

# Haverhill Town Council

## Minutes of a Meeting of Haverhill Town Council's

### PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

Held on Tuesday 21st October 2019 at 7.00pm at Haverhill Arts Centre, Haverhill, Suffolk, CB9 8AR



HAVERHILL  
TOWN COUNCIL

**Present:** Councillor P Hanlon (Chairman)  
Councillor B Davidson  
Councillor D Smith  
Councillor L Smith  
Councillor A Stinchcombe  
Councillor A Luccarini

**Apologies:** Councillor A Brown  
Councillor J Crooks

**In Attendance:** Mayor J Burns  
Chris Netton, Project Manager, Havebury Housing  
Sam Robinson, Gary Johns Architects  
Vicky Phillips, Assistant Clerk

There were 11 members of the public present.

#### **Welcome:**

Councillor P Hanlon welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised members of the public attending that the meeting was being recorded.

#### **ACTION**

**P19 Apologies for Absence**

/162 The above apologies were noted.

**P19 Declarations of Interest and requests for Dispensation**

/163 No declarations of interest were made and no requests for dispensation had been received.

**P19 Chris Netton, Havebury Housing and Sam Robinson, Gary Johns**

/164 Architects

**Presentation on scheme at Garages, Paske Avenue**

Appendix (ii) attached

Cllr Hanlon thanked the public, Mr Netton and Mr Robinson for attending the meeting.

Cllr Luccarini proposed and Cllr Davidson seconded to OBJECT to the application (see Appendix (i))

**RESOLVED**

**P19 Planning Applications currently before West Suffolk District Council and received by publication of agenda (List B attached)**

/165 Applications determined by the Committee are shown on List B attached to

the Minutes, see Appendix (i)

**P19 Date of next Meeting**

**/166** The next meeting of the Planning Committee will be on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2019 at 7.00pm.

**P19 Closure**

**/167** The meeting was closed at 8.17pm.

Signed .....  
**Chairman**

Date.....

**Appendix (i)**

**List A – Approved by Chairman and Clerk under delegated powers**

		PLAN NO.	PROPOSAL	LOCATION	TOWN COUNCIL DECISION

**List B – Considered at the Committee Meeting**

		PLAN NO.	PROPOSAL	LOCATION	TOWN COUNCIL DECISION
11.10.19 Expires 23.10.19	<b>1</b>	DC/19/1019/FUL	10no. dwellings (Demolition of existing garages)  Mr Sam Robinson	Garages, Paske Avenue	<p>The Town Council OBJECT to this application on the following:</p> <p>Revised scheme has not addressed the objections previously raised by the Town Council:</p> <p><b>Layout and Density of Building Design</b> Overdevelopment of the site. The proposal does not achieve good design and is out of character to the surrounding properties. There is no provision for recreation facilities or green space</p> <p><b>Highway issues</b> Traffic generated by the new development would increase vehicles using Paske Avenue, where there are already parking issues for existing residents, especially in the evening and at weekends. Further development would add to this congestion. There would not be sufficient provision for a vehicle turning circle</p> <p><b>Noise and Smells, Fumes</b> The Town Council notes comments from Environment Team on Air Quality Assessment report, but are aware of</p>

		PLAN NO.	PROPOSAL	LOCATION	TOWN COUNCIL DECISION
					<p>contradictory air quality sampling which suggests that a formal study should be undertaken by the applicant in order to inform any conditions or changes to the design to ensure the dwellings will be safe, particularly to young babies and children.</p> <p>Supports objections from residents of Paske Avenue.</p>

## Appendix (ii)

Chris Netton introduced himself and Sam Robinson and gave a brief background on Havebury Housing. CN showed a slide of post-war Paske Avenue and went on to explain about how much of the social housing that was built during the Haverhill expansion has, over the years, been sold through the Right to Buy scheme and that in 2003 Council housing stock was sold by the then St Edmundsbury Borough Council, to Havebury Housing. Currently there are circa 364 people on the Housing Need Register. The scheme at Paske Avenue will provide much needed 1 and 2 bedroom homes in Haverhill. The scheme is considered a town centre scheme, with green open space nearby. The 1 bedroom homes will be single occupancy, therefore not needing provision for green space for tenants with older children.

CN explained that it is appreciated that the proposed changes to the street scheme is not the preference of some, however, Havebury have taken on board resident's concerns and made amendments to the original proposed design. In a previous surveys and consultations, residents had suggested that Bungalows were more appropriate for the site and concerns over street scene were also considered by the Architects. The amended design incorporated 4 bungalows and building materials were changed to predominately red brick. Resident's concerns over noise and smells from the rubbish storage area were considered and deemed acceptable by Havebury as the bin storage would be inspected regularly and concealed in a closed storage facility.

Suffolk County Council Highways have removed their previous objection; CN confirmed that parking provision meets standard policy. Concerns over additional traffic using Paske Avenue have been looked into and a survey was carried out. A TRICS system was used to conclude that there will be little difference in traffic generated from the new development than that from the existing use of garages.

### **Resident's comments:**

Cllr Luccarini read out a statement from a resident who was unable to attend the meeting, but wished their comments noted (attached).

Mr W stated that the Town Council's objections had not been addressed, over development of the site, no outside space and flats dominated the site. Currently Paske Avenue is family orientated and a safe space for children to play outside. The provision of flats for single tenants is not in keeping with the area. Mr W felt that this was a visual disaster and would be miserable accommodation.

*CN did not consider that this development impacted on the safety of children.*

Resident: agreed that the development was imposing and argued that the site would be more suitable for additional bungalows or houses instead of the proposed flats. The Open Space that is mentioned as being close to the development is the Recreation Ground, which the resident felt was actually quite a long way walk away.

Resident: produced photos of Paske Avenue on a Sunday, the phot showed cars parked all along Paske Avenue and using the space in front of the garages. The resident also raised concern over construction traffic blocking the turning head and as there was little opportunity to park further down Paske Avenue due to the road being narrow, this would cause mayhem during the construction period. Resident asked if there are planned working hours? Would

these take into account noise, the school bus, disability bus and vehicles leaving and arriving at peak times for work?

Resident: Re-iterated that the new development was not in keeping with the 'old Haverhill' design and this was a shame as there was not a lot of 'old Haverhill' left. He agreed with other resident's comments that the new flats would tower above the existing and new bungalows and would be an eyesore. The existing road surface was in very poor condition and additional traffic would only make this worse. Also, vehicles already park on the junction making visibility when leaving poor, this would add to this problem.

Resident: Pointed out that, as DW had mentioned, the 1 bedroom flats would not be accommodating older children, would this mean that single tenants would mean a high turnover rate of occupancy, as single tenants and those with young babies would not stay for long?  
*CN – is not aware of a high turnover of tenants.*

There was then some discussion on what would happen if a tenant became pregnant and how long it would take for them to move on, which would mean a need for open space for that child.  
*CN explained, that they would be top of the list for re-housing.*

Comments were then made over the whether it would be better to have 1 bedroom houses rather than 1 bedroom flats

*CN explained that this was not feasible due to the site constraints, 1 bedroom houses took more of a footprint to accommodate parking and a garden.*

Residents again voiced their concerns over increased traffic, out of date data used for traffic movements to and from garages and the design of the flats.

Mr R – the bus depot behind the site had been offered to Havebury in the past, alleviating the issue of accessing via Paske Avenue.

Cllr Burns:

Asked for shadow diagrams for the new bungalows, *SR said these are available, but not on the portal yet.*

Has noted Highways comments i) concern over item 2 which outlines a pedestrian access ii) all applicants are offered alternative garages within walking distance, the vast majority are not within 500m.

*CN : There are garages available and tenants have been provided with a map and table which can be viewed in the Design and Access Statement. The garages are currently in varying conditions.*

Cllr Stinchcombe:

All residents have not received an offer of an alternative garage.

*CN : A standard letter was sent out to all tenants who presently leased a garage, some residents had responded, but not all. Havebury will work with them to get as near to what they want as possible and that suits their needs. Tenants can contact Havebury by telephone or email to express a wish.*

Cllr D Smith

There needs to be a balance with resident's concerns over this development and the need for housing in Haverhill, is the scheme about making money?

*CN: There will be no profit made from this development. It is not a quick and easy build due to demolishing the garages, concrete and site constraints.*

Cllr Burns:

Had noted comments provided by the Environment Team, however, JB raised his concerns over Air Quality at the site and that these would be exceeding legal limits whilst buses were idling in the bus depot behind the proposed flats. He was concerned over the effect this would have on the new tenants of the flats.

Is there Asbestos present in the garages?

In respect of Declared Climate Energy Policy, is Havebury considering sustainability for the next 50-100 years e.g introducing solar panels, electric charging points?

*CN – Electric charging provision will be facilitated in Conditions in Planning Permission.*

*Asbestos is present and has been highlighted to the Contractor, this will be dealt with in the proper manner.*

## Appendix (iii)

### Resident 24 Paske Avenue:

- The size is still overdeveloped for the size of the plot and street, 38% increase in properties
- Flats dominate entire street, 3 stories high, we reference the town councils objection "the development does not achieve good design and is out of character to surrounding properties". They will be the first thing you see looking up the street, the only outside space is a balcony, we will have the view of the tenants outside storage and washing being dried as there is no provision for green space for the flats.
- Havebury states flats will improve the view of the current bus depot, we disagree. If you look at the picture in the statement you will see a bungalow with pitched roof could also mask this, it does not need to be 3 stories high and so dominating!
- Concerned flats are 3 stories high and we will lose privacy in our upstairs rooms as they will be able to look down into our windows.
- There is current planning permission for the bus depot. In the future houses could be built, has it been taken into consideration the look of the flats from the back? They look like a prison and very poor design. I certainly wouldn't want to look out of a window to see that view!
- Losing garages which are in high demand – none nearby. The amended statement now lists nearby void garages, but these are also garages that are not fit to lease at present. How do we know these will become available and not more sites earmarked for development! Havebury have a history of demolishing garages and building on the land. Havebury have stated in correspondence that we have to apply online for a new garage, this is how we have been told to apply, when and if one becomes available. There are still 7 garages we personally know of, still using them for off-road parking even after some tenants got worried and have given them up, the figures Havebury are using in their statement is not accurate - **Highways mentions that we have been offered alternative off road parking which is untrue.**
- Parking is a current issue with residents and visitors parking on the garage forecourt, losing this will cause more congestion on the narrow road. The street is narrow and large vehicles often have to mount pathways due to current parked cars, this will only get worse. We are now losing a further 2 parking spaces on the street due to the amended design which now includes pedestrian dropped kerbs. Currently our visitors park in front of our drive which they will no longer be able to. This is the same on the other side of the road.
- All the garages would be let if Havebury had maintained them and kept them in good condition. Lack of garages available on the website proves this.
- We worry about smells, noise, rodents and fly tipping due to the bin storage being located close to our house, also mentioned in town councils objection.
- Currently it is very dangerous to navigate in and out of the avenue due to parked cars on Mill Hill. We have had quite a few near miss road accidents at the junction due to poor visibility. Traffic generated by the new development would increase vehicles using Paske Avenue and would then increase more risk of accidents at this junction.
- The turning circle has been reduced, this is the only area to turn as the street is narrow. Concerns for emergency vehicles, Lorries and refuse collection who we have seen mount pathways just to get up the street.

We understand demand for housing is high. But with thousands of houses, a large percentage being social/affordable housing being built with the big developments happening in town to the north and now planning changed for Haverhill research park, why is there a need to destroy the look and overcrowd an attractive Old Haverhill street?

This street would be more appropriate for accommodation for the elderly being close to town and how safe and crime free the neighbourhood currently is.