



**Title:** Security  
**Location:** Croxley Green Watercress Farm and Fisheries  
**Address:** Rousebarn lane, Rickmansworth, Hertfordshire, WD3 3GG  
**Date:** 12 January 2009  
**Version:** 501 – application 08/1640/FUL

This document is to be read in conjunction with the whole planning application – specifically the following documents which are referenced in the text:

## Contents

1	Introduction .....	2
1.1	Items covered in the application.....	2
2	Security incidents .....	3
2.1	Trespass and Squatting .....	3
2.2	Vandalism.....	3
2.3	Fly tipping.....	3
2.4	Theft.....	4
3	Required actions to improve security .....	5
3.1	Police reaction to site.....	5
3.2	Proposals by the crime prevention officer .....	5

## **1 Introduction**

The farm is between 14 and 15 acres and is based in both Watford and Three Rivers. It has a fishing lake of 3.5 acres, watercress beds of 6.5 acres, and land of 5 acres. The farm currently grows watercress and has been growing watercress since 1820. The lake has been used for fishing since the early 1900s.

The purpose of this planning application is to improve the security of Croxley Green Watercress Farm and Fisheries. The improved security will then enable improvements in environmental management and good farming compliance. The end result will lead to the creation of new farming jobs and an increased supply of watercress for the domestic market.

### **1.1 Items covered in the application**

- 1.) Renewal of boundary fence and gate
- 2.) Relocation of watercress processing plant
- 3.) Part - retrospective application for the removal of asbestos cement and the replacement with timber for the water pump houses and processing plant
- 4.) Retrospective application for the addition of watercress silt pits

## **2 Security incidents**

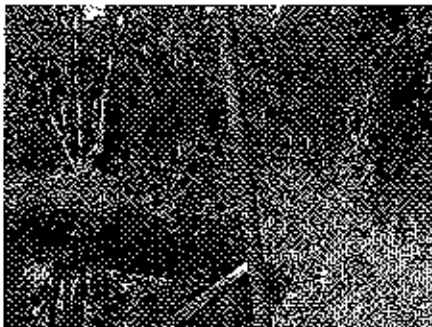
### **2.1 Trespass and Squatting**

There have been frequent reports of trespass at the site. The most serious was the squatters camp established in early autumn 2008.



### **2.2 Vandalism**

The most obvious area of vandalism is the burnt out fencing as you enter the main gate.



Other incidents include the disabling of a digger, breaking of trees, limited graffiti, and the breaking of scaffold.

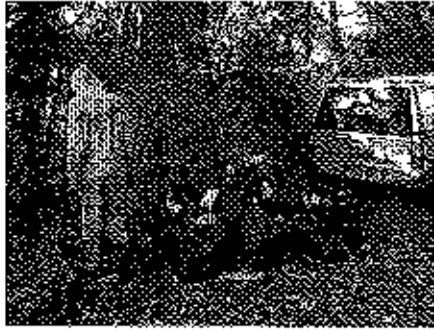
The latest incident has been the forced entry into the air raid shelter.

### **2.3 Fly tipping**

There are two types of fly tipping occurring:

- 1.) General rubbish

The picture below shows rubbish being collected after a single fly tipping event



## 2.) Asbestos fly tipping

Photographs and incident reports were supplied to Three Rivers Environment Agency but the agency failed to conduct a full a proper investigation.

## 2.4 Theft

Items stolen to date include:

- Hand tools
- Power tools
- Brush cutters and trimmers
- Chain saws
- Generators
- Tractor tyres
- Scaffolding
- Decking
- General timber
- Diesel

If the police do respond their response times are extremely slow.

### **3 Required actions to improve security**

#### **3.1 Police reaction to site**

The incidence of the squatters and theft on the site were reported to the police at lunch time on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2008.

The following message was received at 6:23 pm on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> October

*Yeah hello there ...its Hertfordshire police here .....  
Its a message for David Chalmers.*

*I am phoning to apologise we didn't get back to you in time to deal with the incident on you land*

*It's getting dark now and it's not appropriate for us to come out and see you tonight*

*We should have spoken to you earlier but unfortunately we have got in excess 40 jobs outstanding in the Watford area at the moment*

*Can you please call us tomorrow on 0845 33 00 222 and quote URN reference 786 of the 24<sup>th</sup> October, when it suits you and your availability for us to come out and have look and we will endeavour to be with you sometime tomorrow. Thank you.*

The message was played for both Laurence Moore (Three Rivers Planning and Gary Sibson (crime prevention officer) who have both confirmed that the above is an accurate transcript.

#### **3.2 Proposals by the crime prevention officer**

Due to the lack of support from the police and environment agency the following should be instigated as soon as possible to combat the crime at the site:

- 1.) Installation of site fencing. The fencing should either be palisade (the best option) or mesh fencing. Chain link fencing is unlikely to be strong enough. The fencing should ideally be 3 metres high but 2 metres high will provide significant improvements.
- 2.) On site security. Early trespass management is key. This will require wireless security systems to be in place within an on site security presence that can either manage a trespass deterrent programme or contact the police at an earlier stage.

It should be noted that the improved maintenance of the site has lead to a reduction in fly tipping but an increase in trespass and theft.