

**MINUTES OF A RESIDENTS MEETING CALLED BY
BLACKHORSE ACTION GROUP (BAG)**

**HELD ON THURSDAY 30th of Nov 2006 AT 8.00PM
AT THE DOUGLAS EYRE PLAYING FIELDS' PAVILION,
COPPERMILL LANE, WALTHAMSTOW E17**

Present: Michael Leigh (ML) - BAG
Irina Hoss – (IH) - BAG
Janet Hague (JH) - BAG
Nuria Rodriguez (NR) - BAG
Plus 125 residents

Meeting to share knowledge and concerns among residents regarding council's plans to build high density housing next to the north part of Douglas Eyre playing fields and a large school on part of the green belt and playing fields. Also to discuss council's plans to manage the increased traffic in the neighbourhood.

- ML opened the meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance and support.
- IH explained how BAG was created a few months ago in response to the council's plans to relocate Willowfield School on the northern part of Douglas Eyre Playing Fields (DEPF) designated as Metropolitan Green Belt, and in response to proposals to develop high density housing to provide accommodation for key workers.
- IH gave the results of a petition carried out last August in the neighbourhood. 215 residents signed it to oppose the plans mentioned above. Residents, through petition, urged decision makers in Waltham Forest Council to reconsider this part of Blackhorse Lane regeneration project.
- IH also told residents about BAG's meeting with Cllr Terry Wheeler, Cabinet Member for Enterprise and Investment and Cllr James O'Rourke. The meeting took place on the 11th of November on the DEPF. In that meeting the councillors told BAG more about plans to relocate the pavilion to the north part of the playing fields next to the proposed school building and plans for a new all-weather surface. They talked about 're-grassing' all the area covered by the current all weather surface and pavilion sites. The councillors also mentioned plans to build a road at the back of Hawarden Road to enter the playing fields, school and high-density developments and to allow traffic to exit through the corner of Hawarden and Edward Roads. At that meeting with Cllrs BAG stressed its concerns with regards to infrastructure in the surrounding area – Hawarden and Edward Roads are very narrow and in general, roads in the area are already gridlocked.
- NR told the residents about the contacts made with other environmental and community groups, she also talked about the regeneration programme in

Tottenham Hale and described other how residents groups' achieved participation in the decision-making regarding developments in Tottenham Hale.

- Residents raised various concerns and there was general opposition to building the new school on the playing fields. Three parents expressed their strong desire to have a new Willowfield school and talked about the urgency of the school's relocation. BAG agreed that the school needs to be redeveloped, and that children's needs were of vital importance, but the Group also expressed its belief that there are alternative sites, away from green belt land which will better address the needs of young students without compromising the needs and quality of life of residents and the community around DEPF.
- A resident said that an environmental impact assessment of the proposed developments near and on the green belt has to be carried out. People also showed frustration and complained about the poor consultation carried out by Waltham Forest council. This consultation was described as secretive, misleading and incomplete. It was noted that the relocation of Willowfield school to DEPF wasn't included in any of the three regeneration options proposed by the council. It was also mentioned at the meeting that not many secondary school kids live in the area.
- Residents raised concerns about the high-density housing development proposed on the derelict site behind Hawarden Road and the increased traffic and transport chaos that new housing and the school would generate in the area. The group's opposition to the housing development was based on the incapability of the already overloaded roads and infrastructure to cope with additional traffic. The group also considered the council's plans to address this issue to be inadequate.
- The council's track record with the Arcade site was also raised and residents expressed doubt that the council could be trusted to deliver a quality project sensitive to the needs of everyone affected by the proposed developments.
- A BAG Statement was read to the residents and proposed for adoption. After a few amendments were proposed and agreed it was overwhelmingly adopted in a vote. There were four abstentions. The adoption of the Statement gives BAG a mandate and helps to define its aims.
- It was agreed that residents would write to Waltham Forest's regeneration department to register their concerns over the development and to request copies of the Interim Planning Policy Framework (IPPF) for the Blackhorse Lane Regeneration.
- A collection was held to help pay the costs incurred by BAG, such as the hire of the room in which the meeting was held. Residents contributed generously and kindly offered their skills and resources to help with BAG's activities future activities.
- Meeting closed.