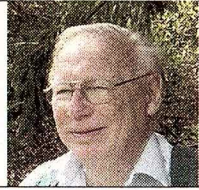


# Horsham Society

with Nigel Friswell



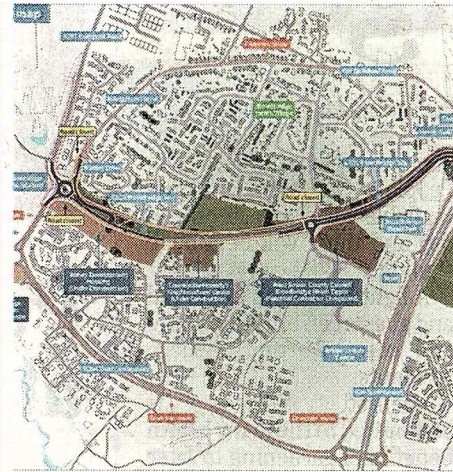
## 'Don't delay, protest today!'

**T**he works to shut off the (old) Broadbridge Heath by-pass have hit the local headlines recently.

But why has it taken so many people by surprise?

The Countryside development company first announced its plans some 20 years ago and they featured in Horsham District Council's housing development consultation document published in June 2000 with an "illustrative layout" plan clearly showing a proposed layout with the by-pass severed at Tesco, thereby allowing better communications between the village and the new development. The alarm bells rang! The Horsham Society commented then that the proposed road layout would be highly inconvenient for people going from Horsham to Guildford.

You need to get into the mind-set of developers (and planners). At the start of the process everyone knows that plans will have to change but the further they go into the process, the more plans and drawings are prepared, the more difficult and costly it becomes to make changes. By the time a planning



application is made, everyone is very reluctant to make major changes to the proposals.

The message is clear. If you want to object, do so as early as possible. Waiting for a formal planning application may well, in practice, be too late. If you hear about a proposal and you have reservations, find out more and get your

voice heard. The people who object to the incinerator at Langhurstwood are right to be objecting now but it could be said that they should have made their voices heard sooner. Just as soon as the rumours started, even before a formal planning application.

In this respect we need to use our district councillors (or, in the case of the incinerator, our county councillors). They know what is going on and if you feel strongly about it, lobby them.

Rightly or wrongly, the Government have made various changes to the Planning system which they hope will speed up the process, although some of us feel that they have got the developers too much in their pockets.

Either way, when it gets to a formal planning application, the timescales become very short for making representations.

The first port of call is, of course, HDC's planning department via their website: [www.horsham.gov.uk](http://www.horsham.gov.uk). There you can see the application papers with details of the proposals.

If you want to make your views known to your local Parish or Neighbourhood

Council (or the Horsham Society) remember that they only have a few weeks from the application date to respond and they probably only meet once a month. If you don't say, they can only use their past experience to guess what their constituents might want. They are also constrained by what are legally considered to be planning matters. The Horsham Society is particularly interested if you have concerns about anything which might affect the character of the town.

It is a minefield but if you want to achieve your goal of making your voice heard you will have to work at it and, probably, work fairly quickly. You won't always win but at least you can say 'I tried'.

*The Horsham Society is concerned about the past, present and future of the town. It seeks to promote good planning and design for the built environment and open spaces. Membership of the Horsham Society is open to anyone who shares these concerns. For more information, visit the website [www.horshamsociety.org](http://www.horshamsociety.org) or phone 01403 259038.*