

The Priory,
Little Horkeley,
Colchester.
Essex CO6 4DB

February 7th 2013

Attn: Ms Sue Jackson,
Principal Planning Officer,
Colchester Borough Council,
Rowan House,
33 Sheepen Road,
Colchester, CO3 3WG

Application 120965

Dear Ms Jackson,

I wish to register my very strong objection to this application.

For the past twelve years, the Bunting family have sought to develop this land in the face of committed and informed opposition. They have dismissed all individuals and groups who have opposed their plans as scaremongers, as peddling misinformation and as attempting to smear the good name of a family who have lived in the area for generations. None of these accusations are true.

The Stour Valley Action Group (SVAG) and The Dedham Vale Society (DVS) have worked tirelessly to take each application on its merits, to look for what possible benefits there might be for the rural population directly affected and for the region more indirectly affected. The fact that these benefits are not apparent now (and have never been apparent), despite the Bunting family's best efforts to advertise them, should not be indicative of negativity on the part of opposition, but rather, should be seen as yet further evidence of this family's determination to dress up what will benefit them as necessarily benefiting all. I think differently, as do hundreds of others.

At first glance, this latest application now about to be brought before the Planning Committee, is different to previous applications for a development at the edge of the AONB. But it is only at *first glance*:

- It is still not viable. The reports commissioned by the Council draw attention to that.

- It still threatens the AONB, even without a building across the boundary. The AONB is not just a series of lines on a map but is a concept that needs careful protection. It's absurd to argue that no harm will come to the AONB just because there is no actual building within it.
- It would still increase the traffic to an already busy series of roads – many of them lanes – by an unacceptable amount. The main roads will need scores of extra signs (when signs are already a blot on the landscape) and there is no guarantee road users will follow instructions to avoid lanes. The lanes are, wherever possible, the province of horse riders, dog walkers and cyclists. They are already struggling against the number of cars which zip through the lanes, taking short-cuts to the main junctions.
- As to need, why guild the lily? The countryside is free for all to enjoy right now. It needs no adornment. The fact that the rural landscape around the Horkesleys and the Stour Valley north of Colchester, 'lacks' coaches, traffic jams, roundabouts, litter, signs, is, you must agree, a very good thing.

We cannot stop progress, but progress should not be measured by the commodification of the natural world. It is our duty, as citizens and as parents or grandparents to protect what our young and their young in years to come have always enjoyed without paying. If you go, as I did yesterday, to the Royal Academy and stand in front of the Constable painting, *The Leaping Horse*, you will notice how recognisable that Dedham landscape still is. That didn't happen by accident. Generations have protected that landscape from the intrusion of buildings, shops and 'centres' that – had they been built – would have ruined what visitors to the area prize so highly.

On our head be it if we do not do the same thing.

Yours sincerely,

Kate Charlton-Jones