

Great Wratting Parish Council would like to register our concerns over/object to the proposal to develop 2500 homes at Great Wilsey Park, Haverhill. Our major concerns are:

1.0 Traffic Generation

The current outline planning application proposes that 2500 houses will be built which equates to approximately 4 – 5,000 extra people. If the current ratio of working age people in Haverhill is followed (52.9%), a not unreasonable assumption, then this equates to approx. between 2100 and 2600 people who will be, or wish to be, in employment. This is on top of the other development sites around Haverhill.

The difficulty of creating new jobs in Haverhill is demonstrated by Haverhill Research Park. Despite being planned in SEBC Local Development Framework since 2001, and receiving £2m Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough LEP infrastructure funding, £2m New Anglia LEP infrastructure funding support & SEBC infrastructure funding, the Haverhill Research Park (expected to create up to 300 jobs) still cannot attract new tenants away from Cambridge because the distance is said to be too great. If new businesses cannot be attracted to Greenfield employment sites which are ready for development, then it is unlikely Haverhill's brownfield employment sites will be taken up. This puts serious doubts on the target of delivery of up to 2000 new jobs for Haverhill.

Thus it is more than likely that employment opportunities will be found outside Haverhill in surrounding towns, especially around Cambridge. This is in direct contradiction of three National and Local policies and Strategies:-

- **National Planning Policy**

According to PPG13, Land use planning was to have a key role in delivering the Government's integrated transport strategy. *By shaping the pattern of development and influencing the location, scale, density, design and mix of land uses, planning can help to reduce the need to travel, reduce the length of journeys and make it safer and easier for people to access jobs.*

- **Government Housing Strategy for England 2011**

States that *new homes should be well connected to jobs.* There is currently no evidence to suggest that the houses proposed for North-East Haverhill will be well connected to jobs.

- **Core Strategy for Haverhill, Dec 2010**

Section 6.3 - *The growth will be in homes and, most importantly, jobs in an effort to try and reduce the levels of out-commuting and create a better balance of employment types in the town.*

The Highways England response to this application points out – *“ that the development is substantial and although relatively remote from the strategic road network, there is nevertheless potential for the development to have severe adverse impacts on the strategic road network
The site is located to the north east of Haverhill. First point of access to the Strategic Road Network is likely to be one of the following:*

A11/A1307 junction to the south-east of Cambridge (16km to the NW)

A14/A143 junction at Bury St Edmunds (25km to the NE)

A120/A131 junction at Braintree (25km to the SE)

Given the dominance of Cambridge as a regional centre, the first of these is likely to be the most significantly affected. This is borne out in the trip distribution.”

Advanced Transport Research (ATR) recently (June 2014) conducted a series of traffic surveys on the A1307 corridor between Haverhill and Cambridge. These results show a sharp westbound peak in the AM and a broader eastbound peak in the PM. This tidal flow is as expected and represents vehicles travelling towards Cambridge during the morning and leaving during the afternoon/evening.

The high levels of traffic recorded in and out of Haverhill show how difficult it is for the villages to access the A1307 at peak times. This shows that Haverhill is not self-contained and any expansion to the town would make an already difficult situation worse. Cambridgeshire County Cllr Roger Hickford, who is the local member and chairman of the A1307 Steering Group, said: *"This is a very important report. In 2012 the A1307 was officially designated as being over-capacity, but since then there has been a big increase in the volume of traffic using the road - an increase in peak periods of five per cent in the mornings and eleven per cent in the evenings."*

"There is also a ten per cent increase in traffic going to Haverhill in the mornings, making it even more difficult for residents to enter and exit villages along the route. "

"One out of every 12 vehicles using the A1307 is an HCV. On top of all this, the figures suggest that 12 per cent of the traffic using the A1307 commuter corridor do not actually use the A1307, but instead prefer to by-pass the A1307 and use the roads through the villages, especially in the mornings."

Thus it is clear that the A1307 is a critical piece of infrastructure which must be up-graded for overriding safety and economic reasons. This is supported by the Cambridge Sub-regional background documentation, which stated that where the jobs/housing imbalance is excessive there clearly needs to be efforts to address that before further population expansion, e.g. the Haverhill corridor, which means that jobs delivery needs to first be increased before new houses and the A1307 to Cambridge needs to be duelled to encourage investment in new businesses in Haverhill.

The delivery of this key piece of infrastructure is supported by the St Edmundsbury Core Strategy (December 2010) Policy CS12 Haverhill Strategic Growth:

"the need to ensure that all essential infrastructure is in place before any development is occupied and that agreements are in place to deliver the desirable infrastructure required as a result of the development."

Thus if the proposed NE by-pass for Haverhill is not built for at least 5 years or the A1307 is not duelled then commuters will find alternative ways through minor roads to Cambridge. These are likely to include:

- B1061 through Great Wrattling and the Thurlows. This is very narrow up the hill out of Great Wrattling being effectively only suitable for one way traffic.
- Withersfield Road, Great Wrattling (west via Withersfield and West Wrattling toward Cambridge) this is effectively a single track road with passing places. It has a sharp drop off from the tarmac on either side with very soft verges. The 30 mph limit in Great Wrattling village is regularly broken and it is particularly dangerous for pedestrians as there is no pavement on the narrow lane.

Neither of these roads is suitable for increases in traffic which will inevitably happen if this development is given permission.

This use of minor roads is a direct contradiction of the Haverhill Vision 2031:

The concept statement attached as Appendix 6 to the Haverhill Vision 2031 details scope for around 2500 homes and a development that will:

"Minimise the impact of the development on the surrounding countryside."

Also in the St Edmundsbury 2013 Rural Vision it states that *“in 2031, rural St Edmundsbury will be a place where:*

Aspiration 15: “The provision of infrastructure and services meets the needs of villages.”

It goes on to say for Great and Little Thurlow under *“Local constraints and opportunities”*
“h. The local road infrastructure and junctions may require assessment and potential upgrading if new development is proposed in the locality.”

Finally in Section 4.2 of the Haverhill Vision 2031 Document identifies nine key objectives in order to set the context within which the ‘spatial vision’ has been developed. Two of these objectives are précised -

Objective 3: Ensure infrastructure requirements are meet in a timely fashion;

Objective 6: Reduce the need to travel by unsustainable means;

The application has not even mentioned the need for the upgraded infrastructure and has made no real attempt to reduce the need to travel when most of the jobs will be in locations remote to Haverhill, especially Cambridge.

2.0 Provision of services for the new development

2.1 Health

With the Haverhill population forecast to increase by over 1/3 in next 20 years there is great concern in Great Wratting over the provision of health care in the area. The BMA recently suggested that GP provision was at ‘breaking point’. Currently the situation is poor in Haverhill and a large increase in population without commensurate facilities will make the situation even worse. Currently there are three surgeries in Haverhill:

- Christmas Maltings & Clements - 17,787 patients
- Christmas Maltings: Dr Selby – 10,622 patients
- Stourview Medical – 3,933 patients

This makes a total of 32,342 people registered with GPs in Haverhill. Nationally each GP deals with approx. 1,700 patients. In 2012 there were 15.3 GP equivalents working at the three practises. So there is currently an undersupply of GPs by 3.7. To make matters worse the Crown Health Centre closed in 2012.

The NHS West Suffolk, Clinical Commissioning Group – Haverhill Health Needs Assessment 2013 & summary views on Health Service Provision document supports this concern:

“Services and facilities:

- *Need more facilities due to the generally increasing population (due to new housing), and specifically for the ageing population;*
- *Grouped facilities/one-stop shop/Healthy Living Centre e.g. alternative therapies, NHS and voluntary groups together;*
- *The lack of local facilities results in inappropriate A&E attendance/ 999 calls.”*

*“Several indicators point to poor health levels in Haverhill, particularly around **respiratory illness, mental health, obesity, and alcohol**. There is significantly more asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, depression, and adult obesity. Also hospital admissions are significantly higher than England for chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, self-harm and alcohol-related harm, and hip replacement.”*

“There are numerous services, statutory and non-statutory, available to residents of Haverhill. However, many are located at the hospitals in Bury St. Edmunds and Cambridge, with access restricted by poor transport links.”

“Transport to services outside Haverhill, especially West Suffolk Hospital, is a big issue for residents. For those with a car, parking is expensive and limited, while for those without a car, buses do not run directly to the hospital, there are no buses after 18.00, and bus passes cannot be used before 9.30. This is of particular concern when the Out Of Hours service is based at West Suffolk Hospital. Transport is better to Cambridge and Sudbury, leading people to use Addenbrooke’s A&E, rather than Out Of Hours services based in West Suffolk Hospital. However, in all cases, transport can be very expensive, especially if several trips are required, or if a taxi is needed.

6.2.2 Out Of Hours access

In addition to the transport issues with accessing face-to-face OOH care, there are long waiting times to see a doctor, and Haverhill residents would like a permanently staffed local OOH service.

6.2.3 GP access

There are long waiting times to get a doctor’s appointment, for example 2-3 weeks for The Christmas Maltings and Clements Practice. It can be longer to see a specific doctor. This can lead to deterioration in a patient’s health, and is confusing when a shorter follow-up period has been specified by the GP or hospital.”

Regarding the provision of a new surgery on the development, the consensus of opinion in the existing health care providers in Haverhill is that the new proposed surgery would be too small to be commercially viable because of the way surgeries now structure themselves. Also the way young doctors are prepared to work, it is highly unlikely that such a small surgery will attract doctors and will therefore not be fundable.

Also it would be unlikely that existing surgeries would take up the offer of running a new surgery as they would prefer to see any 106 monies used to develop the existing urgent care centre.

The development would simply increase the overburden on Haverhill health services.

2.2 Waste

A second area of concern to Great Wratting is the future provision of waste. It is not clear how the Haverhill waste recycling centre can accommodate around 30% growth. It is already very small and over stretched. Recent policy change to recycling services of green garden waste within the Borough could also have a significant implications for people from the whole area taking their green bin waste directly to site, which will effect carbon emissions and sustainability more than direct council collections, increasing road congestion and road safety concerns.

3.0 Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is about balancing economic, social and environmental aspects:

3.1 The economic aspect should be focused on the right land being available in the right place at the right time, identifying and coordinating development requirements and infrastructure to facilitate economic growth. The Outline Planning Application does not address realistically the employment nor infrastructure requirements.

3.2 The social aspect is about meeting the community’s needs, but nothing has been mentioned about the potential impacts on surrounding villages.

3.3. The environmental aspect. Landscaping – the existing edge of development within the area is wide consisting of multi-fuctional areas of trees and open spaces. This currently guarantees the visual impact of the development remains low and is not evident on the wider rural landscape. It also provides recreational space around the site. In line with current practise Great Wratting Parish Council would like to see an increase in separation distances between the housing and the new green edge.

Great Wratting Parish Council

Name of Town/Parish: Great Wrating

Signature of Chairman/Clerk: 

Parish Council response to this application:

No Comment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Support	<input type="checkbox"/>

Parish Council Observations:
please see attached document.