



The Editor
East Anglian Daily Times
30 Lower Brook Street
Ipswich
Suffolk
IP4 1AN

15th January 2003

Dear Sir

Your article on Babergh District Council's enforcement action against a farmer (EADT 13/1/03) failed to tell the full story.

Firstly, Babergh always tries to negotiate with landowners in such situations to reach an acceptable solution. Babergh recognises the realities of running farms and other rural businesses – indeed we attempt to support rural employers wherever possible. However, we also need to balance these considerations against the wishes of other residents who wish to live in an attractive environment, and in this case the site is in a Special Landscape Area where we should have more concern than usual for visual impact. In most cases, gentle persuasion and compromise work well. Formal action is only taken in the small minority of cases when all other options have failed.

Secondly, whilst your reporter faithfully quoted from the list of non-operational, and in some cases non-agricultural, items that the farmer had stored right up against a neighbour's boundary, the pictures that accompanied the article failed to show them. The large blue lorry trailer which Mr Murphy, the owner of the various vehicles and machinery, says has been "kept as far away from neighbouring homes as possible" is in fact right outside that neighbour's property! The camera may not lie, but in this case it was, unintentionally perhaps, economical with the truth!

In previous months Babergh has requested that Mr Murphy clears the site of other materials including abandoned cars and 72 sacks of silage placed right up against his neighbour's property.

Thirdly, Babergh is keen to work with the local branch of the NFU and would welcome the chance of discussing Mr Murphy's case with them, but would ask them to take a more pragmatic stance over these rare cases where the Council is required to take enforcement action.

Yours faithfully

Richard Watson
Head of Planning (Control)