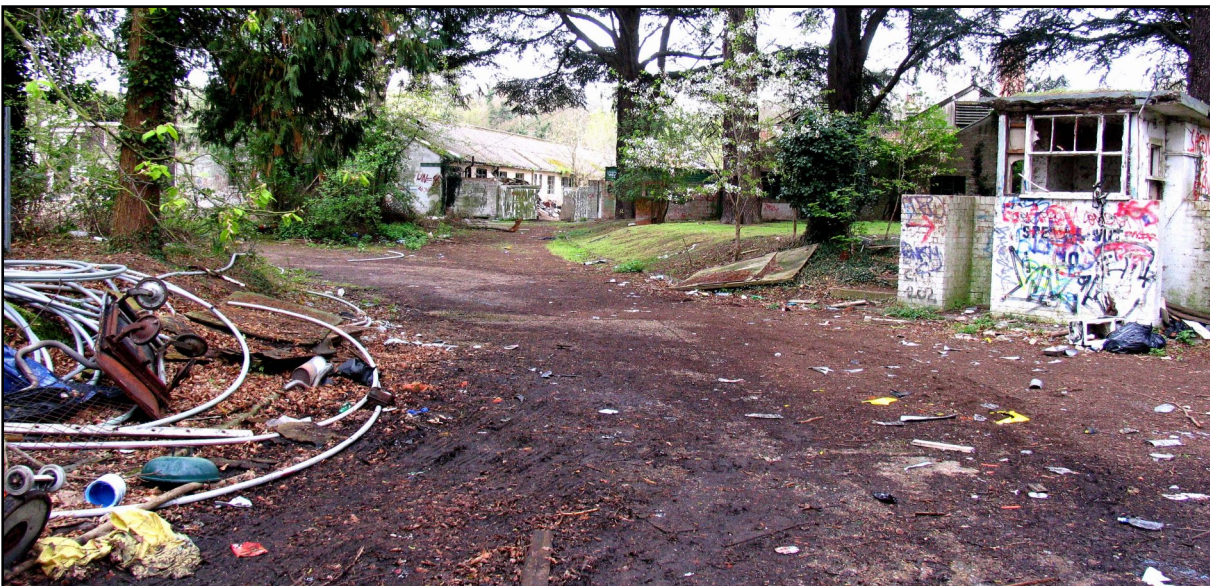
This is Wharncliffe Viaduct where the Great Western line passes through Ealing on the way to Paddington. The track here was electrified for the Heathrow Express, so it gives some idea of what Maidenhead Bridge might look like in future.



Cliveden's Back Door - Free Entry!



This is a recent photograph of the state of the entrance to the Canadian Red Cross Hospital which is ignored by both the developer and the National Trust. This is a disgrace and an encouragement to the ravers and vandals who frequently use the site. This picture is on a good day; very often there is rubbish piled up as well. There was recently a major fire, obviously set by these vandals.



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