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# Elstree & Borehamwood Green Belt Society

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28 Deacons Hill Road  
Elstree  
Herts WD6 3LH  
8 June 2023.

To the Planning Committee  
Hertsmere Borough Council  
Civic Offices. Elstree Way  
Borehamwood WD6 1AA. re the application for a Business Park on land S of  
Watford Rd (EMP1).

Dear Councillor,

I write as a Hertsmere resident and also as Chair of Elstree and Borehamwood Green Belt Society which has been campaigning for Aldenham Reservoir since 2015 when Herts CC ended their lease because of the expense of dam repair. In 2016 when Liberty Leisure , the current owner, applied for Planning permission to build 150 houses on this site, 'The Mere', we unanimously supported the idea because it was **The Only Source of funding** to pay for the repair of the dam and maintenance of the Reservoir and this constituted the Very Special Circumstances required for development on Green Belt. The application was refused to our great disappointment and regret.

Exactly the same considerations apply today. There is no other source of money and the dam has now deteriorated and been assessed by dam engineers as Risk category A. The cost of repair has tripled in the interim.

We were given great hope by the recent cross party move led by Councillors, Newmark, Clapper and Evans to press for approval of the application.

Loss of the Reservoir would be a huge blow for Borehamwood, Elstree and surrounding North London districts. Families come to enjoy the serene beauty of the water alongside the Country Park. It is used by walkers, runners and families for exercise and contact with green nature. I often used to take my own children for birthday picnics and walks round the 'Res' and teach them names of wild flowers and birds and once we saw an otter.

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The Aldenham Sailing Club provided idyllic scenes of sail boats on the water and ran training courses for schools, giving safe experience of the sport to local children. This is now not possible because of lowering of the water level for safety reasons.

The value of the Reservoir cannot be overemphasised for exercise and leisure, mental and physical health and visual beauty.

It is a habitat for fish, water birds, bats and the insects that make up the balanced ecosystem on which survival of life on the planet depends.

Our history is entwined with the Reservoir since its construction in 1795 by French prisoners of the Peninsular Wars ( poor fellows) as a backup for the water mills on the River Colne. Therefore it is part of both industrial and military history and ties in with the Beacon on Woodcock Hill which brought news of Trafalgar to Whitehall in 1814.

The photos in Borehamwood Museum of Edwardian boating parties and swimmers show long term leisure use and it is said that Charles Dickens rowed a boat across it.

For all these reasons I beg beseech and implore you to grant this application, with legal safeguards of course, and save our precious heritage.

Yours sincerely

Ann Goddard.

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Yours sincerely

Ann Goddard. Chairman Elstree and Borehamwood Green Belt Society.

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