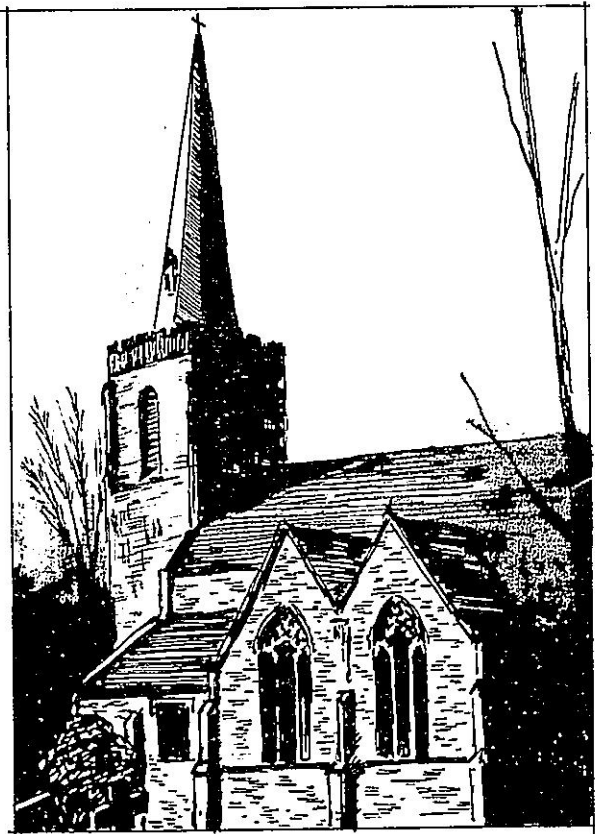
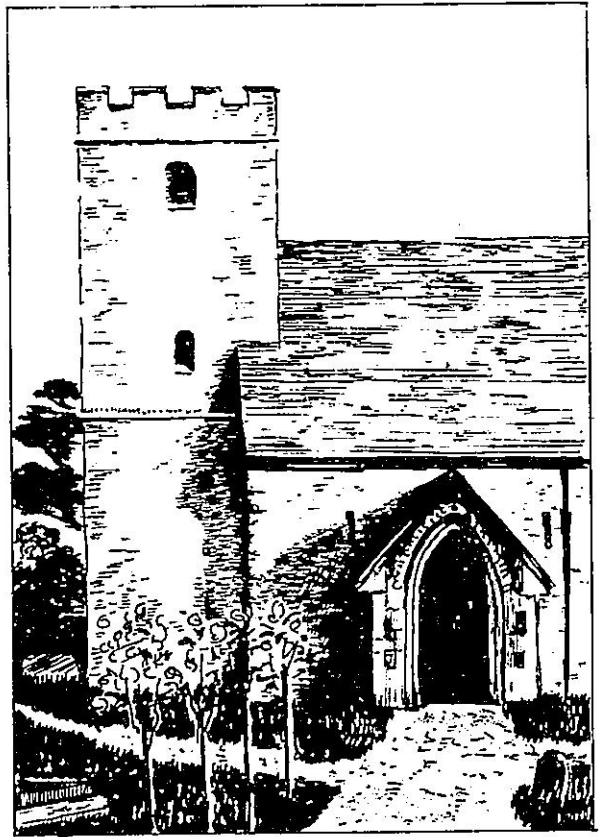


**HITCHAM
AND
TAPLOW
PRESERVATION
SOCIETY**



NEWSLETTER

30

HITCHAM AND TAPLOW PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Officers and Committee Members

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Vice Presidents : Mr. G.P. Ashwell, C.C.
Mrs. E. Law
Mr. G. Paines
Mr. E.J. Perkins
Mrs. A. Young

Chairman : Mr. C.I. Snow, Riverclose, Ellington Road,
Taplow. Tel. Maidenhead 20912

Secretary : Mrs. H.E. Huddart, 6, Wellbank, Taplow.
Tel. Burnham 3426

Treasurer : Mr. R.J. Lewis, Lower Lodge, Hitcham Road,
Tel. Burnham 61100

Committee : Mr. B. Durham
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HITCHAM & TAPLOW PRESERVATION SOCIETY

Newsletter No. 30 - Spring 1975

COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES

1. Skindles Appeal

As reported in the last Newsletter the Society was represented at the Public Inquiry held in September by Mr. C.I. Snow. The Inspector subsequently refused the appeal mainly on grounds of infringement of the Green Belt, emphasising the importance of maintaining the open spaces between Maidenhead and Slough. He was also concerned about the risk of flooding in the area. Mr. Snow pointed out the need to tidy up and improve the west side of the site.

Tree Preservation Orders

2. Further to Newsletter, No. 28 we have now been informed by Beaconsfield District Council that Tree Preservation Orders would only be granted when amenities were threatened. They may be reluctant to recommend an Order where trees make little contribution to amenity or cannot be seen by the public, where they are old and diseased or where the owner himself is anxious to preserve the trees. They pointed out that Parish Councils and other local bodies were better placed to help the local planning authority by providing the detailed information required, particularly in any case which became urgent because of a threat to fell.

The criteria outlined above did not support some cases recommended by the Taplow Parish Council. However, a few specimen trees in the gardens along River Road would be considered. A watch will be kept on the horse chestnut between Norfolk House, Bath Road and Parkmore, Ellington Road and appropriate action taken if necessary.

3. Appeal by Mastercraft Developments Ltd.

The Society had opposed the Appeal relating to the application for residential development with a cul-de-sac from Hill Farm Road, land west side of Hill Farm Road on various grounds including:

- a) Dangerous access from Hill Farm Road.
- b) The skyline as seen from Cliveden Road would be further spoilt.
- c) Adjacent to proposed conservation area.

- d) Possible precedent for adjoining land.
- e) Statistics indicate sufficient houses available in South Bucks.
- f) Large number of unsold houses in district.

In the event, the Appeal was subsequently withdrawn.

4. Dropmore

The question of an objection to the registration as common land of 1.51 acres, south of the lake and west of the house has been investigated. As the original registration had not been worded exactly enough, there was no possibility of access to this piece of land. Concern had also been expressed about the high activity at Dropmore indicating substantial building work. The Planning Department informed the Committee that planning applications approved in 1974 covered the conversion of lofts into flats and the construction of a swimming pool. The Deputy Planning Officer has reported that the work was being done well and is being supervised by the District Building Control Officer and the County listed Buildings Officer. The Estate was not subject to diplomatic immunity.

5. Proposed Taplow Conservation Area

A consultative document has now been published describing the possible extent and features of the proposed area. The Society arranged for a special meeting to take place to allow the widest discussion of the document.

6. Sale of Small Plots of Land East of Hill Farm Road

Last year 30 acres of land between Hill Farm Road and Hitcham Lane were sold for agricultural use by Mr. Jack Page, MP to Ensign Estate Agents Ltd. Soon after contracts had been exchanged and Mr. Page had thereby given up control, the land was offered for sale in one sixth acre plots. The advertisements made it clear that the land did not have planning permission at present, but said that the cost of an application for planning permission was included in the price of £500 to £750.

Such sales are legal as the law stands at present, in spite of the fact that the land is in the Metropolitan Green Belt. Indeed, Mr. Page took the matter up with the Minister of the Environment, and has shown us the reply he received from the Parliamentary Secretary. In this it was pointed out that it is not possible to say that no planning permission for

development will ever be given in the Green Belt "but any prospective purchaser of land in a Green Belt would be gambling on an outside chance if he assumed that this will happen..... There have been a number of similar attempts to make money by putting up land for sale on the basis of exaggeration of its development potential. It is not of course possible to defeat, by legislation, the gullibility or greed of people who buy land on such terms, but the Government proposals to take development land into community ownership published in a White Paper in September should drastically reduce the scope for speculative dealings of this sort...."

The District and Parish Councils have emphasised the presumption against development being allowed in the Metropolitan Green Belt, and a notice pointing this out has been erected at the entrance to the site. The recent rejection of an appeal for development of farm buildings into a residence near Hill Farm House on grounds of preserving the rural nature of the Green Belt is a precedent and shows that the Department of the Environment shares the wish to prevent development here.

The CPRE (Council for the Preservation of Rural England), in answer to our query about experience elsewhere, told us that damage to amenity by activities such as the erection of fences can be prevented by a procedure known as a "Direction under Article 4" of the Town and Country General Development Order 1973, and in response to our request and that of the Parish Council, the District Council have made such an order; and an appropriate notice has been erected at the entrance to the site.

The Society supports the view of the Parish Council that the change of land from agriculture to individual plots is as much a change of use as is the splitting of a large house into flats and should be similarly subject to planning permission. Attempts are being made to bring this to the attention of the Authorities in the hope of achieving an appropriate change in the law, though this may not be easy; the CPRE have pointed out that the present planning law is concerned with activity leading to development, and change of ownership does not necessarily involve this. All that can be done at present is to make maximum use of the "Direction under Article 4".

7. Report on Development Control System by George Dobry QC

This Report published by HMSO is submitted by a QC who has been examining the whole procedure of dealing with planning applications for the Department of the Environment in the hope of reducing delays. There are 12 chapters each including many recommendations. However, the CPRE, to which this Society is affiliated, has circulated a summary to its branches for comment.

The main recommendation is to divide applications into two classes, so that simple ones can be decided quickly and detailed consideration be given to the more difficult ones. We agree to this, but support the CPRE in resisting strongly the proposal that the simple cases should be deemed to be granted unless decided within a set time. Proposals are made to bring Amenity Societies more fully into consultation and to make enquiries less formal and legalistic and to prevent wastage of time for example by cross-examination on questions of opinion.

This illustrates the advantages to our society of membership of the CPRE, without which we would have known little about these major proposals and would not have been able to comment. The CPRE is seeking more individual members throughout South Bucks; anyone interested may obtain full particulars by application to our Secretary.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Applications previously reported

Hitcham Grange, Hill Farm Road : R.S. Pollock

Rebuild and extend to provide 12 flats and conversion of existing building to provide cottages and parking facilities. Not opposed by the Society. No decision yet reached.

5, Saxon Gardens : F.E. Ratcliffe

Two storey extension. Not opposed by the Society. Conditional permission granted.

Taplow House : C.A. Jurgens

Change of use to Hotel agreed subject to consent of the County Authority and Department of the Environment. Discussions on conversion not yet completed. Not opposed by the Society.

East Side - Marsh Lane : Piersdale Securities

Development of 52 residential houses rejected. The Society objected on grounds of infringement of the Green Belt.

Maidenhead Autos

Proceedings instituted by the District Council against the erection of 5 flagpoles. Application opposed by the Society on grounds of unnecessary intrusion.

Mill Lane : Bunce Brothers

Conditional agreement to new house. The Society had represented that a smaller house than the new house on the adjacent site would be acceptable.

Beechwood House, Bath Road : Morley & Scott

Conversion to offices rejected. Opposed by the Society on grounds of out of character in residential area.

Appeals Lodged

Taplow House, adjacent : Spendec Properties

Erection of 2 storey house. Opposed by the Society on grounds of increased density on site.

Mill Lane : Taplow Developments Ltd.

Residential development. Society objected on grounds of infringement of the Green Belt.

Appeals Decisions

Norfolk House : L. Boylan

Erection of 6 detached houses and garages. Dismissed.
Erection of 3 dwellings allowed.

Station Road : P. Langton

Use of land adjacent to garage for parking. Allowed.

Hill Farm House : Mr. & Mrs. J. Page

Conversion of barn behind to residential accommodation. Refused. In refusing this the Inspector emphasised the importance of preserving the rural character of the land east of Hill Farm Road.

New Applications

Hill Farm Cottages : Mrs. M.L. Marti

Siting of mobile home. Refused. Opposed by the Society.

Station Garage

Illuminated Green Shield Stamp sign. Opposed by the Society.

Andry Cottage, Hunts Lane

Single storey extension. No objection by the Society. Agreed.

Cedar Lodge, Hedsor Lane : B.P. Wood & M. Trevallion

Single storey extension. No objection by the Society. Agreed.

Pine Lodge, River Road : Dr. Lane

Single storey extension. No objection by the Society.

Troldhaughen, Ellington Road

Garage extension. No objection by the Society.

Skindles Service Station

Signs. No objection by the Society.

Lamont House, River Road : Dr. T.K. Meikleham

Erection of dwelling house. Opposed by Society on grounds of being edge of Green Belt.

Amerden Bank

Increase from 15 to 16 caravans. No objection by the Society.