

NOTICE of
SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING

on
on Monday 11 January 1988 at 8pm.

at BOOKER MEMORIAL HALL
on Booker Common

NON-MEMBERS (who are resident at Booker & Sands) are also invited to consider FURTHER ACTION AGAINST MOBILLOIL'S proposed 200 acre MOTORWAY SERVICE AREA at BOOKER.

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT designated 1987/8 "EUROPEAN AREA OF THE ENVIRONMENT". The purpose is to focus attention on the need for everybody to preserve what remains of the natural environment and ecology for our children, and grandchildren and beyond them.

MOBILLOIL'S CONTRIBUTION to this high ideal is the attempted destruction of 198 acres of the Designated "Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty & Green Belt" at BOOKER. (AONB & GB)

NOBODY NEED BE OVERAWED by Multinational Juggernauts. They are NOT invincible. They have been stopped before and can be stopped again. Even giants have weak spots - and at times display questionable judgement.

(For example, who would dream of siting an MSA, full of people and petrol, across the flightpath of a busy aerodrome?)

FACTORS INFLUENCING MOBILLOIL'S CHOICE OF BOOKER include "...Easy Service Access from north and south". This suggests a short-term capital cost saving at the installation stage - by reason of Booker's topography and existing road layout.

CHOICE then is between Mobiloil's short term GAIN - against a total ENVIRONMENTAL LOSS for all time and which is without price.

THEY ARE STOPPABLE, but only if everyone makes their objection heard loud and clear. But if you sit supine they'll drive over you.

THE FIRST STEP is for every household to write to The Planning Officer, Wycombe District Council, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe HP11 1BB.

Reference: W/87/7757: M.40 MSA at BOOKER.

It only requires a short simple letter stating your particular objections and in your own words. (Those who have already written need not do so again)

TIME LIMIT. Mobiloil's Public Notice gave us only until 2 December to object. Wycombe District Council have now extended the time limit to 25 December 1987

SO DON'T WAIT - WRITE NOW. Apart from the horrifying Environmental Loss, an MSA could also affect the market value of your own property.

THE NEXT STEP IS TO ATTEND THE MEETING on 11 January 8 to discuss the next stages of the resistance campaign.

We hope then to be able to give you the date of the Council's Planning Committee Meeting at which a decision will be made. (The public are entitled to listen to the debate from the public Gallery - but only provided there is no interruption of proceedings)

MOTORWAY SERVICE AREA (CONTINUED)

WYCOMBE COUNCIL have a good track record in preventing intrusions into this local Green Belt and AONB. So it is more likely than not that the majority of our Elected Councillors will vote against Mobiloil. Cllr Ted Collins-Booker Ward has already written that he is against the MSA at Booker. Nevertheless it will be an encouragement if the public Gallery is well attended when the decision is made.

IF MOBILLOIL is REFUSED PERMISSION - then an Appeal to the Minister is almost inevitable, and followed by a Public Inquiry. We will consider strategy for that event at our Meeting on January 11 1988.

THIS SOCIETY'S WRITTEN OBJECTION covered these main points:-

1. IT IS DESIGNATED AONB & GREEN BELT LAND. The site of 198 acres would fill and choke the lung of open space between Booker and Lane End Woodlands.

It would also create a precedent for further exploitation of the remaining AONB & GB by Developers who have already tried to home-in and failed.

2. LOCATION OF MSA'S is NOT ESSENTIAL - ANYWHERE along the 23 miles of M40 which runs through the Chilterns. Most MSAs on M1 are spaced at between 22-30 mile intervals, i.e. 20/30 minutes driving time.

Neither is it essential to locate them adjacent to residential areas. MSAs operate as self-contained units, even down to their own in-built sewage plant. They can, and do, operate effectively in isolation and reasonably distant from residential areas.

3. PHYSICALLY DETRIMENTAL TO RESIDENTS. Booker residential area is westward of the proposed site, and the prevailing wind is from the west. It follows there would be intolerable environmental nuisance both from fumes and noise - day and night without respite.

4. PUBLIC FOOTPATHS Nos. 109 & 42 would be denied to the public with no sensible alternative route available. These two paths join with footpath No. 23 and provide the countryside walk between Booker and Lane End residential areas via Booker & Widdenton Park Woods.

5. ADJACENT TO WYCOMBE AIR PARK. The proposed MSA is sited across the flightpath of Runway 035/017. The potentially explosive petrol laden MSA would be only yards away from the critical take-off point. There is plentiful case history of air crashes through mechanical failure and human pilot error. The effect of an overshoot doesn't bear thinking of. Local people need no reminding of air crashes at Booker in the past.

NOTE: Write now to Planning Officer if you haven't already done so - Protect your interests.

DOGS

THERE ARE NO BAD DOGS - only thoughtless dog-owners. This shows itself in the persistent fouling of the 'Mown' grassland area around the cricket pitch. This is also a recreational area for children.

WYCOMBE COUNCIL have given consideration to Home Office Circular 21/1987. (Revision of existing Dog Byelaws). They have invited interested bodies to consult in the making of such Byelaws.

Some local residents have proposed that dogs be banned from using the 'Mown' Grassland Area by the Cricket Pitch. There can be no question of banning them from the woodland areas which form the greater part of the Common. The Home Office Circular makes this absolutely clear.

DOGS (CONTINUED)

Sir Francis Dashwood has been approached and replied that "...provided the banning is supported by the majority he would not stand in the way of the Society".

REPRESENTATION: If any have constructive suggestions -or object- please write by 31 January 1988 to The Society, c/o 6 Barbers Wood Close, Booker. After this date the Society will consult with Wycombe Council.

RESTORATION & CONSERVATION WORKS

ONE OF THE BRIGHT SPOTS during a dreary summer was the splendid show of wildflowers at the eastern entrance to Booker Common below Squirrel Lane.

Local residents reaped the benefit of the Restoration work carried out by volunteer members of this Society.

The area had become rundown and derelict as a result of years of neglect and rubbish dumping.

Before it could be restored to its former attractive state it was first necessary to conduct a drastic clearance of rubbish (60 tonnes to Booker Tip), and burn the diseased trees and scrub.

This was followed by planting both trees and wildflower seed. At this stage the restored area took on the brown bare appearance of a ploughed field. To some this came as a cultural shock, but most gardeners could visualise the final effect in the following summer. Nature duly performed in due season with a with a colourful flower show and different varieties of grasses.

Volunteers had also made-up persistently muddy sections of some footpaths. These proved of great value to pedestrians during the continuous wet weather.

Other conservation work carried out during 1987 were:

- 64 Timber Bollards installed along Lane End Road to seal gaps caused by the massive tree felling operation. (Total Bollards now installed-462)
- 196 Tree Whips planted (Total planted now-610)
- Wildflower area harvested and the ground cultivated to promote good growth next season.
- April Spring-clean. Volunteers picked up rubbish and conveyed it to Booker Tip. It was mostly outside the bollard screen, and less than usual.

50 VOLUNTEERS carried out these improvements which benefit all. But it is noticeable that the same people turn out each time. Any others who can offer a 2-day labour please phone H.W. 25665.

LABOUR IS PROVIDED FREE but materials and machinery hire are costly. For this thanks are due to members' subs and extra donations. But a special thanks is due to Bucks County Council and ASDA STORES whose financial support paid for the major part.

1988 RESTORATION & CONSERVATION WORKS (PROPOSED)

ONE OF WYCOMBE COUNCIL'S ACTIVITIES to Promote the "European Year of the Environment" is a scheme to encourage local environmental improvements within the 125 square miles of Wycombe District.

Our members had previously drawn attention to the run down and derelict appearance of Booker Common around its northern entrances at Highwood Avenue and Arundel Road.

They requested that the ground be cleared, except for the sound trees, and the area replanted with indigenous trees and woodland wildflowers. (In fact a similar restoration programme as the one successfully completed at the eastern entrance at Squirrel Lane.)

After securing Sir Francis Dashwood's permission, the Society submitted a detailed plan and estimate to Wycombe Council. They have granted the Society up to £2000 from their European Environmental Fund. (Among the conditions are; that the money will be used only for this specific conservation project; and, financial assistance paid only on production of receipted invoices.)

1988 RESTORATION & CONSERVATION (CONTD.)

THE DEFINED RESTORATION AREA is the triangle of land between Highwood Avenue Car Park and Arundel Road entrances, and southward to the junction of Bridleway 102 and Footpath 98A. (As SHADED AREA IN SKETCH BELOW)

It is proposed to include all the area from the edge of the Highwood Avenue Car Park (shortly to be constructed by the Council) up to the bollards at the edge of the woodland. Then southwards from the western edge of Bridleway 102 and a few yards across Footpath 98A.

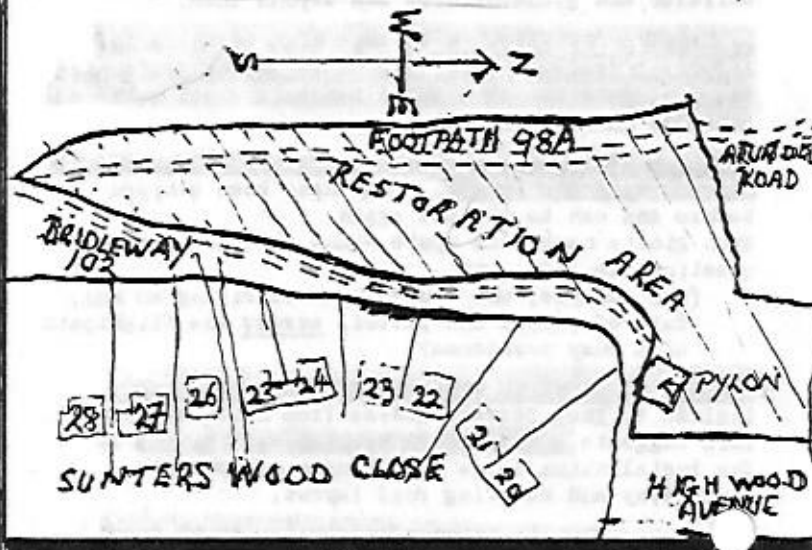
Prior to the SOCIETY'S INSTALLATION OF PROTECTIVE BOLLARDS in 1984 this area was used as a rubble tip. This resulted in swamping the natural ground flora, and stunted and diseased trees.

Before any replanting is practicable it will be necessary to scrape off the rubbish and burn the scrub and diseased trees. Initially this will result in a brown ploughed field appearance.

However we propose planting out woodland wildflower seed and different varieties of grasses, immediately after the clearance operation in Feb/March 1988. This should ensure a green carpet for the summer months.

In National Tree Week in November 1988 we shall plant out some 370 indigenous trees.

REPRESENTATIONS: If any have constructive suggestions -or objections- please write by 17 January 1988 to: This Society, c/o Orchard House, 6 Barbers Wood Close, Booker, HP12 4EW.



WYCOMBE AIR PARK

MEMBERS ALREADY KNOW that for the past year the Society has campaigned for an 'Inquiry' for the purpose of applying sensible restrictions on flying activity. This is necessary because of the very substantial increase in flying activity in recent years. It had become both an environmental intrusion and a public danger. During the year there has been much correspondence and consultation.

On 2 June 1987 Wycombe Council formally recorded that they were investigating with a view to bringing about a solution. But it is a very complex problem which will take time to solve.

LATEST POSITION is that Wycombe Council are taking 'Counsel's legal Opinion' on two aspects:- (If favourable they could lead to greater control over flying activity)

- Interpretations of the Leases, grants of Planning permission, and landlord's consent.
- 'Specification' of Booker Airpark under section 60 of the Civil Aviation Act 1982.

PRESSURE on space does not permit a full report of all activity. Subsequent Newsletters will contain more detail. But these can only be delivered to members (paid-up) because of the high cost of printing.