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Editor's viewpoint

Readers of the Richmond and Twickenham Times may start to fear the borough is set to disappear under a mass of new steel, concrete and glass.

Not a week goes by where our letter writers are not exercised by one planning matter or another in one corner of leafy Richmond upon Thames or another.

In recent weeks residents, councillors and MPs have contacted our newspaper to express disappointment and sometimes outright anger at new proposals from eager developers.

In East Sheen there is the modernisation of an existing supermarket, Waitrose, which seems little concerned with residents set to be dwarfed by a massive car park.

In Twickenham developers want to destroy an old electric works, Victorian buildings of townscape merit in a conservation area, and replace them with blocks of flats.

Richmond resident Chris Smith informed us last week of plans to replace garden space with residential development.

There are proposals to place a Canary Wharf-style building on the River Thames opposite Hampton Wick.

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On Twickenham Green, the Gifford House Action Group are fighting to prevent more green space giving way to housing.

Kew residents fear the loss of green space behind their homes on Sandycombe Road.

And this week we learn that when developers can agree with interested parties, on the former Jewson site in Hampton Wick, they decide that isn't quite enough and want to build a bit more.

The list seems to go on forever.

Where is next?

What will be the next area of green space turned over to developers for housing?

There is a lovely space next to the A316 that would be perfect for a huge housing development. In 25 years time will people walk past and say: "That used to be Old Deer Park"?

On a smaller scale Richmond and Twickenham Greens are more than big enough for plots of housing if eyes are taken off the ball.

Much is made of the green spaces Richmond has to offer but they need protecting.

Richmond upon Thames Council has fought hard in recent years to prevent overdevelopment, and many of the schemes mentioned above have been scaled down or rejected by council planning committees.

But it is Government planning inspectors who ultimately have the final say, and on their whim can a fight be lost.

Barnes residents won their battle to prevent the demolition of De Worde House.

Those of us who enjoy Richmond the way it is hope this is just the first of many fights that will be won.

But while landowners continue to sell out to developers there is a worry residents may end up punch drunk.