

STOP THE TOWER BLOCKS!

TESCO & HOMEBASE PUBLIC INQUIRY STARTS ON 15TH MARCH 2022

OWGRA Newsletter, March 2022, Issue No.6

Secretary of State Michael Gove has 'called in' the two planning applications to redevelop the Tesco & Homebase sites at Gillette Corner. This means he is not prepared to accept the decision by Hounslow Council and the Mayor of London to approve them at face value. They will be considered independently by a Planning Inspector at a public inquiry which is scheduled to be held from 15th to 30th March and then resumes 25th to 27th April. The developer and Hounslow Council will be presenting their reasons why they think these two schemes should be approved, while OWGRA and Historic England will be arguing why they are inappropriate for the area and should be rejected. Following the public inquiry, the Planning Inspector sends her report and recommendations to the Secretary of State who can accept or reject the recommendations of the Planning Inspector. The decision could take many months.

The developer proposes to demolish the Homebase site, build a new Tesco store with 2 levels of parking above, plus 473 flats. The intention is to build a residential development on the Tesco site of 1,677 homes. There would be tower blocks of up to 17 storeys on both sites. The current population of c 13.5K in Osterley & Spring Grove ward would increase by over 40% to c 20K.



Image of 3D model commissioned by OWGRA of the proposed developments (Credit: Ray Cockle Photographics)

Heritage is one of the key areas to be considered at the public inquiry, hence the involvement of Historic England. We/OWGRA are also covering overdevelopment and out of character with the area; public transport and infrastructure; environmental impact, energy, sustainability and air quality; green space and post-Covid issues; housing supply and housing needs. Although the Inquiry starts with a clean slate, the Planning Inspector studies the original planning applications and all the objections submitted at the time.

The first day of the inquiry (Tuesday 15th March) is currently planned to be in-person, most likely at Hounslow House (to be confirmed) and then moves to a virtual (on-line) format. The whole inquiry will be live-streamed and available for the public to watch on-line. Keep an eye on our website <https://owgra.org.uk> closer to the time for details.

Our group has been working very hard since before Christmas preparing for the inquiry. We are still in with a chance that these developments might not see the light of day, at least in their present form. It will be an uphill battle, but we will work very hard and do everything we can to present arguments to try to convince the Planning Inspector that the developments, as approved, are not appropriate for this area for all the reasons that we have been stating since the planning applications were submitted to Hounslow Council. We never opposed development on these sites but have argued all along that we want developments that provide housing that fits in with the area, meets housing needs, and will ensure that future occupants have access to adequate infrastructure as required by planning guidelines.

If you object to these proposed developments please come to the first day of the inquiry (at Hounslow House, but to be confirmed) on Tuesday 15th March 2022, to show your support for the local community which has been objecting to the proposals since autumn 2019. Once we know the details of the venue and timings, we will be posting information about this on our website <https://owgra.org.uk> in the week before the inquiry.

FRIENDS OF JERSEY GARDENS / COMMUNITY BULB PLANTING

NB: Jersey Gardens is located by St Mary's Crescent just off the A4 next to Osterley Library

Recently we have been awarded the "Green Flag" status. This is in recognition of the high standard of the park and its support provided by the council, our 3 councillors, Green Space 360 and The Friends Group. This requires ongoing community engagement which will include various activities and events during 2022. The actual Green Flag itself will be erected very soon near the St Mary's Crescent entrance. A Green Gym is also planned plus more garden maintenance activities.

During the last few months, we have seen two sessions of garden clearance, kindly organized by TCV - The Community Volunteers - where significant areas of the Dell were cleared, which has opened up a unique feature in Jersey Gardens. This was followed by two more recent sessions of bulb planting, organized by **The Friends of Jersey Gardens**, (see photo) some of which was in the cleared Dell area and others in the grass, close to the bench seating by the St Mary's Crescent entrance. The bulbs were donated by Taylors Bulbs in conjunction with the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association (MPGA) under their "Bulbs for London" initiative. **Some bulbs are already in flower in the Dell, so do take a stroll and enjoy some early signs of Spring!**



In addition, the **Friends of Jersey Gardens Group** have maintained a regular dialogue with the Parks council department and GS360, who provide all the garden maintenance in our parks. Users would have noticed **the poor state of the children's play area** where the trampoline and some of the play equipment has been fenced off for quite some time. The reason has been due to supply problems during Covid and the non-availability of the specialized fitters for play equipment. However, very recently the zip wire has been repaired and it is hoped that other repairs will follow soon. **A new notice board** is imminent to be placed near the A4 entrance, also improvement and planting work is planned around the bandstand area. New trees have just been planted in the park.

QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS – EARLY JUNE



We would like to encourage community celebrations in Jersey Gardens and ask for any suggestions and offers for help. So please get in contact with your ideas as we would like to hear from you please!

Contact us on friendsjerseygardens@gmail.com or on Facebook: www.facebook.com/groups/friendsofjerseygardens

THE OSTERLEY & SPRING GROVE WARD PANEL

We are there to represent the community in tackling crime and local issues causing concern to residents in our Ward. We met late January as a Panel, which consists of our 3 councillors, the Police Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT), local residents representing their own areas, Osterley Tesco, West Thames College, Osterley Park and Council Enforcement colleagues. Many issues were discussed related to local crimes and activities which are regularly reported on **OWL**, the Met Police **Online Watch Link**. OWL also contains very useful advice to help prevent crime occurring, as well as links to information and contacts in our local area.

(Note that the OWL app is available on all platforms including iOS and Android and can be downloaded via the link below. No registration is required to receive police alerts directly to your phone/tablet/etc.) <https://www.owl.co.uk/misc/owl-app-download/?f=met>

The Police link <https://www.met.police.uk/ro/report> is well worth using for reporting purposes. In addition, the link <https://www.met.police.uk/a/your-area/met/hounslow/osterley-and-spring-grove> contains an enormous amount of useful information which can be interrogated to find answers to any questions one might have related to your own local area. Among items discussed were the Osterley Park Hotel, CCTV to deter crimes and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), speed watches & dumped Tesco trolleys!

Note: Please report abandoned Tesco shopping trolleys using the app from <https://www.trolleywise.co.uk>. Twitter [@trolleywise](https://twitter.com/trolleywise). Download the FixMyStreet app or report online via <https://www.fixmystreet.com>

The priorities for the Panel are burglary, ASB and also improved communications to promote the Ward Panel and engage more with the community. We will continue to use OWGRA newsletters to spread the word to the community so do keep watching for regular updates!

The key message continues to be: report any crime via 101 or on-line. Call 999 if an emergency or if a crime is actually taking place (response time is normally only a few minutes!). Without any reports, the Police have no means of knowing of any issues or concerns, hence no action is taken!

Be Aware - Theft from motor vehicles continues to be one of the most frequent crimes, where valuable items are left on clear display in cars, which are often unlocked! Cars and vans are frequently having items stolen by just smashing windows and grabbing! This takes only a few seconds!

Stop Press! Councillor Tony Louki brokered a meeting to begin dialogue between residents, Hounslow Council and the Police. They discussed how the former Osterley Bowls Clubhouse might be improved for use as a regular local base for use by Osterley and Heston Wards' Police. A conversion would help reduce Police travelling times to and from Hounslow Police Station, and also offer rare community use space north of Great West Road.

If you do have any local concerns that you feel are not being addressed, please let OWGRA know so that they are included in the Ward Panel activities.

TIME TO JOIN OWGRA

If you are not already a member, why not join today?! If you join or renew now, your membership will run until the end of March 2023. The annual subscription remains at £10.00, which we hope you will agree is good value to support the activities of the Association. You can join using the membership form included with this newsletter. However, if you are already a member and your details remain the same you can simply pay your subscription and renew now. The easiest way is by an online bank transfer and full details are included in the membership form.



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FURTHER SUPPORT OWGRA ON THE IMPORTANT ISSUES

You will be aware that most of OWGRA's efforts over the past year have been devoted to campaigning against the proposed Tesco/Homebase developments. This has incurred considerable costs, for instance for the construction of a 3D model, for legal advice etc. **If you are able to, please make an extra donation towards our funds, so that we may continue the fight.** Thank you!