

LEE MANOR SOCIETY



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Next Regular Meeting
7.30pm on 18th April 2012
(n.b. please note later than usual date)
at: 105 Burnt Ash Road, SE12

Open to all residents in the area. Formalities end 9.00pm - nibbles afterwards

Notes of our Meeting on 14th March 2012 at The Music Room, Old Tiger's Head

Present: Charles Batchelor (Chairman), Ralph White (Deputy Chairman), David Plumer, Sylvia Ling, Dan Griffin, Elizabeth Caulfield, Steve Griffiths, Anita Whitfield, Ashok Ghose, Rita Craft, Veronica Simmons and Sheila Peck (Secretary).

Apologies: Faye Carney, Patti Byford, Suki Picarda, Sue Byford. Jim Mallory and Lorraine Burton (Treasurer).

Leegate

St Modwen, owners of the Leegate shopping complex have started a public consultation on plans for the shopping centre (see <http://www.leegate-regeneration.co.uk>). They are poised to sign a supermarket group (ASDA was represented at the consultation) to build a large store on the south of the site, covering the former Woolworth and Sue Ryder premises, the walkway and shops on the north side of the walkway, part of the square and the car park and former petrol station sites. The office and shopping block on the Eltham Road/Burnt Ash Road corner would remain but be refurbished to contain in addition some flats and possibly a hotel. Supermarket parking would be on the roof of the store. The Burnt Ash Road side of the store would be flanked by independent shops. The idea is that the supermarket draws in customers who also shop at the smaller shops. Discussions at our meeting have been augmented with information from the consultation on 30/31 March. We welcome any plan to revitalize the rundown shopping centre but we have a number of concerns.

- The new store will attract large volumes of traffic and we seek assurance that plans to mitigate detrimental congestion and pollution in Lee Green will be implemented.
- Shoppers might return direct to their cars on the supermarket roof and not visit the smaller shops.
- The store might be too bulky for the site and could loom over surrounding buildings. However, we welcome the idea of retail outlets along Burnt Ash Road rather than an anonymous wall
- The store would have dead, blank facades facing south, towards the 1970s houses and east, on Leyland Road and we urge a sympathetic treatment to the benefit of residents of e.g. Carston Close.
- We would lose the walkway by Iceland and part of the square, leading to a reduction in public open space.
- We need to be convinced that Lee Green can support two large supermarkets (other

enterprises have failed in Leegate) and that we will not end up with two suboptimal businesses.

- St Modwen say it is uneconomic to put many flats on the site but is this a missed opportunity to reduce the housing shortage?

St Modwen will be consulting over the next few months and hope to submit a planning application in the early autumn. Work on demolition and new build would probably start at the end of 2014. We do want to see Leegate revived but we need to make sure local needs are taken into account and the new development makes a positive contribution to the character of Lee Green. This is a once in several decades opportunity and St Modwen and the council planners must get it right.

Progress on discussion of CPZ

Unfortunately there was a mix-up at the Council meeting on 7th March which meant that the Lee Green Assembly Working Party were unable to present their Parking Report to the Mayor and Cabinet. However, we are pleased to say that arrangements have now been made to present the Report to the next Mayor and Cabinet meeting on 11th April and we therefore hope to be able to let you know the outcome in our next Notes.

Ice House Rota

Dan has produced a very attractively laid out Rota for this year so we are now all ready for the first opening on 1st April. As usual we will welcome visitors to the Ice House between 3 and 5pm on each first and third Sunday of the month until September. On the Open House weekend we will open the Ice House on both Saturday and Sunday from noon until 5pm.

Progress on Street Bench

Ralph and Sylvia visited Mencap at Riverwood on the afternoon of 14th March and formally placed the order for a 5ft log bench, to be installed at the Taunton / Wantage crossroads. The bench will be made from driftwood sourced from the River Thames and we hope it will be in place before our AGM which will take place on 16th May. If you are interested in learning more about Riverwood you can visit their website at <http://www.riverwood.org.uk>

Planning Matters

129 Burnt Ash Road: An application has been submitted for the change of use of the premises from a nail/beauty parlour to an estate agent.

21 Wantage Road: This is an end-of-terrace townhouse which has previously been extended by the addition of a side extension. An application has now been submitted for the addition of a first floor to the extension. We have submitted an objection to the proposal as we consider it will be too obtrusive.

Emmanuel Pentecostal Church: The Mayor and Cabinet will consider the application for local listing at their meeting on 11th April.

Council's failure to enforce Planning obligations e.g. Satellite dishes and removal of Developers' Advertising Boards: Charles has made enquiries and has been told that there is a huge backlog of applications. We are pressing for a more robust approach.

Attracting new and possibly younger members

We have had a response to our invitation to residents to let us know if anyone would be interested in our holding occasional late morning meetings/gatherings of members of Lee Manor Society. As we said last month, we are open to suggestions and look forward to receiving your comments as to how this can be progressed.

We would like to thank Adrian at the Old Tiger's Head for facilitating the meeting