

Cautious welcome for 22-home plans

Area was earmarked to be a heritage park

By Chad Nugent

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PLANS have been submitted for 22 homes on a site which was once set to be used as a £25-million heritage centre.

Morson Homes has lodged the application for land off London Road, Great Horkesley, next to the Church of All Saints, which includes dozens of disused greenhouses.

The land has been the subject of controversy for more than 13 years after its previous owners, Bunting and Sons, wanted to build a heritage centre.

Bunting and Sons, which wanted to call the area Horkesley Park, went into administration in 2014 owing £14million, and the land was among assets.

It was bought by W and H Park, a subsidiary of Pigeon Investments, which has worked with Mersea Homes to come up with a scheme, which includes four affordable homes.

The Stour Valley Action Group fought hard to stop the heritage



REDEVELOPMENT PLAN: Disused greenhouses in Great Horkesley, where homes could be built. Inset, Kate Charlton-Jones of the Stour Valley Action Group

centre going ahead, fearing thousands of extra visitors would lead to the peace and tranquillity of the area of outstanding natural beauty being disrupted. The group will be meeting next week to draft an official response.

Chairman Kate Charlton-Jones cautiously welcomed the plans, but wanted assurances development would not get out of control.

She said: "I think Pigeon has been very careful and sensible in consulting with us and a number

of other local interest groups.

"The plans are interesting, small scale and reasonably attractive. If the council does give permissions, and it is a big if, I would like to see a very strong condition imposed which guards against any further development."

The homes range from two to five bedrooms and have been designed to fit in with other rural estates in the surrounding area. Colchester Council aims to make a decision by July 19.