



CIVITAS TOTTENHAM

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TOTTENHAM CIVIC SOCIETY

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Townscape Heritage Initiative in Tottenham

We can't help getting excited about the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) currently transforming the Bruce Grove area. This scheme has been running for around five years now, and has already made a huge difference to buildings including Windsor Parade, and the Station Parade just north of Bruce Grove station.

The scheme is an initiative of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), and some research on the web shows that it has made a significant difference to towns all over the United Kingdom, including Ramsgate, Blackpool, Southport, Chesterfield, Dudley, Plymouth, Lancaster, Cardigan, Glasgow, and Draperstown in Northern Ireland. The Initiative aims to provide funds to areas of high deprivation but with significant heritage assets that have fallen into repair. The priority is to make structural and external repairs to historic buildings. Typically around 15-30 buildings are involved in a single overall scheme, and the funding provided by HLF will be between £500k and £2m.

The image right shows the 'Wilson Building' as it was in its heyday in the early 20th century. You can see the tramlines running up Tottenham High Road in the picture. At some point in the 20th century the original plate glass fenestration was lost, to be replaced with a clumsy pattern of small squarish wooden framed windows. Under the THI, the upper storeys of the building will be returned as close as possible to their original appearance. Iceland, the shop currently occupying the ground floor, unfortunately wishes to retain its uninspiring plastic shop signage.

Wards Stores is one impressive building that managed to retain its original plate glass

windows on the two upper storeys, from the time of its completion in 1909 until the present. How ironic and tragic then that while the Wilson Building is now having these details sensitively restored, a developer still apparently wishes to turn Wards to rubble.

The main threats to the success of the Townscape Heritage Initiative appear to derive from unsympathetic property owners and leaseholders. In Tottenham, an example of the former is the building to the immediate north of Bruce Grove station, which was eligible to be restored under the scheme and receive a major grant, but whose owner apparently was not interested. (continued overleaf)



As to leaseholders, there have been a number of problems with shop owners carrying out unauthorised works to their shop fronts, causing significant damage to restored buildings. One recent case is just to the south of Bruce Grove station where a leaseholder has entirely removed the frontage of his shop (woodwork, plate glass, etc) and replaced it with a perforated metal shutter. His reason for doing this appears to be so that he can extend his wares (mainly foodstuffs) all over the pavement during daytime. TCS has asked relevant Council officers to look into this urgently.

Some other case studies of THI schemes can be seen here: www.glasgowmerchantcity.net/
www.cardigan-heritage.co.uk/cardigan-conservation-news.php
You can read more about the work at Bruce Grove on Haringey Council's website here:
www.haringey.gov.uk/index/housing_and_planning/planning-mainpage/strategicphysicalregeneration/heritageandconservation.htm

Matthew Bradby

Disposal of Haringey's Cemeteries - we object.

The Society's Secretary, Joseph Nicholas, recently wrote to the council to object to the proposed disposal of Tottenham Cemetery by lease to a private operator for a period of 90 years. This proposal was made as part of a wider reorganisation of the council's funerary services, with the object of releasing funds for the modernisation of the crematorium in Enfield, in particular for the fitting of equipment to reduce toxic mercury emissions to meet EU air quality standards. Points made in our objection included the following: Tottenham Cemetery is a public open space and designated Ecologically Valuable site of Borough Grade 2 Importance, with significant nature conservation value; it is also one of Haringey's important historical assets, having been opened in 1856. Disposal of this asset raised inevitable concerns about not just the loss of public access and potentially damaging and insensitive alterations to the historical fabric of the Cemetery but also about its future use; and if burial legislation is amended to allow the re-use of existing graves, the council would obviously

lose future income from the continued use of the Cemetery, but in addition the concerns of relatives of the deceased about such reuse would probably be ignored because any private operator would be entirely profit-driven.

We therefore urged that the cemetery be retained as a council operated public service. The issue was considered by the council's cabinet at its meeting on 16 November, where a deputation from the Sustainable Haringey network called for a review of the funerary service's energy efficiency and sustainability, its retention in-house, and a full public consultation before any decisions were taken. The council's response to the deputation, as recorded in the minutes of the meeting, was that the funerary service is "a discretionary commercial service ...operating in an increasingly competitive market", that the number of burials and cremations had fallen "although efficiency saving led price increases in the last 3 years had partly masked [this]", and that to maintain the crematorium's fitness for purpose needed an investment of "between £6.6 and £13.4 million with a minimum requirement to meet the latest environmental standards, future burial supply and a net income target", which in the current economic climate only a private operator could provide.

The cabinet meeting subsequently agreed to proceed as proposed - specifically, that "Enfield Crematorium, Tottenham Cemetery and Wood Green Cemetery be marketed for disposal as a going concern, such disposal to be on the basis of leasehold arrangements with a specialist operator" and that "the Council cease to directly provide crematorium and cemetery services".

In a separate communication in response to our Secretary's letter of objection, Claire Kober, the leader of the council, advised that it "will ensure that any contract and related lease arrangements are constructed to at least maintain existing standards, and retain control regarding any re-use proposals", and that the report considered by the cabinet "recommends that approval to the actual transfer is brought back [for review] next year". We - and others - will obviously be watching closely to see what happens in the following twelve months.

Joseph Nicholas

How many listed buildings in Tottenham are “at risk”?

The English Heritage list of “statutory listed buildings” has 92 Tottenham entries (for details see Haringey Council website). These cover about 180 individual buildings because some entries include a number of buildings, for instance, the Prospect Place listing includes ten houses and the Drapers’ Almshouses listing includes 44 homes and the Chapel.

English Heritage also has an “at risk” register of listed buildings which are vacant or without a viable use or suffering from serious decay in terms of structure and/or historic fabric. There are 16 entries for Haringey on this register, ten of which are in Tottenham (*).

There is good news about some of these buildings. The wonderful Edwardian Baroque Tottenham Town Hall is currently undergoing complete external and internal restoration (including the Moselle Room which will be available for community use).

The future of three of the “at risk” buildings – 810 High Road, Warmington House and Percy House – is dependent on the Spurs redevelopment going ahead. The exterior of 810 High Road (one of a pair of 1715 houses) has been fully restored and talks are going on with Spurs about the internal refurbishment and reuse of the building. Warmington House, which was due for demolition in the original Spurs redevelopment plans, will now be restored and used as offices. Similarly, restoration of Percy House is likely if the Spurs plans go ahead. Of course, if Spurs decide to leave Tottenham and move to the Olympics Stadium, it will be very bad news for these buildings and the rest of North Tottenham.

There is little good news about 7 Bruce Grove, the former home of Luke Howard (with blue commemorative plaque), which is in a dreadful state. Compulsory purchase plans by the council have ground to a halt. There has been a suggestion that both 7 and 8 Bruce Grove might become a new “free school” but there has been no further news about this. The Bruce Grove 1920s public toilets are in a sad state and without a future in spite of the Council

employing consultants to explore possible uses. Some of us in TCS thought it was strange that only ten of Tottenham’s listed buildings are on the “at risk” register so we asked how buildings got on the list. It appears that inclusions on the register are put on by English Heritage officers and suggestions can be made by the Council’s conservation officers. We were invited to name any other buildings which we thought should be included. We have therefore suggested the former Barclays Bank at 220 High Road which is now empty and the Georgian house at 62 High Cross (Monument Way) - pictured below, it is in a very bad state. Perhaps “Civitas” readers could suggest others.

Of course what is not clear is whether inclusion on the “at risk” register leads to more rapid restoration and re-use. TCS and Tottenham Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) will be monitoring this.

Joyce Rosser

(*) The full English Heritage list of “at risk” buildings in Tottenham is as follows: Tottenham Town Hall; the Palace Cathedral (former Tottenham Palace Theatre); All Hallows Churchyard; Bruce Grove public toilets; Warmington House; South boundary wall to Bruce Castle Park; 810 High Road; Percy House; 7 Bruce Grove; West wall Bruce Castle Park.



Street Clutter

Civic Voice, the national charity that replaced The Civic Trust, recently launched a campaign against street clutter which Tottenham Civic Society supported. We were quoted in the Daily Mail among other places!

Last year there were lots of planning applications for new telecommunication cabinets to be installed in Tottenham conservation areas. These cabinets are huge: 1600mm by 1200mm by 450mm. Muswell Hill and Fortis Green Association objected to all those proposed for their area on the grounds that the cabinets are visually intrusive and take up too much pavement space. However the cabinets are necessary for improved broadband communication which local people in Tottenham no doubt want so we only objected to those planning applications where the cabinets were to be placed in inappropriate locations such as close to listed buildings.

We did however object to some cabinets proposed for the Wards Corner forecourt area saying that

they would block pedestrian movement. Imagine our surprise when we saw that one of the cabinets had been installed in front of El Parador (231 High Road) right by the entrance to Seven Sisters tube station where it causes the maximum disruption to pedestrian movement (see photo). Yet the planning applications clearly state that the cabinets will be positioned “away from centre of pavement in order not to impede pedestrian access.”

With the support of Councillor Richard Watson of Tottenham Green ward, we immediately reported this to the council’s planning enforcement department asking that the new cabinet be moved to a roadside position. A month later we heard that the new cabinet was to be moved to the roadside and the old cabinet taken away altogether. The new cabinet has since been moved to the railings alongside the High Road where it doesn’t get in the way of pedestrians but the old cabinet is still there so we are chasing the planning department to get that removed.

Pictured below: the BT boxes by Seven Sisters Station proudly dominating the pavement area.



High Road planters

Over the past few years TCS and local residents made lots of complaints about the totally neglected state of the Transport for London planters (flower beds) along the High Road from Seven Sisters tube to CONEL. Somewhat to our surprise TfL completely replanted them earlier this year. Fortunately the new plants survived the summer drought period and were doing really well (apart from the planters near tube station which get lots of rubbish). TCS has written to thank TfL. The only thing they didn't replant was the horse trough.

Shortly before going to press, workmen have again descended on the flower beds and have started to remove the roses and other plants and the iron ornaments. Why? Preliminary work for the end of the gyratory system. Apparently the plants were left on the pavement for local residents to collect, so hopefully they did not go to waste. The historic water



trough will be saved, though according to TfL plans it will be moved slightly from its current position.

Pictured below left is one of the iron ornaments that are being removed from the planters outside the former Jewish hospital (in the background) and The College of Haringey, Enfield and Northeast London (CHENEL? Formerly CONEL). It is thought that these may date to the Coronation in 1953. Does anyone have any information about them? Please contact the Editor!

SPURS letter

We thought TCS readers would be amused by this letter which is one of the submissions made on the Council's website:

"Dear Sirs

I beg that Haringey Council approve the plans for the new Spurs stadium before THFC go looking elsewhere to spend their millions. What a disaster that would be for the area and regeneration if Spurs went elsewhere.

The plans have been well thought out and the overwhelming benefits of the scheme far far far outweigh any disbenefits there may be, if any.

Please do not waste any more time and grant consent for this sonderful development without delay and do not be swayed by the professional, purist and NIMBYist objectors that may well have other agendas such as being Arsenal fans.... Yours Etc..."

The Council has since given planning permission - and the letter writer can rest easy that TCS did not object to the revised plans. Some commentators have blamed the need to retain historic buildings as adding extra costs to the development but we would like to point out that Spurs themselves are far happier with the revised plans than the original ones. We are following news that Spurs is interested in the Olympic stadium closely and will keep readers updated.

7 & 8 Bruce Grove

Planning permission was granted on 11 October 2010 (after many revisions of the plans) for the redevelopment of 8 Bruce Grove. This will allow repair and restoration of the Georgian building and 1920s side extension and the building of family homes in a car free development in the back garden.

The CAAC strongly opposed these applications until the final revision reduced the size of the opening through the building from giving large vehicular access to pedestrian only access. The size of the original arch through the building would have been almost as large as that at No.9 Bruce Grove. Surprisingly, English Heritage did not object to this plan (“we do not consider that it is necessary for this application to be notified to English Heritage” - 20 October 2008). So the CAAC was the only objector to this scheme.

The CAAC’s objection made EH take this issue seriously. It also reminded the Council that the property adjoins Bruce Grove Wood, for which they had failed to meet their own management plans for its upkeep and the fact that 8 Bruce Grove is in the area of highest open space deficiency . The Council have taken this on board and now plan a public park on the land designated as Bruce Grove Wood in the UDP.

There is an idea for a Free School occupying 7 and 8 Bruce Grove. This would only entail repair of the buildings and not their restoration. Internal changes would involve the removal/changing position of non-original room divisions. Any funding for this would be from the Council’s education budget. So far no application for planning permission has been made.

Alison Armour

LORDSHIP REC

Major congratulations go to Lordship Recreation Ground on winning £3.8m from the Big Lottery Fund and Heritage Lottery Fund as part of their ‘Parks for People’ scheme! Major funding is also coming from Haringey Council and the Mayor of London. To find out more, go to www.lordshiprec.org.uk .

Monitoring of Planning Conditions

Tottenham Civic Society Members may be interested in this recent response from the Council about the monitoring of planning conditions - i.e. the conditions that are imposed on developers/individuals when they receive planning permission.

“There is at present no systematic monitoring of planning conditions etc. At the present time the onus is on the applicant to comply with the conditions in due time and to construct the development or carry out the use in accordance with the planning permission as granted. An applicant can apply to vary the permission if they wish either before or after commencement.

“To carry out development not in accordance with the planning permission is not illegal but merely unauthorised and can be regularised subsequently by further application and negotiation. At the present time it is the role of the Planning Enforcement team to pursue complaints about unauthorised development and to instigate enforcement action where it is considered to be expedient to do so, where other avenues have failed or it is considered that sufficient harm is caused to warrant such action being taken.

“At the present time taking enforcement action is discretionary and not mandatory. If no undue harm is caused no action need be taken. This can be a cause for concern to those who have referred the matter to the Council for action. The Government is currently reviewing this aspect of the Planning System along with other matters in response to the Killian Pretty report which on the whole suggests a more proactive approach to this and other matters. It has been suggested that local Planning Authorities should place more emphasis on compliance. This could involve setting up compliance teams / officers alongside existing Planning Enforcement. Such matters are still under consideration but would of course potentially require either the transfer of resources or possibly additional resources to proactively pursue compliance.”



wards corner winter warmer 3

**Saturday 11th December 2010, 8pm till late
@ Tottenham Chances, 399 High Rd, N17 6QN**

Tickets (excluding food&drink): £8/£4 (concessions) on the door or £5/£4 in advance, available from Cosmos News, 1 West Green Rd, N15, or by contacting WCC by email at: wardscornercommunity@riseup.net

live music * dj * Food * bar * community

Late Summer Events

We are pleased to report that the two final TCS events of 2010 were very well supported.

On 11 September we led a walk in conjunction with the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers from Tottenham Green to the Lordship Festival. There, the TCS stall was busy meeting people all day.

On 19 September around fifty people attended the TCS walk around Tottenham Green, organised as part of 'Open City' (formerly Open House). Some people then went on to visit Tower Gardens, and Bruce Castle.

**Betting shops. What do you think?
Tottenham has around forty of them.
Please send us your views.**

December Events

This year TCS is not organising a Christmas dinner. Instead we would like to encourage you to go to the Wards Corner event above, and the event that Haringey Independent Cinema is hosting with the Tottenham Community Choir on Thursday 16 December.

This event takes place in the West Green Learning Centre. Doors open at 7 pm and the entertainment starts at 7.15 sharp. In addition to Tottenham's own choir, the acclaimed French film 'Les Choristes' (The Choirboys) will be shown. Admission is £3 waged or £2 unwaged.

Advance Notice: Haringey Local History Fair will take place on Saturday 12 February at Bruce Castle Museum. We hope to see you there!

JOIN US!

I/we would like to join the Tottenham Civic Society (TCS). Annual membership will provide four copies of our quarterly newsletter, Civitas, attend meetings and events, and support our campaigns to promote high quality, heritage-led regeneration in Tottenham.

I/we enclose a cheque for the following amount:

£5 unwaged

£10 individuals

£7.50 per person - two or more people in the same household

£15 for organisations with under 100 members

£20 for organisations with over 100 members

Name.....

Organisation.....

Address.....

.....

Tel.....

Email.....

Do you want to join the TCS Yahoogroup?

Yes No

Would you prefer to receive your copy of Civitas by

Post Email

Please make cheques payable to Tottenham Civic Society and post to: TCS, 61 Durban Road, Tottenham, London N17 8ED.

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TCS email network:

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/TottenhamCS/>

To join this network, you need to follow the registration process and your membership will be confirmed by the group moderator. It's a great way to find out what's going on locally.

TCS is affiliated to Civic Voice, the new national charity that represents local civic and amenity societies. Visit their website at:

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

We are also affiliated to the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies - visit their website at: <http://www.londonforum.org.uk/>