

In 2001 the industry claimed that they could account for 2,200 being found homes – this figure also represents the dogs that were, in fact, rehomed by voluntary rescue kennels and the efforts of caring members of the public. Where are those missing dogs? They end up abandoned, exported to Spain or slaughtered and for those whose owners choose not to pay veterinary bills they are shot, poisoned or drowned.

Greyhound racing is based on the systematic abandonment and slaughter of beautiful, noble creatures. The “lucky” ones fill the kennels of all the dog rescue shelters. **All the rescue centres around Liverpool already find themselves having to deal with the aftermath of this greedy, heartless and totally irresponsible industry.** And now we find out that Council officials have been negotiating with the GRA in order to lay out the red carpet for them to come to Liverpool.

A new track would mean more races, more dogs bred and inevitably more dogs dumped and killed.

If you care and don't want to see Fazakerley go to the dogs then get involved NOW - before it's too late!

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Council officials have done the absolute minimum in laying these plans open to the public. We fear that the Council are trying to steam-roller these plans through.

PLEASE write to (quoting planning app no. **02F/2852**).

* **John Hayes**, Chief Planning Officer, Dale St., Millenium house, Liverpool L69 2DH.

E-mail: john.hayes@liverpool.gov.uk (make sure to give your full name and address).

* **Chair of the Planning Committee Lady Doreen Jones**, c/o Municipal Buildings, Dale St.,

Liverpool L69 2DQ E-mail: doreen.jones@liverpool.gov.uk

* **Please write to your own councillor** to specifically object to Liverpool City Council selling this land to the morally bankrupt greyhound racing industry. The proposed site is a piece of open space, within a unique area of urban wildlife habitat, that belongs to the people of Liverpool. **If you don't know who your councillor is** then write to this local councillor: **Steve Rotherham**, c/o Municipal Bldgs, L69 2DQ or e-mail: steve@fazakerleylabour.co.uk or contact the Council directly by e-mailing them: liverpooldirect@liverpool.gov.uk

When objecting on planning issues immorality will not count. Concentrate on noise, nuisance, traffic and parking concerns etc. as well as the failure of the plans to satisfy the Council's criteria relating to development of open space and land adjacent to the Ecology Park.

* **Write to** the Echo, Daily Post and the free papers, also ring into the chat shows on your local radio stations, with your views. Let's keep the issue in the public eye.

Please come to a picket at the next full Council meeting on Weds, Nov 13th, 5pm, outside the Town Hall, Castle St. Please come to our own public meeting on Weds Dec 4th, 7.30pm at the Committee Room, The Haigh, Maryland St, Liverpool Town Centre to find out more about the campaign.

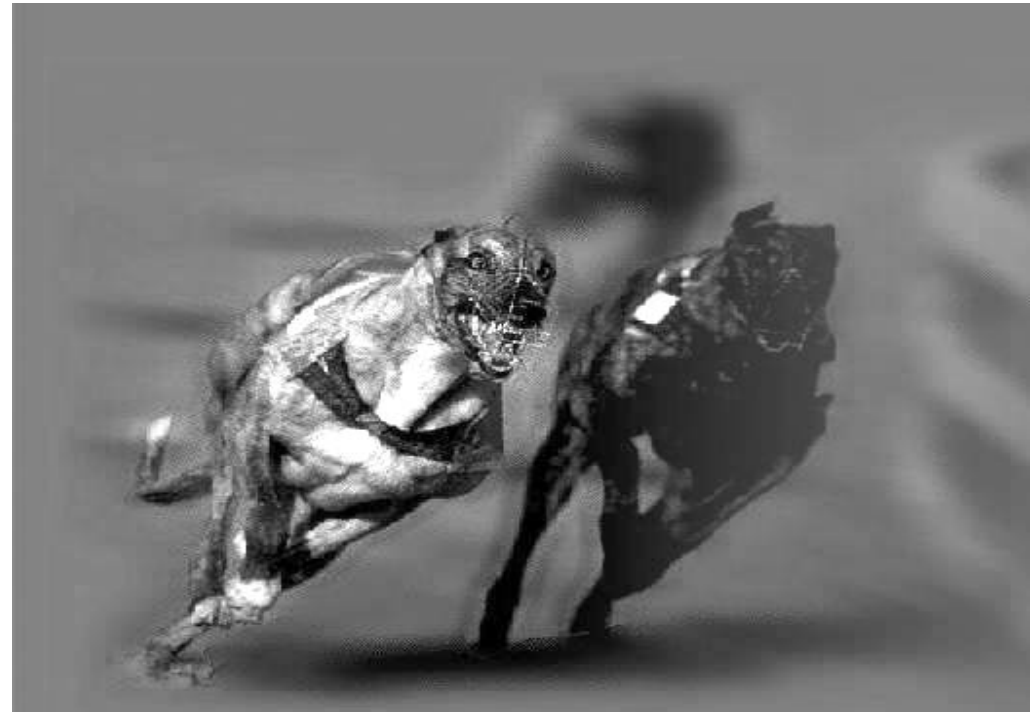
The most important date is the next Aintree Area Committee meeting on Weds, Nov 27th, 7.30 pm at Formosa Drive, Fazakerley, where the plans for the stadium will be discussed by Council officials and councillors. The developers and representatives of the GRA will be there to present their planning application and answer questions from the public. So please be there, if you care!

**For more information: Red Alert Fazakerley,
P.O Box 233, Liverpool L69 7LF**

E-mail: greyhoundaction@blueyonder.co.uk Tel: 0777 1953465

RED ALERT

THE GRIM TRUTH BEHIND THE PROPOSED GREYHOUND TRACK IN FAZAKERLEY



A planning application has been submitted by the Greyhound Racing Association (GRA) to build a stadium in Higher Lane, Fazakerley. The proposed site is owned by Liverpool City Council. It is designated as “open space” and is adjacent to a wildlife haven and residential areas. A greyhound stadium would bring with it a whole range of anti-social problems. Greyhound racing involves cruelty, abandonment and slaughter of these beautiful creatures - a new track would worsen the already existing situation. **We are sending out a RED ALERT because if this proposal is allowed to go ahead it would be a disaster for all concerned – except, of course the GRA and the gambling industry.**

This leaflet has been put together by a collection of local residents, greyhound rescue workers and environmentalists and it explains the reasons for which we oppose this plan.



ECOLOGY

The proposed site is green open space yet in the planning application it is described by the developers as a “brownfield site”, in an attempt to side-step the strict planning guidelines that are in place to protect open space. It is situated adjacent to **Fazakerley Ecology Park** and Fazakerley Brook which are home to a whole host of wildlife including barn owls, lesser spotted woodpeckers and most notably **red squirrels** (which have become **extinct** in most areas of the UK, let alone within urban areas). **This small area of North Liverpool is nationally recognised as an important and unique urban wildlife habitat.** Liverpool City Council has spent money and resources in establishing this area as a wildlife haven. In 1991 they implemented a strategy to protect it including this provision - “**Any development within or adjacent to the Fazakerley Ecology Park area should be compatible with,**

and contribute to, the overall aims and objectives of the Ecology Park.” A dog-racing stadium??

The construction of Fazakerley Prison in 1997, which took up part of the woodland, has had a detrimental effect on the wildlife in the woods, especially upon the red squirrel population. It is a miracle that the red squirrels are still in residence and their very survival is testimony to the success of the Ecology Park strategy. Despite all efforts by local people to halt the imposition of the prison it was forced through by the government. The construction and running of this large stadium would be the kiss of death for this already fragile wildlife habitat. Now that the big boys of the multi-million pound dog racing industry are flashing their cash around Council officials seem to be prepared to put the final nail into the Ecology Park project by giving these plans the green light. Lets make sure it is given the red light.



THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

It's not only red squirrels that have been attracted to the area - people have been too. Just over 150 yards from the proposed site a new housing estate has been built. The developers of that housing estate had to adhere to strict guidelines so as to be sensitive to the nature of the area. If the stadium went ahead then not only would the whole neighbourhood lose this open space and the wildlife but they would find themselves living next door to a source of unbearable antisocial behaviour. In the planning application submitted by the GRA all of the anti-social elements associated with greyhound racing tracks were either totally overlooked or glossed over.

Greyhound racing is driven by gambling and fuelled at the stadia by alcohol. At other GRA tracks they offer combined drink and betting offers in order to entice prospective punters along – they even hold nights where alcohol is given away for free. Residents who live near to existing greyhound tracks testify to the **anti-social nuisance, noise and litter that is caused by drunken punters** when they leave the stadium, once the bars have shut. Bear in mind that the plans are for a 3,000 capacity stadium – would permission be given for a 3,000 capacity public house within a residential area? Drinking is seen as an essential element to a night out at the dogs – that is how it is promoted and advertised at existing stadia. Most meetings will take place at night.

Imagine the noise that is generated by the race crowd, the dogs and the tannoy system as the races reach their climax at 15 minute intervals. There is also the noise from the crowds as they leave, and the noise from the greyhound welfare demonstrations, which take place at other tracks.

Imagine the light pollution caused by the seven 15m high floodlights plus a further ten stand floodlights.

Imagine the traffic and parking disruption caused by such a large influx of people into an area with such poor public transport links. (The nearest rail link is nearly a mile away – and the shortest route would entail

walking through the Ecology Park). And what of the issue of drink driving? Whilst at the track punters (many of whom will be car drivers) are actively encouraged to simultaneously drink alcohol whilst gambling.

Imagine the calibre of some of the people who frequent greyhound racing meetings. The traditional link with “Arthur Daley” types is something that the industry is keen to distance itself from but the reality is that the world of greyhound racing is as riddled with corruption and dirty money as it ever has been. Race rigging is absolutely rife. Only last year the undercover BBC documentary, Kenyon Confronts, exposed the endemic level of fraud, corruption and cruelty within the industry.

Of the 225 jobs that are promised only 25 are on a permanent full-time basis. Economic regeneration for the area? “My Ar**!” The money will flow one-way, into the hands of the bookies and behind the bar. Mike Storey was quoted in the Liverpool Echo (November 2001) saying that greyhound racing is a family event and that the residents will not be disturbed. This is not true. The truth is that if allowed to go ahead it will be a disaster for all concerned, except the GRA. Fazakerley is in desperate need of regeneration but this stadium is the last thing it needs. Behind the scenes there is talk of a Community Centre being offered as a “sweetener” - the GRA have got the money to dangle this carrot but with this stadium the area really would go to the dogs. All the Council seem to have seen so far are the GRA's pound signs. In this leaflet we have pointed out the danger signs.

CRUELTY WITHIN THE INDUSTRY

Council leader, Mike Storey, did get one thing right in that Liverpool Echo article when he said – “Greyhound racing in this day and age is very different from its old clothed-cap image.” It certainly is. **Now it is a £2 billion self-regulated industry.** At the behest of gambling interests the priority now is on the sheer high volume of races which requires a constant supply of greyhounds. In the year 2000 there were 5,643 meetings and the total races run was 67,837. The greyhounds are there to act as mere cogs in the gambling machine – they are used, abused and disposed of once they become surplus to requirements.

What happens at the track is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the suffering involved within greyhound racing. Injuries on the track are routine and tragically predictable as the dogs run at literally break neck speed around tight bends. Leading greyhound veterinarian, Paddy Sweeney, estimated that **10% of all dogs in races carry injuries**, which are often masked by anti-inflammatories. Apart from injuries caused by collisions and pile-ups there are the repetitive strain injuries - caused by running around the track in the same anti-clockwise direction - the most common being stress fractures in the hock. MP's have tried to regulate what goes on in dog-racing stadia, eg. providing independent vets, but have failed.



At least 20,000 greyhounds are bred for the U.K industry each year. Of these, many pups and young adult dogs are destroyed because they don't make the grade. It is impossible to calculate exactly how many of these are put down as no records are kept.

Registration is only commenced by the racing industry once the dogs are 15 months old. **The average racing life of a dog will last for just eighteen months.** Using the industry's own figures around 10,000 are registered for racing each year and 10,000 are “retired” (this is the figure that the industry is prepared to accept).