

We won't build the Horkesley Park plan

By **WENDY BRADING**

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CONTROVERSIAL plans for a heritage centre in the Dedham Vale are unlikely to be pursued, it has been revealed.

Long-running family business Bunting and Sons went into administration after a failed ten-year battle to win permission for a tourist attraction at Horkesley Park.

The new owners of the site, W and H Park, are now drawing up options for the land.

While the firm has declined to reveal its ideas at this stage, it said a heritage centre, which would have attracted thousands

But developers say they might look at housing on beauty spot

of visitors, is unlikely to be one of the options.

One possibility is believed to be for houses on the site of the redundant greenhouses off London Road.

This is outside the area of outstanding natural beauty.

W and H Park said it wanted to speak to local people before their proposals are made public, which is expected to be next month.

A representative for the firm said it also intended to carry out extensive consultation and community engagement.

Will Pavry, chairman of Stour Valley Action Group, which led the fight against the plans for Horkesley Park, welcomed the firm's intentions to consult the public. *

The group fought a vociferous campaign against the plan for a heritage centre, claiming it would destroy the peace and tranquility

of the area of outstanding natural beauty.

Bunting and Sons drew up a total of five schemes, but went into administration last October owing more than £14 million.

Assets, including Westwood Park, Horkesley Park and the Grade II-listed building the Chantry, were sold to W and H Park this year for £6.3million.

Mr Pavry said: "We welcome the fact Pigeon – the parent company of W and H Park – wants to consult as widely as possible with the community and local organisations.

"I think it is too early to comment on their plans for various options for the greenhouse site, but they are not planning to put in an application for the Horkesley Park development.

"They will be sensitive to the requirements of the area of outstanding natural beauty.



■ Campaign – Will Pavry

"There will be a lot of views for and against. As a group, we do not have a view yet.

"We have made it clear the problems with the Horkesley Park applications were the impact of vast numbers of people and cars on the area.

"It is clear that will not be a factor with the proposals for the site. To that extent, we welcome the initial meeting."

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