

NUMBER SIX

Welcome to the latest issue of the newsletter designed to keep key stakeholders up-to-date with the future of the former HMG Ganges site.

It has been a little while since the last issue and we feel that in light of recent developments now is the time for a further edition to be sent out.

The Reserved Matters application

Readers of Ganges News probably already know that this application has been the subject of negotiations with the applicants since the amended scheme was submitted to the Council in 2007. This has involved the submission of amendments to the layout of the scheme and a new (replacement) Environmental Statement. Consultations have been carried out with the community at every stage. The amendments are explained and the application documents can be accessed via the Council's website;

<http://www.babergh.gov.uk/Babergh/Home/Planning+and+Building+Control/Planning+Information/HMS+Ganges+-+Revision/>

We are now close to being able to report on the Reserved Matters to Babergh's Development Committee.

However, before we do we are required by law to undertake what is called an 'Appropriate Assessment' of the proposals. This is in order to establish whether there could be an adverse impact upon the adjacent protected and important wildlife sites (which are identified as Special Protection Areas and Ramsar or wetland sites). If the Appropriate Assessment does not identify potential adverse effects, we should be in a position to report the Reserved Matters to the Council's Development Committee later this summer or in the early autumn.

The meeting will take place at the Council's Offices in Hadleigh. Recognising the level of public interest in this issue, Babergh has agreed to change its normal arrangements for public speaking at the meeting. These will be as follows:

* The time limit for speeches from the Applicant (or their representative) and the representative of Shotley Parish Council be extended from 3 minutes to 5 minutes

* Up to four speakers be entitled to speak from each of the objectors' and supporters' groups for 3 minutes.

Babergh Councillors on the development Committee have already decided to visit the former HMS Ganges site before they consider the Reserved Matters.

The “Paragraph 29” application

The site owners have made no secret of their intentions to submit further, alternative, proposals for the development of their site. These proposals are often referred to by them as the “paragraph 29 application” and is so named

after the comments made within paragraph 29 of the Secretary of State’s decision letter following the public inquiry into the previous application for 325 dwellings.

To this end, the applicants have submitted a Scoping Report to the Council and have requested that we adopt a Scoping Opinion. The purpose of a Scoping Opinion is for the Council to advise the applicant about the scope of an Environmental Statement that will accompany a potential future application. The process of adopting a Scoping Opinion is purely a technical exercise in gathering relevant environmental information and Babergh can request more information later on should it so wish.

The wider community will have an opportunity to comment on the environmental information as part of the processing of any planning application that might be submitted to the Council.

The applicant’s Scoping Document can be found on Babergh’s website at:

<http://www.babergh.gov.uk/Babergh/Home/Planning+and+Building+Control/Planning+Information/HMS+Ganges+-+Scoping/>

The Scoping Opinion will also be posted on our website once it is adopted by the Council.

Listed mast

Whilst Babergh’s aim is to ensure the long-term preservation of the mast in the best condition possible, it is important to remember that is and can be no linkage between that outcome and any planning application from the developers for the site.

Over a number of months, Babergh has been actively involved with Galliard to secure the progress of any repair work. We have offered all the appropriate guidance and advice to the developer. Our understanding is that they are in the process of obtaining quotes from several different repair companies. As with any tender process involving what will be quite a complex and highly

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specialist job, with few organisations around with the required skills and knowledge, this has taken time.

However, Babergh has formally requested that an update on the progress made by Galliard be available by no later than July 10.

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