

## Lee Manor Society calls for the restoration of historic Lee village centre

The Society is calling upon Lewisham and Greenwich councils to draw up a comprehensive plan to revitalise the historic centre of the village of Lee.

The village centre is currently swamped by heavy traffic and ugly building developments, the Society says in a 20-page study that has been presented to Lewisham council planners.

Lee Green crossroads forms the historic heart of the former village of Lee but this heart has been lost by unsympathetic developments. The former village green and pond have long been removed through road widening schemes.

The crossroads is home to two former coaching inns, the Old Tiger's Head and the New Tiger's Head which are part of Lewisham's history. The Old Tiger's Head provided refreshment for soldiers marching off to the Battle of Waterloo in 1815 and was later the home of bare knuckle boxing matches and horse races. The New Tiger's Head is currently empty though there are plans to convert the upper floors to apartments.

Recently announced proposals to demolish and redevelop Leegate, an ugly 1960s shopping centre that has gone into decline, could provide the fillip for a full-scale regeneration of the crossroads area.

We are hoping to win the council's backing for a design brief for the crossroads that would set standards for a sympathetic revival of the area. We want the best of the old to be preserved and any new developments to be of high quality. If the shopping centre is redeveloped we would like to see a good mix of shops and not just chain stores.

The Society believes that improvements to the look of the crossroads would improve the quality of life for local residents and provide a boost to local retailers. But we are concerned that very little attention is paid to Lee Green in the council's Local Development Framework, an overall planning document for the borough that is currently being discussed in council.

Lee often gets overlooked in the council's thinking and we are keen to put it back on the map.

The society believes that a comprehensive plan for the crossroads area should include improving the quality of shop fronts, encouraging the use of the upper floors of shops as apartments and additional tree planting. It wants history boards put up so draw attention to the history of the area.

Apart from the two historic public houses, the crossroads is also home to Lee Green fire station, an attractive Edwardian building, and a police station, recently converted to flats.

The crossroads is mainly in Lewisham but one corner, including the New Tiger's Head and the fire station, is in Greenwich. The two councils will have to work together on any scheme.

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[http://www.leemanorsociety.org/Design/LeeGreenDesignBrief\\_June2007.pdf](http://www.leemanorsociety.org/Design/LeeGreenDesignBrief_June2007.pdf)