



Lostock Letter

Newsletter of the Lostock Residents Group

No. 011 August 2006

<http://www.lostockresidentsgroup.org.uk>

Have you got news of an inappropriate Planning Application?

Call Roy on 01204 844771 or email: chairman@lostockresidentsgroup.org.uk

NOTES FOR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS

We survive on donations from residents and we have had many donations so far for which we thank you sincerely. Printing is one of our biggest expenses, so if you feel we are doing a worthwhile job our Treasurer would be pleased to hear from you. Please ring Wallace on (01204) 491362 or Roy on (01204) 844771.

Free printing of letters and newsletters would also be most welcome. We distribute up to 1400 Newsletters and Alert letters.

LOSTOCK RESIDENTS GROUP

We are an apolitical group completely independent and a purely voluntary group. We attempt to protect that which is good in our area and object to what we consider to be inappropriate development. We do not oppose everything that is proposed, some cannot be opposed. We are also concerned about infrastructure, sewerage, car parking, flooding and traffic management. Should any of you be interested in attending any of our Committee Meetings, you would be most welcome to attend, but only one at a time. Please contact Roy on (01204) 844771.

WALKERS AND DISTRIBUTORS

We currently have about 40 walkers and distributors, but we are always looking for more, since a few drop out, or move away and others are on holiday. We could do with a few more volunteers in the Middlebrook/Junction Road West area. If you feel you can help, please contact Colin on (01204) 846548 or Roy on (01204) 844771.

E-MAIL LIBRARY

Just a reminder that you may sign up to be on our e-mail register by sending your name and postal address to: chairman@lostockresidentsgroup.org.uk

Subscribers can withdraw at any time and details will not be divulged to any third parties.

WEBSITE

We hope that you have visited our website. We are sorry it crashed soon after we started, but it was for the best of reasons. We got so many hits over the week when we first published the address it took us beyond our bandwidth. This was soon remedied by paying a higher subscription.

Thank you for the comments we have received to date. Please take time to look at it and pass on any comments you may have.

As promised the website is in addition to our paper communications and will not replace either the Newsletter or the Alert letters relating to any planning applications which are brought to our attention by concerned neighbours.

Everyone will still receive an individual hand-delivered Newsletter. The whole area (1400 households) will continue to receive Alert letters for major issues.

For more localized issues, the website will enable residents to see what is going on outside their immediate area.

TONIGHT WITH TREVOR MCDONALD (ITV)

A bit of a fiasco, a non-event. Apparently the reason Counc. Walsh and myself did not appear was that Ruth Kelly declined to be interviewed which meant that our interview would have unbalanced that part of the programme. Bloomfield, Old Kiln Lane and Fall Birch Hospital did appear, but only fleetingly. I asked for the bits off the cutting room floor, but they politely declined!!

LOSTOCK PLANNING UPDATE

60 St. Andrews Road – 9 Apartments - After a lengthy and intense campaign against this inappropriate development this was approved by the Planning Committee. In our opinion there were sufficient grounds for it to be refused. There were so many similarities to the Old Kiln Lane and Brynmoor developments which were both refused by the Bristol Inspectorate. A condition was placed upon the developer to bring the road up to adoptable standards. There appears to be an inconsistency in the Council. At least the officers were consistent in accepting all the applications albeit mistakenly. Will they ever learn?? We warned the Councillors that if accepted, it will set a precedent for a plethora of similar applications. Be warned and vigilant.

Braybrook Drive 74754/06 - This is the fourth application to place a house on a particularly cramped site. It is strictly speaking a greenfield site since it was left as open space by the original developer. Indeed, it was a wooded area and still has several trees with T.P.O's in close proximity. It is proposed to build a four bedroom dormer bungalow. It does not even have space for a garage and cars will have to be parked on the drive. A thoroughly bad design. The building would detract from the pleasing and open aspect of the estate. The site should be left as an open space amenity for the community. Letters to BMBC Planning by 23rd. August or shortly afterwards.

Lower House Farm 75097/06 - This application is to demolish the farmhouse and to build seven apartments. The farm is one of the oldest buildings in the area, dating from the 1700s. We do not need any more apartments in Lostock; look at the progress at the station!

This block would dominate the houses in Lower House Drive, Broadwood, New Meadow, the top of Acresdale and Green Drive. The building will be at right angles to Chorley New Road, on a site sloping to the south. The lower end will be four stories high. Exiting the site will be horrendously dangerous. Plans may be examined on the Internet or at BMBC Planning Department by 3rd September or shortly afterwards.

Apartments & Town Houses at Lostock Junction Station - There appears to be no progress on the site. Are apartments becoming unattractive??

504 Chorley New Road - Between 30 – 50 trees were pre-emptively felled on this site and at 514 They did not have T.P.O's and, therefore, it was perfectly legal. The neighbours complained and T.P.O.'s were placed on the remaining trees. Firstly an application was made to put a pair of semi detached houses at the rear of the plot. This was withdrawn. A further application for a detached 3/2 storey house was made and was approved on the 10th August. In our opinion it is of poor stepped design, hard up against a steeply sloping bank. The house is at the back of the site with a vast amount of space at the front. Watch this space!

Low Wood & Old Hall Clough - The developer on the Low Wood site for which approval for 3 houses was granted in 2002 felled 28 trees on these two sites in January of this year, which had T.P.O's or Woodland Orders on them. He was told to stop, he didn't, so an injunction was placed and an undertaking was agreed that he would not fell any more. He is now to be prosecuted in the Magistrates Court on 29th August at 10.00 am. Low Wood is a "brownfield site" whereas Old Hall Clough is a "greenfield site". Let us hope that the magistrates punish them severely (maximum fine is £28000 per tree), otherwise it will set a huge precedent to other developers across the Borough. Meanwhile the developer has been surprisingly allowed to prune and fell a number of trees in the area. We hope this does not prejudice the prosecution. He has also agreed to replace the 28 trees he has felled. (See pictures of the tree devastation on our website)


Mobile Phone Mast At Broadgate Farm, Junction Road West - Another mast has been applied for at this farm, by the owners Beaumont Estates. It has been rejected, but has gone to appeal. This could make 3 in about 100 yards radius. Pure greed.

REGENT ROAD – Double Yellow Lines –It has been proposed and we have advocated that the double yellow lines on the bend at the bottom of Regent Road be extended to prevent parking on the bend. This is extremely dangerous and it is amazing that there has not been an accident, However, there have been objections and further observations will be necessary.

60 Regent Road - This plot is still unsold.

138 Regent Road - Progress is well underway. There are still one or two issues remaining. Obscured glass being one

50/52 Regent Road - This application, for extensive extensions has been withdrawn, but will no doubt return.

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| <p>LOSTOCK & CHEW MOOR UPDATE</p> <p>(Conservation page – website)</p> <p>The Wild Flower Meadow was sown & completed last year. The result has been so far a bit disappointing, but it is probably early days yet and the dry weather hasn't helped. More work will probably be done on it at the appropriate time. It is hoped that the footpath completed two year ago, will be extended by Bolton MBC to New Tempest Road soon.</p> <p>HEATON AREA UPDATE</p> <p>Bloomfield - 21 Apartments are progressing</p> <p>Clough Lodge -Approval for two houses has been granted but no work has been commenced on the rebuild. The house has been demolished.</p> <p>Old Kiln Lane - No further developments.</p> | <p>AREA FORUM - HEATON, LOSTOCK AND HULTON</p> <p>The next area forum will be on 20th September at the Ladybridge High School. These meetings are useful in several ways. There is a “drop in” session from 6.30 pm – 7.00 pm where our local councilors may be approached with questions and problems. Then there are presentations by various organizations which are of interest to the community in our wards and lastly there is a question and answer session. If answers cannot be immediately given, the questions are given to the appropriate departments and answers are given in writing at the next forum.</p> <p>If you have any questions for your Councillors or BMBC Officers, Police or Fire Brigade this is the place to go.</p> |
| <p>GIANT HOGWEED</p> <p>This has appeared on Regent Park Golf Club at the rear of the gardens on the west side of Regent Road. This has been reported to the authorities. It is an offense to allow this to grow on ones land. If you have any in or near your garden please report it to Mr. John Gorton</p> <p>Do not attempt to treat it yourself, it should not be touched. Ask for selective killing as we do not want to kill other wildflowers.</p> |  |

TOO MANY FLATS

The All-party Housing, Planning and Local Government Parliamentary Select Committee, published a paper on Housing in June 2006 which expressed concern at the recent increase in two bedroom flats in town and city centres. The Select Committee considers that the provision of flats needs to be balanced by an increase in family housing which ensures mixed sustainable communities. The needs for older people and the disabled should also not be overlooked in the pressure to promote an increase in private housing.

Landlords and organisations are also worried. Six years ago, flats made up 20% of the total number of homes built, two years ago it was 42%, now it is a staggering 59%. Stories are circulating of apartments becoming difficult to let, and landlords being forced to drop rents, which attracts a different types of tenant, changes the residential profile and prompts the original, more affluent tenants to leave too. Amateur buy-to-let investors are getting burnt fingers.

As for sales, the director of SmartNewHomes.com is reported as saying that ‘The price of a new semi-detached property is up by 11.5% since the same time last year, compared to an average price increase across the mix of just 1.3%. This is a clear indication that semis are in demand’. Government density guidelines are blamed, but they are only guidelines. Perhaps our planning officers who accept proposals for even more flats, and our Councillors who vote in favour of them, should bear this in mind.

More Select Committee information in the next Lostock Letter.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Council has formal policies on trees, woodland and hedgerows within its Unitary Development Plan, a document legally adopted by the Council.

Policy N7 The Council will permit development proposals that reflect the intentions of the Red Rose Forest by:

- (i) not permitting development proposals which would result in the loss of trees, woodland areas or hedgerows of visual, historic or amenity importance and requiring replacement planting, on- or off-site as appropriate and directly related to the development where it is considered that the benefit of the development outweighs the loss of some trees or hedgerows;
 - (ii) requiring tree planting directly related to and as part of new development proposals and that a scheme of maintenance be approved;
 - (iii) seeking habitat management and creation through landscape improvements; and
 - (iv) making Tree Preservation Orders where trees of landscape or townscape significance are considered to be under threat.
- The Red Rose Forest aims to create a well wooded landscape along the western edge of Greater Manchester. It includes the entire Borough of Bolton.
 - Where it can be directly related to the development proposal, the Council will use conditions, planning obligations and/or legal agreements to achieve the Key Objectives of the Red Rose Forest Strategy.
 - All planning applications for the development of land containing existing trees need to include a survey identifying the location, species, size and crown spread of all trees on the site.

Policy N8 The Council will not authorise the felling or pruning of any tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order a Conservation Area unless:-

- (i) removal of the tree or trees forms part of an approved development scheme;
 - (ii) the tree or trees are proven to be adversely affecting the structural condition or safety of buildings or other structures;
 - (iii) the tree or trees should be pruned or felled as a matter of good silvicultural practice; or
 - (iv) the tree or trees present an unacceptable risk to public safety.
- **Any tree**, or trees, subject to this policy **that is felled should be replaced** in the same locality by a tree, or trees, of suitable size and species.
 - There is **a presumption in favour of retaining a protected tree** or trees unless there are overriding reasons to the contrary.

Readers of the Lostock Letter may wonder how the recent tree felling within Lostock complies with these Policies. Even after the pre-emptive felling of large numbers of mature trees on the 504-514 Chorley New Road site, further trees were removed. Why? Where are the replacement trees?

What is happening at the Low Wood and Old Hall Clough sites? ALL the trees on those sites were covered by Tree Preservation Orders, so NONE should have been felled. Many were, and felling continued despite the Trees and Woodlands Officer's intervention, stopping only when the Council obtained a Court Injunction. Subsequently the tree-fellers have agreed to replace felled trees with suitable saplings. This is hardly mitigation, as that is no more than what would have happened under Policy N8 if there had been agreement for the felling. There was not, and the site has been badly disturbed. Perhaps surprisingly, permission has been given for further felling, apparently without the replacement planting which should be mandatory.

We await with interest to see the size of the fine per tree felled, which can be very severe, when the case comes to Bolton Magistrates Court on August 29, at 10.00 am.