



# HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM HISTORIC BUILDINGS GROUP

## Newsletter



No.2 May 1991.

### UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN.

The Council has recently announced the timing of the series of consultative meetings for the Draft Unitary Development Plan, the borough's future planning blueprint, which replaces the Borough Local Plan and the Greater London Development Plan. The Group's concern is to ensure that the policies on historic buildings, conservation areas and general environmental aspects are the best which can be achieved. We also want to make sure that our Local List of Buildings of Historic, Architectural and Townscape Value is included in the Plan. We further hope that the Council will add, on our recommendation, a list of unspoilt terraces and parades as a separate schedule.

It is important that anyone who wants a voice in the future development of the borough should attend the area meetings and involve themselves in the consultative process which runs for six weeks from June 7. The meetings, all at 7.30pm are:

- June 18 - College Park. Letchford Gardens hall.
- June 20 - Fulham. Burnthwaite Road memorial hall.
- June 24 - Shepherds Bush. Bulwer Street hall.
- June 26 - Sands End. Broughton Street hall.
- July 2 - Hammersmith. Emerald Centre, Broadway.

### THE LOCAL LIST.

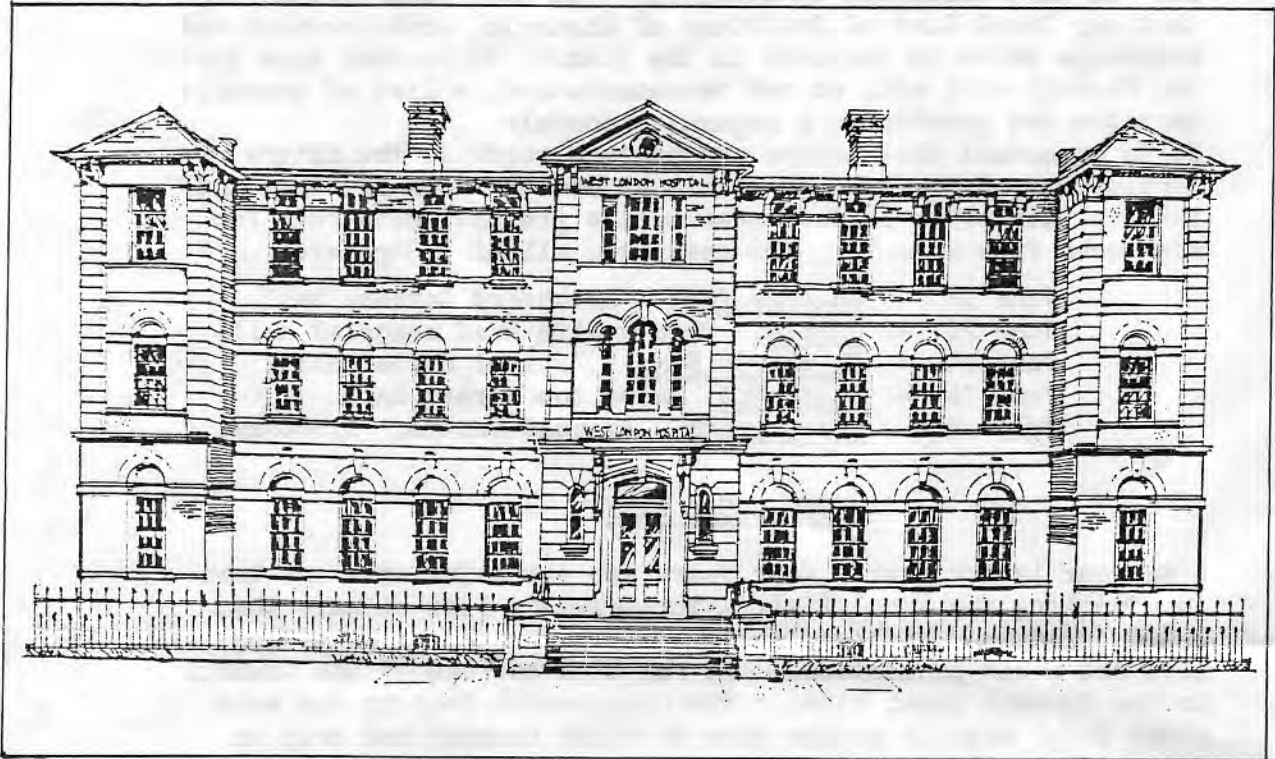
Since our launch nearly four years ago our major work has been in compiling the Local List, a borough-wide list of more than 1,000 buildings which we believe add to the character of the area and merit protection. It has been adopted by the Council in the Borough Local Plan. The Hammersmith Society and many other local amenity groups gave us their backing and help in compiling the List. The protection now being sought for terraces and parades is an extension of that initiative.

### FUTURE ACTION.

We propose to expand this work with further research and surveys with a view to securing added protection for buildings of value to stimulate greater vigilance in preserving them. Our other work involves commenting on planning applications which relate to historic buildings and following them through to a public inquiry if necessary.

RIVERSIDE DEVELOPMENTS.

The Council has recently issued a consultative document on a new Riverside Walk Brief which acknowledges the "major development pressures to which this area has been subjected over the past two or three years." Notwithstanding, the Group is concerned that the Council appears to have no specific policy covering riverside developments although we asked for a chapter to be devoted to it in the UDP, given the importance of this area to the borough. There is particular worry about the proposed redevelopment of the four-acre Distillers Site from Winslow Road to Chancellors Road and that, on outline application only, the Council approved 280,000 sq. ft. of offices. Once this is granted, the planning authority's hands are greatly tied. This is a crucial site and we believe that a detailed application would have been more appropriate. A previous development on an adjoining site was subject to detailed drawings and widespread consultation. There has been nothing similar with this application.

OTHER CONCERNS.West London Hospital

The Council has been approached by the Health Authority indicating that it wishes to sell the hospital site (close to Hammersmith Broadway) for redevelopment. There is now an application to demolish the entire south part of the site, leaving only the facade on Hammersmith Road. The Council is inviting local comment. We believe many people would be reluctant to see this building go and be replaced by the inevitable glass stump which characterises new commercial development in central Hammersmith. The Group is currently researching the history and assessing the architectural and townscape merit of the building and we welcome any views

Planning restrictions ignored.

There appears to be an increasing trend among developers and builders to flout guidelines and conditions laid down in planning approvals. The Group has urged the Council to keep a closer watch on developments as they progress and take stronger action against defaulters. Staff shortages prevent the Council being as vigilant as it would like in inspection and it relies on the public reporting such cases.

Recently a halt was ordered to work on an office development in Black Lion Lane, Hammersmith when it was found to be 18 inches higher than the neighbouring cottages, in conflict with a requirement to maintain the existing skyline. The building has been lowered to comply with the approved drawings.

There have been other cases at 189, Munster Road, Fulham and 312-316, King Street, Hammersmith. Constant vigilance is required.

Dorcas Parade, 99-119, Hammersmith Road.

This parade (opposite the old Cadby Hall) was in decline for years and is currently being restored with shops and offices. Although Grade II listed, only the facade was retained in the redevelopment and the whole of the remainder is new building. Because of inadequate protection since the shops closed some years ago, doors and other period features disappeared and the parade has suffered further recently. The developers sent the original shop fronts to a bonded store but, inexplicably the order was given for them to be destroyed. The Council is considering legal action against the developers and is requiring them to carry out a detailed restoration of the fronts, an action we strongly endorse.

Fulham Palace.

In a previous newsletter we detailed our concerns and those of English Heritage about damage to the building and grounds and the Council's generally poor stewardship of the Palace.

The former residence of the Bishops of London, it dates from 1480 and is the borough's only Grade I listed building. There are also Saxon remains and the grounds are a scheduled ancient monument.

Nearly two years ago English Heritage wrote to the Council protesting about damage to the building and the threat to the buried archaeological remains caused by heavy lorries being driven over the lawns at Council-sponsored functions and required undertakings against further destruction. We had hoped that lessons had been learned and the situation would improve. Thus, we are alarmed to hear that recently a tractor crashed into one of the gate piers and cars have been allowed to park on the lawns, again threatening the ancient remains. There was other internal damage during the winter freeze caused by unlagged pipes bursting. The Council must take its stewardship of our foremost heritage building more seriously.

Sacred Heart School (212, Hammersmith Road)

A proposal to demolish the former primary school, part of the listed Grade II\* buildings in this complex, replacing it with a three-storey science block, has caused particular concern in recent months. The Council has approved a revised scheme which still involves demolition despite an objection from the Group. Although we were not satisfied that alternatives had been adequately explored, at least the redesigned new building is an improvement on that originally proposed.



APPEALS.

We have also been concerned to learn that a controversial proposal for an office block at 39-41, Uxbridge Road, Shepherds Bush slipped unnoticed through the appeals system. The scheme was rejected by the



Council 17 months ago but objectors were denied the chance to state their case to the Department of the Environment inspector on appeal. The Council also failed to inform the inspector that the buildings were in a Conservation Area.

The Council has blamed staff shortages in its planning department for the blunder, not the first of its kind.

However, the developers still require Conservation Area consent to demolish the buildings, which we urge the Council to refuse.

OUR SUCCESSES.

With the Hammersmith Society and Ravenscourt Society we lodged a strong objection to a scheme to demolish 16, Ravenscourt Avenue (off King Street) the 120-year-old former St. Peter's Vicarage and latterly the Corona Stage School. The Council advocated a smaller-scale development, including housing, which could retain the old house instead of the proposed glass office block which not only conflicted with the Victorian terrace opposite but also represented an unacceptable intrusion of commercial use into Ravenscourt Park and the Conservation Area, with increased traffic and other problems. After a public inquiry at which our Chairman, Mrs Angela Dixon gave evidence, the Department of the Environment upheld the Council's planning refusal. The site is now likely to be considered in conjunction with the redevelopment of a neighbouring site in King Street.

The Group also succeeded in getting DoE listing for 188, Hammersmith Road (the Constitutional Club) an early 19th Century building for which the original development proposals would have been severely damaging. The Council's refusal was again upheld after a public inquiry at which the Chairman also gave evidence. The Group's view that an extra storey on the house in the form of a modern office-type mansard would ruin its essential villa style was recognised by the inspector.

HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM HISTORIC BUILDINGS GROUP

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS & HELPERS  
Subscription - £5

Name.....

Address.....

Send to: John Leonard, 2 Hammersmith Terrace, W6 9TS