

THE Jericho Echo

STILL RUSKIN DEVELOPMENT PLAN

You will have heard the news. Ruskin's application for planning permission has been deferred again by the Planning Committee.

A public meeting on Monday 3rd September was attended by representatives of Ruskin College (the retiring principal and his architect), members of the JRA, Oxford Civic Society, Oxford Preservation Trust, Oxford Area Arts Council, Friends of Old Headington, the Planning Committee, residents of Jericho, particularly Worcester Place - seventy persons in all, plus the oft-evoked ghost of John Ruskin. All under the chairmanship of Councillor Simpson, Deputy Lord Mayor.

The reason? To get public reaction to Ruskin College's plan to knock down four cottages in Worcester Place and replace them with a library complex, four seminar rooms, 20 study-bedrooms and four garages. This is part of a long-term, four-stage plan for expansion which started in 1967 with the building of the extension in Worcester Place and the development of the Old Rookery site in Headington.

Stage III is the one we are talking about, while Stage IV (which is being studied), will cover another group of cottages on the north side of Worcester Place. This plan, so the Principal informs us, was informally discussed with the City Council in 1973, but not publicly disclosed.

The opposition, led by the ghost of John Ruskin, says that no one has the right "causelessly to destroy for the expediency of the moment". Their objections are not to Ruskin College or their plans as such, but to the policies which allow the systematic destruction of old Oxford, its chara-

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cter, its history and its amenities, to make room for more and more large scale institutions.

51x15
The big question is, why must Ruskin expand in Jericho? Well, the Principal says it is because that is their plan. The 1st year students are to be in Headington and the 2nd years to be in Jericho along with the library and teaching rooms, and he believes that they have got it right.

510+
250
760+
240
The Headington site is (he claims) full, and it is too far for 2nd year students to walk, cycle or bus into the centre of Oxford (poor things). The Friends of Old Headington back him there, at least as far as the Headington site being full. They are all for the new development being down in Jericho because they have relieved us of our hospital (we didn't want our hospital to move and the old building is not ours anyway).

10 00
Most of the 70 people present wanted to know by the cottages had to be demolished. Couldn't they build behind them, moving the big buildings back so that they overlooked Worcester gardens and not Worcester Place? Couldn't they leave the facade and frontage and build behind them? Well, "No" says the architect. Worcester College have objected to their gardens being overlooked (so do the residents of Worcester Place); the cottages themselves are unfit for human habitation (as students have been living in them for ten years that is an admission of an indifferent landlord); the cottages lack damp courses (so did most other renovated Jericho homes) and, finally, the College will not get a Dept. of Education and Science grant unless the cottages are demolished (that is incredible).

Furthermore, Ruskin argue that, as the social centre is to be right in the centre of the block, the neighbourhood will not be woken whenever the students decided to make a night of it. Not so, a resident pointed out, when they are noisily occupying the street, the echoing will be even worse when the new buildings are finished.

Then there was the aesthetic side and the ghost really came out fighting with phrases like "historic vandalism" and "heritage belonging to the future". Put plainly. What is going to be left of the street by the time Ruskin have finished with it? Not much. Half one side is a mess already for nobody could say that the extension has any architectural merit at all although the little cottages have. Not great art, but pleasing to the eye, even if the Oxford Preservation Trust feel that they are a borderline case.

The meeting opened and closed with the question put by the JRA. Not, what will happen to Worcester Place, but what is Jericho's future? Ruskin is only one of several institutional landowners interested in the outcome of this case. Worcester College, OUP, Lucy, the new Green College, British Waterways, the breweries, and the Council themselves. They all own properties all over Jericho and in nearby parts of Walton Manor. There is an overall plan for Jericho, agreed by the Council. Do they mean it, or is it a case of "yes, except for...".? Except for Ruskin now; except for Worcester next year; Lucy, OUP, Green College or the Council in the following years? It will not take long. Twenty years could see the piecemeal destruction of Jericho. After all, there are only 750 houses to start with, not all of them old. What is more, if you fill the place up with students (very nice people no doubt) the residents will get pushed out (nice people too). Jericho ceases to be an inner city residential area and becomes a student/institutional area. Is this the "no change in use" as Ruskin claim on their planning application?

1000
words
We will leave the last word to the ghost, who once commented "whenever ... I assume that a little honesty or generosity - or what used to be called "virtue" - may be calculated upon as a human motive of action, people answer me, saying "you must not assume anything common to men byt acquisitiveness and jealousy".

BEAUMONT STREET CROSSING

The borough engineer must have been eavesdropping on our editorial meetings because he's beaten us to it. We were just about to start beefing about that dangerous crossing at Beaumont Street when the work began on the new push button lights at the corner of Hythe Bridge Street and George Street.

That's what we have been waiting for and there are a lot of people who are going to thank you for them!

PLANNING!

For copies of meetings of the Planning Committee, see Miss Cowham at 15, Guy Court, Tel. 55901 (evenings)

LECTURES!

IN PRACTICAL ECOLOGY

every Thursday, starting 27th September at 7.30pm. at 29 Observatory Street.

AN OPEN LETTER TO ALL WHO CARE FOR OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE

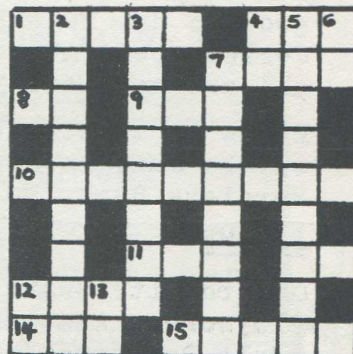
It has been announced that all nursery schools in Oxfordshire are to be closed as well as 15 other schools, including primary, middle and secondary schools. Do the powers-that-be really understand the long-term effects of these recommendations in conjunction with the reduction of teaching staff in all our schools (which is already in operation) plus the cuts in Special Education? It is true and it is fully understood that the council have to make cuts somewhere, but does it always have to hit the children of our county? Oxford was always the centre of learning in England, indeed at one time the world at large. Are we now to lead the country in fostering the growth of inadequately educated children; children who will not receive that which is their due? Good teachers do not need thousands spent on audio-visual aids such as televisions, tape-recorders and other paraphernalia but they do need buildings, books and the chance to teach the children; plus the enthusiastic backing of their Education Committee to allow them to carry out their profession, which is to educate the children of this county from 3-18; not merely to have the "basic fabric of a service".

JOB.

rubbishrubbishrubbis
The Council rubbish skip will be at the bottom of Great Clarendon St. on these dates:

15.10.79
12.11.79
10.12.79

Crossword



Clues Across

- 1.S.American dance (5)
- 2.Oh Cleo! It bites(3)
- 7.Add a p and you get the cure(4)
- 8.See 9 across
- 9.Yours; with 8 across you have to admit it (3.2)
- 10.You can't close this gap(4.5.)
- 11.Court the girl(3)
- 14.Painter's skill(3)
- 15.Tarka the ...(5)

Clues Down

- 2.Not liked(9)
- 3.Brownie Leader(5.3)
- 4.Capone's first name(2)
- 6.Afterthought(2)
- 7.Quick dip(3.3.3.)
- 12.Single degree(2)

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We have now ended our Playscheme activities for the summer, and hopefully the majority of children have benefitted from this scheme.

The Playscheme would not however have been possible without the grant given by the Oxford City Council, the playleaders and a small band of Jericho parents.

The Playscheme met from 2-5 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons under paid supervision, on Tuesday evenings it ran on voluntary help and proved enjoyable to all who came. Many thanks to those helpers and for the various donations of cakes etc. received for these evenings.

Our trips were very "happy ones" and the weather was good to us. We sincerely hope that all children in Jericho benefitted from the scheme, it was open to all and completely free.

Below is a detailed list of income and expenditure of the Jericho Playscheme, account no. 20544949, Barclays Bank, Wellington Square.

INCOME

Oxford City Grant	360.00
Playscheme Ass. Grant	50.00
Adult Payments for Outings	29.00
	<u>£439.00</u>

EXPENDITURE

Payment Use of Field to O.C.C.	
50p. per session	12.00
Squash, biscuits, mugs etc.	5.49
Equipment	60.11
Children's Tea	21.87
Blunsdon Coaches	133.00
Entrance Ragley Hall Adventure Wood	14.90
Playleaders for six weeks	120.00
	<u>£367.37</u>

Balance left in account £71.63

It has been suggested that the balance left should be spent on a children's Christmas party to be held in the school hall (date to be arranged). For this to be possible we must call on all parents to help either on the day or by providing refreshments. All suggestions for the party, or other ways to spend the balance will be appreciated.

May we remind all people in the parish that our main aim is to bring to the attention of the Oxford City Council the lack of recreational facilities in the area, our biggest hope is for a Youth club or Social Centre where all young or old could meet and benefit.

The recognition by the Council of our playscheme is a start. If anyone would care to write to Mr. Fred Ingram at the Town Hall thanking him for our grant and at the same time reminding him of our lack of facilities it may be a step in the right direction.

Vera Rush Wendy Matthews

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Crossword Solution

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O		W		A		T	
O	P	E	N	E	N	D	E
U		O		D		M	
L		W	O	O		I	S
B	A	I	L		U	N	
A	R	T		O	T	T	E

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