

THE KEMNAL ROAD RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION.

MINUTES of the ^{COMMITTEE} Meeting held at the Bulls Head Hotel Chislehurst on the 31st August, 1959 at 8.15 p.m.

PRESENT:

Mr. H.W. Clifton	(Chairman)
Mr. C.M. Dunn	(Secretary)
Mr. L.H. Gilbert *	(Treasurer)
Mr. R.B. Thompson	(Legal Adviser)
Mr. A.D. Jackson.	
Mr. J. Langlands	
Mr. G.E. Coulter.*	
Mrs. J. Smith.	

ABSENT: Major Ian Gibbs. *

1. MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17th AUGUST 1959.

The Meeting was opened by the Secretary who read the Minutes of the last meeting which were approved by all present.

2. ROAD FUND COLLECTION ARRANGEMENTS.

The Secretary read a memorandum which was as follows:-

"The Committee is confident that the residents will realise the overall advantages of continuing to maintain Kemnal Road as a private road. This is the responsibility of the residents and can only be done if all residents are prepared in a neighbourly way to contribute their fair share to the common pool. The accompanying agreement which we ask you to return duly signed over a sixpenny stamp to the Honorary Treasurer, L.H. Gilbert, "Hoblands" without delay set out the basis on which you will be assessed as soon as your frontage or share of frontage can be ascertained. It is expected that on this assessment an income of something over £150: per annum would be raised. This with care should enable the Committee to maintain the road adequately although as the last complete resurfacing of the road cost £800: a policy of "make do and mend" will be essential for the next few years. If the committee through lack of funds or because of disagreements among residents finds itself unable to carry out this task it would have no alternative in the long run but to ask the Local Authority to take over the road. In that event the Committee is advised that the charges for constructing pavements, paving, channelling, sewerage and making the road up to the required standard would, in all probability, amount to as much as £10: per foot of frontage. It is furthermore expected that were the road to be taken over it would lead to an increase in the rating assessments of all properties in the road. If you require any further information please apply to the Chairman H.W. Clifton, South Lodge; Treasurer L.H. Gilbert, Hoblands; Secretary, C.M. Dunn, Hoblands Cottage; or any of the following members of the Committee: Mr. A.D. Jackson, 'Westerland Lodge'; Mr. R.B. Thompson, 'Kemnal Wood'; Mr. John Langlands, 'Foxcarth'; Major Ian Gibbs, 11, 'Westerlands'; Mr. G.E. Coulter, 3, Marlowe Close; Mrs. Jean Smith, 'North Lodge, who will be glad to provide it. Signed: C.M. Dunn (Secretary.)"

This memorandum is to accompany the printed Agreement, as set out in Minute No. 1 paragraph three, to all householders in Kemnal Road. It was agreed to send the letter and Agreement, with a 6d. stamp already fixed for the convenience of householders, in the hope that thereby less delay would arise in the return.

The Secretary thought too that the Wellington Trust should be sent the Agreement, but with a covering letter explaining the position to them, as the road had been and is still being used by them to a great extent, but that finally the Lossees of Mulbarton Court would pay their own contributions.

The Secretary asked that the Treasurer should now take over, as it came within his province, the sending out of the letters to all householders, the assessing of the frontages, and of course the final collection of funds. The Treasurer agreed to these points.

3. SELWOOD DEVELOPMENT.

The following is a brief summary of a two hour talk which took place at Selwood on Thursday the 27th August at 11 a.m. between the K.C.C. and Mr.H.W. Clifton, Mr.C.H. Dunn, Mr.A.D. Jackson, Miss S.G. Williams and Mr. F.V. Wymer acting on behalf of the Kennal Road Residents' Association:-

Mr. Homewood opened the meeting with a few introductory remarks. Mr. Dunn confirmed that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss our objections to the proposed development and our counter proposals. He asked whether the Council Representatives were empowered to defer any action to despoil the grounds of Selwood until our representations to them had been properly considered. On receiving a negative reply he warned them that they were in a clear breach of covenant and that we would hold them legally responsible and would claim the maximum possible damages.

Mr. Dunn then asked whether they were willing that an agreed statement should be made to the Press after the meeting. They could not agree to this as the meeting was a private one. Mr. Dunn then stated that he reserved his rights to issue a statement to the Press if he so wished.

He then asked whether in view of the large numbers of Old Peoples Homes in the district there was a local need for another one. We were assured that there was a long waiting list, that the homes had to be provided where the need was, so that there was no difficulty about visitors being able to get to the homes, and that still more homes were needed. Their remarks were at times contradictory and it seemed that their idea of "local" included the whole of the N.W. Kent, whereas ours was for the Chislehurst area only. (Tea and Coffee served)! Dr. Jones interposed to state that his hospital had many patients being maintained at great public cost because of the shortage of homes. However as these cases are not fit for admission to Old Peoples Homes this seems irrelevant.

Miss Williams put forward our objections on the grounds of the serious loss of amenities which would be suffered by the residents of Selwood. The loss of their views and their lovely grounds available for their recreation which they had loved and enjoyed so much since Selwood was opened five years ago. Miss Williams pointed out how much dissension would be caused by having two separate homes and staffs on the same site. The Council representatives stated that they thought the old people of Selwood would gladly give up their grounds if the need of further accommodation was explained to them. It was pointed out that the destruction of the grounds was not necessary because the extra accommodation needed could easily be provided by an additional wing as suggested by us, leaving the lawns and trees in front of the house still available for recreation.

The Council representatives also stated that no decisions had been arrived at regarding how Selwood and the proposed new home would be staffed. They said if their plan was to be dropped in favour of ours two years would be lost in "red tape". We stated we found this statement hard to accept. They said they could only make the necessary arrangements, financial etc. to build two new homes per annum, and were finding it almost impossible to find suitable sites. Indeed our assistance was asked in trying to find some more sites for them. After the meeting Mr. Clifton and Mr. Dunn drove round Hawkwood Lane to look at the large site already owned by the K.C.C. which is being developed by the Education Authorities as a school. There they discovered a fairly large wooded area not required for the school or playing fields which had already been provisionally earmarked for an Old Peoples Home. This, in addition to the new site to be developed at Beckenham is therefore their full 12 months quota without any others they probably have, without our knowledge.

Mr. Jackson asked what brief had been given to the Architects concerning the development but was unsuccessful in obtaining an answer. He nevertheless pointed out the bad precedent established by siting a building in front of an existing one and stressed the convenience and practicability of our counter proposal of an added wing. He pointed out that the kitchens were already of adequate size and that the dining room could easily be enlarged. Also values of surrounding properties would be depreciated.

Dr. Jones stated that he had no objection to the K.C.C. proposal which in his opinion was in keeping with the road and not detrimental to property values. He also questioned the value of some of the signatories to our resolution of objection because they were not Freeholders. Mr. Wymer stated that it was most important that the Planning Authorities should not allow this proposal to establish a precedent for our properties in the road and was assured that on this matter and that of density great care would always be exercised.

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Mr. Clifton then questioned the K.C.C. Representatives regarding the financial side of their proposal and was told that it was proposed to spend about £60,000: on this development. He stated that the existing kitchens and heating plant were large enough to open with an additional wing as proposed by us as was obviously intended when Selwood was originally developed into an Old Peoples Home about five years ago. The extra accommodation could be provided in this wing at much lower cost of public money and without spoiling the amenities of either the Old People or the residents of the road. The Council Representatives did not agree and were pressed to state what they would have done to increase the accommodation had the grounds in front of Selwood not belonged to them. They would not answer this directly but said if they could not develop the gardens in front of Selwood they might consider selling them. Mr. Clifton then offered to buy the grounds and give them to Selwood for the permanent use and recreation of the Old People, provided the gardens would be maintained as they are. Mr. Clifton stated he cared very much for the idea of Old Peoples Homes and vouchsafed that he donated about £2,000: a year towards the amenities of various Old Peoples Homes in the district.

The Chairman then proposed that we should then inspect the actual site of the proposed building which had been pegged out across the gardens. It was then seen how near the building would be to Westerland and Selwood and how many trees and shrubs would have to be destroyed to make way for it. The Council Representatives still seemed to think highly of their proposals in spite of our protestations and said that the site of the building might be with advantage shifted about four feet further away from Westerland. This would probably save one or two holly trees but would obviously encroach still further across the rhododendron bordered entrance drive.

The meeting ended with the Chairman stating that their plans would go forward with work probably starting on the site during the latter half of September, but that our representations would be passed to the full Committee for their consideration. For our part we said we would still persist in our efforts to get their plans stopped.

A lengthy discussion arose after Mr. Dunn had given the above report, regarding future action to be taken by our Committee, and the Secretary asked Mr. Thompson if there was any hope of an injunction being taken out, stopping the K.C.C. from progressing with their proposals, but Mr. Thompson felt that it would not only be a prolonged undertaking but probably a futile one, as the majority of Covenants in Kennal Road had been broken, and an injunction could not be taken against the destruction of trees and shrubbery.

The Secretary had already written to the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and also the Minister of Health prior to the meeting at Selwood, and it was thought best to await the replies from these two authorities before taking any future action.

Following the meeting with the K.C.C. the Chairman and the Secretary were able to way-lay Dr. Jones (the resident opposer to the scheme) to discuss with him the reasons for his attitude towards our Committee, and to ascertain primarily whether he had received the letter which was sent to him, and when he was going to hand over the money and records in his possession, held on behalf of the residents of Kennal Road. Mr. Jones obviously has no intention whatsoever of being co-operative for he made it plain that he certainly does not intend to hand over the records, containing the names of the residents' and the assessed frontages, and felt that the odd sum of money (which he ascertains as being about £27.10.0d.) should be returned to Foxbury as he maintains that all their contribution was not required. (It should be recorded here that the Treasurer has since had a telephonic conversation with Mr. Cox, the other signatory, as mentioned in Minute No.1 paragraph 5, to the effect that Mr. Cox will not sign any cheque sent to him by Dr. Jones.)

Dr. Jones further reiterated the remarks previously made by his Wife, that there had never been a Kennal Road Residents' Association, but the Secretary refreshed his memory with regard to the Minutes of a Meeting held in 1956, and pointed out that three years revenue had been lost through his behaviour.

Dr. Jones was quite adamant in refusing to pay anything towards the upkeep of Kennal Road, to which the Secretary replied that he would, of course, be living on the charity of his neighbours.

Mr. Thompson felt that he had a right, as a resident having contributed towards the previous cost of the upkeep of the road, to write a letter to Dr. Jones stating that

he would like Dr. Jones to explain his attitude, as Mr. Thompson had never had an acknowledgment of the payment made by him to Dr. Jones.

4. SIGHT LINE AT TOP OF ROAD.

The Secretary had received a visit from an R.A.C. Official stating that they had received communications from members in the road about the unsatisfactory sighting. It was hoped that it could be agreed between the C.M.S. at Liskeard Lodge, the Local Authority and the Trustees of the strip that the posts are moved back three or four feet whichever is required, with the line of the C.M.S. frontage. The Secretary said that he thought the Local Authority would put some asphalt across Ashfield Lane, so that it would improve the sight line, without opening up the road. It was agreed by all present that this action should be taken, thus ensuring a greater measure of safety when entering Ashfield Lane.

5. ASSOCIATION STATIONERY.

The Secretary proposed a vote of thanks to Mr. Coulter for all his good work, which was endorsed by all other members, and especially for the printing of the circular letter and agreement forms to be sent to all residents.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING.

Because of the Selwood Development it was felt that a meeting might be necessary at short notice, but in the meantime a provisional date had been fixed for the 14th September in the Adam Room of the Bulls Head Hotel at 8.15 p.m.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Mr. Jackson felt that he should raise the point about the regular calls made by Jehovah Witnesses. All felt it was a personal problem to be overcome, and not one in which the K.R.R.A. should take part, and the Chairman proved that calls could easily and effectively be stopped!

Mr. Thompson said that he would like to raise the point with regard to the problem which his visitors encountered in trying to find his home, and indeed Kemnal Road. All present felt that it would not be an advantage to advertise Kemnal Road at the junction with Bromley Lane, as this may well lead to more traffic.

Mr. Gilbert took the opportunity of thanking Mr. Clifton and Mr. Dunn for all their hard work on behalf of the Association, which was warmly supported by all members present.