

Dear Member,



I have pleasure in inviting you to our 37th AGM on Wednesday, 21st May 2008 commencing at 7.30 pm at the **Windsor Forest Restaurant, Level 2, Ascot Racecourse Grandstand** (use Car Park 3). The Authority are providing their facilities free of charge and our Guest Speaker will be Mr Charles Barnett, the new Chief Executive of

Ascot Racecourse. As usual, wine and nibbles will be provided by the Committee and we hope to have a good turnout at this prestigious venue. I now report on the activities for the last 6 months, leaving more detail for the AGM itself.

PLANNING OVERVIEW

Green Belt In responding to the RBWM reconsultation on their Core Strategy Plan, SPAE have strongly reiterated the local overriding wish to preserve its Green Belt land. RBWM have also helpfully confirmed that, although not mentioned in the current Structure Plan, they recognise the need to lessen and grade normal development densities on the edge of Green Belt.

South East Plan SEERA and SEEDA Finalisation of the SE Plan is still set for Autumn 2008, and there are now proposals to wind down SEERA (after considerable abortive expenditure) and subsume most of its activities in SEEDA.

Chobham Common Special Protection Area (SPA) SEERA has consulted on a draft interim strategic plan (ISDP) for the SPA; SPAE has said:

1. A zone of 400 m to 5 km should be set only if measures to avoid impact on the SPA are provided.
2. The provision of SANG is an essential prerequisite to such measures.
3. Account has to be taken of the distances from the SPA to the development and its mitigating SANG. People from a development 500 m from the SPA are unlikely to travel an additional 1.5 km in order to reach a SANG.
4. In the whole RBWM area, over 80 additional dwellings within 5 km of the SPA have been granted planning permission at Appeal with no proper SANG mitigation, Inspectors accepting as mitigation the presence of existing (not additional) Crown Estate green open space to which there is conditional public access but

which meets few of the criteria in ISDP8 for SANG land. These already permitted developments were allowed to proceed without any change having to be made in the character of the land cited in mitigation, without landowner consent to such use, without any discounting and without payment of any developer tariff.

5. SPAE welcomes a strategic approach to, and framework for, assessing SANG quality and accessibility on the assumption that only the ISD Plan comes into operation where Planning Inspectors are the competent authority, they will no longer permit developments that do not meet the requirements of the Plan. Members wishing a copy of this response should apply at the AGM to Peter Standley, its main author and our SPAE expert.

Planning Targets & Windfall Sites Government targets for the RBWM and Bracknell Forest areas were exceeded partly as a result of considerable windfall sites. In RBWM's revisited Core Strategy Plan there is an ability to apply to be considered an exception for windfall sites.

Third Heathrow Runway Members are encouraged individually to lobby their MPs against this extreme proposal which has been compared to the Highland Clearances. Planned revised flight paths would be over our area.

Heatherwood Hospital Assurances have been given that, despite cuts in services, our most valued local hospital will stay open "for the foreseeable future". SPAE did not object to the recent development of its Green Belt backland for profit in the hope that the hospital would be rendered more viable and funds allocated for modernisation. Consultation on the new proposals ends on 14th April and members are encouraged to help in their responses. It would be a tragedy to lose Heatherwood for our area.

SUNNINGDALE

Peter Stubblefield
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At Charters, Charters Road, (in the Green Belt), the long awaited school car park N of Charters Road is to be built later this year and a large Estate Management Building was refused. Applications, for new modernist detached houses, replacing houses accessed from Hancocks Mount, (historically part of the Charters Estate and recently bought back in), try to alter the access arrangements laid out by the Appeals Inspector in allowing "residents only and emergency" access from



Hancocks Mount to the main buildings. These applications have now been refused; RBWM has decided that the proposed placing and 'modernist style' would detract from the Grade II listed Charters building.

As expected, two of the more contentious applications recently refused have returned as Appeals, following the Planning Inspectorate's change of heart on the SPA. Ashish Nivas (13 flats) plus Summerwood and Pucksfield (21 dwellings, 7 affordable), appeal on 19 Jun 2008. Predictably, because the site is just across the road from Chobham Common, the Appeal on land at 142 Chobham Road (9 apartments) was dismissed on SPA grounds.

SUNNINGHILL & ASCOT Peter Standley
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Proposals for flatted developments continue and include Ridgefield and Milestones (for 12 flats), Rustlings (for 12), Budgens' car park (14 flats) and Endeavour House, Queens Road (10 flats) and another two applications for the replacement of Rosewood, Burleigh Road (8 or 9 flats). Alternative schemes are, however,

beginning to appear eg for two pairs of semi-detached houses at Meadow Court, London Road (at appeal). Details of the Ascot Motor Works, Winkfield Road, block of 14 flats have now been submitted for approval.

Replacement of dwellings which sit comfortably within their plots continues with inappropriately large houses extending from one side of the plot to the other, with ridge heights of 9-10m and accommodation on three floors, regardless of the scale of adjacent houses. Although national planning guidance requires good design to be "well integrated with, and complement, the neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally in terms of scale and density" little weight seems to be given to this by RBWM!

We continue to monitor progress towards an interim strategic delivery plan which would allow developments which increase density to go ahead providing potential harm to Chobham Common is mitigated. We have given our views on the conduct of an environmental impact assessment prior to an application to permit the continuing use of the waste transfer station/recycling facility in St Georges Lane (which has operated without planning consent for some seven years!).

WINKFIELD Stewart McDougall
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It is likely that BFBC will be asked to absorb a further 2,000 dwellings (up from 11,000) within the rebased SE Plan. We are all familiar with the pressures resulting from the major developments at the RAF Staff College, the Met Office and Peacocks Farm, and the

plans for major residential development expansion in North Bracknell. Fortunately the Winkfield parish area has been spared the direct impact of a major development, although the traffic impact of the those within Bracknell will be felt by us all. With such development pressure, it is to be welcomed that BFBC has reiterated its commitment to the Green Belt, particularly the separation area between Ascot and Bracknell. Individual pressures on the Green Belt continue and, as this is written, we await a decision on an application in Prince Albert Drive to convert a disused agricultural barn to three industrial units. The other Green Belt issue in this area, that of Bewes Stud's application for a new dwelling, has now been rejected and the appeal withdrawn.



Flatted applications in Winkfield continue to be restricted by the SPA and lack of SANGS, although it can only be assumed they will resume once the current oversupply is exhausted.

All residents using roads in the Winkfield area should familiarise themselves with the road closures that will result later this year when the new water pipeline is laid down in roads such as Swinley, Priory and Locks Ride. Disruption will be severe for several months.

WEBSITE & EMAIL

You are encouraged to visit our website (www.spae.org) regularly for news, and to let Glynis Morse (secretary@spae.org) know your email address if you have not already done so: your next paper report can then be replaced by an environment- (and budget-) friendly emailing.

CPRE

We continue to work closely with this excellent organisation and you are cordially invited to attend their AGM at the Ascot Racecourse, Windsor Forest Restaurant, on Friday 9 May 2008 and 7.30 p.m. Temporary free membership facilities at their and our AGM on 21 May have been mutually extended and it is hoped that both occasions will be successful and well attended.

SPAE COMMITTEE

I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my thanks to the officers and members of the Committee for their continued support and hard work during the year and to welcome Jacky Scott-Howison as a new committee member and deputy General Secretary.

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R G Stubblefield
Chairman