



Sue Jackson
Principal Planning Officer
Environmental and protective Services
Colchester Borough Council
PO Box 889
Rowan House
Colchester CO3 3WG

February 7th 2013

Dear Ms Jackson,

The Stour Valley Visitor Centre at Horkesley Park, Application No 120965

Further to your letter of 17th January 2013 inviting additional written comment on the above application, we believe that it must be refused on the basis that it is contrary to policy and the findings of the recently issued consultants' reports submitted by the team retained by the Council at local taxpayers expense.

In view of the incomprehensible position the Planning Officers have indicated they will be adopting in recommending approval of the application we have taken Leading Counsel's opinion on both the planning position and the process that the Council has followed. We attach that opinion from Mark Lowe QC together with an opinion on policy from Pomery Planning Consultants and our own analysis of the question of financial viability and visitor numbers. We trust that the opinion will assist you and your colleagues in preparing your report and we wish the Council to be in no doubt as to the areas of major concern that we have over your position and that you should be clear as to the areas that we will challenge if your misguided approach continues and leads to a resolution to approve being made by the Planning Committee.

The Stour Valley Action Group's position throughout all the applications for Horkesley Park since 2001, of which this is the latest iteration, is that it would cause irreparable harm to the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and destroy the peace and tranquillity for which the area is internationally famous. If approved it would set a precedent for inappropriate development in, and adjacent, to Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty across the Country. This is surely not the intent of the NPPF or the Council.

If Horkesley Park were to be approved, it would completely negate the findings of the applicant's own consultants, LDA Associates, in their report for the Countryside Commission of 1997 entitled the Dedham Vale Landscape in which they extol the virtues of the outspokenness of local communities who care about the Dedham Vale to resist harmful change. We are vocal and this would be harmful change.

We are sure that the Planning Officers will change their stated position and see the overwhelming reasons for recommending rejection of the application.

Yours sincerely

W L Pavry
Chairman, Stour Valley Action Group

www.stourvalleyactiongroup.org.uk

The Walnut Tree, Little Horkesley, Colchester, CO6 4DG