

Hi everyone - time for news from Biggin Hill

Two things of interest today..... One requires very quick action from you if you want to help the airport that has given us all so much pleasure over the years!

Before that - this is a reminder that there is a Memorial Service for the late Peter Elliott, who died suddenly on the 29th October 2004, shortly.

Many of you will remember Peter from his days as one of the instructors at the original Experimental Flying Goup at Biggin, but of course he went right back to the Croydon and Redhill days in the 1950's. Originally an aviation engineer, Peter moved into flying and became an Airline Pilot with BOAC, as it was then, eventually retiring in 1983 from his post as a Senior Training Captain (in fact a Trainer of Training Captains, to be more precise!). After retiring, Peter maintained his very active interest in flying and Biggin Hill, owning a number of aircraft which he flew regularly with his wife Kay from Biggin.

The Memorial Service is to be held in the RAF St George's Chapel at Biggin Hill on Saturday 27th November 2004 at 12:00 midday, and afterwards at the Pilots Pals bar, where there will be refreshments and a bar service, of course. I hope you will be able to join many of Peter's friends and colleagues from his more than 40 years at Biggin Hill, to celebrate his life and achievements. As always, it would be really appreciated if you could drop me a quick email if you intend coming to the service (and who, and how many), just so we can have an advanced idea of numbers we need to cater for, both at the Chapel and in the Bar afterwards....

Now the urgent one!

You may be aware that those wonderful bureaucrats in Bromley Council are at it again! Having slowly permitted house building that encroaches on the airport perimeter for many years, they are now excelling themselves. This time they are planning to build 139 homes on the site immediately opposite the terminal entrance - plus a plan for a Heritage Centre on the adjacent plot. Note the number - 139 - important, because if it was 140 then they would have had to go for a public enquiry! As it is, they have railroaded this through with planning permission - we all know the Heritage Centre will not be built there - so, once this lot is built, they can withdraw the Heritage Centre plans, and build another lot of homes on that bit too!

Devious these elected representatives of ours, aren't they....

The problem with this, although it may not be immediately obvious, is that all the building is gradually circling the airport perimeter. This latest batch is a major set of complaints waiting to happen. As this becomes more of a problem, there will be more and more restrictions placed upon our airport, until (in my opinion, and those of many quite knowledgeable folk) the airport becomes non-viable commercially and is forced to close - just remember West Malling and Brooklands, and many more. This would be the perfect excuse for Bromley, who have to currently keep it as an Airport, to claim it is becoming derelict and unused, and get the restriction lifted...

Then, perfect for sale for building yet more "affordable homes" in their borough, but out of sight up in the remote outpost of Biggin Hill where it doesn't affect them in Bromley itself.

The going rate for such an exercise - around 2 to 3 million pounds an acre - and Biggin Hill is 600 acres!!!!

What can you do to stop this madness?

Well, we have about a week to try to force a public enquiry. We need to bombard the Government Office for London, and the Biggin Hill MP (plus your own if you live outside the area) with letters of complaint BEFORE 19th NOVEMBER. To make it easy for you - go to <http://www.savebigginhill.co.uk> where you can download and print the letters to send.

PLEASE - help us to save our village and our airport from the faceless bureaucrats in Bromley Town Hall, while we still have a chance. This website has been published as a Save the Biggin Hill Village site, rather than an airport support forum, but most of the village actually want the airfield - as they realise it is a better of all the likely options and the one that will, ironically, protect the village more than being anything detrimental for the residents here. We are trying to motivate them to stand up and be counted - please help us as well

Thanks for your help
John Willis
Biggin Hill Airport Users Database