

Objections to planning application DC/20/0614/RM

From:

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Residents Response

It is concerning to see how once again Revised Matters applications are being misused by this developer and we are once again presented with design which is outside the intent of the original plans. Also there seems to be a process in place where, once outline planning permission is given then consultations are in the main between West Suffolk District Council or Suffolk County Council and the developer, without involvement of the local residents who have only seen the original outline plans.

We also wish to emphasise that our objections and comments are made with a view to promoting good housing and environment within Haverhill to support communities to thrive, for now and for the future.

Our objections and concerns include:

1) Road Infrastructure

a) The proposal that Anne Suckling Roads should be opened up for general use is not acceptable.

Councillor Burns (Haverhill Town Council Planning working party meeting, 10.08.21) quite rightly pointed out that the relief road was to be built, partially to stop such a use of Anne Suckling Road. Historically many objections have been raised about such a proposal. And the concept plan for Haverhill of 2007 is clear that Anne Suckling Road was not intended to be a link road or for general traffic.

At a number of outline planning meetings attended by residents there has been assurance that this road would not be opened up for general use. Some residents have bought houses here on the assurance this would not happen including one neighbour who consulted with Persimmon when Phase 1 was beginning to be built and the sales office was just opened. He was told categorically that Ann Suckling Road would remain an estate road and would not become a link road. What is it that has changed?

b) It was suggested at a presentation to Haverhill Town Council 10 August that traffic calming measures might be employed to control the traffic. Two immediate issues come from this; the first is that the latest design recognises there is a 'problem' being created by opening this road to all traffic; the second is that traffic calming measures do not control volume of traffic, this road would create a short cut from the Cambridge Road to the Bury Road. The success at deterring traffic using traffic bumps or alternatives is limited when such a route can potentially cut journey time.

c) The junction at Ann Suckling Road is designed in such a way that vehicles accessing Boyton Hall estate from Haverhill are thrown into the centre of the road by the curve and camber of the actual road surface. Parking on that entry corner exacerbates this movement and there have been a number of near miss accidents in the past few months. This is without increasing the traffic flow. The number of vehicles parking along this road continues to grow and with the future occupation of 38 dwellings in Meadow Lands it is anticipated that the number of vehicles parking here and along other areas of Anne Suckling Road will increase further.

d) As residents of the area, we are still completely unclear of any benefits opening Ann Suckling Road would have for any sections of the community.

Potentially, opening this road would result in residents from the Boyton Hall Estate using the road to drive children to school rather than walking; as previously stated it is also highly likely that all residents in the area (including those on Boyton Hall and the newly built dwellings on the Ann Suckling road) would use this road, even with calming devices as a short cut across from the east to the west; there is a huge potential for neighbourhood and personal security being compromised by linking estates right across Haverhill. It should be noted how many established residential areas in other towns are now building barricades across linking streets to reduce traffic creating rat runs, as well as aiming to increase the security of the neighbour hoods. Why is Haverhill going in the opposite direction?

e) If Anne Suckling Road is used for general traffic it will result in more air and noise pollution from vehicles; as the allotment area buffers directly onto Anne Suckling Road, this area, where food will be grown, will be particularly badly affected. The houses squeezed onto the junction with the A143 end of Anne Suckling Road will also be affected in a similar way. These houses also have little distance between the road and the entrance to the houses bringing increased safety issues in what are supposed to be family houses.

f) Most residents accept that this road should have a bus route however it should have a bus gate which restricts other vehicular access as planned for Howe Road.

g) The building of the relief road (or non-building) of the relief road is increasingly an issue. Its route is shown on in all its glory on sketches, drawings etc. However, on the ground nothing is in evidence. Is this really going to be built? We are in clear danger that Ann Suckling Road could become the link road by default.

h) This developer manages to turn out plans and spring into action when it is building houses that will be sold. However, to get to this stage and only now be looking at the infrastructure of the project shows disregard current residents, people moving into these new properties and to the local authority. We have already seen site materials delivered to site via Anne Suckling Road. Again, we have been assured on a number occasions that this would not happen (assurances seem to mean nothing) the next areas to be built as we understand it are to be 3A and 6. How is it intended to get materials to site without using Anne Suckling Road if the first part of the relief Road is not constructed? We believe that house building should be halted until this first length of relief road is completed to give site access.

2) Football pitches and play area:

a) Councillors (Town Council working party meeting) also made some very good observations as well as expressing concern about the two football pitches, the 'container'

changing rooms and the play area.

Are two football pitches really necessary? It looks like there has not been enough consultation concerning this. A container changing room sounds a poor substitute for a solid building. Sports England recommend that if choices have to be made then toilets should take precedence over changing rooms.

b) The plans for the playground are very disappointingly small and unimaginative; A generous playground that is gated with a gradation of scale and design of play equipment to cater for a range of age groups with adequate seating for parents and carers is also essential. Playgrounds restricted to only toddler use is fraught with difficulties for parents with growing families with a range of ages.

c) We continue to believe that for this growing community, it is imperative that it should include a generous open green area with landscaping to create a space where people and families can meet, play informally and sit.

Other points:

d) The planning process - we feel that Persimmon continually use Revised Matters to erode the original vision of the area set in the outline planning; the proposed changing of the purpose of Anne Suckling Road is one of many such examples.

3) Attenuation basin and allotments

Very little was said about these areas. Landscaping around the allotments, including fencing need to be considered. Parking, for the allotments, should be restricted by parking bollards so that only allotment users can access the allocated parking bays otherwise they will be overflow parking for the new development.

Is there a possibility of a community orchard rather than allotments, opening this space for more than a few people?

4) Plaza

We still have no information about the plaza, a major part of the infrastructure and according to the design plan, the major design feature driving the 'city scape' density of this development.