



5th September 2023

Dear Braintree Planning Department

23/01994/FUL The Woodlands Hotel, Coupals Road, Sturmer, Essex

Haverhill Town Council submits the following response in respect of the above planning application for the demolition of the existing buildings on site and the erection of a 64no. bed care home (use Class 2) together with access, car parking, landscaping and associated works.

Haverhill Town Council OBJECTS to the application in its current form. Whilst supportive of the principle of development of a care home and the overall proposed concept, there are a number of material matters which leave us no option than to object.

1 – The permissive path that passes through the site has been used for at least 15 years by walkers and MUST be retained. It is an integral part of the Great Wilsey Park Masterplan for connecting the proposed country park on the Great Wilsey development (under construction now) to East Town Park and walking routes along the Stour valley. It would of course provide the occupants of the care home good access to these important facilities. We are concerned that that there is no mention of this path and its loss would be contrary to policy LPP48 on inclusive environments, LPP50 on protecting access to open space and the wider countryside and LPP52 promoting sustainable travel, as this permissive path connects to walking routes right through Great Wilsey, which care workers would use to walk to work.

2 – Contrary to policy LPP42, there is no mention of a footway/combined cycleway to connect the site to the footway further down Coupals Road and provide safe access to East Town Park. This should be included as part of a s106 agreement with SUFFOLK Highways and ESSEX Highways. This is to ensure safe and sustainable travel for workers and residents who may be able to use a scooter if there is a safe footway to use. Without this there is a serious risk that the occupant of the home will effectively be isolated due to the speed of traffic on a road with no footway, and workers will opt to come by car rather than walk or cycle.

HAVERHILL ARTS CENTRE, HIGH STREET, HAVERHILL, CB9 8AR
Tel: 01440 712858

Email: saffron.owen@haverhill-tc.gov.uk Web: www.haverhill-tc.gov.uk

3 – Previous discussions indicated that a condition of planning approval would be that a publicly accessible restaurant would be part of any proposal brought forward. The applicant has not indicated if the restaurant within the care home will be open to the public. Such an inclusive offer would be a positive for the residents and fulfil the undertaking made.

As a final note, the Landscape and Visual appraisal report submitted by the developers, in Paragraph 3.14 refers to Haverhill Vision 2031 and states that a potential link road will pass to the west of the site, between it and the existing housing edge. (down the driving range). This link road is no longer supported and will not be built.

Yours sincerely

Colin Poole
Town Clerk