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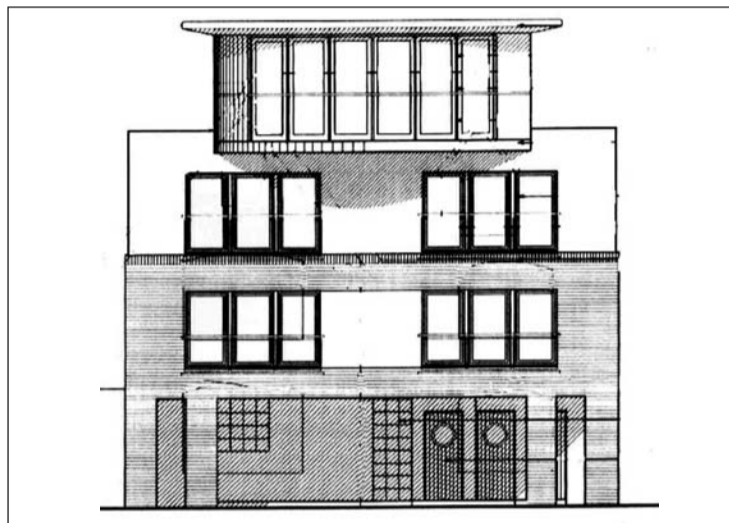
LOCAL NEWS

Planning Roundup

Richard Jannaway

97 Havant Road

Just before we went to press, an application went in for yet another substantial development on the same scale as those featured on the front page. Yet another ocean liner block cramming five 2-bedroom flats, one 1-bedroom flat and four 'cottages' - two bed semi-detached houses - into the 0.112 hectare plot. That is a density of 89 dwellings to the hectare. Regular readers will recall that this was the site where the trees in the front garden disappeared very suddenly just after the house was sold. Without the removal of those trees, the car parking spaces required for this number of dwellings could not have been fitted in without putting the whole block up on stilts, rather than just half of it.



Front elevation of the proposed flats at 97 Havant Road

Even if this awful design is rejected by the HBC Development Control Committee (DCC) there is a danger that it will be allowed when it goes to the inevitable appeal, and is looked at by an Inspector with a 'build, build, build' brief from Whitehall and no local knowledge. This is why the people of Emsworth need to get together to ensure a really substantial representation at both the DCC and appeal stages. (See Public Meeting page 1)

Lost on Appeal

The attempt to safeguard the shopping vitality of Emsworth by resisting the conversion of shops to housing has suffered a setback. The change of use application for 31 High Street from an estate agent's office to a house, which was rejected after ERA representations last summer, has been reversed on appeal.

Plate Glass Door

The conversion of the 'Allwoods' building into an Indian restaurant is welcome but the owners seem unaware of what it means to have premises in a Conservation Area. They have installed a very inappropriate glass door on the front of the building. This has received a record number of complaints for a small alteration and is now subject to a retrospective planning application.

Emsworth "Gang"

P.C. Lisa Jones

There have been a number of incidents of juvenile nuisance in Emsworth over the past four weeks. This steadily increased and it appears from my research that there may be two groups of youths involved. A group aged 14-17 yrs old are coming down to Emsworth on the train at weekends and a younger group of approx. 5 to 6 youths aged 13-16yrs come from the North Emsworth area. The report that follows refers mostly to the Emsworth group.

Whilst walking to and from the town centre along New Brighton Road, the Emsworth youths have been reported causing nuisance in and around the Emsworth Community Centre on a Tuesday and Thursday in the early evening, disrupting classes by entering the centre through open doors! This issue is being addressed.

Equally on a Monday and Wednesday evening the Emsworth youths entered St James' School grounds and climbed onto the roof removing footballs and playing with them on the school grounds before being asked to leave.

One of the groups has also entered the public toilets in South Street wetting tissue and throwing it into the street.

I have liaised with all informants, Neighbourhood Watch and aggrieved parties. Patrols have been increased across the area, by myself, HBC Accredited Community Safety Officers (ACSO's) and police response patrols. Descriptions were circulated of the offending youths which resulted in three of the Emsworth youths being arrested last week (early March), one was charged with criminal damage.

The nuisance seems to have significantly decreased since the arrests. Patrols will continue and further arrests made if required.

Please continue to report all incidents that occur.

The Changing Face of The Square

Phillip & Dot Warren

The western side of The Square is set for development shortly when Project Connect - the scheme to link the Methodist Church with International House next door - gets the go ahead.

International House was purchased in 2000, to provide the Church with much needed further accommodation and right from the start a link between the two properties was planned. This will provide a new inviting entrance and atrium/foyer in the area between the two buildings, leading into the chapel and into International House. Further back, there will be a circulation/information area, a new kitchen, and improved toilet facilities. This will be of great benefit to the many Emsworth residents who use the Pastoral Centre every day for refreshments and an unhurried chat.

It is hoped that the Church Council (its managing trustees) will give the final green light at their April meeting. The building work is then expected to commence in June and take 6 or 7 months to complete. The daily work of the Pastoral Centre and the Church's Sunday worship will continue throughout.

Construction is likely to cost just short of half a million pounds. With £157,000 already raised locally, and promises of over £100,000 from Methodism and hopes of a similar total from other grant-making trusts, the church is within sight of the end of the task. The Church is confident that the local Emsworth community will continue to give their support in reaching this goal by raising the remaining £60,000 locally.

Dot Warren commented, "From purchase of International House onwards, the total cost is in the region of £750,000; over 85% of that total has already been raised or pledged, so this really is the last lap!" By supporting Project Connect, you will be contributing to the continuing care of people within the local community.

A small exhibition of the plans, architect's drawings and a model will be on display in the Church and Pastoral Centre from 1st - 28th April, Monday to Friday, 10am-4pm, Saturday 10am to noon, (but not open on Good Friday). Please come and see what is planned - and sample the very reasonably priced refreshments (with no strings attached!).



Emsworth

Victoria Cottage Hospital

M. Goddard (Chairman, The Friends of Emsworth Hospital)

Let's get one thing straight! Our Victoria Cottage Hospital has not closed! Sadly, the 15 in-patient beds were closed in 2005, but other NHS units were formed, and today you will find a force of nurses, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and others busy inside and outside the hospital.

Never enough of course, since we recently heard that the waiting time for an appointment at the physiotherapy department is around two months. Not due to lack of facilities as The Friends of Emsworth Hospital have always supported this unit, it is well equipped and could support up to four physiotherapists, but the reality is a staff of two and then only on a part time basis.

Also the colorectal clinic had to move to Petersfield due to the stringent requirements for sterilisation of equipment. However, in the hospital today you will find :-

The physiotherapy unit already referred to.

White ward newly re-equipped by the Friends as a spinal fitness centre, also used for slips and falls clinics and other activities.

A Multi-disciplinary Team of specialist nurses and others set up with the purpose of rapid response to patients in their own homes, assessing suitability to be supported at home with appropriate care packages, and also to get patients back home from major hospitals after accident or illness at the earliest opportunity with the necessary support.

There are also occupational therapists, district and community nurses, a mental health team, health visitors and the newly established Red Cross loans service.

Well established consultant clinics cover vascular and general surgery needs, together with the daily phlebotomy (blood) clinic and podiatry. Expected soon is the reopened ENT clinic, and an Ophthalmic clinic.

All the time the hospital is being used for the benefit of local people, The Friends will continue to give support wherever possible. New members are very welcome. It is very important to maintain a strong voice in discussions with the NHS authorities and the larger the membership, the better our chances of being heard. Joining forms are available from the Hospital reception. Do join us in helping to improve our local services! Contact the Secretary on 01243 371476 for further information.

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