

**Alice Roberts**

*Head of Green Space Campaigns, Campaign to Protect Rural England*

Thank you. I have a short amount of time, therefore, I am going to go very quickly, therefore, pay attention. My name is Alice Roberts. I am from the London branch of the CPRE. We have a national office of which Shaun [Spiers] is Chief Executive of and I am in the London branch. I spend a lot of time working with local campaigners who are fighting to save land in and around London. This is protected land with the highest level of protection. Often it is Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) or green belt and that is one of the reason why I am here today.

What we do is we try to make sure that people understand that this land is coming under threat and although Dieter [Helm] was talking about St James' Park in a jokey way, I can tell you about Shoreditch Park, which is in central London, which is currently under threat from development; Lee Valley Regional Park is currently under threat from development and some of you will have picked up the *Strongest Protection*, our publication, which showed a whole load of other areas which are park land and a number of other sites under threat.

What we want to tell you is that we do have a choice and the choice is, as you can see on the left side here, we build a nice compact city with high-density housing built well or we can build what we have on the right, which is, obviously, everything that has been spoken about today. This is the green belt and MOL within Greater London, over which, of course, the Mayor of London has some power. However, of course, then we have the wider green belt, the jurisdiction of which is much more complex and we do have an interest in both of these areas but mostly London CPRE has an interest in the inner London areas.

One of the messages I wanted to say, apart from the fact that these areas are incredibly important to Londoners strategically, is that we do not need to build on them. The figures in the pack have been updated to 560,000 units, at current build rate 25,000 a year in London. Those are 20+ years of units that we have available. For those who are allocating land within their local plans, which are green belt land, I would say that this is unnecessary. We do not need to do this and we have other areas to build.

I am going to show you some pictures really quickly of where they are being built at the moment. Therefore, here we have Old Oak Common, which is due to be built, a massive brownfield development. Of course, it is not just brownfield. This is Ilford's Sainsbury's site, which is one storey or maybe two and a massive car park. The thing below is one of the pictures of what it could look like. This is a Morrisons in Camden, which I saw in the news was up for redevelopment. That is a new building. It is not old, it is not derelict, it is not brownfield, and it is just being redeveloped. This is the Clapton roundabout, Lea Bridge Road roundabout, which many of you will have been round, which I live nearby and where there is consultation around recovering the land from it because it is not really needed as a roundabout. This is commercial space, Topps Tiles in Stamford Hill, which is being rebuilt as you will see in the next picture, although I am afraid it is not a very good picture. Therefore, retain the commercial space on the bottom floor, build flats above it. This is a space opposite the road,

which is just a classic piece of infill. I think that was a breakers yard and this is what is going on there now. This is Brick by Brick in Croydon where Croydon have identified a load of garages on public land, therefore, old garages and public land around existing social housing which can be used to create more housing.

I am going to skip those two. Therefore, all I really want to say is that we do have a choice but that we also do have a real issue. We have identified 250 sites in the wider green belt and I think we need the Mayor of London to engage with the authorities around London because we think that is nearer to 500 and with all the infrastructure projects as well we are really facing a situation where it is not a question of whether we build on it or not, it is really: are we going to let this happen or not?