

The One-way IDR

Over Christmas and early January some changes have been made to the scheme and a last minute consultation is to be carried out with, to date, very little public information. This is due to close on Friday 2 February which may have passed by the time you read this. The changes are outlined in an addendum to the study on environmental impacts of the scheme.

Revised proposals should be available for public viewing at the Civic Offices and Reading Central Library until 2 February. It can also be seen on the Council's website, www.reading.gov.uk. At the foot of the IDR section, under Transport Strategy, you will find a brief paragraph and then below, a link to 'Environmental Statement'. Within the statement you will find the addendum.

The changes relate mainly to additional cycle routes, some shared with pedestrians, leading from the junction at Duke Street, past Sidmouth Street, connecting existing cycle routes as far as Watlington Bridge where cyclists will need to dismount to join the existing cycle way from Kings Road to the Forbury. There will also be new crossings at the Sidmouth Street Junction and between the entry and exit to Queens Road Car Park.

We are told that construction is due to start in March 2007, beginning with Phase 1, which is the section from the A33 junction up to part of the Kings Road triangle. Phase 2 will take the remaining part of the triangle past the Forbury up to and including the TGI Friday roundabout and last Phase 3 from Caversham Road to the A33. When or if Vastern Road becomes one-way, we will need to monitor closely the impact on traffic through Caversham Centre and any other local one-way schemes proposed.

. Meanwhile, Wokingham District Council has lodged an application for a judicial review of the scheme.

Policing matters

Although the number of burglaries in Caversham has been reduced, they have continued and are the subject of policing activity. Therefore the Tri-signs have remained

in place for longer than planned, until mid-February. The police have been successful in catching two teams of burglars who are now on remand in prison. Police have asked residents to be vigilant to suspicious activity and report it to the police immediately. For non-emergency matters the phone number that should be used is 0845 8 505 5050.

Neighbourhood Policing is now scheduled to begin in March for the entirety of Caversham, which will now include the area of Kings Meadow. The anticipated staffing will include four Police Community Support Officers who will be recruited before the launch date. The downside is that Caversham will lose two out of its four PCs who will be deployed elsewhere. The Neighbourhood Policing scheme will involve greater resident and business involvement in identifying problems and formulating appropriate responses to the circumstances.

Planning Applications in 2006

A substantial number of planning applications were turned down during 2006 and as we feared, many have been the subject of repeat applications and/or appeals. This has been the case for the proposed development behind Upper Woodcote Road adjoining Little Heath golf course and also the proposals for land between All Hallows Road, Copse Avenue and Henley Road. More recently an appeal has been lodged for the proposed development on the Laundry site on George Street.

Repeat applications are an issue for local residents as well as the Council. The planning regulations do not allow comments to be carried forward from one application to another as each application has to be viewed in isolation. While we may grumble at this and have all sorts of concerns about the motivation of developers, if we wish to oppose applications, unfortunately, we have to play within the rules. If your views are broadly the same for the repeat application, you can send a photocopy of your earlier letter with an alteration in pen of the application number. If there have been more changes, you may prefer to amend your previous letter, making sure that you include the new application reference. On the subject of developers' motivations it is interesting how many developers choose to submit applications over holiday periods!

Mapledurham Playing Fields

Congratulations to the people of Caversham! The response to the consultation was the largest yet recorded in any Reading Borough Council consultation. The results were:

- Option A - new sports pavilion and changing rooms: 252
- Option B - new building with changing rooms and a meeting room only: 34
- Option C - demolish hall but re-provide changing rooms 2,097
- Option D - To provide facilities in partnership with a new Caversham Primary School: 499
- (No Option Selected: 68)

Many of the consultation replies for Option C, along with those who did not select an option, said that they did not want to see any loss of open space. The Management Committee has now asked Reading Borough Council to push ahead with Option C, but have asked that Council officers investigate options for delivering this without any loss of land at Mapledurham.

Replica weathervane for the Caversham Court Gazebo.

The Reading Civic Society, the Caversham Court Gazebo Trust and CADRA are continuing their work to provide a fitting tribute Molly Casey. Their combined aim is to produce and install a replica of the 17th century weather vane, once on the gazebo and now residing safely in St Peter's Church. Molly was involved in the very early discussions and was very enthusiastic for the project, so it seems a particularly appropriate way to commemorate her tremendous commitment to Caversham and to Reading.

Listed planning consent will have to be obtained and support from English Heritage but once the position is clear, we hope that Molly's friends and colleagues will wish to support the scheme. Please look out more information in future issues.