

MITCHAM COMMON CONSERVATORS

A MEETING of the Conservators was held at Mill House Ecology Centre Windmill Road Mitcham on 14 June 2006 when there were present :

Mr P Harper (Chairman)
Dr D Coleman
Mr K Everett
Councillor T Godfrey
Councillor T Harris
Councillor S Hoar
Ms D Hyatt
Councillor B Mansfield
Councillor I Munn

1. Appointment of Chairman RESOLVED that Mr Paul Harper be appointed Chairman of the Board for the ensuing year

(Mr Harper in the Chair)

2. Appointment of Vice Chairman RESOLVED that Councillor Timothy Godfrey be appointed Vice Chairman of the Board for the ensuing year

3. Appointment of Conservators

London Borough of Croydon Councillor Godfrey, Harris and Hoar and Mr Peter Hopson appointed until May 2007

London Borough of Merton Councillors Angela Caldara, Barbara Mansfield and Ian Munn and Mr Paul Harper appointed until May 2007

London Borough of Sutton Councillor Bailey and Leach re-appointed until May 2007; Ms Dee Hyatt appointed and Dr Coleman re-appointed until May 2008

4. Apologies for Absence Received from Councillors Bailey, Caldara and Leach and Mr Hopson

5. Minutes The Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 March 2006 were approved and signed by the Chairman

6. Former Members of the Board RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY that a vote of sincere thanks be recorded to those former members of the Board who for various reasons had not been re-appointed to the Board for the ensuing year, for their past services, and that they be informed accordingly

7. Report of Director of Environment and Regeneration, London Borough of Merton

Environmental Stewardship

The Common being now registered on the Rural Payment Agency's Rural Land Register (as reported to the June 2005 Meeting) an application for Entry Level Stewardship ((ELS) had recently been submitted to the Rural Development Service

The application had proved successful, with the result that for the next five years the Board would receive an annual ESL payment of £5,486, to be used as a contribution towards habitat management on the Common

London Strategic Park Project Report

The Greater London Authority had a strategic role in assisting the implementation of proposals for new Regional Parks in London, pursuant to which the London Strategic Parks Project Report had recently been published (copy previously circulated to members)

The report sets out an assessment methodology that can be applied to identify strategic open space opportunity areas, is intended to act as a catalyst for the development of Regional Parks in London; and includes future action to facilitate regional park aspirations in the Wandle Valley

RESOLVED that the Board keep a watching brief on this initiative and be represented on any future working party or partnership that might be established

Management Plan

A first draft of a revised management plan having been circulated to members it was RESOLVED that a Working Group comprising Councillors Munn, Godfrey and Dr Coleman be appointed to consider in detail the policies proposed in the draft, with the aim of submission of a Consultation Draft to the next meeting of the Board

Planning Application : 28-30 Goat Road

Representations had been submitted to Merton Council as the planning authority and Sutton Council as neighbouring authority on a proposal to refurbish existing timber merchant premises and erect a new warehouse on this site, which is directly opposite Mill Green

The representations (supported by Sutton Council) recommended that a payment be sought from the applicant of the cost of reinstating a roadside strip of Mill Green which had been eroded by vehicular encroachment

London Biodiversity Partnership

The Partnership had recently produced two leaflets (copies circulated to members) informing about acid grassland and heathland habitats, both of which types are found on the Common

Mitcham Common Logo

From a range of samples submitted, a consensus of members present was reached on the form and design of a logo for use on the Board's stationery, website, media and diverse other appropriate publications

8. Budget A Statement of Expenditure and Income to 31 May 2006 was submitted

9. Investments (1) Reported that on the advice of the Investment Adviser, the Chairman had approved the sale of the holding of 2000 BAA Ord shares RESOLVED that the Chairman's action be confirmed

(2) RESOLVED that the Board consider, at its next meeting, the desirability of appointing a body of members to establish an investment policy, to keep the same under review and to authorise dealings

10. Finance RESOLVED that the draft Financial Statements for the year to 31 March 2005 be approved

11. Spring Inspection of the Common - 14 May 2006

Present: Mr Harper (Chairman), Dr Coleman, Councillor Godfrey and Mr Hodge. Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bailey and Mr Spalding

12. Land Adjacent to Wingate Crescent Reference was made to this land, which had been acquired by Croydon Council from Surrey County Council by adverse possession in 1976, it having previously been held by the latter since 1936 for transfer to the Board, in exchange for Common land taken for the widening of Blue House Bridge. The reason for its non transfer at the appropriate time was unknown

The Friends of Mitcham Common had pressed that, by arrangement with Croydon Council, the land, with a small parcel of adjacent land, be absorbed into and managed as part of the Common

It was recalled that approaches had been made to Croydon Council on those lines in the past, without response. Furthermore, that such an arrangement would require the establishment of appropriate funding arrangements for maintenance, with Croydon Council

RESOLVED that the Friends be informed that the Board proposes to take no further action in this matter unless it receives an approach from Croydon Council, possibly prompted by the Friends

13. Mitcham Golf Club – Proposed Borehole A letter was submitted from the Club, stating that in view of the current water shortage and the possibility of a Thames Water Drought Order, it was looking at the possibility of drilling a borehole on the Common; and was awaiting a borehole prognosis from the British Geological Survey

If the report were favourable, the Club would wish to apply for the consent of the Environment Agency to investigate and, if permitted, sink a borehole. The borehole construction would be totally underground, and on completion the landscape of the Common would be unaffected

A location plan and illustration of the works (previously circulated to members) were submitted

RESOLVED that the Club be informed that:

- (1) the Board would have no objection to the Club applying to the Environment Agency for consent to investigate
- (2) if such consent were granted, and assuming that investigation would involve some disturbance of common land, the Board would require a form of written Agreement with the Club, prior to the investigation taking place, which would provide for such matters as indemnity, re-instatement etc

- (3) if consent to the borehole was subsequently given by the Agency, a further such Agreement would be required covering, additionally, the construction and future operation of the works
- (4) as a first step, the Board would appreciate sight of the water borehole prognosis report from British Geological Survey, when received

14. Appointment of Clerk The Chairman reported that eighteen applications having been received, five candidates had been selected for interview of whom four had attended, from whom two had been selected for second and final interview, which would take place shortly

There was a vacancy on the Appointments Committee, Councillor Mrs Gatland having not been re-appointed to the Board for the ensuing year

RESOLVED THAT Councillor Hoar be appointed to fill the vacancy, with Mr Hopson to act in his place if the need arises

15. Mitcham Common Education Trust RESOLVED that Councillor Harris be nominated as a Trustee in place of Mr Peter Spalding (resigned)

16. Mitcham Common Environmental Trust RESOLVED that Councillor Harris be appointed a Trustee in place of Mr Peter Spalding (retired, being no longer a Conservator)

17. Annual Inspection of the Common RESOLVED that this take place on Sunday 10 September 2006 commencing at 10.30 a.m.

IN COMMITTEE

18. Windmill Trading Estate The Chairman submitted a report on his meeting (with officers) with Mr Hugh Cave, the developer's Development Director, at which Mr Cave had indicated that an amended planning application was in course of preparation and was intended to be submitted to the planning authority early in September: and that he would wish for negotiations with the Board regarding the accesses, to continue

