

# 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.



