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**W. E. RICHES**  
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# BIRCHINGTON LOSES THE ROAD AND WESTGATE GETS IT (IN THE NECK)!

**Margate Council's decision to abandon its scheme to slice Birchington in two with a new trunk road, represents a victory a three-year battle, for the determined and highly organized village opposition.**

This paper, always firmly against any blueprint designed to speed traffic into the centre of Margate at the expense of Birchington and Westgate, reported unanimous opposition to the first scheme presented at a public meeting in March 1969.

*"Opinion in the hall seemed to be pretty unanimous on one point only, " we reported that April - "no one wanted the road at all. The representatives from the council were equally undivided - here was the road fait accompli, and all they were interested in was any specific case of hardship which might arise from its building. "*

Three years later we are happy to report that the road no one wanted is to be buried in the Planning Department's archives. The ring-road will begin at Brooksend along the line of Shottendane Road and link up to Westgate. It is this final stage. yet to be approved, which has roused opposition from Westgate residents who dislike the idea of a roundabout just east of the Walmer Castle.

Only seven Westgate properties would be affected. declared Councillor Bill Dawson. as opposed to the 48 proposed at Birchington. Subways would enable residents to safely cross the road and he felt there would no congestion.

## TOPSY TURVY

Bill Dawson, one of the great champions of the Birchington campaign, can now accept the road with equanimity, so long as it doesn't touch Birchington. Westgate's representative Bill Goodrich, who at the meeting reported. tried to urge Birchington residents to accept the road, now rejects it on behalf of Westgate. Such topsy turvy opinions are not so strange. These councillors are right to uphold the views of the majority which elected them.

## COMPLETE RING

The answer, we would suggest, is one we urged in our newspaper for three years. for the proposed ring road to bypass Birchington and Westgate and go straight to Margate. This not only makes sense. For such a road is already planned for the future. but it is a practicable proposition.

All schemes like this suffer five, ten, fifteen years delay. We say build that future road now and save the next generation clamouring for it when. as will undoubtedly happen, the present road to be built is jammed with traffic.

## WRONG WAY ROUND

In our opinion, the planners have got their priorities the wrong way round. Build the complete ring road now and avoid congestion in Birchington and Westgate from London to Margate traffic. Improve the local traffic roads later. Without that holiday traffic, we have plenty of room for years ahead.