

David Moore: A time of change - but will we get it right?



same time, it was decided that we should have a town centre first policy for new businesses with the aim of trying to ensure that the existing town centre did not decline.

We also had a vision for the size of the town, when the A24 and the A264 were set as the boundaries for the town. Haven't times changed!

A great deal of time and money has been invested in areas such as East Street and West Street with the aim of trying to improve their appearance and with conspicuously more success in the former.

There's still more to do, such as changing and improving the appearance of the existing planters in West Street, and we know that the

enhancement of Bishopric east of Albion Way is currently under consideration as a continuation of the West Street project.

We also have the ghastly approach to Carfax and Causeway via Blackhorse Way to tackle and we have to consider the future of what will replace the current building on the site of the old Prewetts Mill.

All of these projects will play an essential part in how people will view our town in years to come.

On top of that, there's still the result of the Waitrose / John Lewis edge of town development to be ascertained.

Will it benefit the existing town centre or will it, for

example, lead to a movement of the town centre away from Waterstones and towards Albion Way at the expense of the existing businesses in Carfax?

Whatever is done to Bishopric will play a major part in what happens next in this respect.

New homes will be built within Horsham and that in itself is not a problem.

It's simply a matter of how many new homes will be built, what will they look like and where will they be located, all of which have to be carefully considered.

At the same time, other factors have to be taken into account if the population increases, especially those concerning the infrastructure

that people demand as a basic right.

Will the sewerage, water, electricity and refuse collection systems be able to cope with the increased demand?

Will there be adequate parking for vehicles both near their homes and in the town?

Will it be easy to get in, round and out of Horsham?

The Horsham that we see tomorrow will be very different from that which we have today.

That's not necessarily a bad thing as we have to accept that change will occur as no town can afford to stand still.

However, there's good change and bad change and we all have a responsibility to ensure that every proposed change is carefully considered

before it is actioned so that we fully understand the consequences.

If it all goes wrong, the plea of, 'it's not our fault' will not be acceptable.

It's time for all of us to stand up and be counted.

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 our website www.horshamsociety.org or telephone 01403 261640.

The Planning Inspector's examination of Horsham District Council's proposed planning framework is now underway and we'll know the outcome in the not too distant future. However, this is only one of the many changes, which will affect our town.

It's not that many years ago that the boundaries of the town centre were fixed on two sides by Albion Way. At the