



# Press Release

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## **“MANYDOWN LAND IS AVAILABLE FOR DEVELOPMENT.” SO SAYS THE MANYDOWN COMPANY, FREEHOLDER OWNERS OF THE LAND**

Residents that packed the Council Chamber recently were shocked to hear that despite claims by the Council to the contrary; the owners of the land called Manydown stated explicitly “on the record that there is no obstacle to the development to the Manydown land as far as management or ownership structure is concerned”.

This confirms what SOLVE’s more than 1500 supporters and thousands of other residents around Basingstoke believe; that the Council is not being fair or balanced in the way they evaluate the suitability of greenfield sites for development.

“On the one hand the Council included the golf club land as being available for development despite their owners stating explicitly that their members have not yet agreed to this. On the other hand the freehold owners of Manydown have stated explicitly that the land they own IS available for development. Yet the Golf Club is in the sites allocated for development and Manydown is not. To the average man in the street it would appear that the Council is deliberately playing games with legal nuances and

hiding behind historic decisions to ensure the Manydown land is not considered for development under the current LDF” said Peter Bloyce of SOLVE.

He goes on to say “The decisions not to make Manydown available for development were made in 2006 and 2009. However, they were not publicly acknowledged and understood until September 2011. To the average man in the street, let alone the vast majority of our elected Councillors, it was never clear Manydown had been withdrawn and it was even actively considered through the 18 month SHLAA process. In fact this critical decision was never properly scrutinised or transparent.

The world is a very different place now, with our Council blaming government cutbacks for the cut backs in front-line services. Yet they refuse to reconsider a decision apparently made 5 years ago that effectively means the residents of Basingstoke cannot benefit from an asset potentially worth hundreds of millions of pounds because a small group of Conservative Councillors have pledged “to do everything in their power to prevent any development on Manydown”. This decision means that Basingstoke’s most valuable asset will remain untouched while our public services are cut under the false pretence that the Council has no access to funds!”

SOLVE does not support large scale development on any Greenfield sites east or west. However, if the Council are going to renege on their pre-election promise not to build any large scale developments on any countryside, and ignore the central theme of the public consultation that residents do not want to see any large scale developments on Greenfield sites; then we believe that Councillors have a duty to consider ALL sites on their merits, not on procedural sleight of hand and backroom deals”.

**SOLVE (Save Our Loddon Valley Environment) is a non-political group of over 1500 local residents who believe our unique eco-systems and historic sites of national significance are as important as our economic aspirations, and should be protected for the continued enjoyment of all of Basingstoke’s communities. [www.SOLVELoddon.org](http://www.SOLVELoddon.org)**