Development Control - TrustNews May 2002

As the Development Control Panels 'weekly monitoring of planning applications at the City Council Offices is one of the Trust's most important tasks, this TrustNews begins with a report of their committee.

Although telecommunication masts get good coverage in the local press because of residents' strong opposition to them, there are other less obvious but insidious installations, such as satellite dishes, TV aerials and telephone wires, which arouse little comment but can have a cumulatively detrimental effect on their surroundings. A recent example was the proposal to site a satellite dish with no given dimension on the front façade of a listed house, **1 The Broadway**, right opposite the statue of King Alfred. We objected to this proposal and it has subsequently been refused planning permission.

We have also objected to two recent proposals where permission had been granted for earlier schemes. These were on land at **The Vicarage, Sleepers Hill**, where it is proposed a 5-bedroom house should be built instead of the permitted 4-bedroom house, and at the **Friary Bowling Club, St Michael's Gardens**, where the club want to replace their existing club house. In each case the panels considered the previous proposal was preferable to the current one and so objected to both applications.

Two developments to which the Trust objected have been granted planning permission. These are on land to the **rear of 48/50 Dean Lane**, where Linden Homes are to build 14 new dwellings in place of the existing two houses, and at **Sarum Court** on the corner of **Sarum & Greenhill Roads**, where two blocks of 14 flats will be built by Cove Construction. In both cases it was felt that better designed buildings and more suitable layouts were possible. It is feared these not very satisfactory schemes were probably given consent because the developers were flexing their muscles and preparing to go to appeal.

It is good to report that a scheme we disliked and which has been kicking around, virtually unchanged, since April last year has at last been refused. It was considered the design and siting of Heritage Homes (Wessex)'s two blocks for 12 flats at **Abbotts Court, Park Road**, would be detrimental to the character of the neighbourhood and that Park Road would not be able to accommodate the extra traffic generated by the development. If this is true for this scheme it should certainly also be so for Try Homes' proposal to build 14 new flats on the opposite side of the same stretch of **Park Road**, in place of **Woodpeckers**. The density proposed for this site works out at about 77 dwellings per hectare, which is more suited to the city centre than this quiet backwater.

However, this high density pales into insignificance beside a scheme seen recently, to build five 'pavilions' opposite King Alfred's College instead of the houses at **1, 2 & 3 Sparkford Road**. Here the Winchester Housing Association proposes that about a quarter of a hectare should accommodate 36 flats, resulting in a density of 120 dwelling per hectare, which would be very high even in a city centre. Parking spaces have been provided for each unit, and consequently most of the site is given over to hard surfacing, with blocks of flats marching down the hill close up to the boundary

with the road. We objected to the scheme as being unsympathetic and detrimental to the neighbourhood.

A development likely to cause some local comment is the Winchester Housing Group's scheme to convert **9A Parchment Street** for use as a 2-bedroom flat with a 'venue' on the ground floor and, having demolished the assortment of sheds at present existing in the yard behind, to build a block of seven 1-bedroom flats with access via a route across the neighbouring car-park to the south. Members of the Trust's council and panels were given a presentation by the architects, following which the general consensus was of support for an innovative scheme, although concerns were raised over some minor aspects. The Trust did however object to the new ground floor window on the Parchment Street frontage, for though a modern window here could be acceptable it was felt the one proposed was too aggressive and paid scant respect to either the windows in the adjoining façades or the scale of the street as a whole.

Shione Carden

Roger Backhouse Writes - TrustNews May 02

We have had a lot of very encouraging feedback about our first edition of TrustNews. I hope that you all enjoyed reading it. Please remember that we are anxious to receive your views and to hear from anybody who thinks that they can help us.

This edition is smaller but includes important information about the walks organised by the Trust during the summer months. I would like to thank all those who are prepared to give their time to enable members and non-members to learn more about our splendid city, and especially Nick McPherson who has made all the arrangements.

Friarsgate Action Body

Inevitably most of our work is reactive to proposals made by others and it is difficult to take any initiative over developments that are proposed in the city. It is important though to prepare for what may be controversial matters in the future. To that end we have set up a small group to focus on the proposed Friarsgate development. We have called this group the Friarsgate Action Body (FAB). At least it is a catchy title! At the outset we are obtaining information about who owns the various sites. One estimate is that there are over thirty site owners who will be affected (see the plan of Friarsgate in the February TrustNews). We are also looking into the history and the listed status of some of the buildings.

Proposals from the preferred developers, Thornfield, are still awaited. The delays are caused principally because they do not yet have enough detail about the County's proposals for traffic. Some contact has been made between FAB, Thornfield and their likely architect. No firm proposals are likely to be produced for some months, but when they are the Trust should be ready to make informed comment. I have been greatly encouraged by the willingness of the parties who will be making the

proposals to talk to us and to discuss matters with us. In due course we shall be seeking the views of the membership. We want to try to avoid any repetition of the mistakes made over the Brooks development.

Membership

There is no doubt that an increased membership will give the Trust more clout. If you know anyone who might be interested in joining, please contact the Secretary for an information pack to help you persuade them.

Gift Aid - TrustNews May 2002

Subscriptions paid under covenants or Gift Aid for the years 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 have enabled the Trust to recover £540 in tax for those years.

A greater sum could be expected from future years if more people signed Gift Aid declarations. To date only about a quarter of the membership has done so. The scheme is open to those who pay Standard Rate tax. Will you help the Trust by doing this? If so please contact the Secretary for a declaration form.

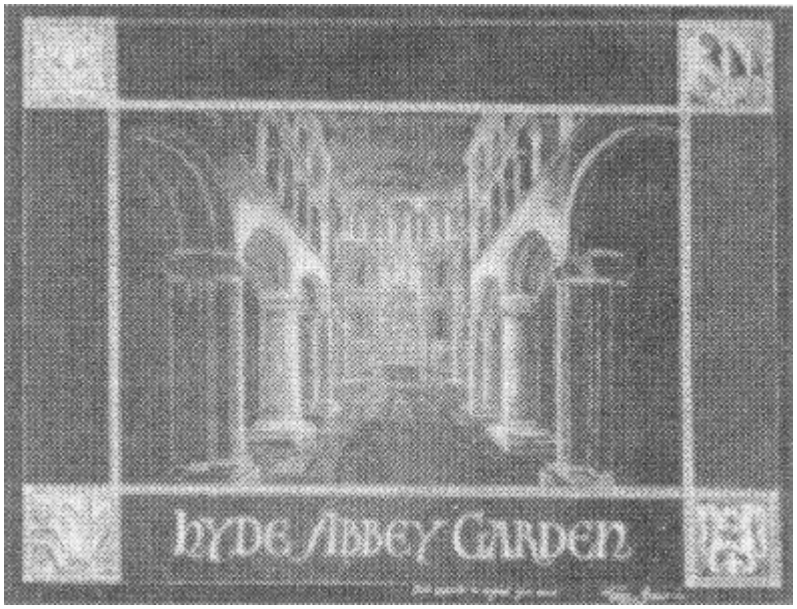
Help! - TrustNews May 02

The Trust needs volunteers to help with the substantial collection of photographs of Winchester life, taken and presented to the Trust by Bob Sollars. Over a lifetime of photography Bob had many pictures published in the Hampshire Chronicle and other newspapers.

A list of the negatives is now being entered onto the archival system at the Historic Resources Centre in Hyde Street, and we need assistance to complete this large task. Volunteers are also needed to continue to photograph 'changing Winchester' for the City of Winchester Trust Loan Slide Collection. Slides from this collection, started in the 1980s, can also be borrowed by members for lectures, talks or articles.

Please contact the Secretary if you can help with either task, or if you wish to enquire about borrowing slides.

Garden for Hyde Abbey - TrustNews May 02



Plans for a memorial garden for Hyde Abbey are going ahead at the bottom of King Alfred Place. The site of the Abbey was confirmed by a recent Community Archaeology Project and as a result the Friends of Hyde Abbey Garden came into being. The Friends' Steering Committee has chosen a design by Landscape Architect Kim Wilkie, and a glass panel by Glass Engraver Tracey Shepherd (illustrated here), depicting the interior of the Abbey, will stand at the entrance. The garden will considerably enhance the character of Hyde and emphasise the site's heritage as a royal burial ground.

In 1110, the remains of King Alfred the Great, Queen Ealswith and their son Edward the Elder were moved from New Minster, adjacent to the present Cathedral, and reburied in front of the high altar of Hyde Abbey.

This community-led garden project is supported by the City Council as its Jubilee Project. Significant financial support is coming from the City Council, but the Friends need to raise about £26,000 to complete the garden. It is hoped the garden will be ready by June 2003, when it will open to the public. Barbara Hall will be leading a Trust walk on 18th July entitled ”A walk from New Minster to Hyde Abbey" see enclosed list.

Members interested in this project should contact the Chairman of the Friends of Hyde Abbey Garden Steering Committee at the Historic Resources Centre, telephone: 01962 848269; e-mail: museums@winchester.gov.uk

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Roger Brown's Model - TrustNews May 02

Most of you will have seen the marvellous model of Winchester made by Roger Brown. For those of you who have missed this remarkable experience, and for anyone wishing to see it again, we hope we have good news because there is a very strong likelihood of it being put on display again in the Great Hall of the Castle in the summer.

Roger, when he was the County Planning Officer, used to hold forth to the Trust (of which he has long been a member) about the need for a Town Model, saying "for goodness sake, if a town like Rye can boast a model, surely Winchester should have one!" He explained to us ignoramuses the advantages in terms of planning, conservation, education, and entertainment, and we were absolutely convinced by his persuasive words. But nobody had the courage to make one. So, when Roger retired in the mid-80s he sat down and made it himself!

This is no ordinary model either: 15 feet in diameter, it accurately records the City in the early 1870s, complete with its first street lighting scheme, and with cathedral and inn windows, all of which light up realistically. Given the overhead projection scheme and voice-over which Roger has always envisaged, it could be even more special, equalling, for example, the exciting model of Boston displayed in the Hancock Tower, which tells the story of the city, Boston tea party and all. And he is prepared to give this extraordinary asset to the City!

Unfortunately as yet no one has been able to find it a home so it languishes in sections like giant slices of stale cake in his garage. The Trust had a scheme to extend the Heritage Centre for the purpose, but we could not get sufficient support from the Authorities to obtain the necessary Lottery grant. The time has come to press for a solution again. Surely the County, the City or some other organisation has the space for a permanent display. What about the Bapsy Bequest, or perhaps some planning gain from the Friarsgate Development?

What is the Bapsy Bequest? Some 8 years ago Bapsybanoo Pavry, Dowager Marchioness of Winchester, left £500,000 to the City for a public building associated with the Guildhall. No use for it has yet been devised, and in the meantime the value of the bequest must have nearly doubled. In the next issue we hope to illustrate a scheme prepared by Huw Thomas, designed to house the model and more besides.

Robin Merton - TrustNews May 2002

We are pleased to announce that the Trust Council has conferred an Honorary Life Membership on Robin Merton in recognition of his four years as Chairman of the Trust.

What future for Art - TrustNews May 02

Every Thursday for eight weeks (6.00pm-7.30pm) beginning 25th April, there will be a series of free public lectures in which distinguished international thinkers speculate on the conditions under which art will thrive in the near and medium-term future. Speakers include Brandon Taylor, Thierry de Duve, Victor Tupitsym and Renata Saleci. The venue is the Winchester School of Art, the New Lecture Theatre, Park Avenue, Winchester.

The Art of Architects and Friends - TrustNews May 02

An exhibition of paintings by architects from Hampshire and beyond is being held at King Alfred's West Downs Performing Arts and Conference Centre, Romsey Road, Winchester, to celebrate the publication of Peter Kilby's new book 'Winchester - An Architect's View" (Published by WIT Press, Southampton, at £59). The exhibition is open from 9am - 5pm Monday to Friday until 31st May.