



**Response of Great Horkesley Parish Council to the revised proposal from Barratt David Wilson
Homes for the development of land east of Nayland Road Great Horkesley CBC ref. 213363**

Transport Statement

1. This section of the Parish Council's comments on the revised application from BDWH should be read in conjunction with the diagrams which form the first five pages of the Transport Statement, starting with **page 1**, which covers the Coach Road junction and the site access from the A134.

It appears from the diagram that the footway emerging from the development is not to be connected to the existing footway on the eastern side of Nayland Road. This omission would result in residents from the development wanting to use the bus stop to the north of the Coach Road junction having to cross Nayland Road twice and also Coach Road. It thus creates an entirely avoidable risk.

The footway emerging from the development alongside the vehicular access should be directly linked to the existing footway on the eastern side of Nayland Road.

2. The Council is strongly of the view that the provision of a pedestrian refuge in Nayland Road adjacent to the vehicular access does not given sufficient priority to pedestrians who need to cross here. These will include:

- Children from the northern end of the new development walking to and from the Bishop William Ward School, the playground on the village Jubilee Green and the Green itself, where village events and football training take place;
- Children from the existing population walking to and from the new Scout and Guide HQ;
- People of all ages walking to and from the allotments;
- People of all ages walking to and from the Village Hall and the existing shops, the pub and the old village hall further north on the A134.

The proposed tiger crossing adjacent to Brick Kiln Lane is too remote to be of use to these pedestrians.

The A134 crossing adjacent to the access to the new development should be a zebra crossing to ensure that drivers give priority to pedestrians wishing to cross here.

3. It is not clear how cyclists emerging from the new development at this point are enabled to join the shared footway cycleway on the opposite side of Nayland Road other than by walking across.

The Council notes the proposal (shown by red hatching) to remove the vegetation including presumably the trees to the rear of the footway in order to obtain a 2.5m width of shared footway/cycleway. It is accepted that this vegetation is of poor quality, the trees having mostly sprung up after the October 1987 gale. Nevertheless, the change would undoubtedly be unpopular.

The Council would not object to the removal of the vegetation, including the trees, but feels that the impact on the street scene should be considered by the landscape officer because it would expose a number of back garden fences which some will no doubt consider have an adverse impact which should be mitigated.



4. Moving on to **Page 2**, the footway/cycleway around the northern side of the Keelers Way bell-mouth is clearly too narrow to be fit for purpose, which is curious given that there is enough land here (in no known ownership but maintained by CBC) for the width to be maintained.

The width of the footway/cycleway on the northern side of the Keelers Way bell-mouth should be maintained by using some of the grassed area adjacent to the existing footway.

5. Similarly, the footway/cycleway on both sides of the Blackbrook Road bell-mouth, shown on **page 4**, would appear to be not fit for purpose.

Consideration should be given to maintaining the width of the footway/cycleway across the Blackbrook Road junction by reducing the generous width of the Blackbrook Road bell-mouth.

6. Moving to **Page 5**, the Parish Council is astonished and appalled that the applicant considers it acceptable that southbound cyclists should be abruptly returned to the carriageway face to face with northbound traffic i.e. on the wrong side of the road in a derestricted section of the A134. No warning signs for northbound motorists are proposed nor are there any facilities proposed to enable southbound cyclists to return to the southbound side of the carriageway.

The proposed arrangement for terminating the cycle lane south of Green Lane is inherently dangerous and strongly opposed by the Parish Council. If the applicant really cannot do better than this, the application should be refused.

7. Elsewhere in the application, the applicant indicates a willingness to make a contribution to the cost of continuing the shared footway/cycleway to join the Colchester cycleway network in Chesterwell, which would be consistent with the requirements of the emerging Local Plan (LP). However, this willingness is linked by the applicant to the acceptability of building 100 homes on a site identified in the LP and the outline application as being appropriate for 80. Proportionately this represents a smaller contribution than was agreed between the landowner and the planning authority at the outline stage, so it is clearly a flawed argument.

8. The applicant's argument for building 100 houses on a site identified in the emerging LP as being required to make a contribution of 80 to the Borough's 15-year target seems largely based on the "discovery" that it was possible to do so whilst meeting required design criteria. There is a bald statement on page 29 of the DAS that this uplift has been agreed with the Council during the pre-application process. This cannot be true: only members of the Council in Committee to agree to such an uplift and this application has not yet been considered by the Planning Committee.

9. It is also noted that the applicant has now moved from describing the 25% uplift as "slight" in the original application to "relatively small" in the revised version. 25% is neither slight nor relatively small: it is substantial and one would expect a substantial argument to support it, perhaps based in the need of the planning authority to meet its housing targets. However, as far as GHPC members can discover, the application contains no such argument, which ought to be grounds for refusing the application.



10. However, the site was supported by the Parish Council for inclusion in the emerging LP and the previous outline application was also supported. There is much in the *revised* version of the current application which the Council can now support and it would not wish to see it refused when it believes the gap between authorities and applicant could yet be closed.

11. The Council believes that there is an argument that *provided that* 100 houses can be accommodated on the site in a matter that satisfies the design criteria of the Borough and County Councils, the extra 20 houses – a substantial 25% uplift – should be regarded as necessary in order to maintain the viability of the overall development whilst providing not the cycleway *contribution* required by the 80-house proposal but the full shared footway/cycleway between the village and Chesterwell as set out in the feasibility study that accompanied the outline application. Such a link would surely be attractive to potential purchasers of the houses proposed for the site and it would therefore be in the interests of the developer to provide it.

The Parish Council strongly believes that if the applicant will not agree to provide the full cycle link between the application site and the existing cycle network in Chesterwell, the application to build 100 houses on the 80-house site should be rejected.

12. The Parish Council regards it as more important that the link to Chesterwell be provided that that the section of footway between Keelers Way and Coach Road should be converted into shared footway/cycleway. This would overcome a number of difficulties in the present proposal described above and would avoid the inevitable criticism from residents following the removal of trees.

The Parish Council therefore urges the Borough and County Council to negotiate with the applicant to achieve provision of the full cycle route between Keelers Way and Chesterwell on the basis that the requirement to provide the route between Coach Road and Keelers Way be dropped.

13. Overall, the Council is concerned that at a maximum 2.5m, the proposed shared footway/cycleway may not be wide enough to keep users from passing vehicles.

The Parish Council urges the applicant and highway authority to look again at the proposal for a shared footway/cycleway within the village and increase its width to the nationally-recommended 3m wherever possible. Clearly, between the village and Chesterwell the 3m standard can be achieved.

Letter from Savills to Lucy Monday dated 21st June

14. The Parish Council will largely confine its comments to Section 3, the applicant's response to the Council's comments on the original application.

15. It is noted that on **page 17** the applicant once again fails to make a strong argument for the provision of 100 houses on an 80-house site and refers to a non-existent agreement with Colchester Borough Council regarding this matter.

16. It is noted that on **page 18** the applicant seeks to rely on what was agreed in the outline consent to limit what might be required from the new application. The Parish Council rejects this approach: the substantial uplift in housing numbers in the new application is such that a substantial uplift from what was required from the landowner under the outline consent is now appropriate.



17. The writer argues in the second box in page 18 that the tiger crossing in the vicinity of Keeler Way meets the needs of pedestrians from the northern end of the development wishing to access the village school, hall and green. This is simply untrue, as has been pointed out in more detail elsewhere.

18. Also on page 18 and also on **page 19**, the Council notes that whilst the writer rejects the objection of the parish council to the original layout of the northern end of the development, the layout in the revised proposal has actually been changed to meet the Council's – and residents' – criticisms.

19. The reference to ECC Highways guidance on **page 20** is noted but the Parish Council remains dubious that footways adjacent to roads within the development will remain free of parked cars. It is not a question of providing "the required level of parking" but rather of providing pedestrian routes through the development on which it is actually impossible to park cars. This is particularly important in respect of the proposed route of the Essex Way through the development.

Other matters

20. Given that the applicant is seeking to maintain the higher density of housing at the northern end of the site, the Parish Council now doubts that the play equipment should be sited at the southern open space, closer to the larger houses that have larger gardens. The play equipment should be provided closer to the homes with smaller gardens which are more likely to be occupied by those with younger children. It would also be closer to the Scout and Guide HQ and the allotments – for adult gardeners the proximity of play equipment for their children would be a boon.

The Parish Council recommends that the play area be established in the open space to the north of the Manor drive where it is likely to be of most use to the village's newest residents.

21. It has been noted that the Parish Council's previous observation that the proposed development omits the outdoor gym which at the public consultation on the outline proposal was the feature most identified by residents as a requirement for the site has been rejected on the grounds that it was not a requirement of the outline consent. Be that as it may, this is a new application for a substantially larger number of houses and the Parish Council would be failing in its duty to existing residents if it did not point out that in the face-to-face public consultation, the outdoor gym and an associated fitness trail emerged as the features most people wanted to see provided on the site.

The Parish Council recommends that an outdoor gym be provided on the site in accordance with residents' wishes – perhaps on the southern public open space in the position where the application currently proposes to site the play equipment.

22. In the online material related to the development there is some mention in relation to the proposed Scout and Guide HQ and the allotments of the LP requirement that development of the site should not compromise the setting of the Manor. The Parish Council is aware that the requirement exists first in order that the land in front of the Manor should not be built upon, thus obscuring it from the A134, and second in order to emphasise that Great Horkesley is a village characterised by large open spaces adjacent to its main road and thus different from the urban mass to the south. Clearly allotments in this space would not be out of place. As far as the HQ is concerned, it is sufficiently far from the Manor not to have any impact on it and as the Parish Council has stated before, it should be



an attractive building which enhances its setting, not merely a functional one, and which subject to planning consent being obtained at the time can be extended as the need arises, again without compromising the setting of the Manor. The need for the land immediately surrounded the building to provide safe outdoor activity space for the younger members of the Associations must be allowed for from the outset.

The Parish Council regards the proposed location of the Scout and Guide HQ and the allotments as appropriate and expects them to be arranged so as to facilitate future extensions as the need arises.

23. In discussion with the applicant the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Parish Council stated that whilst the Council expected the woodland to the east of the site to be available as open space in perpetuity to all residents, it did not wish to be responsible for its management from the outset. There now appears to be debate online as to the exact future status of this land. The Parish Council's view has not changed from that expressed at the pre-application and statutory consultations on the outline application: the land must be available for recreation to all Great Horkesley residents, including camping by older scouts and guides using the new HQ. It must also provide permanent screening of the development from the east. To an extent its ownership is a lesser issue, but it must be managed as a village asset.

The parish council would welcome being involved in discussions about the future status, ownership and management of the woodland to the east of the development site.

24. The Parish Council welcomes the applicant's willingness to provide most of the 'missing link' in the Essex Way between the end of Brick Kiln Lane and the Black Brook bridge in Ivy Lodge Road by establishing a route through the development site. The Parish Council would prefer this route to be a Public Right of Way wherever possible, a view already expressed to the applicant. The Council believes this could be done most easily while the land is in one ownership.

The applicant should continue to negotiate with the highway authority to establish the route of the Essex Way through the site with the status of Public Right of Way wherever practicable.

25. Given that riding in the section of Ivy Lodge Road between the A134 and the Black Brook bridge can be unpleasant for cyclists owing to its narrowness, the awkward bend and its use as a shortcut by HGVs, it does not seem inappropriate to provide a cycle access/egress for the development close to the Black Brook bridge. If regulation prevents this short section of cycle path being part of the Essex Way, it should either be constructed alongside the Essex Way path or the path in question should not be designated as part of the Essex Way. Paragraph 24 above notwithstanding, cyclists' safety should be the paramount consideration here.

The Parish Council supports the proposed provision for cyclists of access to and egress from the development close to the Black Brook bridge in Ivy Lodge Road.