

Save Barton Farm Group

Newsletter • Autumn 2003

Dear Supporter

Before you read any further, please may we make something very clear to you:

The proposed Major Development Area (MDA) at Winchester North is not a foregone conclusion – there is still a long way to go in the fight to protect this nationally and internationally historic City and its unique relationship with its landscape setting – we are forging ahead with our defence of Winchester.

In April/May 2004, there will be a Public Inquiry at which the fate of the MDA and therefore the fate of Winchester will be decided. The period running up to the Public Inquiry will be the most important part of our Campaign.

Winchester residents and those keen to protect England's heritage need to know that the clock is ticking towards the Endgame. Cala Homes, the would-be developer, is champing at the bit to obtain planning permission as soon as possible. It is already bringing pressure to bear on the City Council to ride roughshod over established planning principles – it is anticipated that Cala Homes will apply for planning permission this September, a good six months before the Public Inquiry.

We are more determined than ever to stand-up to Cala Homes and their crass development proposals. The proposals are a travesty for an historical City like Winchester. Ever since our first meeting 4 and half years ago, we have been asking one simple question: **Why an MDA?** Despite our cajoling and consulting with the powers that be this simple question still cannot be answered.

The MDA is still proposed despite the fact that the following issues have not been properly addressed:

- A City already grinding to a halt with traffic congestion
- Winchester's current affordable housing problems
- Use of surplus MoD land that is expected to become available
- Local Plan Report that is a catalogue of missing and mis-information
- Protection of Winchester's landscape
- An outdated Structure Plan and National and local planning policy changes

We will be expanding on these points and many more at our Public Meeting below.

We are holding a Public Meeting at 7.30 pm at the King Charles Suite, Guildhall, Winchester on Thursday 18 September 2003.

This meeting will kick-start the escalation of our campaign between then and the Public Inquiry.

The meeting will not be a debate about whether the MDA should go ahead or not but to put the facts before you and to demonstrate how and why we can win. The meeting will be for supporters of our cause who will be willing to help us in any way whatsoever in the run up to the Public Inquiry. The meeting will:

- Remind you that the threat of mass development north of Winchester is very much alive.
- Make clear the position to date and dispel any misconceptions
- Set out our ideas and strategies for the campaign in the run up to the Public Inquiry
- Discuss our strategy for the Public Inquiry
- Hear your ideas and views on the various ways you can practically help
- Answer any questions you may have regarding the Campaign and/or the current position.

The time has now come for Winchester residents to show that they truly care for their City and that they are willing to make sacrifices, however large or small, of time, resources and funding.

Everyone is busy, with jobs, families, commitments – the list is endless but there are times in our lives when we need to put our heads above the parapet and invest time and effort in standing up for our principles – for those of you who care about Winchester's heritage and future, there will never be another opportunity like this between now and the Public Inquiry.

The two recent misleading exhibitions organised by Cala Homes were miserably attended. Let us show Cala Homes that we mean business by:

- Turning up in numbers at The Guildhall on 18 September – the local Press and TV will be there to help us to show the strength of feeling in Winchester
- Resolving to make at least one practical commitment in the next six months, however large or small, to save Winchester from this crass development.

Thank you.

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