

Theydon Bois Action Group

PROTECTING THE VILLAGE OF THEYDON BOIS

C/O 32 Theydon Park Road
Theydon Bois
Essex
CM167LP

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Civic Offices
High Street
Epping
Essex
CM16 4BZ

Dear Councillor Mrs. Diana Collins

You are no doubt aware of Theydon Bois Action Group's (TBAG) campaign to stop the methodology of using landfill in the construction of golf courses. During the course of our campaigning we have met with MP's, the Chairman of the Environment Agency, Sir John Harman and Joan Ruddock Parliamentary Under Secretary - Climate Change, Biodiversity and Waste. We have worked with other campaigners in other parts of the country.

We have been instrumental in shaping the processes which now mean any planning application that involves the importation of inert waste, spoil, soil or subsoil which is deemed as 'waste disposal' i.e landfill, rather than 'waste recovery' i.e associated with a genuine use in construction will now be decided at Essex County Council as the Waste Planning Authority and not by EFDC.

As a direct result of a letter from Communities and Local Government a recent application to import 297,219 cubic metres of inert waste to facilitate the construction of an 18 hole public, pay and play golf course at Netherhouse Farm, was referred by EFDC to Essex County Council, they refused the application citing 13 refusal reasons.

Essex County Council have recently produced a set of comprehensive guidance notes that cover the main issues including developers claims to import 'topsoils, subsoils, soil or spoil' when the actual intention is to import inert waste material. The notes also highlight the need to scrutinise multi-phased developments. Merely because the development (a single phase) is relatively small scale, does not necessarily indicate that any application lodged should be

properly considered to be a District matter. Such an application would still involve the importation and deposition of waste.

TBAG strongly objected to application EPF/ 0958/08. Our secretary gave an impassioned speech on 28 August 2008 at Area Plans East Planning Sub-Committee objecting to the *'Third and final phase of Golf Course remodeling to include importation of 45,000 cubic metres of sub-soil over a three month period at North Weald Golf Club, Rayley Lane'* but the application was recommended for approval by the Planning Officer. Members approved the application even though the developer, Mr Andrew Lloyd-Skinner, did assure Councillors that the second phase would be his last. The importation on phase one, EPF/1996/04, was for 15,500 HGV loads and phase two, EPF/0308/07 was for 100,000 cubic metres. The total for the three phases of the project was approximately 300,000 cubic metres of waste, 450,000 tonnes.

It is a shame that these important guidance notes were not available when members of EFDC considered all the applications granted locally to import waste spoil onto the Green Belt and especially regrettable that there now seem to be problems at North Weald Golf Course.

It comes as no surprise to TBAG that Mr Lloyd Skinner is still importing waste material to North Weald Golf Course, that mounding levels are too high, that a pond has been unlawfully filled and that residents and member of the Golf Course are very very unhappy and have sought help and guidance from TBAG.

Apparently Mr Lloyd Skinner has to now remove material from the site or apply for planning permission to retain it.

Why is it that EFDC do not seem to learn from these applications?

Have we not got enough land filled golf courses in the district?

What is it that the Ongar Park & Blunts Farm Golf Courses - Ad Hoc Special Committee achieved?

Please look into this application and the apparent breaches as a matter of urgency. Any new application should be a County Matters application and TBAG will be objecting, in the strongest terms, to any application that use the methodology of land fill for golf course construction.

Yours sincerely

Jacqueline Dodman
Secretary Theydon Bois Action Group

Cc Cllrs Roland Frankel, John Philips, Ann Grigg, David Stallan