

LRA's LOUGHTON LIFE Newsletter Members' Edition July 2019

Loughton Residents Association is independent and focuses on looking after Loughton. We have Cllrs on the County & District Councils, and hold 20 out of the 22 Loughton Town Council seats.

Draft Local Plan

The Epping Forest District Council Local Plan is now under scrutiny by the Planning Inspectorate in a series of hearings in Epping. LRA are continuing the fight against planned over-development in Loughton and Debden and for the preservation of Jessel Green.

The District Council disregarded local and national policies, submissions by respected bodies and consultation responses that many of you completed. Our forest, local services, transport and green spaces will all be under pressure from congestion and increased pollution if the plan for 1000+ new dwellings so close to the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation is approved.

Seventeen days of the Examination in Public ended on 11th June with a morning session in which Loughton sites were considered in detail.

Barrister David Altaras and LRA Cllr Chris Pond argued for the Town Council against high-rise on the station car parks, and for the retention in full of Jessel Green, as did David Linnell and planning consultant Liz Alexander for LRA, and Michael Benbow spoke about the proposed huge care complex in Alderton Hill. Several other Loughton sites were also debated. The SaveJesselGreen group also spoke at a hearing specifically for Loughton. Most of the Loughton participants thought the day went reasonably well, and points were put across succinctly and cogently.

The hearing can be found on Epping Forest District Council's website at <https://tinyurl.com/hearing11june>

All is now in the hands of the inspector, Louise Phillips, whose report is expected during late summer. If further argument is necessary, Loughton Town Council and LRA will be prepared to follow it through.

High-rise housing at Loughton & Debden stations?

Transport for London (TfL) is proposing developments on its car parks, rising to 12 storeys in Loughton and 13 storeys in Debden. This was also examined on Tuesday 11th June as part of the Local Plan.

See page 4 to read what TfL has to say!



Left to right: Tessa Cochrane and Stella Murphy

New Town Mayor

Loughton Town Council has announced the new Mayor for the 2019/20 term will be LRA Cllr Stella Murphy, and the deputy town Mayor will be Cllr Tessa Cochrane.

After her election, Stella thanked members for electing her and expressed her gratitude to former Mayor, independent Cllr Stephen Murray, who would be a hard act to follow. She said *"I am sure that he would be looking forward to a break after attending over 120 events during the past year"*.

Loughton's Town Mayor is elected annually in May by the Town Council. The Mayor's role is to preside over meetings of the council, as well as representing the council at civic and ceremonial functions, such as the Remembrance Sunday parade.

Lidl



LRA Cllr Chris Pond has had confirmation from Lidl that they intend to operate the new store, which will replace the Homebase store in 2020, from 8am to 8pm. They would need to submit a planning application to operate outside those hours. Their alcohol licence application asks for 7am to 11pm, but that's their standard national approach and cannot over-ride the permitted hours for the Loughton store. Chris has also asked them to route their delivery lorries away from the Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation, and respect the Art Deco frontage of the 1923 bus garage.

See page 3 for Lidl's intentions for their new shop!

Our thanks to all the residents who support LRA

Our Farmers' Markets



Meet LRA's volunteers at our Farmers' Market on the second Sunday of each month, from 9am to 3pm on Centric Parade, High Road. Read our display boards with local information and browse our second-hand books.

Can you help us occasionally at LRA's Farmers' Market?

Thank you for being a member.

LRA is run 100% by volunteers, so could you help a little more? Do you have:

- *One spare hour to help occasionally on our book stall (no experience needed)?*
- *A hatchback car to be on the reserve list for transporting market materials on the day (8am or 1.30pm)?*

If so, for a no obligation chat please email jill.angold-stephens@ntlworld.com.

Loughton Cricket Club Ground

Loughton is very fortunate to have its cricket ground within the town itself. After very long drawn-out negotiations, Loughton Town Council's solicitors have confirmed that the Freehold Transfer of the land to the Town Council was completed on 13 May 2019 and the Cricket Club's lease on 15 May 2019.

This is an important open site and we hope this transfer will safeguard it for future generations, possibly by making it a *Field in Trust*.

Etheridge Road

We spotted local residents' Facebook posts about an overflowing dog poo bin in Etheridge Road. LRA Cllr David Wixley took it up with the District Council, who cleared it within 24 hours.

You can email reports of overflowing bins and other waste collection problems to the District Council or you can call them on 01992 564608.



Disabled parking spaces

Cllr Chris Pond was asked about disabled parking spaces and has asked North Essex Parking Partnership and Epping Forest District Council to review the number of disabled parking spaces in the High Road.

Correction

In the March 2019 Spring edition of Loughton Life, in an article headed "District Council office move", we said that in the 1990s Epping Forest District Council had not used sufficient foresight to realise the Old Station Road site might be sold on at a big profit by the property company to whom it had first been sold. Ron Heath pointed out that the Council did impose covenants, but these were circumvented by the developers. We apologise for this misunderstanding.

CONTACTING LRA

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LRA councillors are Independent and non-political

Planning & licensing

The LRA Plans Group (LPG) looks at all planning and licensing applications in the town. It consults residents and supports, or objects to, individual applications as appropriate. It works entirely separately from LRA's Cllrs on Council planning committees.

Baylis Food & Wine, 159 High Road

The LRA Plans Group and Loughton Town Council have objected to an application made to District Council to extend this shops opening times and supply of alcohol times due to providing a new online service and delivery service. Proposed opening times:

- Monday to Thursday: 7am to 11pm (alcohol 8am to 11pm)
- Friday to Saturday: 7am to 1am (alcohol 8am to 1am)
- Sunday: 8 to 11pm (alcohol 10am to 11pm)

The LPG and Loughton Town Council have asked for earlier closing times than requested because of the potential for customers and delivery vehicles disturbing nearby residents; the High Road has flats above the shops.

Wo Fat Restaurant, 270-272 High Road

They applied for supply of alcohol and provision of recorded music to midnight on Mondays to Saturdays, and until 11:30pm on Sundays. The LRA Plans Group and Loughton Town Council have objected to this application and have asked for earlier closing times than requested because of the potential for customers disturbing nearby residents; the High Road has flats above the shops.

Molen's Cafe, 209D/E High Road

A Planning Inspector has turned down an appeal by this café against a planning condition imposed by the District Council which prevents customers using the café's rear garden because of the level of disturbance this would cause to nearby residents. The café's potential use of the garden has been a long-running saga; the firm nature of the Inspector's decision should mean that there will be no further threats to nearby residents' peaceful enjoyment of their gardens.

Rear of 165 High Road

The District Council's local planning committee refused permission for a one-storey roof extension to provide an extra 2 one-bedroom penthouse flats, as an addition to the five-storey building being erected on the site. The LRA Plans Group and the Town Council objected because the approved building was already too high and out-of-keeping with the "human" scale of the High Road, particularly as it would be opposite the green open space of Standard Green.

Lincoln Hall, 125 High Road

The District Council has received an application to demolish the hall and replace it with a purpose-designed pre-school building for 120 children for Chrysalis Pre-school (who are limited to 70 children in the existing hall).

Retail park rubbish binned

LRA Cllr Chris Roberts complained twice in writing to the District Council Portfolio Holder about the rubbish and mess after every weekend, as bins were never emptied on a Saturday. We are pleased that bigger and better bins have now been installed across the entire park and hope there'll be no more rubbish overflowing onto the pavements.



Lidl

Following Lidl's intention to open a new store, which will replace the Homebase store in 2020, some of the St John's ward LRA Cllrs have spoken to Lidl about their intentions for their new shop. Here are some points:

- This is an A1 to A1 planning use, so no application to change use is needed. Floor area about 11000 sq. ft.
- A planning application will be necessary for signage and any associated minor changes they want. This is now in the process of consideration.
- Opening date likely Feb-March 2020, but it might be earlier if Homebase vacates early. Fit-out takes 3 to 4 months.
- They were not really aware of the building's history, so they have been sent photographs to bear in mind when any changes are made.
- The car park will be controlled by ANPR, but this will be considered for changing to ANPR+scanning of a barcode on a till receipt if ANPR alone does not work.
- Occupancy of a bay by a vehicle will be limited to 90 minutes.
- Main deliveries will be outside shop opening hours, so that will probably mean before 8am or after 7pm.
- To minimise disturbance to neighbours, beepers on delivery vehicles will be suppressed, and rubber-tyred trolleys for goods inward etc. will be put in place
- The loading bay will be moved a few yards towards Church Hill.
- Their estimate of car park capacity is presently 39 cars, which they estimate will be sufficient. All the shipping containers and associated junk will be removed.
- They are confident there will be no major highway disruption but will work to sort out any issues that arise.
- The shop will have an on-the-premises bakery.
- Sunday opening will be limited to 6 hours.

Chigwell Lane changes

Approved works will reduce the northbound lane to a single carriageway under the M11 bridge, to protect vehicles which have exited the M11 heading towards Chigwell; there have been several accidents there. The three Loughton Cllrs all objected because of the extra congestion this would cause, but were overruled on safety grounds.

Further north on the A1168, a scheme is being considered for protection, possibly by improved signage, for the right turn into Station Approach.

The Town Council has sought better pedestrian crossing facilities across the A1168 at the Landmark building. Cllr Mohindra has requested measures to prevent damage to the Broadway central reservation from vehicle overrun.

LED lights... an idea too bright?

LED lights are energy-efficient, but the Hills Amenity Society is increasingly concerned about the replacement of soft yellow bulbs in streetlights with harsh white LEDs in Stony Path, York Hill, Baldwins Hill, Forest Way and at the corner of Queens Road and Pump Hill. They are raising this with County Highways, supported by LRA Cllr Chris Pond.

Staples Road's lights were converted last week and some residents now say the lights are so bright they can't sleep.

Loughton & Debden high-rise housing? The only way is not up

TfL's proposed developments on its car parks, rising to 12 storeys in Loughton and 13 storeys in Debden, seems ludicrous, but their 141-page submission for the Planning Inspector suggests they are serious. Without asking for local opinion, TfL tells us these sites "would contribute positively towards the character of both Debden and Loughton without harming wider townscape, the amenity of neighbouring properties or heritage assets".

Loughton



They say: "Development on the site has an opportunity to form its own distinct neighbourhood character while being respectful to the character of surrounding areas."

Debden



They say: "High density development in the form of taller buildings on the Debden station car park site will also contribute positively towards its character by marking the location of the station."

The LRA Plans Group will oppose any such plans!

Staples Road parking

Following the introduction of residents' parking on Kings Green, by the War Memorial, residents of Shaftesbury and the western end of Staples Road have gained the 70% support necessary for a residents' scheme there [source Epping Forest Neighbourhood Watch].

Electric Vehicle Charge Points

Cllr Chris Pond raised a query for a constituent who has an electric vehicle, and Essex County Council replied that there are no immediate plans to install electric vehicle charge points in Loughton. They said:

Essex County Council is looking at various ideas for supporting electric vehicle charging infrastructure and identifying what role the County Council might play in terms of supporting the growth of a reliable charging infrastructure, especially in light of improving battery technology. On-street charging is one of the options that we have looked into but the wider implications and a number of drawbacks, in particular the liabilities that come with additional street infrastructure, long-term maintenance and operational reliability issues which, at a time of severe financial pressure, mean we currently do not have plans to roll-out the installation of on-street charging widely. However, we are considering whether it might be possible to test this concept at a very limited number of sites that have already been assessed, before considering the wider implications across the County.

District Council depot opening hours, Oakwood Hill

Following a successful campaign by local residents and the LRA to save a green space by Marlescroft Way, the District Council has extended opening hours at its nearby Oakwood Hill depot. Grounds maintenance staff and other depot users will have access from 07:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 07:00 to 13:00 on Saturday. Staff will be parking on the roads in the estate across Oakwood Hill. Residents are concerned that this will mean extra disturbance at anti-social hours. LRA Cllrs Chris Roberts and Chris Pond argued for changes to the proposals, but the majority (of non-Loughton Cllrs) approved them. The Council did, however, make some changes which may help residents. Chris Roberts asks people living near the depot to keep him updated about the effects of the increasing use of this site.

District Council moving to North Weald

We've had several questions about if/when the District Council will be moving to North Weald. This is probably about two to four years down the line, and the intention is to move only back-office staff. Meetings and democratic services will remain in Epping. LRA Cllrs will be keeping an eye on this process, as there are doubts about its viability. Much also depends on what happens about the St Johns Road Epping development and what Historic England thinks of the proposed changes to the existing listed civic offices.

Have you renewed your LRA membership?

If not, renew now until the end of 2019 for
£5 per household

Not sure if you've renewed?

Email contact@loughtonresidents.co.uk

LRA's membership information is not shared with anyone

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