



## Newsletter – October / November 2003

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### Slate Quay, Caernarfon

In May we were contacted by locals concerned at proposals for the demolition of a group of quayside buildings, on the harbour beside Caernarfon Castle, and their replacement with a car park. Regine was promptly dispatched from the SAVE office to investigate.

The buildings form an attractive group of industrial buildings, and are located within a conservation area, as well as being right next to a World Heritage Site, and next to the Grade II\* listed Harbour Offices. They are surviving examples of the growth of the town in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and of the then thriving slate industry. Their charm lies in the way they form a part of the townscape, providing a visual link between the more formal Georgian and Victorian houses of the town and the harbour.



*Caernarfon's Harbour Trust is seeking to demolish this entire group of buildings, industrial and residential*

The owners of the site are the Harbour Trust, an old and venerable body, are now closely linked with the local authority, and their keenness to demolish rather reminded us of the local authority's predecessor's zeal to demolish 6 Palace Street (which we then took on and repaired). Our response, working with local campaigners, the Georgian Group, the Council for British Archaeology, Cadw, the Victorian Society and

the International Commission on Monuments and Sites UK (ICOMOS UK), was as robust as might be expected. SAVE then asked architect Morris Higham to draw up outline proposals for the site, showing how the buildings could be converted to a series of residential units around courtyards, along with cycle repair shop and café. (Mr. Higham is currently working on the repair of one of SAVE's long term buildings at risk, Allt-y-Bela, a mediaeval house in Monmouthshire).

With this level of pressure one would hope that the local authority would not give their approval for the plans, and indeed they did not. The next challenge is to encourage the Harbour Trust to reuse the buildings in an appropriate manner, and to that end Regeneration Through Heritage have offered their expertise, and SAVE's Welsh preservation trust, the Ymddiriedolaeth Treftadaeth Caernarfon (YTC) is waiting in the wings (although attempts to find local trustees to take it on have not to this date been successful). There is also the possibility that the Harbour Trust will appeal against the decision and demand a public inquiry. This case will be keeping us busy for a while yet.

### Smithfield

Smithfield Market is under mounting threat. The future of the meat market rests, Kafka-esquely, in the hands of the Potatoes and Horticulture Division of the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The threat follows the study of London's market provision by Mr. Nicholas Saphir for Defra and the Corporation of London which concluded that the meat market should be moved from Smithfield and relocated. Though this may not happen for ten years it calls into question the whole £85m investment by the City Corp in modernising the market to meet EU standards

At the same time a direct threat of demolition and redevelopment hangs over the empty general market (also by Horace Jones) as the Corporation of London seeks to maximise its income from the site through the creation of yet more office space. We are expecting to hear the announcement of plans for their demolition and replacement with a giant office block at any moment. Rest assured, our reaction will be swift and strong – more on this part of the market in March.

SAVE's objections to the closure of the meat market are based on several misconceptions in the report, such as the supposed impact of the market on traffic (minimal – it operates at night), and the claim that there is no room for expansion (although the threatened general market buildings remain empty and in need of a use). Of course our main concern is for the historic buildings.

At the same time, alternative plans to the Crossrail project were put forward by an independent consortium, which would raise the necessary funds through building large offices above the proposed stations, one of which would of course be under Smithfield.....

## **Government consultations**

There have been a vast number of government consultations over the last six months, which we simply have to respond to in order to ensure that the arguments are heard loud and clear. While at times it feels as if we are being distracted from saving buildings in doing this, the value of the exercise remains in the influence we can have over policy which affects these buildings. A pre-emptive strike, if you like.

## **Runaway Runways**

The consultation to build runways over mediaeval villages and historic buildings across the UK was greeted by SAVE with a stiff response, as indeed it was by all other bodies involved in conserving the historic environment. Our objections are based on the unprecedented damage the proposals would inflict on the Nation's precious historic environment, from the wholesale destruction of historic villages, to the demolition of thousand year old monuments, to the terminal blight inflicted on historic buildings near the areas earmarked for expansion. Indeed, by putting forward such wide open proposals, the blight has already begun.

The 'predict and provide' policy proposed by ministers is misguided and inappropriate. The phenomenal growth in air transport over the last 30 years cannot be seen as a model for the future growth of a mature market. Who would have predicted recent changes, with the introduction of low cost airlines, moving the focus from long haul to short haul, using smaller aircraft capable of using a wider range of existing airports?

We see it as a waste of public money to enlarge airport capacity on the basis of Soviet style planning and forecasts – the market is better able to meet demand using existing facilities and other airports, thus spreading the economic benefits and reducing the need to travel to major nodes such as Heathrow. It is simply wrong that very well established communities should be bulldozed out of existence on the basis of forecasts that are possibly inaccurate and demand that could very probably be met elsewhere, particularly when the EU policy of liberalising the skies opens up more direct routes to cities outside the London area.

The consultation falls short in many areas in terms of the effects of airport expansion on the historic

environment, most notably in that in many cases the Department for Transport simply has not done an audit of the damage the airports expansion will cause to listed buildings, ancient monuments, conservation areas and archaeological remains. It would be entirely wrong to even consider advancing beyond the scoping stage of any project, let alone one of the scale of those included in the consultation, without having a good indication of what the scheme will involve in terms of destruction of the historic environment. For example, in the South-West no assessment of damage to elements of the historic environment through the expansion of airports is mentioned, despite being a material consideration in the planning process.

In those places where an initial assessment has been done, such as at Gatwick, Stansted and Heathrow, the outcome for the historic environment would be dreadful, and the proposals for a new airport in the Midlands are equally appalling. In Wales, no attention seems to have been paid to historic buildings, and a fundamental misunderstanding of the basic philosophy of conservation, seeking to move elements of the historic built environment elsewhere, is presented throughout the document as a realistic option. This is a nonsense. Clearly there has been a failure to co-ordinate properly with the Department for Culture Media and Sport and its advisors on the historic environment, English Heritage.

The expansion of airports will have much wider effects on the historic environment than those identified in the consultation documents. Flight paths will inevitably render some historic buildings on the approaches to the new airfields unusable and so economically unviable, leading to their neglect and gradual decline. The development of former airbases must be looked at in the context of the thematic study of airfields carried out by English Heritage on behalf of the DCMS – many of these have important historic structures and layouts. For example the proposals to turn Alconbury into a major freight destination could have a very significant and detrimental impact on one of the finest WWII satellite bomber stations and collections of Cold War bunkers in the UK. These should be retained and if at all possible reused, yet this aspect of history is not considered in the consultation documents.

The problems of airport expansion are already evident in the attempts to extend Southend Airport, which involve a proposal to move a fine Norman Church. This proposal is utterly impractical and in conservation terms philosophically invalid. The creation of a second runway at Manchester involved the unacceptable demolition of a small number of perfectly sound historic buildings – yet law and guidance only allow the demolition of listed buildings in truly exceptional cases, and almost never when a historic building is in good condition.

## **‘Protecting our historic environment: making the system work better’**

This summer, Government announced its intention to review the designations system with the aim of bringing it into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The current system is the result of a series of patiently negotiated Acts of Parliament, and any change to it therefore deserves the strongest possible scrutiny. The resulting paper was full of suggestions but appeared rather short on purpose and vision.

The main proposal is for one form of designation from which a series of different management systems will flow. Put simply, it is the current system, but with scheduling, listing, conservation areas, battlefields, registered parks and gardens etc all given the same name. This is meant to result in a clearer, more flexible system. It seems to SAVE that this would actually result in more confusion.

There are proposals to open up the listing system and put it in the hands of English Heritage, to which we are not opposed. However, any such reform must be subject to a series of check and balances – for example, certificates of immunity must be opened up to public scrutiny, buildings must be given protection from the moment they are put forward for listing, and listing must be overseen by a panel of experts to ensure that the process is not subject to inappropriate external interference. Above all, the duty to list buildings that meet the criteria must remain.

While there is a welcome proposal to open out the criteria for listing (perhaps giving recognition to locally valued buildings), there is also a proposal to introduce criteria based on condition and future uses. This would unnecessarily prejudice the future of many fine buildings where a solution could be found given time. Similarly obnoxious is the proposal to move a number of Grade II listed buildings on to local lists. Both of these smack of an attempt to limit the number of buildings on the national list. Damning our heritage because government is not able to properly manage the lists is not acceptable.

Noticeably absent from the consultation is any recognition of the importance of Conservation Areas, not only at a national level (and of course to those who live in them), but also in terms of the role they play in regeneration and tourism. Much like Grade II listed buildings, conservation areas are nationally important through their diversity.

There is a proposal to put together a statement of significance for every listed building, stating what is important about it. This would then be used when making any judgement about what can and cannot be done to a building. On the surface, this might seem sensible, but the way we value and understand historic buildings is constantly changing and

advancing – such statements would only be snapshots in time. They would require access to every building, and its thorough investigation. While it would be helpful to give owners a clear idea as to why their building is considered important (which many of the older lists do not do), the implications of the proposal are potentially massive. Rather than papering over the cracks in the lists (many of which are up to 30 years out of date), a thorough review of the lists would be more appropriate.

The review has the feel of having been rushed out by ministers keen to be seen to be doing something. Change for change’s sake is not the way forward – a full, properly considered review, which presented a series of options, looked at the resource implications of these and then considered what might happen if these resources were instead spent on the current system (or heaven forbid, repairing historic buildings) would have been rather more helpful. Instead we have a series of ideas, all of which need very careful consideration in terms of their consequences for protecting the heritage and also in terms of resources.

No matter how many times the document is read, the impression sadly remains that it is not so much about protecting the heritage as it is about balancing the needs of developers with that of the heritage, the fragility and vulnerability of which are not properly noted. If anyone would like a copy of our full response, please contact the office.

**Other government consultations** over the last six months which affect historic buildings include one on uniting consent regimes, the review of PPG15, two reviews concerning heritage in Wales, one on satellite dishes, one on the future of the National Heritage Memorial Fund and one on the future of Historic Scotland. Our presence in Scotland has not recently been as great as we would like it to be, but never the less we were still able to put in a strong response. Early fears that the result would be a bloodbath, as happened in the Republic of Ireland (its heritage quango, Duchas, was recently abolished), seem to have been allayed. The questions really related to the how Historic Scotland might function best. We stressed the importance of the role played by Historic Scotland, as well as its potential, and drew the attention of the Scottish Executive the experience of English Heritage as a body partially independent from Government.

## **Northern Ireland Planning Commission**

Not to be outdone by Government, the National Trust launched its own consultation on the planning system in Northern Ireland. This consultation, in the form of a planning commission, is to be welcome, but that it is the NT that has to take the initiative says much about the situation. We have given the Commission a full account of our activities in Northern Ireland over the

last couple of years, and look forward to learning of the Commission's conclusions.

In the meantime we continue to push for improvements to the planning system in Northern Ireland and its enforcement, and to some extent it would seem that our efforts are bearing fruit. An amendment to the Planning Orders went through Parliament before the summer recess, continuing the good work of the Northern Ireland Assembly. However, prior to the suspension of the NI Assembly, the Order had been subject to intense scrutiny by the ever-vigilant Environment Committee under the chairmanship of the Hon Rev William McCrea. Instead, it was hurried through the House of Lords, although not before one or two good Lords asked some awkward questions. The result of this is that the Minister is now talking of a second series of amendments – the effect of a restored (in the political sense of the word) Northern Ireland Assembly on this could only be positive

The amendments now give Northern Ireland a system that is rather more enforceable than before, including the power to spot list a building. A result of this has been the first ever compulsory purchase of a threatened listed building, the stables at Sion House, Sion Mills, County Tyrone. The Environment and Heritage Service is to be congratulated for this but must not sit on its laurels – it has been nearly a year since the illegal demolition of the Grade B+ listed Tillie and Henderson Shirt Factory in Derry and no action has been taken. Let us hope that this new found confidence can be carried forward to tackle other problems.

## **Berwick upon Tweed**

Berwick in June is simply gorgeous and so a public inquiry against McCarthy and Stone provided the Secretary with a good excuse for a trip to the sea-side. To briefly recap, McCarthy and Stone, suppliers of expensive sheltered housing to the elderly, and currently third largest housebuilder in the UK, had chosen a rather inappropriate location in Berwick to set up shop with a 40 flat development – in the garden of the Grade II\* listed Governor's House, also in the conservation area and next to the Grade I listed ramparts (which, for good measure, are also Scheduled Ancient monuments). Given this, their confidence seemed perhaps a little misplaced, although they were keen to stress that their public inquiry team had won seven out of their last eight inquiries.

The key points of investigation for the inquiry were the impact of the proposals on the townscape, on views of the historic town, ramparts and Governor's house, and on the setting of the Governor's house.

The presentation of evidence was a lively affair, with the Inspector having to remind those observing the Inquiry that 'this is not the Jerry Springer show' following spontaneous applause and cheering for evidence given against the proposals. He concluded that the overall bulk of the building would be greater than that of the Governor's House, that this bulk would be readily apparent and that the building would dominate this part of the town. He felt that no attention had been paid to how the building would relate to the Governor's house, and that it would harm the setting of both the Governor's House and the listed ramparts. He pointed out that the building would have wider effects on the setting of nearby Grade II listed buildings, as well as on the conservation area. The Inspector also made the important point that the fact that the developer had been involved in pre-application discussions with various interested parties cannot guarantee the production of a satisfactory scheme or the grant of planning permission.

In summing up, the QC for McCarthy and Stone was splendidly rude about SAVE and the Georgian Group, saying that we were 'insignificant, really'. Naturally his written version did not contain these words.

It is therefore with not inconsiderable satisfaction that we are able to report that McCarthy and Stone lost the appeal, with the Inspector concluding that *'the proposals would cause serious harm to the setting of the nearby listed buildings, the ancient monument, and to the character of the Berwick-upon-Tweed conservation area.'*

When asked about the possibility of reducing the size of the scheme, McCarthy and Stone went to great lengths to explain that the current size was necessary in order to make their development viable. On these grounds, we would be rather surprised to see further proposals from them for the site. What is needed is a scheme that takes into account the future of the main building on the site, not one that ignores it.

## **SAVE Europe's Heritage: Stop the Valdastico Sud**

As reported in the last newsletter, Save Europe's Heritage was busy investigating the impact of the proposed Valdastico Sud, a new motorway which would plough through the historic landscape of the Veneto in Italy, and the impact of the accompanying industrial development. The results of this have been published in the Save Europe's Heritage report 'Unforgivable Assault on a World Heritage site', which is available from Save Europe's Heritage at 70 Cowcross Street, London EC1M 6EJ for £5

The report received wide press coverage across Europe in a variety of publications, not least in Italy, where the reaction was (as might be expected) particularly strong. The result of re-igniting the debate about the road has been a legal challenge by the coalition of groups massed against the road. This may take some years to come to fruition, although if work is started on the road, the process can be expedited to take place within a few days. The challenge has been very thoroughly prepared and hopes are high.

### **Haltwhistle Church Hall, Northumberland**

'Regeneration' comes in many guises, but occasionally it seems that those who jump on the bandwagon miss out on some of the basic points, most frequently that historic buildings have a role to play. The Haltwhistle Partnership wished to help regenerate this splendid little market town, with its bastles and stronghouses, its rich railway heritage and Holy Cross, a superbly complete early English parish church. It also has a church hall, which the Church kindly offered to the Haltwhistle Partnership for a community centre. The church hall is a restrained, yet sensitive Edwardian building, constructed using local materials, and forms an important part of the street scene. The centre of the town in which it sits is a conservation area and the authors of the Northumberland edition of Pevsner remark that *'there is no individual building of wrong scale or manner'*.

Consequently the Partnership decided that the best way forward was to knock the Church Hall down and build a brand-spanking new community centre in its place, claiming that the current building could not be adapted to the needs of the community centre. Despite being a key building in the conservation area, it would seem that the borough council was prepared to let the building go, but for a vociferous local campaign. In essence it was felt that the Partnership had not looked hard enough at how the building could be adapted to the needs of a community centre, and how its expectations might also be adapted to the building. Offers of help from SAVE to help find the

expertise necessary to convert the building and put in place a long term plan fell on hard ground and letters went unanswered, but finally the Partnership had the good sense to withdraw the application.



### **Toddington Manor, Gloucestershire**

Toddington Manor is a wonderful confection, the result of an original mind and possibly the best work by a 'gentleman architect' in the form of Charles Hanbury Tracey. The building was started in 1819 and finished 16 years later, costing over £150,000. It was worth every penny. The Manor is in essence three squares, corner to corner in a line, with the smaller one in the middle containing the service wing, the outer ones comprising the stable block and the



Picture courtesy of Adam Murray Stanford

main house.

The skyline is animated with pinnacles and towers, yet there is no sign of the roof. As you move around the building, the effect is of a constantly changing skyline in a wonderful golden stone from further up the Cotswold escarpment at Stanway. It is gothic that a mediaeval master mason would be proud of. The stables are important as they contain an early, and very large, example of an indoor ride – the only other ones of similar size at that date were military. The Manor is unsurprisingly listed Grade I, its gardens and parkland are on the register of parks and gardens, and it sits in a site of special scientific interest, as well as an area of outstanding natural beauty.

Like many other country houses at risk it had been in institutional use, but the lack of maintenance that followed has not resulted in the level of destruction that usually accompanies this, principally because the main construction material is stone. The interiors of the principal rooms remain intact. Having been on the market (although not recently, when country houses with a sensible amount of land have been snapped up into single private ownership with astonishing frequency) it was finally purchased by Warner Hotels, which put in an application to convert the building to hotel, and build large accommodation blocks in the grounds along with associated car parking. The conversion would involve a degree of intervention in the fabric which is unacceptable, and would see the stable court yard roofed over and converted into a ballroom, the remaining stables within the block cleared, while the ride would have no use. Major details, such as the plate safes, would be lost; a fire escape inserted into one of the corner towers, and a bar into one of the reception rooms.

This application was quite extraordinary, including 16 pages of information on the likely impact on the local bat population and only a couple on the significance of the cultural heritage of the site and the impact of the proposals on this. On the grounds that there is a serious lack of justification for the proposals the application should be refused, let alone the enormous damage that the proposals would do to the house, stables, ancillary accommodation, grounds, setting and so-on. Furthermore, the applicants did not claim the development would be enabling development, presumably because it fails to meet the technical definition laid down by English Heritage.

Needless to say, the application attracted strong opposition from ourselves and the Georgian Group and we await the outcome with interest.

### **St. Joseph's, Christchurch, Dorset**

The Roman Catholic diocese of Portsmouth seems to be going to extraordinary lengths to demolish the former St. Joseph's Church and presbytery in the Purewell conservation area of Christchurch in order to

make way for a car park to serve the community centre it proposes to construct behind it.

The presbytery is a handsome three bay late Georgian style town house of the sort which would have no difficulty in finding a new owner, while the church is a confident and proud statement of faith, with its liturgical west end facing north on to the main road, allowing the architect to make full use of the opportunity this offers.

Naturally SAVE put in a strong objection to the initial plans, but we were surprised and disappointed to learn of a second application to demolish. We were notified of this by the Church's agents, who requested to know why we felt the church was worthy of preservation, pointing out that we surely have bigger projects which require our more urgent attention. Kind of them as it was to tell us what to do, they had clearly failed to notice that the demolition of groups of important buildings in conservation areas does constitute a serious threat to the historic environment.

Their justification for demolishing the buildings is on the grounds that they are beyond repair. The report on the building provided by the Diocesan Historic Churches Committee is careful not to make statements of fact.

The Church's own internal system states that the Bishop may allow a church to be used for secular purposes if agreed by the Council of Priests and the Historic Churches Committee, (Canon #1222 and paragraph 47 of the Directory on the Ecclesiastical Exemption from Listed building control). The advice of these bodies is to demolish the building, and so the Bishop is prepared to grant a decree to demolish, but not to offer it for sale on the open market or for some alternative use (as secular guidance demands). This in itself is not a reason to demolish – indeed the internal decision making processes of any organisation, church, state or private enterprise should have no bearing on the outcome of the planning system.



*The former church and presbytery of St. Joseph's, Christchurch, threatened with carparkification.*

## Cheadle Literary Institute, Cheadle Green, Cheshire

This delightful piece of public spirited munificence faces sale by the local authority and redevelopment. The building dates from 1887, and is important not only for its architectural presence and social importance, but also because it was designed by a woman. We can think of only one of other building of the era in England designed by a woman - in the Lake District. Suggestions of any others of that date on a postcard to the SAVE office!

The Institute has its roots in the project to provide Cheadle Village with a reading room and library, initially in the 1850s in rather less substantial buildings, with the laudable aim of 'promoting the moral and intellectual of the members by providing a reading room, the library and lectures, and by providing harmless and healthy recreation': precisely what some might still prescribe to large parts of the country. This was of course well in advance of the 1870 Education Act.

First steps were taken to construct the new building, funded with donations from leading individuals in the village and wider area. Among these were Dr. and Mrs. Bangay - while Dr. Bangay was the leading force behind the Institute, Mrs. Bangay was responsible for the design of the building.



The institute's first chair was Daniel Adamson, the industrialist famous for having called the meeting to form the Manchester Ship Canal in June 1882. In the 1930s the building was handed to the District Council in the belief this would secure its future.

We have written asking for the building's spot listing, but the achilles heel of so many requests to spot list is holding the application up - photographs of the interior are required. When a building is as obviously deserving of protection as this, there is surely a case for expediting the process.

## Northwick Cinema, Worcester



The Northwick is another of the many inter-war cinemas that have been mortally wounded by the rise of video and usurping multiplex complexes. Built in 1938, the exteriors and interiors of the Northwick, as with other Art Deco cinemas provided the perfect back-drop to Hollywood glamour. It is rightly listed Grade II.

Entering the Northwick is to be transported back to this golden age of cinema decoration. On the walls there are huge mythical figures, horses and chariots, all made of plaster. Mouldings surround the proscenium arch, and contemporary details, such as light fittings and ashtrays, still survive. The original perspective drawings for the interior from the architect, John Alexander, are still held by the Royal Institute of British Architects.

Unfortunately the original colour scheme was painted over when the cinema was taken over by Mecca (perhaps the lavish decoration distracted the bingo players) but it still exists under a layer of paint and English Heritage has provided technical advice to help the well intentioned current owner recreate it. The side walls were originally covered in stencilled designs which have now been reinstated by the owner, as have carpets based on the original 1930s designs.

In 1987 the cinema was threatened with demolition after its stint as a bingo hall, but this was refused by the city council and in 1991 the building was sold and extensions were added to provide changing rooms, offices and a basement dance floor and sitting area. From 1991 to 1996 the Northwick functioned as a music and concert hall.

The building is on the market once more. Enter the Mayor of Worcester, Gareth Jones, who announced to the local press that the building was a dreadful blight, should be knocked down and replaced with a nice new block of flats. In spite of protests by ourselves and the Twentieth Century Society to these comments, the Mayor remained unrepentant, thriving on the cheap publicity. This obviously puts his

officers in a rather difficult position, as they are trying to work towards a solution for the building. Heavens only knows how many hours of patient negotiation towards a solution for the building have been lost through this outburst.

## **National Maintenance Week**

The second annual National Maintenance Week runs from 21<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> November with the conference 'Maintenance: Making it Happen' at Hardwick Hall on 21<sup>st</sup> November. This sees the coming together of the National Trust, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, the Heritage Lottery Fund, Maintain our Heritage and English Heritage. For those of you wishing to roll up your sleeves and get involved, national gutters day is on the 28<sup>th</sup>....

## **The Future of Friends of SAVE**

We are looking for people interested in joining a group to help develop activities for the Friends of SAVE. At this early stage the duties would not be too onerous. Meetings would be held in Central London, possibly four times per year. If you would like to be a part of this, please contact Adam Wilkinson at the SAVE office on 020 7253 3500.

### **Give a chum membership of the Friends of SAVE for Christmas**

In the event that you are stuck for presents to give your friends and relatives, and they have an interest in historic buildings, why not introduce them to the delights of SAVE and sign them up to the Friends for a year? Every penny we receive counts: please spread the word.

## **UPDATES:**

### **Pendle victory**

An important victory for the heritage sector, in Pendle, Lancashire. As previously reported, policies aimed at boosting house prices in the North-west were to result in the mass clearance of Victorian back to back housing, which formed the heart of a vibrant community. Following a long public inquiry, the Government took the view that the destruction of these buildings and their community was not the best way to proceed. Indeed, one keeps on hearing the words 'Pathfinder' and 'Heritage' mentioned in the same sentence. Refreshing stuff.

### **Alternative plans for St. Mildred's Tannery, Canterbury**

Following our threat of legal action over the lax development brief prepared for this important town centre site, we attended a late night planning

committee meeting, where we were successful in our successful opposition to plans to demolish nearly all of the historic structures on the site. Thanks are due to SAVE Friend Anne Graham for her enormous hospitality following the meeting. Although the council's decision was a good start we felt that a firm demonstration of what could be done was needed and so we have drawn up our own plans for the site that would see the retention of nearly all the historic buildings as a part of a mixed use scheme.

The initiative has been welcomed by the City Council, and developer, Bellway Homes, was also interested to look at our ideas. We will also search for an alternative developer for the site if Bellway fails to come up with anything better than before, although early signs are encouraging – at a recent public meeting their rough new designs were aired for comment, and it appears that much of the criticism has been taken on board, although there is still a way to go in terms of building retention and reuse. See Page 11 for an image of our conversion scheme

## **Cromer, Norfolk**

The Cromer Preservation Society's war of attrition against the spread of U-PVC windows in its main conservation area is making good progress, with owners being requested to make retrospective applications for conservation area consent for the replacement of their windows with U-PVC, and many not being granted consent. To bring the local authority to this position has taken over a year of persuasion, at times none too subtle. Much to its credit, however, it has listened to the arguments put forward and has proved willing to take action. The potential of local amenity societies, when given the backing and encouragement at a national level, is huge. Local authorities, and of course, English Heritage, should take note of this potential, not only in the realm of window replacement (which is a persistent and sensitive issue which many of them have failed to make an impression on) but also in other areas of the historic environment

Hurrah to **Rushmoor Borough Council** who have so frequently been at the end of the rod with which we beat lax local authorities (RAE Farnborough is on their patch) for having declared parts of Aldershot a conservation area, reflecting the military heritage of the town, including additions of the post war period.

## **Vauxhall Bridge Road, London**

Following a failed attempt to delist this terrace of 10 1820s buildings in Pimlico, owners Westminster City Council took the bold step of putting the buildings on the market. While it would appear that they are finally taking a sensible attitude to this site, there is as ever a sting in the tail, as they are promoting two schemes for the site; the first quite properly for the restoration



of the buildings, the second for the clearance of the site. This must prejudice any decision their planning committees take in the future. The hypocrisy continues.

## Minerva Tower

Proposals for the City of London's largest single tower block could be scuppered by local residents having their say over the effects of the tower on their daylight. The Corporation of London has commissioned a study on this. This application continues to court controversy, and we will watch its progress with interest.

## RAILWAYS

### Paddington Station

Following Westminster City Council's decision to allow the demolition of Span 4 of Paddington station (pending permission from English Heritage), we have been pushing wherever possible for its preservation. English Heritage have asked for Network Rail to better explain the benefits of the redevelopment of the station (other than the increase in office space this will grant them). One of the key arguments for demolition relates to the need for greater capacity at the station. A spot of research by SAVE scotched the idea that capacity increases could not be wrought from the existing infrastructure: with the station under the control of one train operating company (as is widely expected to be the case), increases of a similar or greater level to those that would result from redevelopment will occur, as a result of better platform management and increased line speeds.

We await the decision of English Heritage with great interest, but still regret that our colleagues in the Victorian Society and Twentieth Century Society did not feel able to support retention of the structure. There is, however, a wide coalition of interests keen on the retention of the structure, from railway enthusiasts through to engineers who recognise its intrinsic merits. The latest addition to this merry band is ICOMOS, the President of which recently wrote in a letter to the Chairman of English Heritage *'Although [Span 4] is a later addition of 1916 to Brunel's original three spans, it was carefully designed to compliment the original station and must therefore be seen as an indispensable element of the entire complex. In view of the fact that Paddington Station forms a part of the proposed Great Western Railway World Heritage Site, the demolition of such an integral element of the station reflecting the rapid development of railways in Britain is really not acceptable and could threaten the inscription of this site on the World Heritage List'*. Simple, but true.



Span 4 of Paddington Station before the unsightly crash deck was erected.

### Pevsner

A huge thank you to all of those who kindly bought us new editions of Pevsner – we are now all up to date. In the meantime, our venerable fax machine, latterly held together with sticky-tape and rubber bands, has all but given up the ghost (and the main office laser printer is also less than happy). Any functioning cast-offs or back-of-lorry donations would be welcomed.

### The Prosser Shed, Hexham Station, Northumberland

Hexham station, although not immediately familiar to the average chap in the street, seems to create excitement amongst railway enthusiasts, and rightly so. Dating from 1835, it is part of a group of building including a 19<sup>th</sup> Century gantry signal box, a double-decker stables, and until recently, a set of coal drops (demolished to make way for a bus pick up and set down).

The goodshed, by Thomas Prosser (probably more famous for York Station, which is incomprehensibly listed at Grade II\*, not Grade I) is currently unlisted, and although it forms an important part of the group of railway buildings, is in a conservation area and has a viable use, is up for demolition to make way for a Safeway supermarket. This is odd, given the fact that this is an important building in the conservation area and that Safeway make great play of their environmental credentials. A spot listing request for the building was turned down. It would appear however that not enough information was provided by the local civic society, and so a more detail application has gone forward, outlining the rarity of sheds by Prosser (most having been destroyed).

Tyndale District Council needs to grasp the importance of its rich and still largely intact heritage, and take advantage of it, not let it pass into oblivion. Located at one end of the Hadrian's Wall tourist route, it has all to play for.

### **Bishopsgate Goodsyard, London**

All attempts to prevent the demolition of the goodsyard have failed, and demolition is well underway, with no uses or funding for the site planned. While the listed Braithwaite viaduct will remain, no one thought to account for the reuse of any of the materials on the site, and so millions bricks have been pulverised as the time it would take to recycle them was not included in the demolition contract. It really could not get much worse than this.....

### **Brynmawr rubber factory**

Or maybe it could: an old case, which we thought was, quite literally, dead and buried. Not quite, it seems. Having been paid millions of pounds of public of money by the Welsh Assembly to destroy the complex to make way for a retail outlet ('essential for regeneration' was the claim) nothing has happened on the site since demolition. Outrageous.

*Below: An impression of how the Southern part of SAVE's scheme for St. Mildred's tannery, Canterbury might appear. The scheme aims, naturally, to retain as many historic buildings as possible to form a mixed use scheme. Image courtesy of Ptolemy Dean.*

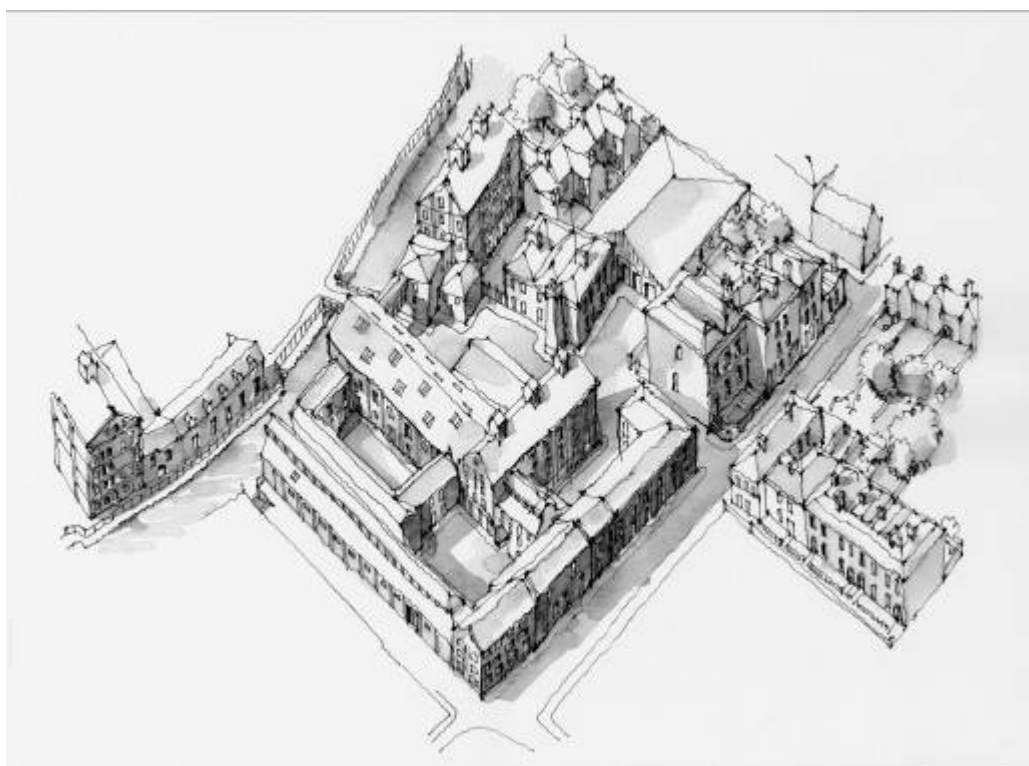
### **Buildings at risk**

Firstly, a change in personnel. After nearly two years of hard work on the buildings at risk project, Regine Jaszinski has decided to move on to Nottingham County Council where we expect she will be whipping the conservation team into good shape. We are immensely grateful for her hard work and diligent approach to the project which has seen a thorough review of the buildings at risk databases. We welcome in her place Alice Hickman. Alice joins SAVE from the Courtauld Institute and a brief spell at the Georgian Group. She and volunteer Kate Russell are now updating all the Buildings at Risk on the register and looking for new ones region by region, working with County Councils and Local Authorities as well as Building Preservation Trusts. They are being assisted in this by Anne Bantelmann, who has joined us as an intern, and will also be working on other projects, helping Adam and Alice.

If you know of a building at risk, please let Alice know via the SAVE email, [save@btinternet.com](mailto:save@btinternet.com) - in the first instance we need a photo and some history of the building. Although we focus on Grade II listed buildings, grade I, II\* and unlisted buildings of historic interest or architectural merit are welcome too.

We also run a 'Building of the Month' slot on the website, which is a perfect place to highlight the plight of a building recently come on the market or at imminent threat of demolition, or whose future is otherwise in the balance. The immediacy of this slot means we often rely on tip-offs, so do let us know.

We are immensely grateful to both the Mercers Company and the Leche Trust, which are supporting the Buildings at Risk project.



## How you can help

As Friends are no doubt aware, SAVE's finances are permanently tight, and so all donations are really rather welcome. Successive Secretaries of SAVE have struggled with the dilemma – concentrate on fundraising and lose sight of the buildings or vice versa? The answer, as you might expect is usually the latter. Here are some suggestions on how you might give more efficiently.

- **Set up a Standing order with your bank**

Rather than us having to stuff about 80 envelopes every month and post them out to Friends reminding them to send off their annual subscriptions, an annual (or even monthly) standing order to pay your sub directly from your bank to ours would save us half a day's work per month and quite a lot on postage too. You just have to instruct your bank to make the payment to the following bank:

Branch:	Lloyds TSB Chelsea	Sort Code:	30 91 86
Account Name:	SAVE Britain's Heritage	Account No:	0630114

- **Give as you earn**

Payroll giving is a very tax efficient way of donating – the donation is deducted from the payee's gross pay before PAYE so they get immediate tax relief at their highest rate of tax.

In other words, it will only cost someone who pays tax at a basic rate of 22% income tax £7.80 in order for us to receive £10

- **Gifting shares**

This is a spot more complex, but very tax efficient. If a donor who is a 40% taxpayer gives us shares worth £1000, they will get tax relief of £400, meaning that the donation has cost them £600. On top of this the donor is not liable for any capital gains tax even if you have used up your capital gains allowance. The donor signs their shares over to us, and we can either sell them and use the proceeds, or keep them as an investment.

For example, if you give us shares worth £50,000, which you originally purchased for £1500, there is no capital gains liability, and the full amount of £50,000 can be deducted from taxable income.

There are more complex ways of giving shares (well, technically selling shares) that we won't go into here as we're not professional tax consultants.

- **Transfer of Assets**

Likewise, capital assets can be given to SAVE without you incurring any capital gains or inheritance tax liability.

- **Gift aid**

This is the simplest way for donors of ensuring we benefit from your donations by allowing us to claim back the basic rate of tax on any donation, whatever the size, from tax payers. Many Friends have already signed a gift aid form (you only need do it once) – any remaining please contact the office for a copy.

- **Legacies**

If you regard it either as forward thinking or slightly morbid, the fact remains that any sum given to SAVE in a legacy has the advantage of relief from inheritance tax. All you have to do name us in your will and earmark some funds from your estate. As a relatively young organisation, we have yet to benefit from this particular form of donation.

- **Company Giving**

If you are in a position to donate this way, the company can make a donation – one off or spread over time, and claim tax relief when working out the profits for corporation tax.

- **Volunteer**

You can help SAVE by giving us some of your time, from stuffing envelopes to helping organise fund raising events to providing professional advice (which may be seen in itself as in-kind giving and therefore tax deductible – but check first!).

Naturally, the above advice is no substitute for advice from a qualified financial advisor or solicitor, and you may wish to check with one before giving.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Mind Over Matter: A Study of the Country's Threatened Mental Asylums | £12.95 | (£10.36)* |
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\*Prices in brackets only apply to the Friends of SAVE.

Prices include postage & packing within the UK. For a full list of SAVE's publications, please contact the SAVE office or visit our website [www.savebritainsheritage.org](http://www.savebritainsheritage.org)

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