



BEVERLEY & DISTRICT CIVIC SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER WINTER 2015

Please could contributors to newsletters note that the deadline for copy is always the last day of February, May, August and November, unless notice of a different date is given at the end of the previous newsletter

Update on the Development Brief for the area South West of Beverley.

The Development Group commented on the draft planning brief for the extensive development plans for circa 1900 homes on the land South West of Beverley (land between the Railway line and the Minster estate). Subsequently the Development Group had a constructive meeting with the planners responsible where we elaborated on our original suggestions as reported in the Autumn Newsletter.

The Final Draft, which at the time of writing is on the agenda of ERYC's Cabinet for decision, has incorporated some of our ideas. To help interpretation the draft site plan is reproduced at the end of this article.

In particular, recognition appears to have been given in the text to the Society's suggestion that the development seeks to achieve an identity of its own (*We would also hope that the housing layout reflects the need to create an atmosphere of belonging, identity and a unit which is self-contained whilst having effective links to Beverley Town so not to be wholly reliant on the Principal Settlement and appearing as purely an extension into the open land*).

The draft has incorporated a Central area, just to the East of Long Lane, which includes a site for the primary school, and other services. We advocated the provision of housing for the elderly in this area also (*We feel that a central community area should be established as a focus for the development incorporating the new school, shops, accommodation for the elderly and other essential community services such as medical and dental practices. Ideally this should be located to take advantage of the value of Long Lane as a connector*).

We asked for ERYC to encourage quality design incorporating the highest environmental standards for all the housing, including affordable and starter homes (*Further we would advocate that the Authority takes the initiative in encouraging the developers to raise their aspirations to produce a distinctive quality scheme, building to the highest environmental and design standards*). The brief is unclear on these ideas, but hopefully they will be taken into account when detailed plans are submitted by the individual developers.

However, our proposal to develop a link between this development and that to the East of the Railway line for which plans are more advanced, by the provision of a new bridge giving access for both developments to this Central area and primary school, seems not to have been taken up, which is disappointing (*Turning specifically to the brief, we repeat that it is regrettable that development on both sides of the railway could not be considered as a planning entity since they are interlinked by so many common factors*). This proposal would need the co-operation of Network Rail and additional funding, neither of which appears to be forthcoming.

Whilst more green spaces are proposed, these are predominantly located around the Central area and to the South, which does not fully take account of all our suggestions, namely to provide green spaces throughout the development and links to existing residential areas (*As part of this approach we would hope that the green spaces would be designed so as to be integrated into the overall design and throughout the area for easy accessibility for residents, and especially children and the elderly, and linking to existing residential areas so as not to be solely appendages on the periphery*). Also there appears to be no mention of the concept of creating "Southwood", which is the idea of a large green space linking the south of Beverley into the new development by aggregating small areas of open space into one large green space, something that the Society and others have advocated for many years.

The Group intends to continue a dialogue with the Planners.

The Development Group

Update on progress with the Walkington Road cycle track

Following the decision of the Inspector to approve the land swap to enable the installation of the combined pedestrian and cyclist track alongside the B1230 from Cartwright Lane across Westwood towards Walkington, the Society was invited by Mark Jessop of the East Riding of Yorkshire Council to discuss our ideas for the design of the track. This was the first of meetings being called by him with interested parties.

We welcomed this opportunity, and had a constructive discussion on many items bearing in mind our concern for retaining the rural nature of Westwood and, whilst having due regard for safety, minimising the impact of the track on the environment.

We made many suggestions regarding details of the design. Amongst the topics we discussed were: the number and height of the necessary blue signs designating the track - perhaps using lower and smaller signs mounted on timber posts rather than tall metal ones, and combining signs wherever possible to reduce the number; using natural materials (maybe stone) for the two crossing points, and for any 'rumble strips' (possibly rubber) to encourage drivers to reduce their speed at the junction of Westwood road extension and Walkington road, and at the Eastern entry onto Westwood, as a substitute for coloured road markings; using neutral/natural colours for any necessary sensory pavements at the crossing points; the design of the cyclists' cattle grid adjacent to the traffic cattle grid by the chalk works, where there would also be a pedestrian gate; the provision of a kissing gate suitable for the disabled and

pushchairs for access to Westwood at the Cartwright Lane end; and finally looking at designing more attractive and lower level signs for advertising Beverley by the fencing at the Cartwright Lane entrance to the town.

One of our major proposals was for ERYC to hold a joint meeting with all the interested parties when all suggestions had been made, and embryonic plans developed so as to achieve the best solution for everyone. Mr Jessop agreed with this idea, and we look forward to further discussions in the New Year.

The Development Group

The Society's leaflet designed to raise awareness Beverley's Conservation Area

Many members may have received recently a leaflet through their letterboxes which addressed the importance of caring for Beverley's Conservation Area. The leaflet was distributed to all residential and commercial properties within the Conservation Area.

This project was prompted by a general concern about preserving the integrity of these areas within the town (there are nine subdivisions within Beverley). The project group liaised with the East Riding Council's planning department, and the conservation officer in particular, before distributing the leaflet, which also highlights the availability of advice from East Riding's Conservation Officers when considering alterations to properties.

We hope that the initiative will help to maintain the attractive nature of our town which is so highly valued by visitors and residents alike.

Projects subgroup

[Congratulations to Sandy and others responsible for putting together this leaflet - Ed.]

The Geology of East Riding churches

On Tuesday 8th September a well-attended Civic Society Open Meeting at the Beverley Arms heard local geologist, Richard Myerscough, explain the origins of the main types of stone used to build our East Riding churches.

In many cases parish churches used the most readily available sources quarried from the local rock. In the north Wolds 75% were built from Birdsall Calcareous Grit, a sand coloured stone which can be carved to a smooth finish, as at Bridlington Priory. After the Dissolution of the monasteries in 1539 much of the stone was re-used on local churches and substantial houses which are still standing.

However, this stone is susceptible to erosion from pollution and rain. Cave oolite, on the other hand, in areas such as Rowley, is more resistant and sometimes can be readily available. Fields in the Pocklington area are strewn with it. Another building source already in usable form that can be easily found in Holderness are cobbles extracted from the boulder clay. Deposits of these can be found at the coast, and also inland, left by spillways during the ice age meltdown.

Richard's favourite is Hildenley Limestone, an attractive white stone, popular with the Romans and often re-used on the inside of churches all over the south Wolds, as was the plentiful chalk.

Magnesian limestone, which runs in a narrow seam from Nottingham to Durham, produces a durable but expensive building material. It was used for both Beverley Minster and St Mary's Church. Unfortunately, as can now be seen particularly at the west end of the latter, weather and traffic pollution have nevertheless taken their toll.

Richard Myerscough, who taught at Hull University, is currently involved with Bridlington U3A and he also works on the Nunburnholme and Rudston projects, studying various aspects of the buildings.

Beverley Civic Society Study Day on Housing : Past, Present and Future

In Friday 6th November at the Beverley Arms, the Chairman, Sandy Patience, presented a survey of the historical development of houses, with particular emphasis on the late 19th Century when revival in taste for earlier periods led to the desire for "tudor" look low density homes in leafy settings away from city centres.

Post First World War mass production building in suburbia, and later in the new towns, using "pattern book" styles set expectations for family homes which have largely continued since. With current pressures to increase the number of new homes, Sandy Patience spoke of the urgent need to ensure that we are building wisely for our children's future in terms of land use and environmental challenges.

As climate change is already becoming a reality and a crisis over fossil fuel availability looms, it is vital to minimise the energy consumption in new homes. At present 60% of fuel use is for central heating and this could be drastically reduced if building regulations required not only a higher standards of double glazing and wall and loft insulation but also better construction. Too often poor workmanship is allowing significant leakage of heat around badly fitted windows and doors as well as through walls.

A common problem at present is limited internal living and storage space. Where land is at a premium a change to more terraced housing, away from detached homes, could give extra dimensions to rooms. In development design, orientating housing units so that living rooms with larger windows face south and bedrooms with small windows face north makes for a pleasant and comfortable living experience. Mechanical ventilation and wood fibre wall insulation prevent overheating in summer. Sandy Patience emphasised that the cost of upgrading of thermal properties in construction would be more than off-set by much lower fuel bills.

Following the morning's discussion, at the invitation of P.J.Livesey, the developers, there was a visit to Westwood Park, the old Hospital site, to view progress in the new housing. Also, members, in the company of the architect, saw the newly-converted building which was originally a work house. Now it contains smart apartments of varying sizes.

Beverley Minster: Preserving the Heritage

At the Civic Society open meeting on Tuesday, 10th November, the Chairman of the Friends of Beverley Minster, Prof. Roger Lewis, presented an illustrated lecture on the town's most famous feature and the work being done to maintain and enhance it.

The audience at the Beverley Arms was given a fresh view of the familiar through a comprehensive visual tour of both the exterior of the Minster and its setting as well as some impressive views of the interior. Many images were taken by John Phillips, Honorary Secretary of the Friends of the Minster. Wide angle shots, some from high vantage pointing down the nave, brought home the scale and elegance of the main body of the church; while close up details such as the carvings on the tomb of Eleanor Percy were a reminder of these medieval masterpieces in beauty or lively humour that we can still enjoy.

The Friends raise funds to help with restoration projects and to introduce new items such as the modern stained glass window at the east end. To mark the ancient pilgrims' processional route around the building Helen Whittaker was also commissioned to create the copper sculpture there. New flexible seating in the nave and high quality figures for the Christmas crib are recent additions. Roger Lewis emphasised the importance of employing the best craftsmen to match the standards set centuries ago.

The church serves many functions; firstly as a leading centre for Christian worship; as a splendid auditorium for concerts and other performances; and as a community facility for such as mothers, toddlers and youth groups. At present entrance for visitors is free, though the running costs total around £8,000 per week. So financial donations are critically important. The Friends raise money from a number of events throughout the year.

The Friends are also playing an active part in the Lottery bid for joint funding with St. Mary's Church for major restoration work on both these outstanding buildings.

Roger Lewis appealed to the Meeting for new members to join this important cause.

The three meeting reports above are by Rosemary Major

Forthcoming Public Meetings & Events...

Please note that meetings from now on, will be held in The Beverley Arms Hotel commencing at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated

(where coffee will be available for purchase)

Members and non-members are welcome

Tuesday 8th December 2015

Berna Moody

Medieval Feasts

Please join us for a festive drink and mince pie after this meeting

Tuesday 12th January 2016

Simon Kelsey

The Restoration of Christopher Pickering's former home in Hull

Tuesday 9th February 2016

Paul Schofield

Hull Old Town - its importance to 'City of Culture'

Tuesday 8th March 2016

Arthur Credland F S A

Marine Painting

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Please send material by email if possible: this saves re-typing. However, if you do not use email, no matter – all contributions and letters, no matter how brief, are welcome. **The deadline** for copy to be included in the Winter 2015 Newsletter is **Monday 29th February 2016.**

Please note this date in your diary if you are likely to contribute

Over a third of our membership now receive this newsletter in electronic form via email, thus saving valuable Civic Society resources for other use, not to mention the distributors' shoe-leather and time. It is appreciated that many do not use email or prefer to receive their newsletter in hard copy form; but if you are willing to join the e-circulation list, please could you let me know via the above email address. Many thanks.

To all readers of this newsletter - A Peaceful Christmas & A Happy New Year

