

## Questions over derelict site's future

By [Lindsey Eudo-Mitchell](#)

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The site of former care home Christmas Lodge has officially been put up for sale but the council has promised part of the neighbouring nature park will be safe.

The Aldershot home was closed in 2006 after Hampshire County Council deemed it 'no longer fit for purpose' and residents were moved to Ticehurst.

Cllr Ken Thornber, leader of the council, has promised that when the site is sold that piece of land will be safe.

Mike Hatch, chairman of the Friends of Brickfields Park, was sceptical about the council's promises.

More than 4,000 people signed a petition to get the home reopened in 2006 but the council stuck to its decision and said the land would be "disposed of" to fund adult services.

Campaigners submitted a lengthy report suggesting alternative uses in a bid to save the building and they raised issues surrounding nearby Brickfields Country Park.

Aldershot Civic Society wanted to use the southern wing as a meeting area for people visiting the park.

The group also suggested creating a Brickfields Environmental Sustainability Trust to help rebuild what it described as a shattered community in Heron Wood.

But one of the biggest worries centred around a piece of land between the park and the lodge which had unofficially become part of the nature area.

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Mike Hatch, chairman of the Friends of Brickfields Park, was sceptical about the council's promises.

He said: "What they are saying is 'we want you to have this piece of land' but if that's true why haven't they handed it back?"

