

# £25m heritage centre delayed

PLANS for a £25million heritage and conservation centre at Great Horkesley have been delayed.

The Highways Agency, a statutory consultee, has told planners it needs more information from developers Bunting and Sons about the traffic implications of the Horkesley Park project before it can comment.

The agency says it should have been involved in the early stages of the transport assessment and the use of 2005 traffic surveys by the firm's consultants is not consistent with Department of Transport guidance.

Buntings' proposals included improving bus services to the site, but

**by Pat Bray**

the agency points out bus operators have not yet been contacted, though a meeting is planned to discuss "enhancing transport accessibility."

Colchester Borough Council's senior planning officer John Davies said: "The council was originally looking at considering the application in June, but we're now waiting for the highways issues to be resolved.

"Once we have greater clarity, the application will probably go to the planning committee later in the summer."

Kate Bunting, a partner in

Bunting and Sons, said: "We are aware of the response from the Highways Agency and the request for further information.

"It's not unusual for statutory consultees to raise questions and ask for further detail on certain matters that particularly interest them in order to ensure the thoroughness of their reports.

"This request is being dealt with as part of the due process."

The Horkesley Park plan, which involves 117 acres on the edge of the Stour Valley, includes a country park, main building, art gallery, Suffolk Punch breeding centre, gardens and an underground nature watch warren.