

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Chris Curry

A27 Site

Plans have now been submitted for outline approval of the A27 site development as shown on page one. Now that we have seen the details, we have a number of concerns in addition to those raised in the July issue of The EMS, all of which the ERA has discussed with the Council.

- The 80-bed hotel applied for is twice the size originally approved when the A27 was constructed which was for 40 bedrooms. As we feared it has access from the Emsworth end, not just from the A27.
- The screening between the road and the site is minimal and between the railway and the site is non-existent. This gives people approaching Emsworth by train or road a negative appearance of an industrial rather than a rural town.
- A large conspicuous office block is proposed at the site entrance.
- We are doubtful whether the footpath from Washington Road to the Hordean Road Recreation Ground is going to represent a safe crossing for school children and cyclists.
- The road access details at the Interbridges road junction show specifically that an articulated 16 metre truck is expected to be able to turn into North Street and pass under the rail bridge. A proposal that seems both risky from the possibility of collision with the bridge and adds to the difficulties for road users in North Street.
- The projected number of employees on the site is high at 300. Plainly these people will not come from Emsworth and the hope that they will come by public transport or from within the Borough are unlikely to be realised.

New Brighton Area

The planning application for demolition of 26 New Brighton Road and the conversion to 36 sheltered housing apartments has been refused by the Borough Council. The ERA are very concerned about the significant change in character of this part of Emsworth and support the Council's rejection of the proposal. Unfortunately, the developers have gone to appeal, which will take place at **Havant Civic Offices at 10am on Tuesday 21 November**. We intend to be represented at this Inquiry and support from residents attending the meeting would be helpful.

We have had two meetings with HBC to express our concerns about the New Brighton Road area and hope that these discussions will bear fruit over the coming months.

South East Plan

We have responded to the SE Regional Spatial Strategy, which is part of the SE Plan. This is a mammoth document and studying it and replying involved considerable work.

In general terms, we expressed concern at the proposed high quantity of planned development in South Hampshire and in Havant Borough. It exceeds, by a long way, the needs of sustainable growth for the South East and is geared to targets set for housing growth by Central Government, involving a mass movement of people from other regions. This does not necessarily bring houses or jobs to those living here now, who do not have these benefits. In general terms, we support the principle stated by Havant Borough that the necessary infrastructure should be in place to meet the development demands before, rather than after the event.

New Planning Documents

We have also written to HBC about the new Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy and the Core Strategy Issues and Options documents. This all sounds rather dry and you may ask why we are wasting our time. Unfortunately, if we do not make our points while these new policies are being put together, we will not be able to complain that they are not to our liking. We will continue with this work as long as our eyes hold out and our computers continue to work.

New Shops in Emsworth

Richard Jannaway

During the last three months, five new shops have opened in Emsworth and the town is showing signs of the beginning of a renaissance.

In the High Street, the restoration of the Old Pharmacy building is finally complete and Flowers Gallery has opened. Sophia Lynch offers works by emerging and established artists in a welcoming and informal setting. A little further down at number 46, Soles of Emsworth our 'new friendly shoe mender', run by Andrea Toastivine, offers a personal and flexible service on the premises.

Just round the corner, Queen Street Greenhouse, Plants and Flowers has moved from no. 4 to no. 6 Queen St, which has been completely refurbished. Janis Tilling continues to sell superb flowers and potted plants. No. 4 has also been refitted and is now available to let – the only shop currently available in the town centre.

I wish to apologise for the unclear reference in the planning roundup in the July EMS, which said that part of the florists was to be converted to residential. This will NOT be happening.

Further down the hill in the Old Flour Mill, Queen Street Gallery owner Michael Northey is attracting people from all over Sussex and Hampshire with monthly themed exhibitions from top contemporary artists.

Back in The Square, Cinnamon Rose, owned by Debi Rampton offers a range of gifts, candles and silk flowers. Debi won the Food Festival window

Threat to St Richard's Hospital

Richard Jannaway

Most people will have heard by now of the plans to reorganise the health service by downgrading St Richard's, and/or Worthing Hospitals to 'district hospitals'. This involves removing many acute services, most crucially the A&E facility. It is possible that the nearest A&E would be either Portsmouth or Brighton.

On Saturday 22 July, a packed meeting at Emsworth Community Centre heard Consultant Microbiologist Marjorie Greig describe how downgrading the A&E department would affect or destroy other services. Comprehensive paediatrics, maternity and non-routine surgery all depend on the specialist resources in the A&E department.

A downgraded St Richard's would also lose the ability to attract top doctors and would no longer be able to train GPs. The close relationship between local GPs and the hospital would be severely weakened.

A massive sustained campaign is vital and as many people as possible should write to the new NHS South East Coast authority giving their views on the proposals. Write to: Fit for the Future, NHS South East Coast, York House, 18-20 Massetts Road, Horley RH6 7DE.

You can also write to our own Hampshire authorities to express your concern about the knock-on effect on services in our area. The address is: East Hampshire PCT, Third Floor, Raebarn House, Hulbert Road, Waterlooville, Hants PO7 7GP.

Please send copies of your letters to both the Save St Richard's campaign and David Willets MP so that they can use them when lobbying on our behalf.

A collection after the Emsworth meeting raised £208.63 but the campaign still needs funds and if you can help with fundraising or just send a contribution contact the campaign office.

Addresses: Support St Richard's c/o CMEC, St Richard's Hospital, Spitalfield Lane, Chichester PO19 6SE.

David Willets MP, House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA.

The situation changes almost every day. If you use the internet you can go to the website, www.supportstrichards.co.uk where you will find details of the arguments as they develop and points to help you with your letters.

Medical Issues

Chris Curry

NHS Organisation

Our East Hampshire, Fareham and Gosport PCT is to be rolled into one PCT for the whole of Hampshire. This will be effective from 1 October. We are yet to learn how that will affect us locally and how we will be able to communicate with them.

Health Service Planning

In view of the changes that are planned and have already occurred in Havant & Emsworth, a deputation from the ERA went to the HCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 25 July. We made a number of points which are summarised as:

- Before Emsworth Hospital was closed, the financial recovery plan which resulted in the closure was based on a study. We have concerns about the validity of some of the figures used, which were also used in the local NHS capacity plan.
- The Capacity Plan assumes that community care is a satisfactory replacement for the hospital beds previously available. Yet it is only now that the PCT is getting round to monitoring the results of this care.
- The 25 bed Oak Park hospital planned for 2009 will no longer offer mental health support to St James' Hospital, or community hospital support to QA, but will only be accessed by GP placement from Havant and Emsworth practices. This will leave us with, in effect, a replacement in capacity and services for Havant War Memorial Hospital and nothing else. This is one outcome of the Capacity Plan.
- Does the Capacity Plan take into account the SE Plan housing increases for Havant which are included in the 80,000 additional dwellings to be built in southern Hampshire?
- Does the Capacity Plan allow for the possible downgrading of St Richard's Hospital?
- What plans are in hand for replacing the out-patient and all the other related services currently based in the former Emsworth Cottage Hospital when that is closed in 2010?
- When is the PCT going to advise the public of the loss of these services?

The Chairman of the HCC HO&S Committee made it clear that he would like time to respond to our questions but he did say that the Capacity Plan does not make allowance for the SE Plan additional houses. Something his committee has actually been asking for the NHS to include in its planning.

display competition after being open for only 5 weeks. Also new in The Square is Citrus Flowers run by Carli Strugnell and Debbi Eades who have taken over the 'Heav'n Flowers' shop and are featuring some stunning displays.

North Street is also looking better than it has done for years. The variety of shops has increased with Emsworth Flowers our third florist doing well and a branch of Co-Op Funerals Directors will be opening at no. 31 during October.

The ERA welcomes the new fine art traders to our community, but the traditional 'core' shops are still the most important for our daily needs. New and old together means there are more and more reasons to shop in Emsworth.



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