

STOUR VALLEY ACTION GROUP NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2007

Dear SVAG members and friends,

Buntings have told us that they are nearly ready to re-submit their planning application for the Horkesley Park Heritage and Conservation Centre. March 31st will be the anniversary of their latest withdrawal and we must expect that they will re-submit before then.

Many of you will know that they have been collecting signatures in the car park of ASDA and many other places over the last year. The tactic being used is a blatant 'soft sell' using a poor Suffolk Punch to lure the passing public into signing the petition for their plans for Horkesley Park'. These signatures will probably be worthless in Planning terms but we will have to counter them by getting every one who cares about the protection of the countryside to write to the Colchester Borough Council in protest when the time comes We will have to, once again 'rally the troops' to stop this invasive retail outlet that threatens existing businesses and the very beauty of the countryside they claim to celebrate. Far from 'Conservation' the project is likely to be one of 'Destruction'.

Those of you who wrote before will have to write or e-mail again. We will confirm the Planning Reference (which will be different from last time) and address to you as soon as the project is re-launched.

When the time comes, please encourage as many friends, family and neighbours to do the same!!

SVAG now has in place village co-ordinators throughout the Stour valley who will be distributing leaflets and posters and we would ask you to help in distributing and displaying these resources.

The main areas of objection are likely to be:

- Potentially disastrous affect of the development on the precious Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).
- Retail development of huge garden centre and restaurant facilities on an agricultural site. These facilities are simply not needed in the area and will probably provide few genuine local jobs.
- Rural gridlock; Local roads and villages just cannot sustain the huge potential increase in traffic that will inevitably result.
- Reduced rural access with existing footpaths being fenced in.
- The isolation of the beautiful Grade I Listed All Saint's Church, just yards from the proposed development.
- Noise and light pollution: totally unacceptable levels of both.
- Loss of jobs in existing local businesses. Why should local family firms be threatened by this unwanted development?

A more detailed list of facts and points of protest from the last application are on the new SVAG website: <http://stourvalleyactiongroup.org.uk/HorkesleyPark2.html> **This will be fully up-dated as soon as the new Application is launched.**

It is vitally important that the Colchester Borough Council understand the widespread feelings of the local community against this development or else this beautiful historic landscape will be lost and gone forever. With 'Cuckoo Farm' and the football stadium going ahead - Where will the expansion of Colchester end? When the outlying villages of Bergholt, Great and Little Horkesley, Boxted, Langham and Nayland are subsumed into the urban sprawl that is Colchester?

Thank you for all you can do to help in this valiant fight to save a peaceful, beautiful part of the country that is quintessential England.

Yours Sincerely

Will Pavry, Chairman, Stour Valley Action Group.