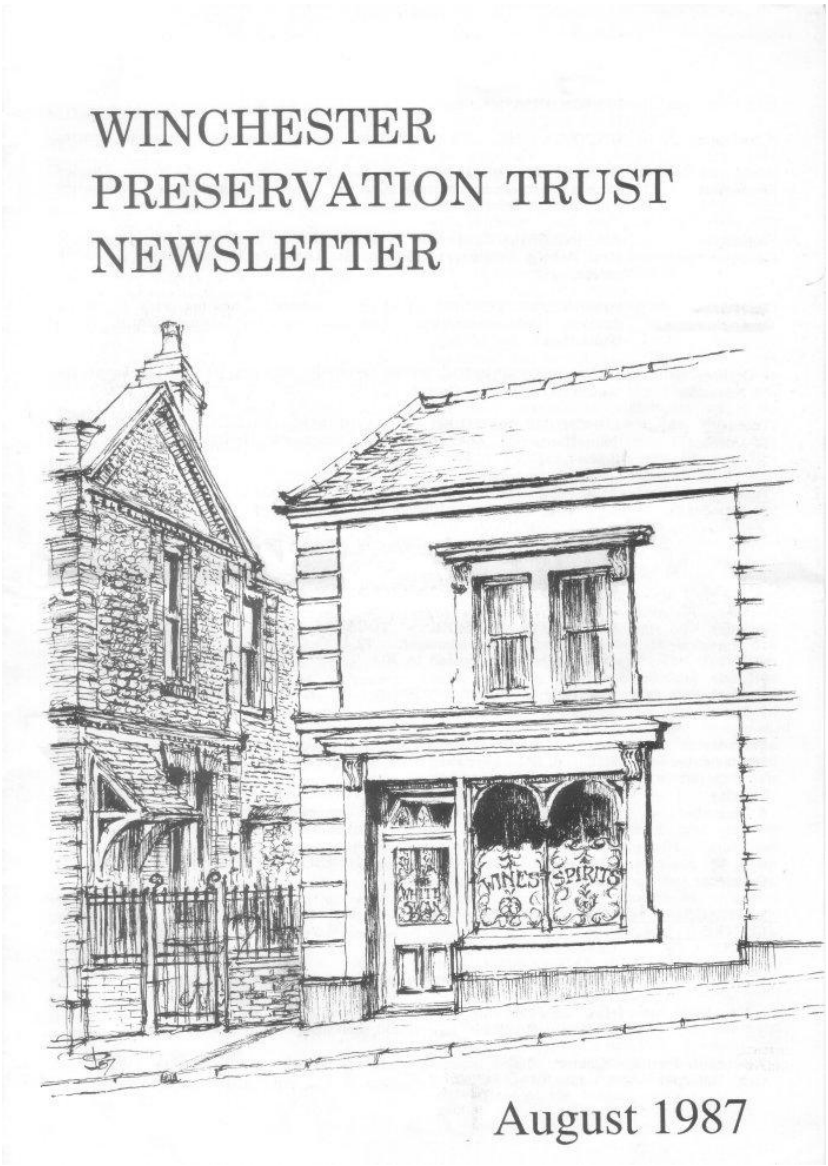
Title Picture - TrustNews August 1987



This delightful drawing of the White Swan in Hyde Street is by Winchester Architect, Peter Jones.
Many members will recall that it was Peter who organised the voluntary labour force in the Heritage Centre building renovations, as well as doing some of the more skilled jobs himself. Due to the efforts of the Trust and City Council, the White Swan has recently been added to the DoE's List of Buildings of Architectural or Historic Interest.

Date of Annual General Meeting - TrustNews August 1987

Please note that the date of the AGM has been changed from 19th to 20th October to accommodate our guest speaker, Lord Briggs of Lewes.

M3 and the Winchester M3 Joint Action Group - TrustNews August 1987

The 1985 Inquiry will now be re-opened at the Guildhall on 29th September.

No more important issue confronts Winchester.

Members will recall that the Trust has been a consistent supporter of a tunnel as the only acceptable motorway option. This also is the policy of the Winchester M3 Joint Action Group (JAG) which played a vital role in the past in averting the Department's more disastrous proposals and which has been reactivated in view of the re-opening of the Inquiry.

The Trust has also strongly maintained that the high embanked crossing of the Itchen Valley was a calamity, mitigated only by the maintenance of the railway viaduct (and then only from Winchester's perspective). The over-line crossing of the railway represented a further serious intrusion into the valley scene.

Unlike the cutting, the tunnel option does not demand these additional environmental impositions, provided the spoil disposal problem can be solved (and it can).

The Trust, therefore, fully supports the JAG policy, calling for a tunnel, a ground-level valley crossing and an under-the-railway crossing at Shawford.

The Inspector in his Report on the 1985 Inquiry was sympathetic towards a tunnel but did not recommend it on grounds of cost and construction time. JAG now has evidence that both the cost and the construction time were considerably exaggerated by the Department of Transport and can be substantially reduced.

This is the conclusion reached in a report prepared very recently by a firm of construction consultants with particular expertise in tunnelling. The report was commissioned originally by individuals who have provided some of the funds required. But JAG intends to make use of it at the re-opened Inquiry and has set up a fund to meet the balance of the costs incurred to date, and to pay for any further studies and legal representation that may be necessary.

The Trust is a member of JAG, strongly supports it, and has already contributed £500 to this fund.

Since 1970 the Departments of the Environment and Transport have produced a succession of proposals, any one of which could have been forced through by the Government of the day. The fact that none of them has been adopted and that the latest Inquiry, in which the Inspector recommended a route to the east of St. Catherine's hill, has been re-opened, implies that no satisfactory solution has been proposed and that the only answer which will be acceptable to almost everyone is a tunnel.

We believe that the tunnel cost can be justified, both in cost/benefit terms and by precedents, in that sections of other motorways have been no less expensive. There

is thus a real chance of achieving a tunnel solution, provided that funds and massive public support are forthcoming.

How Members can help

- Make a donation which the Trust will pass on to JAG. Cheques, made out to "WPT - JAG Account", may be delivered to the Heritage Centre, to branches of Barclay's Bank in Jewry Street, High Street or Weeke, to the Hon. Secretary or to any Officer of the Trust.
- Write in support of the objectives of JAG to the new Inspector, Air Vice-Marshal Charles Maughan, CB, CBE, AFC, C/o. The Guildhall, Winchester.
- Write to your M.P. and to your County and City Councillors.
- Apply to speak at the Inquiry. Do so as soon as possible, addressing your application to Mr. E. Lawson, Programme Officer, Department of Transport, South East Regional Office, Federated House, London Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH4 1SZ. Tel. Dorking 885922 Ext. 366. (You will be required to provide a summary of your intended statement by 7th September).
- Attend the Inquiry sessions as often as you can. A big audience demonstrates that people care.

The Inquiry will re-open at 10 a.m. on 29th September and is expected to last several weeks.

Winchester Preservation Trust Booklets - TrustNews August 1987

During the past 11 years the Trust has published four illustrated booklets on streets in Winchester of special interest. We are keen to continue with this series and already have one at the draft stage on St. Thomas Street, but we need to sell more copies of the first four in order to raise the money for the new booklet.

We are appealing to members to buy these booklets because we all need to know our streets intimately in order to preserve them. For the time being we are offering members the four booklets at the bargain price of £1.60 for the set.

Titles are: "The High Street", "Jewry Street", "The Square and Great Minster Street" and "From Cathedral to Castle".

The sets are available for collection from the Winchester Heritage Centre.

The Trust’s Comments on the Brooks Exhibition - TrustNews August 1987

The Trust’s Comments on the Brooks Exhibition (as submitted to Winchester City Council)

Introduction

There is nothing that the Trust would like to do more than praise the outcome of this competition. We shrink from the task of criticism after so much evident hard work

and ingenuity has been expended, not only by the three finalists and nine runners-up, but by all the City officers, members and consultants involved. But the suitability of the scheme for the centre of Winchester will not be judged by posterity on the basis of good intent and effort, and it is the Trust's responsibility to try and make this judgment in advance.

We are especially qualified to do so, having spent, as a body, the last 30 years concentrating on Winchester's environmental problems. The Trust grows and changes, but its principles and experience develop, and the diversity of skills contributing to Trust opinion removes the risks both of vested interest and lack of realism. The following comments are a consensus view contributed in earnest debate by people ranging across the spectrum of commercial, artistic, historical, professional and, not least, plain but well-informed citizen and user opinion.

The fact that it has been comparatively easy to reach a consensus view in the circumstances is in itself significant. We earnestly beg members of Winchester City Council to heed what we say, and not proceed on the basis of expediency - the familiar cry of the pragmatist "we must get on with it". The heritage that we have from the past is of such unparalleled importance to Winchester that we must see to it that the heritage we give to the future is not based on such philistine values. Even in ten years' time another year or two at this stage will be of little consequence, but a mistake on so large a scale would mar Winchester's character forever.

The Exhibition

Although it is a pity that the City did not provide a take-away synopsis of each scheme, we have no difficulty in praising the quality of the exhibition and the wealth of information provided; that the models produced for scheme C seemed poor, for example, is only because the others were superb. But it is a sad, sad reflection on the City's past record of public participation that this vitally important exhibition was only fully on display for one week in July and that there were rarely sufficient experts to discuss the schemes with the public (as has always been the case before), and that the forms supplied for opinion-gathering should have been so superficial.

We find it hard not to sympathise with those who feel that the authorities are not seriously interested in public opinion on this occasion, and that the decision has already been settled behind closed doors - probably on purely financial grounds, of which no information has been provided for public debate. Even other City Councillors, we learn, were discouraged from sitting-in on the official working party's sessions, and when the Trust made attempts, firstly to give its opinion on Winchester's character to competitors, and later made tentative enquiries of them to the possibility of an exhibition of die losers, we were officially criticised for interfering in "the Council's competition" and threatened with an end to our "special relationship".

The Schemes

(a) **Character**. In general the feeling about all three schemes is that they lack any sense of identity with Winchester. There is great lip service to "Winchester vernacular" but none of the schemes reflects the City's familiar streets. There is no

extension of the townscape of central Winchester, which is particularly serious because the physical relationship is so close.

We looked in vain for that sense of outdoor closure which characterises the High street area and which should be a fundamental element of any large-scale central redevelopment here. Do the people of Winchester really want a closed-in block, however trimmed with gables and turrets? Is this universal, Home-Counties, artificial, hypermarket-type ambience what visitors to a historic city will be drawn to see? Frankly, the architectural quality displayed would hardly be acceptable in any other town of character; the inevitable Juggling with form and materials to satisfy the conflicting requirements of the brief is a sure recipe for disaster.

(b) **Commercial Content**. Basically the schemes are equally dominated by car parking and shop floor space, and all three schemes have shoe-horned these requirements of the official brief into the space available. Much ingenuity has been spent on trying to make the results attractive, but the market, the housing, the restaurants and landscaping seem like sops to the brief rather than fundamental elements of the schemes. Everyone's desire to see this area remain alive at night would seem to have little chance of fulfilment on the basis of these proposals. There is no knowing how the shop area would be used.

This is a background problem for all city centres, of course, where planners now have even less control than before over privately owned sites. Here, for once, there was a unique opportunity for the City to use its powers as owner to dictate or influence shop types, but the brief ensured solutions over which there is no control.

For example, there is mounting popular complaint over the increasing proportion of multiples in the city centre; the brief could have responded to this, whereas these schemes would probably result in a further increase in the number and size of the multiples in Winchester. We have already made a strong plea for an area restricted to small shops, but find no lasting hope for the small shopkeeper in any of the schemes. The City made a brave but hopeless (and potentially expensive) stand over the reduction in number of small shops on someone else's land; why, oh why would the authors of the brief not make small shops an element of development on this publicly-owned land?

(c) **Housing**. There was no requirement for housing in the brief, only a suggestion, and it is to the credit of two schemes that any housing was included at all. However, the lack of importance inferred from the brief is evident in both solutions. Scheme B has a few miserable houses on a sliver of land used to hide a lorry service ramp, and scheme C gave no details of its roof-top suburban bungalows, access to which ensures that they would play no part in the life of the scheme.

(d) **Parking etc**. The Trust has explained at length its view that any provision for public parking on this site is a mistake, primarily because it will perpetuate the present traffic congestion on central area roads which lead to and from the car park - roads which should have pedestrian priority. This congestion is not, of course, apparent on models dotted with one or two polite little cars, but the present level of pedestrian/vehicle conflict, exacerbated by the proposed 30 per cent or so increase in central area shopping space, should not be beyond imagination. And once

imagined, is there anyone who could claim that the development would improve the centre of Winchester?

The other reasons why the Trust is opposed to the parking provision are more apparent. With these schemes there would certainly be an improvement in the ambience of Middle Brook Street and the lower end of St. George's Street (though little advantage seems to have been taken to improve St. George's Street, except in the case of the pentice in scheme B), but the Friarsgate extension and Upper Brook Street would be extremely unpleasant places for pedestrians, not only in terms of traffic, but because of the traffic-dictated character of the new buildings facing on to these streets and the inevitable engineers' "improvement" of corners.

Eye level judgment of the models is difficult because of the surrounding buildings, but it is one of the most important tests which responsible judges should undertake, with the aid of a simple periscope.

However, the greatest influence of the parking provision is its effect on the structure of the whole development, which we atempt to investigate under the next heading.

(e) **Economics**. It has been very difficult to comment properly on any aspect of the exhibition in the time available, but it is almost impossible to make a rounded judgement because the financial factors have not been made available to the public at any time. However, whilst we were only able to guess at our predictions of disaster when studying the brief, we are now able to draw some conclusions from the outcome of the brief as displayed in the three selected schemes.

It can only be the conditions of the brief which has resulted in three schemes so similar in their solutions. Given a specific shopping area and a specific number of car parking spaces, it seems that as we feared, this type of development was inevitable. For Winchester it is a gross overloading of the site which could not result in anything but an alien intrusion.

Despite, or perhaps because of, the common solution of two-tier underground parking, the site has been treated as a single building pierced by corridors and halls in order to maximise the use of every square inch of space. We are told that the underground car park is a practicable solution, but we are not told how much it would cost. We suspect that to overcome the ground conditions and high water table the cost must be enormous, and it is this which governs what happens above ground level in all three schemes.

The competitors have shown great ingenuity in meeting the challenge presented to them, and we cannot fault their decision to put all the cars below ground faced with the conditions of the brief. But we contend that they have solved a difficult and irrelevant problem.

In general terms the Trust does not believe that the ratepayers would put financial return as their first priority for the development of this site, and historically there is no need for it either because the land was acquired for us by the City for a very small outlay some 35 years ago. But we are no more able to be certain of what the citizens

want than is the Council, which is why we advocated public participation in the preparation of the brief.

On the other hand, we do not think that financial considerations should be taken lightly. alternatives to the present solution are not necessarily financial losers. There is, for example, good commercial reason to believe that a scheme with half the parking provision, or none at all, could be just as profitable to the City. But circumscribed by the brief, the real ingenuity of developers could not be tested by this competition.

Conclusion

The Trust is unable to support any of the three schemes as an appropriate solution for the redevelopment of the Brooks, and is therefore reluctant to draw careful comparisons between them in this commentary, knowing the tendency for quotations out of context. There are good and bad features in each which we shall assess separately out of respect for the architects and for future reference. But on the central question, we can only responsibly ask the City Council to think again before committing Winchester to a solution which at best is banal and at worst could be disastrous.

Heritage Centre News - TrustNews August 1987

The first three months of the Audio/Visual culminated in a visit by the City Council's Director of Amenity Services and Tourism Manager. The Manager of the new Saxon Hotel also came to see the A/V and was so impressed that he offered to provide a leaflet on it with every bedroom key.

Although visitor numbers are up 200 on the same period last year, it should be noted that the Centre has, this year, been open for an extra 35 sessions.

We have not been helped by the Brooks sign. The hoarding that surrounds it has obscured our presence (hence the recent appearance of a high-level banner on the end of our building), and the unfortunately-named "Heritage" souvenir and book shop attached to the Dig has caused enormous confusion - almost always to our disadvantage.

Special thanks are due to our Stewards who have responded magnificently to the Hon. Manager's call for extra effort during the tourist season, and also to those Trust members who, although not able to be regular Stewards, kindly offered their services.

For operational reasons, the visitors' entrance to the Centre has recently been moved to the southern (car park) end of the building. The new internal layout provides improved facilities for "current affairs" displays.

Those Trust members who have not yet seen the (free to them) Audio/Visual should aim to do so before the end of September when this year's season of regular showings comes to an end. The main exhibition will, of course, continue, and two temporary exhibitions are already programmed.

A VHS video cassette of the Audio/Visual is now available and would make an excellent Christmas present for anyone who cares about Winchester. The price to members is £8 (a £2 reduction on the normal price of £10). Copies may be ordered from the Heritage Centre Shop (our shop, not the other one!)

Our stock of secondhand books, although quite high, is not yet high enough for another book sale. We hope to run another book sale this year, so do please have a look at your shelves and let us have anything you can spare.

BR’s Refurbished Station - an Appreciation - TrustNews August 1987

Now that the refurbished station is resplendent in its new colours, with the famous clock returning soon, it may not be inopportune to praise BR for the extensive work on this 1840s building.

Once forecourt improvements are made, about £400,000 will have been spent, with only £46,000 being provided by the County and City Councils.

We are indeed fortunate that BR is prepared to invest this amount in the station, whereas at Basingstoke and Andover much of the cost was covered by commercial concerns.

Alan Cooke

Winchester Preservation Trust Awards - 1987 - TrustNews August 1987

Any member who would like to nominate a scheme for an Award should ask the Assistant Hon. Secretary, Miss Kate Key, for an entry form. (Tel. day 54411 ext. 7372, evening 51738). The closing date for entries is 11th September.

Please note that, although anyone may nominate a scheme, certain permissions are required.

M3 - Stop Press - TrustNews August 1987

The declared purpose of the (partially) re-opened Inquiry is to hear any new evidence which the Countryside Commission, English Heritage and others may wish to submit. During the procedural meeting held on 23rd July the new Inspector stressed that his terms of reference did not permit him to hear any evidence that had been submitted already, even though, as objectors were quick to point out, much significant evidence (as well as points won in cross examination) had not been recorded by the previous Inspector.

This handicapping of objectors who appeared at the 1985 Inquiry does not apply to the Countryside Commission or English Heritage,' who did not appear.

English Heritage (also known as the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England - HBMC) is an objector to the Department's preferred route which involves a cutting through Twyford Down. It says it will not be proposing an alternative route. However, it will be providing an assessment of the historical and archaeological importance of a number of sites, including the water meadows, Itchen Navigation, railway, A33 line, Plague Pits, St. Catherine's Hill and Twyford Down complexes and Saxon finds. In carrying out this assessment, it says it will be guided by the non-statutory criteria of importance approved by the Secretary of State for the Environment (Deposited Library Document HBMC 5).

There is a grave danger that English Heritage's assessment, although based purely on criteria related to historical and archaeological importance, could encourage the Inspector to recommend that a By-pass route is more acceptable than the Twyford Down cutting.

The Countryside Commission will be proposing an alternative route. This follows the line of the existing A33 between St. Catherine's Hill and the Itchen Navigation, passes across the entrance to Plague Pits Valley on the alignment of the A33 and then crosses the Itchen Valley on an alignment similar to the Department's published route, except that it goes under, instead of over, the railway.

In common with other proponents of a By-pass route, the Countryside Commission has failed to satisfy the Trust on a number of points, including the following very important ones: (1) How can the motorway be constructed on the line of the A33 without causing traffic to divert through Winchester? (2) What will happen when - as seems likely from the Department's traffic forecasts - there is pressure for further road capacity?

Since the contraflow and other problems associated with construction works on the line of the A33 will delay traffic and increase accident rates substantially (in the region of 400%), diversions are certain to occur. If the tunnel option is adopted such problems will not arise during construction of the Winchester section.

Unlike the By-pass route, the tunnel option imposes an immense physical constraint to further widening. With this option, if additional road capacity is ever needed, it will almost certainly have to be provided on an entirely different route.

In the Trust's view, the tunnel option is the only satisfactory way of getting the motorway past Winchester. Members who support the Trust's opposition to the Twyford Down cutting are urged to give active support to JAG's proposals for twin tunnels on an improved alignment and a lowering of the route to the south. They should avoid being gulled into supporting a Bypass route, which would be terribly damaging to the City and its setting.

Please support JAG with your money, with your letters and with your presence at the re-opened Inquiry.

Marston's Brewery - TrustNews August 1987

It is understood that preliminary talks with the City Council have taken place concerning possible development opportunities for the Brewery site at the junction of North Walls and Hyde Street.

Newsletter contributions should be sent to Mrs. Gill Graham, Hon. Secretary, Winchester Preservation Trust, Highways End, Highways Road, Compton, Winchester, S021 20F. (Win. 713072).

Programme - TrustNews August 1987

Continuing
Discover the City - exhibition at the Winchester Heritage Centre.

Until end September
Winchester Heritage - regular showings of Audio/Visual Display at the Winchester Heritage Centre.
Free to members of Winchester Preservation Trust.

Tuesday 15 September 7.30 p.m.
An Introduction to Family History - talk by genealogist Mrs. Pamela Peskett.
St. Lawrence Parish Room, Colebrook Street.

Thursday 24th September 7.00 p.m.
Winchester Leisure Centre - discussion meeting with architects Jackson, Greenen & Down.
at the Leisure Centre, North Walls Park.

1 October to 14 November
Display of Photographs of the Brooks in the 1950s at the Winchester Heritage Centre

Tuesday 13 October 12.45 - 1.45 p.m.
Lunchtime Lecture - Cathedral Museum Project - by John Hardacre.
Winchester Heritage Centre. Number limited to 30.

Tuesday 20 October 7.30 p.m.
Annual General Meeting, King Charles Suite, Winchester Guildhall. (Please note change of date).
After the business meeting, at approximately 8.00 p.m., there will be a Talk by Lord Briggs of Lewes (Professor Asa Briggs), Provost of Worcester College, Oxford, and President of the Winchester Heritage Centre. (Members' guests welcome).

Tuesday 10 November 12.45 - 1.45 p.m.
Lunchtime Lecture - Tourism - by Mark Smith, the City Council's Tourism Manager.
Winchester Heritage Centre. Number limited to 30.

18 November to 6 December
Display by the friends of King Alfred Buses in the Winchester Heritage Centre.

Thursday 26 November 7.30 p.m.
H.M. Naval Base, Portsmouth - illustrated talk by Dr. Ray
St. Lawrence Parish Room, Colebrook Street.

Tuesday 8th December 12.45 - 1.45 p.m.
Lunchtime Lecture - Archaeology of the Brooks - by Mike Morris who is directing the excavation.
Winchester Heritage Centre. Number limited to 30.

9 to 12 December
Display and sale of Chinese Brush Paintings in the Winchester Heritage Centre.

Heritage Centre Hours
Tuesday to Sunday 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and 2.00 p.m. to 4.00 p.m.
Closed all day Monday
Groups catered for outside normal hours by arrangement with the Hon. Manager.
Hire charges for first floor exhibition/meeting room (subject to availability): Whole day £12.50, half day £7.50, two hours £4.00.

Winchester Heritage Centre: 52/54 Upper Brook Street, Winchester. (Tel. Win. 51664) Hon. Manager: Alan Cooke (Win. 64292).