

VILLAGE

EMERGENCY ISSUE

View

JUGGERNAUTS ON WATERMEAD?????

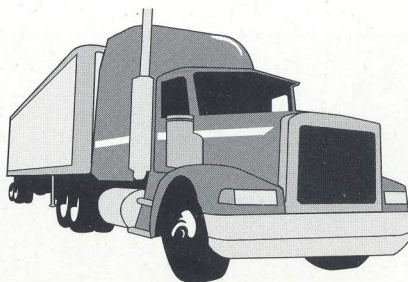
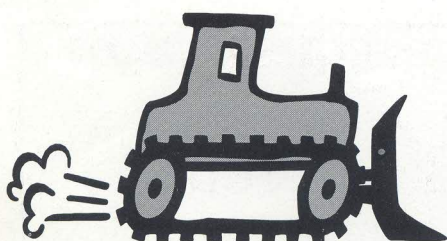
Watermead is in a planning crisis. On 8th May 1997 Aylesbury Vale District Council's Development Control Committee unanimously threw out Watermead Home's application for 72 homes on the remaining 8 acres of Watermead, coupled with a new sports pavilion as part of £125,000 planning gain package for Watermead (which would also have allowed financial support for the children's playground). Watermead's arguments were treated with contempt and the officers' recommendation to refuse, supported by an inaccurate plan, was rubber-stamped.

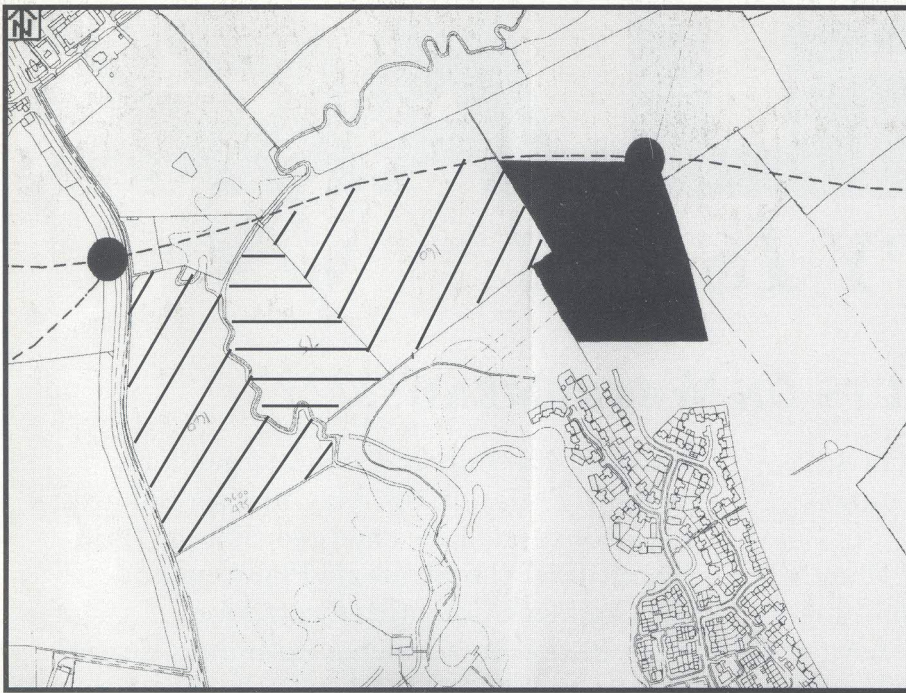
As many of you will know the Board of Lakeside Land supported this scheme not just because of the planning gain (which was substantial and restored the biggest single loss of amenity following the Royco collapse) but more importantly because it blocked off all further development to the north and east. From the time the southern alignment for the Aylesbury By-pass was abandoned the Board has been concerned that the planners might go for a second access through to Watermead from a northern by-pass, coupled with 'in-fill' development out to the By-pass which would see Watermead surrounded by housing. The Board is aware that some councillors have been applying pressure to develop Kestrel Way/Ayleswater as a relief road to the A413 Buckingham Road and A418 through Bierton. The Board's fears have turned out to be fully

justified. Not only did some councillors expressly refer on 8th May to a second access road but it has now emerged that on 19th March 1997 the Strategic Planning and Development Committee voted for consultation on a scheme extending Kestrel Way to a new roundabout on the Northern By-pass, with provision for 140 houses. This would open up land between the extended line of Kestrel Way and the A413 for development (see map).

What is more the Board has now heard from two separate confidential sources that officials of Bucks County Council have had talks with AVDC planners about getting the developer of those houses to contribute towards the by-pass (the first stage of which will be privately funded - the plan being to dual it later, Bucks CC demanding that the land to dual it all the way through be reserved).

As the Board sees it (after taking professional advice) the choice is not between 72 houses and none. It is between 72 and 140, with possibly another 375 on top, with absolutely no planning gain and all the money, which would have been spent on facilities for the community going towards a by-pass. The refusal is to be appealed. The Board is also prepared to support a revised scheme of 60 houses only, again built with housing on the outside so as to block off further development.





AVDC-prepared plan showing proposed site for 140 houses and roundabout north of Watermead. Please note the plan does not show development already approved at Kestrel Way right up to the boundaries of the shaded area and the whole existing length of Kestrel Way is not shown on this plan. A further 375 houses could be built between Kestrel Way and the A413 (the hatched area on the map), more still between Watermead and Bierton by access off the roundabout. The shaded area includes the 8 acres Watermead Homes wished to build on! The 30 year development restriction does not apply to the northern boundary. The restriction is worthless as AVDC can vary it by agreement with the landowner, without effective consultation (hence the Board's emphasis on a physical barrier to further development).

Even the Highway Authority's officials have stopped calling the by-pass a 'distributor road' - the intention seems to be to sign it throughout as the A41 Watford.

WHAT CAN I DO?

You can object to the proposed by-pass and second access road (with 140 houses), and also object to the 850 homes with an industrial area sited opposite Watermead at Weedon Hill (site of the battle of Aylesbury) by going to the AVDC display at the Holiday Inn Watermead on Monday 2nd and 30th June 1997 2pm - 8pm, or by writing to Mr Michael White, Head of Forward Planning, AVDC, Exchange Street, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP20 1UB.

You can also write to the Board expressing support for the application by Watermead Homes - the Board will ensure that all comments are placed before the Inspector at the Planning Inquiry, and are interested to hear from anyone who might want to give evidence.

You can also show support for the Board and the community by attending the public meeting on Thursday 31st July at 8 pm at the Village Hall.

Please copy all responses to a Director or to the Community Forum.

NB: So Far as planning gain is concerned, the Board is aware that many parents would like to see a children's playground and the Board supports this. Please bear in mind however that the Board is advised that it cannot insure a playground, which would have to be run by the local authority. Planning gain is a question of practicability as well as preference. The pavilion would of course be used all year round and have community meeting rooms as well as changing rooms etc - the Board would like to see youth football in the winter and its use most emphatically would not be confined to cricket.

PLEASE MAKE YOUR OBSERVATIONS COURTEOUS AND TO THE POINT.

IT IS VITAL YOU RESPOND. WATERMEAD IS YOUR COMMUNITY, LET THE COMMUNITY SPEAK !!