

HITCHAM AND TAPLOW  
PRESERVATION SOCIETY

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NEWS LETTER No. 27

AUTUMN, 1973

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COMMITTEE

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Mr. R. Sneyd

COMMITTEE

Mrs. Anne Hanford, Secretary of the Cedar Chase Residents Association, has been co-opted as a member of the Committee until the A.G.M. in October.

BUCKS COUNTY STRUCTURE PLAN

The Town & Country Planning Act of 1971 provides for two levels of plans; the Structure Plans which lay down policy for a wide area and the Local Plans which apply this policy in detail. Only the Structure Plan has to be submitted to the Secretary of State for his approval whilst the Local Plans may be adopted by the Local Planning Authority within the Structure Plan.

For the first time, there are now statutory provisions about publicity and public participation. Publicity has to be given to the report of survey. There is a duty on authorities to give publicity to the matters they propose to include in their plans, to provide an opportunity for representations to be made and to consider those representations, whether from individuals or organisations.

An examination in public will be held to provide the Secretary of State with the information and arguments he needs, in addition to the material submitted with a structure plan, to enable him to reach a decision on the plan. The examination will normally be held by a small panel appointed by the Secretary of State, consisting of an independent chairman and two other members, and will take the form of a discussion, led by the panel, with selected participants. It will occupy three to six weeks.

The first step in the preparation of a structure plan is a survey of the area. Bucks Planning Department has circulated four Reports of Survey, dealing with an initial statement and objectives, national regional and county policy, population and employment, and housing. The first two are somewhat general, but the third and fourth are thorough statistical studies of much value.

A particular point of interest in the fourth study is the conclusion that the rate of house building in areas where there is plenty of land is no higher than where land is short, so that it is not lack of land which is holding up the supply of houses, but rather economic factors. Enough land has been allocated for building in the County to allow for a 50% increase in the population, but the rate of building is such that twenty years would be needed to complete all the houses needed for such a population increase. It is therefore apparent that raiding the Green Belt would not increase the supply of houses in Bucks., rather would it divert building from land where it was planned, to land which should be protected.

Your Committee is studying these Reports and making appropriate observations to the County Planning Department.

PLANNINGSpecial Message from the Committee

Your Committee feels that your attention should be drawn to the increasing effort being made by property developers in the vicinity of Taplow following the Government's proposals to raid the Green Belt. In the past, refusal of planning permission in the Green Belt has been generally accepted without an Appeal. Now however two Appeals have been entered, particulars of which are given below, and others are expected, mostly concerning the green areas around the Village and North of the A4. Those of you anxious to protect the Green Belt and to prevent rapid disintegration of the character of the Village are urged to support and encourage your Committee at the A.G.M. in October, to persuade your friends to join the Society and to express your views to your elected Council representatives.

Appeals Notified to the E.R.D.C.

Skindles Hotel: The application for residential development of the Skindles car park and the land West and North of Lansdown House was rejected by the E.R.D.C. An appeal has been made.

Land East of Existing Houses, Station Road: An Appeal has been entered against the refusal of permission for the erection of a bungalow on this site.

Planning Items Reported Previously

Taplow House: The second application for demolishing the house and erecting flats in its place has been rejected by the E.R.D.C., and the house is now to be included in the list of protected buildings. It is to be auctioned in September.

Saw Mills, Heathfield Road: Activity has now ceased and the property is up for sale.

Path from Mill Lane to Taplow Court: Messrs. Plessey have written that damage by vandals has decreased since the notice was erected indicating that the path is private. However, they have no objection to responsible citizens using the path as a means of access to Bapsey Pond and the old churchyard, and have agreed to members of the Society being so notified by the inclusion of this paragraph in our Newsletter.

New Items

Spinney between Mill Lane and Skindles Car Park: Complaints about litter scattered in this spinney were passed on to the Public Health Inspector who effected some improvement. This spinney is now covered by a Tree Preservation Order.

Norfolk House, Bath Road: A proposal to build a detached house in place of some existing buildings was resisted on the grounds of piecemeal development and increased traffic entering the Bath Road.

Hillmead, Boundary Road: A proposal to erect 25 flats instead of the 20 already approved was opposed on the grounds that the density would be too high. However, it was approved by the E.R.D.C.

Land adjoining Hill Farm Cottages fronting Hill Farm Road and Hitcham Lane: A proposal to erect five houses on this part of the Green Belt was opposed. This proposal was rejected by the E.R.D.C.

'The Poplars', Old Marsh Lane: The erection of a house in the garden was opposed on the grounds of excessive density and was rejected by the E.R.D.C.

'Penwortham', Wymers Wood Road: The replacement of the house by flats was supported as a potential improvement, but was refused by the E.R.D.C. The erection of a house nearby was opposed and was rejected by the E.R.D.C.

Hitcham Grange, Hill Farm Road: A proposal to demolish the house and redevelop the site with four houses per acre was supported subject to the preservation of the trees.

Poyle Lane and Poyle Farm, Burnham: The replacement of five houses by twenty-two was opposed on the grounds of the loss of amenity from the existing trees and an unduly high density. A similar proposal at Poyle Farm was also opposed as ribbon development in the Green Belt.

Land between Buffins and the football field: A proposal for residential

Land between Buffins and the football field: A proposal for residential development at five acres of farm land was opposed on the grounds of infringement of the Green Belt.

Conversions at Wellbank: A proposal to extend two of the houses into their porches was opposed but has been approved by the E.R.D.C.

108/110 Dropmore Road: A proposal to erect a bungalow here, deep in the Green Belt, was opposed.

Maidenhead Autos and Lent Rise Service Station: Proposals to erect illuminated advertising signs at each of these Service Stations were opposed.

Allotments at Boundary Road: An objection by a Member to the appearance of the new wire netting and concrete post fence around the allotments was taken up with the Horticultural Society and with the E.R.D.C.

The Croft, Ellington Road: An application for an Established Use Certificate for the letting of surplus furnished rooms was opposed because of the lack of parking space for vehicles belonging to the tenants.

## AIRCRAFT NOISE

Our last Newsletter reported our submission to the Noise Advisory Council, in which we urged that the aircraft routes should be spread at least as widely as was the case before July 1972, and that aircraft with destinations across the North Sea should not be diverted as far West as Taplow.

A meeting was called by the "Working Group on the use of Minimum Noise Routes" at the Department of the Environment on the evening of May 9th. This Society was represented by Mr. Leonard Miall and Mr. C. I. Snow. Five other Associations were also represented, together with eight Local Authorities and the Local Authorities Noise Council.

The Chairman of the Working Group said that his Terms of Reference involved considering Minimum Noise Routes in the light of recent experience. He said that this would be done with an open mind and that his Group was in no way bound by the fact that they had been the original proposers of the Minimum Noise Routes. The great majority of those present strongly urged the abolition of the minimum noise routing policy and its replacement by a policy of dispersal, at least to the extent prevailing before 21st July 1972. The Working Group should recognise that the question was an ethical one and the matter to be decided was whether or not minimum noise routes were right for the population as a whole. People living in areas of low ambient noise level were often more disturbed by aircraft noise than those in urban areas. For this reason the minimum noise routes were unacceptable in principle. Dispersal was essential as a short term measure, but the long term answer lay in quieter aircraft. However, some representatives of Slough and Burnham pointed out that although they sympathised with the arguments for dispersal, their own areas had benefitted from the introduction of the new beacon in July 1972 and they could not support any changes which would worsen their present level of disturbance.

The Chairman said in answer to a question that BEA intended to continue the practice recently introduced of their Tridents climbing continuously from take-off. This should mean that they should pass over Taplow at a higher altitude.

Within a fortnight of this meeting, the Under-Secretary for Aerospace, Mr. Cranleigh Onslow, called a meeting of MPs and some representatives of Local Authorities at which he said that it would take some time before the Working Group could report, but that meanwhile he had decided to ask the Civil Aviation Authority to divide the Burnham route so that the traffic bound for the North East would peel off over West Slough and Burnham and the remaining half would continue over Taplow and Maidenhead: thereby he accepted one of our recommendations. He hoped that the CAA would agree in time for this to be implemented by July. In the event however the CAA decided not to make any changes until a safety study arising from the Trident crash had been completed, and this meant that no change could be implemented until the end of September, by which time the seasonal decline in traffic will be taking place. It has now been announced in the Press that the change will take place on October 11th.

Meanwhile the British Airports Authority decided to appoint to the Heathrow Consultative Committee one representative of the some 47 Societies affected by the Airport, and called a meeting - also on the evening of May 9th - to elect this representative. In the circumstances, the Society was represented by the 21 July Action Group. Mrs. P. N. Atlee, Chairman of the Moseley Residents Association, was appointed. Following her first meeting of the Consultative Committee, Mrs. Atlee called a meeting of the bodies she represents to form a new Association to advise her.

The majority of those present at this and other similar meetings were much concerned to arrange to lobby the House of Lords who were discussing the Maplin project. They did so because they consider that Maplin gave the chief hope of preventing increasing disturbance around Heathrow. A minority however pointed out the great cost of Maplin and emphasised that it could have no effect on traffic until the 1980's; they looked to the urgent spending of money on quietening aircraft, to the development of Northern airports, and to the diversion of traffic such as freight from Heathrow. There can be no doubt that reduction of traffic from Heathrow is the most certain way of reducing disturbance around it.

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