

NEWS

Wildlife group slams plans for haulage road near nature reserve

Outraged wildlife campaigners are protesting against plans to create a haulage road near Fairlop Waters nature reserve, fearing the lorries will frighten away rare birds and harm trees.

The council's planning committee gave conditional approval to construction firm Brett Tarmac Limited's application to extend Fairlop Quarry, in Hainault Road, on June 5 this year.

The Recorder has seen a map which appears to show the route of a 13m wide road for mineral-transporting lorries snaking along the south west flank of Fairlop Waters, Barkingside – which is protected by law as a local nature reserve.

The map, obtained by wildlife group Fairlop Birders, is dated October 2016 and is more detailed

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than that included on the council's website which is dated April 2016.

The group fears the daily passage of lorries will ruin the habitats of the park's rare long-eared owls and great crested newts (a protected species) and 50-year-old trees, among other species.

Birders spokesman Chris Gannaway said: "This is a terrible state of affairs when one group of council officers take the trouble to develop and go through the local nature reserve registering process with Natural England, while the planners allow developers Brett Tarmac to run



Wildlife groups fear for the long-eared owls and great crested newts that live in the reserve.

Photo: RON JEFFRIES

roughshod over what is now a mature wildlife site."

They, together with the Aldborough Hatch Defence Association, also argue that council's planning committee did not adequately scrutinise the plans at the time.

Simon Treacy, planning director for Brett Tarmac Limited, said that extensive

environmental surveys and widespread consultation with everybody concerned was undertaken before the application was approved.

He added: "We will continue to discuss our activities with the planning authority, local groups and ecological experts to achieve the best possible outcome for all (such as enhancing areas of the

site that have potential to become habitat for numerous species on the Fairlop Plain)."

A council spokeswoman said the application went through the normal planning procedures included site notices, advertisements in press, letters to neighbours, public consultation and a planning committee meeting.

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YOUROPINIONS

Calculated attempt to mislead

Jenny Chalmers, chairman, Aldborough Hatch Defence Association, writes:

Thank you for highlighting the grave concern of residents on your website ('This is deplorable': Wildlife campaigners condemn plans for haulage road through Fairlop Waters nature reserve).

It is outrageous for a council spokeswoman to state that the planning application went through normal procedures.

There was a deliberate and calculated attempt to mislead and hide the fact that a vitally important area of local nature reserve would be crashed through by the haul road.

At no time during the planning committee hearing or the so-called consultations arranged by Brett Tarmac was any mention made of a haul road destroying the habitat of protected species.

Clearly Redbridge Council is more concerned about raking in a few million pounds than preserving the natural heritage of the borough for today's and future generations.

A councillor once described Fairlop Waters as "the jewel in the crown of Redbridge". How sad that some of today's councillors are prepared stand by and do nothing whilst Brett Tarmac ruin the beauty and tranquility of our country park.

Shame on them all!

Overcrowded, scruffy and dirty

Colin Sweeting, full address supplied, writes:

My family have lived in Barkingside for over a hundred years and I am the fourth generation but I will be the last.

My daughters are appalled at the state of this area - for example the



Campaigners fear for the long-eared owls that live at Fairlop Waters.

Photo: RON JEFFRIES

footpaths either side of Tesco's at Barkingside are a positive disgrace.

Having moved away, my daughters would not remotely consider returning to live here.

In your Q & A feature you ask for three words to describe the borough and I would say "Overcrowded, scruffy and dirty".

Urgent need for lake repairs

John Meehan, chairman, Friends of Wanstead Park writes:

The largest lake, the Ornamental Water, in Wanstead Park looks a very sorry sight at the moment.

It is almost empty and most of it is vast tracts of smelly mud.

At the moment the amount of water that the City of London is licensed to pump from its borehole is clearly inadequate to keep the lakes fully to their designed levels.

Currently pumping water from the River Roding is not possible.

This is why compulsory work to strengthen the dams in the park - which has to be carried out within three years - needs to be linked to wider improvements.

The non-statutory elements in these works could then be used as match funding for a Heritage Lottery bid for £5million.

An integrated plan that repairs the lakes, improves the visitor experience, improves access to all areas of the park and maintains the wildlife of the park is required as a matter of urgency.

I believe the City of London accepts that we cannot go on as we are much longer.

Scrap plans for A&E closure

Bob Archer and Andy Walker, c/o Blythwood Road, Ilford, write:

The Barking Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals

Trust (BHRUT) clinical services strategy is a cause of BHRUT's problems.

This strategy commits to closing King George A&E, even though the plan to close King George A&E is supposed to be under review.

The bed and staffing cuts that have taken place at King George as preparation for the A&E closure have led to a deterioration in care that was called staggering by Cllr Zammatt earlier this year.

Yet bewilderingly, BHRUT are sticking with the King George A&E closure plan, prompting Redbridge Council to commit to fighting "tooth and nail" for our A&E per the recent Recorder article.

This has prompted us to book Redbridge Town Hall for a cross party public meeting for November 17 to say BHRUT need to honour their pledge to review the closure of King George A&E.

It is important that Dr Moghal, the BHRUT medical director, gets a grip of the situation and takes the King George closure plan off the BHRUT website and starts making the case for expanding King George and Queen's.

The evidence for the deterioration in care is at savekinggeorgehospital.blogspot.com

Be aware of child's internet use

Lynn Gradwell, director, Barnardo's London region, writes:

As we start the summer holidays, I would like to make your readers aware of the risks that our children face as they potentially spend more time online - and offer some tips on how to keep them safe.

Sadly, we know that many children are seeing inappropriate

content online. It is a deeply disturbing fact that children can stumble across pornography, and the ease with which children can live-stream themselves online is something that all parents should be aware of. Children with phones and tablets are effectively taking a TV crew into their bedroom and being able to broadcast to people they don't know.

We know that this can leave them open to grooming and abuse and can have an effect on their emotional health and wellbeing. We are particularly worried about grooming and children having contact with strangers online, sometimes being coerced or manipulated into sharing images.

In a bid to tackle on-line abuse and the devastating impact it can have, we would urge parents to try and understand the online world that their child is using.

Learn about the games and apps they are using and make sure that parental controls, privacy setting and online filters are being used. Internet Matters has some great parental guides on everything from live-streaming to the sites, apps and games that your children might want to use.

Start a conversation and find out who they're talking to online and what they're talking about.

You can report inappropriate behaviour or material to an organisation like CEOP (Child Exploitation and Online Protection) and we would urge anyone looking for advice or support to go to barnardos.org.uk.

It's worth remembering that the internet can also be a fantastic place for children to develop, to grow and achieve safely.

It's a place where they can reach out for support if they're struggling with a particular issue - so there is a good side to the online world.

Thanks for my years in Gants Hill

This is the last Spiritual Life Column that I will be writing.

Sue and I came to Gants Hill in September 2005.

Sadly my wife Sue died last year and being past pensionable age, I have decided to retire from my ministry at Ashurst Drive Baptist Church.

It has been a good 13 years and I have made good friends in the church and community.

In any area you meet those who become special to you, and lifelong friendships are forged.

What will happen at Ashurst Drive Baptist Church when I retire?

It will follow the leading

Spiritual Life

**Rev Richard Owen
Ashurst Drive Baptist Church**



of God and continue to serve God and the community.

What am I going to do in retirement? Apparently, retirement may increase my risk of dying of a heart attack.

In a study it was said: "We found an 80per cent higher rate of death from coronary disease among those in a study who had retired compared with those who had not."

So in retirement I will be trying to fend off the

coronary by walking around the flatness of Cambridgeshire, the county where I am retiring.

I will be spending time with my grandchildren who will keep me active as well. I intend to still preach the good news of the gospel that Christ died and rose again to save those who follow him and have him as Lord and Saviour.

So once again, thank you for my years in Gants Hill, they will ever be close to my heart.

Heat has made Tube journeys a misery

The summer heatwave has been great - unless you're a regular user of the Central line.

For weeks now, passengers have been subjected to delays, cancellations and carriage temperatures in excess of 30 degrees.

This makes the commute even worse than it already is, particularly for those who struggle to get on the train, let alone grab a seat, at the best of times during the busy rush hour.

I'm also aware of the long waiting times affecting residents living on the short stretch between Woodford and Hainault.

I've written to the Transport for London Commissioner, Mike Brown, to secure an urgent

View from the House

**Wes Streeting,
Ilford North MP**



meeting about the situation.

Crossrail will make some difference, but not soon enough. Telling passengers to look forward to air conditioned trains in 10 years' time has just added insult to injury!

The only consolation I can offer my constituents is that I share your pain as a regular commuter on the Central line to, and from, Westminster.

Hopefully you've had some respite from the commute during the summer.

I managed to escape for a week in the Yorkshire Dales to enjoy this unusually sunny English summer. I know everyone thinks that we MPs disappear all summer, but I'm now back to work - dealing with casework and local community issues, meeting with local health commissioners about the state of our local NHS services and catching up on some reading.

At least I won't have to use the Central line so much before Parliament returns in a few weeks!