



Stour Valley Action Group

www.stourvalleyactiongroup.org.uk

Newsletter



6th January 2014

Dear Member,

Horkesley Park Appeal Current Status

We last wrote to you in October 2013 following the Public Inquiry indicating that the Inspector would make his recommendation to the Secretary of State early in 2014. We have recently been advised that the Secretary of State will announce his decision on or before May 6th 2014. We could therefore have several months to wait until we hear the outcome.

As most of you will be aware, there was a major development in the fortunes of Bunting and Sons in the middle of October in that the Bank of Scotland, as their main creditor, applied to the Courts to have the partnership put into administration. As a result, Deloitte LLP were appointed as Administrators. We have now seen a detailed report published by Deloitte that shows the very considerable extent of the debt owed by Buntings to the Bank and other creditors, and the substantial overstatement of fixed asset value in their most recent unaudited accounts which relates to the year ended October 31st 2011. The net debt of the partnership is over £10M. Deloitte have made it clear that no unsecured creditors will receive any payment. Such creditors include Colchester Borough Council, a number of local traders and most, if not all, of the Buntings' consultants. HMRC are also owed a considerable sum and it is not clear whether this will be paid. Should you wish to see the report in full, it is available on the Deloitte web site.

The Administrators are continuing to operate the partnership with a view to maximizing its value on disposal. It is probable that it will be sold in separate parts and in particular we believe that the Westwood Park business may be sold separately. It is not known what will happen to the assets relating to Horkesley Park and we can speculate that Deloitte are awaiting the outcome of the Appeal before making a final decision on this.

The Planning Appeal attaches to the property concerned with the original Planning Application. If the Appeal is upheld, the then current owners of the land and properties would be the beneficiaries of that decision. They would of course be subject to the full conditions that were agreed between the Council and Bunting & Sons at the Public Inquiry.

We will ensure that you are advised as soon as there is further news.

Happy New Year.

Will Pavry
Chairman, Stour Valley Action Group