

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Chris Curry

Build, build, build - an update

There is some good news about the unprecedented number of major planning applications featured in the last issue of The EMS but most of the stories are only part way through.

Firstly, 50 Bath Road. The planning application was refused by the Borough Council for many reasons, including:

- it would be detrimental to the visual amenities and spatial characteristics of the street scene;
- it would result in the overshadowing and loss of light to neighbouring properties;
- parking to the rear of the site would adversely affect the amenities of the occupiers of the adjoining properties;
- it would result in the loss of trees important in the local landscape and subject to a Tree Preservation Order;
- due to the narrowness of the Bath Road at this point and the restricted visibility, the use of the proposed access would be likely to cause undue interference with the safety and convenience of users of the adjoining highway.

This sounds quite comprehensive but the developer immediately applied to cut down three TPO trees. This has also been refused. We must expect yet another application at some time.

26 New Brighton Road. This application has been refused, on three grounds. Firstly, the north elevation is an "... over dominant and incongruous feature within the street scene of Westbourne Avenue". Secondly, the number of parking spaces is below the Council's guidelines. Thirdly, alternative facilities for access have not been adequately provided for or guaranteed.

The developers have already submitted an appeal. The appeal will be decided at a Public Inquiry at a date and place to be advised later. The ERA will be presenting our case to the Inspector.

58 Horndean Road. Application was refused for a large number of reasons, including:

- the character of the building would detract from the area;
- there would be loss of privacy for neighbouring properties;
- the parking would be out of character with the local area and would be a nuisance to the neighbouring property;
- concerns related to the trees which are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order.

So far we do not know whether there will be an appeal or another proposal. The tall mainly Yew hedge around the property was quite severely trimmed back from the footpath and a branch of a TPO Oak tree cut back from a street light on the instructions of HCC Highways during the school holiday over Whitsun.

97 Havant Road. This application has been refused for reasons of inappropriate style, we wait to see what the developer will propose instead.

Lastly, Oak Tree Drive Development. The decision for this site had not yet been made when we went to press but planning department spokeswoman, Daphne Haywood told a meeting in Emsworth on 14 June that the "... application was unacceptable and that if they persisted the officers are minded to reject it" (See report of meeting on front page)

Interbridges East

We have requested a Tree Preservation Order be put on trees on part of the land that was originally compulsorily purchased for the purpose of landscaping alongside the A27(T).

Building without planning approval: land adjacent to 20-22 New Brighton Road

I recently attended the Development Management Committee that reviewed the action to be taken regarding the three properties and two garages built at this site. These have been constructed in different locations and to a significantly different design to the approved plan. Despite the best efforts of Councillors Brendan Gibb Gray and David Gillett as well as the ERA deputation, we were unsuccessful in overturning the officers' proposal to grant planning permission for the three houses.

Plainly there was concern amongst the Committee that they had to approve something where the builder had so significantly disregarded the usual planning process. They mainly seemed to feel that the buildings would be approved if there was an appeal to an Inspector and this was their overriding concern. If an appeal is unsuccessful then costs can be awarded against the Borough Council. However, various conditions were added, including the need to consult the neighbours about boundary planting and a restriction preventing conversion of single houses into semi-detached or garages to separate dwellings.

The lesson is that neighbours and others involved cannot rely on enforcement officers to visit small sites and any deviation from an approved design must be reported vigorously by neighbours as soon as it is apparent.

The Committee seemed to feel that they should consider what action they could take to prevent a recurrence but how that will occur was not specified.

Public Meeting on Planning

On 18 April, the ERA held a public meeting together with the Emsworth Community Board to discuss the concerns of residents at the large number of planning applications that are arising in Emsworth at present.

We had 165 people who signed the attendance register although we estimate that nearer to 200 attended. Of those who signed, 86 are willing to attend Borough Council planning committee meetings and 100 plus are willing to write objections when required. Others volunteered to help collect ERA subscriptions. Thank you to all those who agreed to help.

We will contact all those whose addresses are available and let them know what the next steps are to be. In particular we will give times of Planning Committee meetings and let people who said they would go have special notice when meetings concerning Emsworth arise. We will also notify the potential writers when their contributions are required. We have already done so for one site, asking those in nearby roads to send in their views.

At the meeting we agreed to write to Jackie Batchelor, Head of Development Services, regarding the need to increase the number of Enforcement Officers from one to two.

Finally, we have had meetings with professional advisers who can give us further advice on planning applications that we feel residents will wish us to object about and also how we can impact planning appeals.



A packed meeting of Emsworth residents concerned about inappropriate development

Pre-Application Presentations

Havant Borough Council is encouraging developers to present their plans to the public for comment before they are presented as formal planning applications. Developers also have the option of presenting their plans to the Community Board at their monthly meetings and when this happens the ERA will be present (see opposite under Oak Tree Drive development). These presentations are part of the new system of "Community Involvement," and will be expected for larger sites. At a recent meeting with Planning Officers, we pointed out that the main objections at the Oak Tree Drive development and at the 26 New Brighton Road development related to the density of occupation. This was not changed when the plan came forward for application. In future, both the ERA and Council Officers will be asking how developers have taken residents comments into account when they have pre-application presentations.

(See also 'A27 site' on the front page).

Planning roundup

Richard Jannaway

It has been a weird quarter on the planning front. The big proposals described in the last issue's 'Build, build, build' coverage have either been rejected or are still being discussed, see 'From the Chairman' opposite, whilst the small detailed proposals are quite few and mostly unexceptional.

Spice Village Restaurant in the Square have had their retrospective application for their all-glass entrance door turned down and have agreed to replace it with a duplicate of the original wooden doors.

The application for an extension to 8 Bellview Lane has been refused. The owners will need to present something more in keeping with their neighbours.

The rejection of three houses behind 616 Southleigh Road is going to appeal in Bristol.

Also in Southleigh Road, an application to build a detached chalet bungalow behind No's 585-587 was still awaiting decision at the time we went to press. This is an unexceptional piece of back land development worthy of note because there is only pedestrian access from Anthony Way. Car parking is in lockup garages accessed from Birch Tree Drive.

If you want to keep abreast of developments in your area and elsewhere in Emsworth, it is worth looking at the weekly lists. These are posted on the notice board outside the Co-op and also on the ERA website.

Southleigh Forest Landfill

As we reported in the January issue, the Southleigh forest landfill site has still not gone away. There is some good news in that the more northerly of the two sites, Mays Coppice (EHS 025), has been ruled out. The other one in Southleigh Forest is, however, still very much in the frame for first mineral extraction and then landfill. The ERA has submitted a detailed report outlining why it too should be rejected. See page 7 of the January 2007 issue of The EMS (available on the ERA website) for map and details.

Emsworth Town Partnership

Brendan Gibb-Gray

A Town Partnership has been formed of existing Emsworth community groups and associations to forward the proposals of the Market Town Initiative on behalf of all.

Regular readers of The EMS will know that the Market Town Initiative has been working in Emsworth for two years. The Health Check of the town has been completed and a number of projects identified to take forward.

It is necessary to form the "town partnership" in order to bid for funds. A Community Interest Company (CIC) is being formed and members of the partnership will work towards writing a constitution and opening a bank account.

The partnership will support the following projects:-

1. **Young people.** We will produce a pamphlet and deliver it to all homes in Emsworth, churches, shops and the library showing exactly what is on offer for young people. This is the first step to improving services for younger people.
2. **Public Toilets.** The present toilet provision in the town is inadequate; we are considering ways to improve this.
3. **Town Access Plan.** Together with other community groups we hope to conduct a "street audit" of Emsworth.(see article by Emsworth Community Board).
4. **Educational Services.** Chichester Harbour Conservancy have offered to bring their excellent educational services to this side of the Harbour. We hope to develop a programme of events for young and older people concentrating on the Harbour. This will require premises and the partnership are exploring with the Borough Council potential locations where this and other planned activities can be held.

The next MTI meeting is on Tuesday 17 July in The Crown Hotel (7.30pm) so we will be delighted to see you there.

We also need a secretary, see advert on page 5.



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