

Next meeting: Change of date to Monday, November 18 at 7.30pm

Current Projects at London Architects MAKE



An evening of masterplanning & architecture with founding partner John Prevc at the Shopfront Theatre, City Arcade
All welcome. £1 for visitors



coventrysociety

November 2013

Spotlight on the Ring Road

The opportunity to talk on the Shane O'Connor Breakfast Show helped swell our numbers at last month's meeting when Coventry City Council's Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Highways, Colin Knight, joined with member Chris Daniel to present Coventry Ring Road—Love it or Hate it?



Cllr Denis Berry opens the final section of the Ring Road on September 19, 1974

The 2009 Talking Bird's film describing the making of the Ring Road featured member Brian Rednap who was the engineer responsible for its construction. Sadly Brian couldn't make the meeting for health reasons but his contribution through the film was greatly appreciated.

Chris walked the entire length of the road on both inner and outer rings to prepare a picture slide report for the evening. He found the whole experience quite revealing.

"My presentation was titled "Embrace and Adapt", said Chris. It was based on the practicality of dealing with the Ring Road as it exists, it functions and the belief it won't be erased.

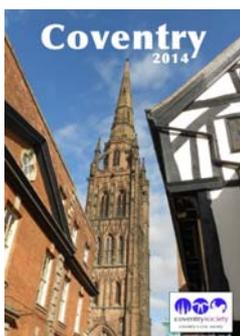
I perceive an opportunity to build on the original concept with significant scope to improve vehicle, cycle, and pedestrian access into and out of the City Centre."

Observations included: Connections through the viaducts can be reinforced when they are already light, airy and open.

As the Friargate proposal shows the road can be bridged, facilitating much improved connections between the railway

station and the city centre. The greening, wherever possible, of the road and its environs can help transform the appearance and thus the reputation of the Ring Road. Car access to the city centre works, but the experience is largely poor, negative and unwelcoming. Coach access is simply awful and the worst possible welcome. Pedestrian interface is a real issue, and its transformation presents a significant challenge. We have created "no go" zones, and the subways and walkways are not fit for purpose. The visual impression is largely negative with a long standing lack of appropriate maintenance and management. The whole fabric is very poor with barriers everywhere being negative both physically and psychologically. Areas that have become derelict and intimidating were highlighted.

A lively question & answer session were testament to well received presentation from Colin and Chris. Notwithstanding the problems highlighted in the presentations the Ring Road is clearly a functional success and a great design achievement. As Colin said: "It does what it says on the tin." Next year we celebrate the road's 40th.



CovSoc Calendars

Now available at November and December meetings.

Or phone Keith on 7640 2030, Paul on 07814327614 or Colin on 76672625 to arrange to collect.

They are on sale at £6 per calendar.

Members can purchase at the special price of £10 for two.



DECEMBER 2014

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Conservation Areas

A Conservation Liaison Group is about to be formed to work with the City's Conservation Officer Chris Patrick. Members of the Group would carry out street surveys logging good points, bad points and what they'd like to see in the area. These views would then be inputted into the appraisals and management plans. The Group could also convene to discuss major applications in conservation areas. If you are interested in joining the Liaison Group then please let the Chairman know.

First WW memorials

With the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War next year, Civic Voice is asking local societies to undertake a review of war memorials in their regions. As well as obelisks and tablets erected in the open air, memorial rolls of honour were put up in factories, sports clubs, railway stations, schools and universities. Church windows were also designed and dedicated to military units or individuals. Memorials to the First World War are many and varied marking the participation of millions in this large-scale, world-changing event. If you have a special interest or know someone who has a special interest in this heritage field then please let a member of the committee know.

Contacts

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If Twitter is your thing, you can follow us at <https://twitter.com/#!/CovSoc>
We also have our own page on Facebook.
You can also follow us there at <http://www.facebook.com/CoventrySociety>

More news and views on our website: www.coventrysociety.org.uk



Coventry Libraries and Information Service celebrated the 100 year birthdays of the three Carnegie libraries in style on October 19. Colin Scott, Operational Manager for Library Services helped recreate the day all those years ago by slipping into top hat and morning coat to become a look-a-like Andrew Carnegie. Coventry Transport Museum supplied a veteran Rover to transport Carnegie to the three libraries—Foleshill, Stoke and Earlsdon. During the planning of the event George Shermens, the son of the chauffeur pictured in the original photograph went along to join in the fun and is pictured (right) at the wheel of the early Rover with Carnegie. Each of the libraries have been celebrating the changes that have taken place in libraries over the last 100 years to reflect the needs of local communities.

TIC

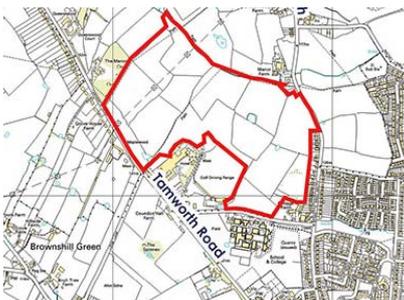
News that the Tourist Information Centre currently in the Cathedral Tower will soon be relocated to a room at St Mary's Hall now appears to rule out the possibility of it going to Bayley House. The room fronting Bayley Lane is just inside the courtyard entrance.

Uni Science block

The Society remains concerned about the juxtaposition of the Whitefriars Gatehouse to the proposed Coventry University Science Block. We met university consultants to discuss possible improvements to the scheme and still hope to see something better when detailed plans are submitted. At this stage the planning committee voted in favour of the outline scheme.

Keresley housing

An application has been made to build 800 houses on Green Belt



land at Keresley, a plan opposed by local residents. We looked at Coventry's own planning guidelines and found the application contradicts them.

Additionally there were no exceptional circumstances that would allow the over-ruling of the guidelines. The Committee therefore agreed that the society should oppose the application.

► Local author Lucy David will donate the proceeds from her book *Hedgerow Magic* to Keresley Parish Council to fight the plan.

The tranquillity of three charming villages, Baginton, Bubbenhall and Stoneleigh, are threatened by a proposal to build on green belt land near to Coventry Airport. The development called Gateway, is of the same order of importance as Friargate but would cover a much larger area. It is now the subject of a public inquiry that will start in January.



The Parish Church of St Giles, Bubbenhall

Gateway is part in Coventry and part in Warwickshire and both councils gave planning permission earlier this year. The issues are as usual the conflict between jobs/investment and loss of green belt. And the site includes the green belt area at Whitley that Jaguar was given planning permission some years ago but has since lapsed.

CPRE made a thorough and damning objection and the locals in the area are

Spon Street celebrates

After months of rehabilitation to the fabric of Spon Street, its road surface, pavements and lighting are fit for purpose once again. Traders in the area are naturally delighted and will be celebrating on Saturday, November 23.

As well as live music on the street and in St John's Church there's a craft fair in the former Bridge Club at 17a, a special opening at the Watch Museum, mulled wine and mince pies at The Town Crier and Old Windmill and 'Queen Isabella' will be meeting visitors in the church.

The event takes place from 10am to 4pm.

Green Belt

naturally up in arms. While we represent the interests of Coventry we clearly need to consider the whole site together.

The applicant has not shown the need for a vast tract of speculative industrial/commercial development when there are numerous idle brownfield sites in and around the city.

The Society supports the principle of development on some parts of the application site but considers that no case has been made for the extent of speculative industrial and commercial development, consuming large tracts of green belt. In our submission we also said: "The application does not offer sufficient compensation for the increased traffic it would cause, and ignores conditions that were placed on the previous expired permission for Jaguar to develop the Whitley site.

We feel that if the inspector is not able to approve a scaled-down version of the application, he should refuse it and invite the applicant to reapply with a less damaging scheme together with firm evidence of the need for it."

Coventry's ref. is OUT/2012/1791 and Warwickshire's is W/12/1143.

Hope for Theatre One?

After seeing a series of paintings by local artist James Birkin showing the interior of the former Theatre One in Ford Street, the committee concluded it's worth exploring the possibility of setting up a Trust to seek grants that could facilitate the restoration and re-use of the former cinema.

► The building was originally a coffee tavern and later opened as the Alexandra Picturedrome in 1917 by Elijah Strong.

