

Hi everyone

Just a few notes about Biggin Hill for the beginning of the new month....

Firstly, the latest "Biggin Hill Bugle", produced by our very own John Bryan for the bar, is available as promised on the internet. It can be viewed as a PDF file and downloaded or printed from <http://www.pilotspals.co.uk>

The airport plans for development can be viewed via the site link which can be found on the home page of <http://www.savebigginhill.co.uk>. The site also lets you express your own views on the development and other Biggin Hill community matters in the guestbook. Please do use it - the airport authority AND the local press DO read the letters there. If no one makes comments, the impression is given that everyone is perfectly happy with everything. (Just please remember that it is a "community site" and not just an "airport site". Some people in the area do believe that the airport should be severely restricted, although the majority of local Biggin Hill residents are largely proud of their airport, and supportive of anything that will secure its future without causing any significant noise or environmental nuisance - ie. not another Heathrow!).

As far as progress on the airport "development" is concerned, we are led to believe that the first works are to commence later in February, resulting in the demolition of some buildings at the main south camp entrance to make way for the Hotel, which is apparently intended to be operated by the Ramada Group.

I understand that an application for the club area build will be submitted to the Council in the next week or so, and it is likely that a further application covering the Private Members Bar and Heritage Centre will follow in a further 2 to 3 weeks.

It is hoped that most existing tenants in the South Camp area will be able to remain in their existing accommodation until the new accommodation is ready for them, which should minimise any inconvenience to those organisations.

It would appear that the airport is now discussing the available options with the club (Joe's) and that their plans do make provision for its continued existence, albeit in a slightly different location alongside the Heritage Centre. Costs and terms are of course a different issue, and undoubtedly these discussions will continue for some time before anything final can be advised. It does therefore appear that it is not all doom and gloom YET! We obviously all would wish to support Joe in his endeavours to secure a club for us for the future. Sometimes I feel we don't always show him the support we should, so do give him some encouragement - pop in whenever you can, even if just for a quick soft drink... It needs your support or it WILL eventually die, and then we will have nowhere left to meet up informally on the airport.

(I am aware that there are one or two on the airfield that believe there should be a "posh" club exclusively for the private owners where they can have their monthly G & T and do their posing! If this select group really believe that is what the majority want, then isn't it time that these people opened such an establishment themselves, rather than try to force their ideas on everyone else?)

The club at Pilots Pals may leave a bit to be desired sometimes, but it is "our" club. It is a place where we all know that we are likely to meet people we know with similar interests. It is somewhere we can take our families without unduly upsetting those who do not have children. It is a place we can turn up in casual attire after a hectic day's flying. It fosters an interest in flying all year round to people who support the airfield but may otherwise not have got involved in flying directly. And finally, for all those old Biggin Hill'ites, it is a place you can simply turn up to and are likely to find at least one of two faces from the past that you knew. Please make sure that club gets your use and support

John Willis
Biggin Hill Users Database