

Open Space

*An occasional newsletter of the
Aldborough Hatch Defence Association*
Issue 22 – June 2008

**Council launch
“Redbridge Conversation”
but it is a**

Treble whammy for Aldborough Hatch as Council suggests selling Green Belt land for housing

Hard on the heels of the news that Redbridge Council will shortly receive a planning application for extraction of sand and gravel from Aldborough Hatch Farm (see OPEN SPACE, Issue 21, April 2008), comes the invitation from the Council to residents to say “yes” or “no” to the suggestion that Green Belt land in Aldborough Hatch should be sold for housing development.

Time and time again Councillor Alan Weinberg, Leader of the Council, has stated publicly that the land at Fairlop Waters would not be sold for housing development – but now the Council he leads is suggesting that Green Belt land elsewhere on Fairlop Plain should be sold off for housing, depriving the community of the valuable green space that residents have fought hard and long to retain over many years.

Residents and the Aldborough Hatch Defence Association did not spend nearly ten years fighting against the desecration of Fairlop Plain by an all-weather racecourse to see something over 70 acres of Green Belt land go under concrete.

We will fight with all the means at our disposal to stop it happening now!

This is some of the land that the Council suggests could be sold off for housing!



(Above) Land on Aldborough Hatch Farm at Oaks Lane.



(Above) Land on Aldborough Hatch Farm adjacent to St. Peter's Church.

Do not delay – act today to make clear to Redbridge Council that the Green Belt of Fairlop Plain in Aldborough Hatch is not for sale! See overleaf under “What can we do?”

What is the Redbridge Conversation?

The Redbridge Conversation has been launched by the Council to ask residents what they would like money to be spent on in the Borough and what needs to be sold to balance the books. The details are available online at www.redbridge.gov.uk. The Council included some information in *Redbridge Life*, which was distributed to all homes in May. The Council has also released a paper

questionnaire which is available from Council offices, libraries, schools, GPs and post offices.

The Council seems to have overlooked the fact that many residents in Aldborough Hatch do not have access to the internet. A recent inquiry for the paper questionnaire at a local library met with a blank stare – we can only hope that supplies have now been delivered for residents to collect.

Land on our doorstep for housing

Two areas of land are mentioned in the Land Sales Option (see next column). The first is described as “*Land at Oaks Lane*”. No acreage is given, but the land value is stated as £67M for housing development. We would hazard a guess that this includes the majority of the fields on Aldborough Hatch Farm – stretching from Aldborough Road North west to the Central Line and bordering onto St. Peter’s Church, St. Peter’s Close and Oaks Lane.

The second area is described as “*30 acres of land at Fairlop Plain*”. Here the acreage is given at 30 acres and the land value at £56M for housing development. But no indication is given where this land is – again we would have to hazard a guess that it could be Aldborough Hall Farm. This is the farm near the Dick Turpin where the land is currently under excavation for sand and gravel, with land bordering onto Applegarth Drive and Bawdsey Avenue.

Sadly, the Council is not being more specific about the exact whereabouts of the land they are suggesting should be sold. Without more precise information we can only fear the worst – and if we have got it wrong, that is simply because the Council is being economical with the facts and has only itself to blame.

What can we do?

We need to make it abundantly clear to Redbridge Council that we do not want the Green Belt to be desecrated by housing development – which, judging by recent building in the Borough, would involve flats. We urge residents to take the following action:

- * **Go online** if you have internet access and refute the option to sell this land; **OR**
- * **Complete the paper questionnaire; AND**
- * **Write to Councillor Alan Weinberg, Leader of the Council, London Borough of Redbridge, Town Hall, 128-142 High Road, Ilford, Essex IG1 1DD, deploring the fact that the Council is even suggesting selling valuable Green Belt land.**

In your letter you may also wish to propose that the Council could introduce some cost-cutting efficiencies to pay for essential services – for example, getting rid of the brand new and very expensive mayoral cars, keeping executives’ and councillors’ salaries at reasonable levels, and halting the totally unnecessary developments in the town centre.

Is an Olympic swimming pool needed to replace the pool at Seven Kings? Surely a similar pool to that at Fullwell Cross would serve schools, the public and other swimming groups. The Council has known for years that this pool would need replacing – why has the Council not made financial provision for this in the past?

Please copy your letter to the Aldborough Ward Councillors – Vanessa Cole, Ruth Clark and Loraine Sladden - at the Town Hall.

Land Sale Options

The following information has been taken from the Redbridge Council’s website:

Land at Oaks Lane

Proposed Value £67,900,000

Address

Oaks Lane, Newbury Park, Ilford, Essex.

Details

This site may be suitable for residential development.

Consequences

Loss of public open space.

Risks

Currently the site is protected by local/national green belt policy and Local Development Framework policy as “Green Corridor”.

Release from green belt requires “exceptional circumstances” and policy revision. This would have to be justified by a review of urban capacity and the green belt boundaries. If successful, housing would be acceptable in principle.

The land may be subject to Nature Conservation rules and constrained by mineral extraction leases.

The land is included with the tenancy of Aldborough Hatch Farm, which is let until September 2013.

May be subject to review by the Secretary of State.

Planning Process: A minimum of four years is required to undertake studies, revise policy and deal with planning application under revised policy.

30 acres of land at Fairlop Plain

Proposed value £56,020,000

Details

The council owns 1,000 acres of land on Fairlop Plain.

This proposal is for the disposal of up to 30 acres of this land for residential development.

Consequences

Loss of a public open space.

Risks

Currently the site is protected by local/national green belt policy and Local Development Framework policy as “Green Corridor”.

Release from green belt requires “exceptional circumstances” and policy revision. This would have to be justified by a review of urban capacity and the green belt boundaries. If successful, housing would be acceptable in principle.

Depending upon exact location, the land may also be subject to nature conservation rules and constrained by mineral extraction leases.

May be subject to review by the Secretary of State.

A minimum of 4 years is required to undertake studies, revise policy and deal with planning application under revised policy.

Aldborough Hatch Defence Association

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